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**Journal
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(Hansard)**

Thursday 14 May 2015

Jeudi 14 mai 2015

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 14 May 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 14 mai 2015

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please join me in a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING ONTARIO UP ACT
(BUDGET MEASURES), 2015
LOI DE 2015 POUR FAVORISER
L'ESSOR DE L'ONTARIO
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 5, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 13, 2015, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Sousa has moved second reading of Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Oh, I'm sorry. A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

Second reading vote deferred.

STRENGTHENING AND IMPROVING
GOVERNMENT ACT, 2015
LOI DE 2015 SUR LE RENFORCEMENT
ET L'AMÉLIORATION
DE LA GESTION PUBLIQUE

M^{me} Meilleur moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 85, An Act to strengthen and improve government by amending or repealing various Acts / Projet de loi 85,

Loi visant à renforcer et à améliorer la gestion publique en modifiant ou en abrogeant diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Madame Meilleur.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I rise in the House today to begin debate on the proposed Strengthening and Improving Government Act. Before I begin, I would like to let the members know that I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough Southwest.

Ce projet de loi contient plusieurs mesures importantes qui amélioreront l'efficacité du gouvernement. En fait, la Loi sur le renforcement et l'amélioration de la gestion publique met à jour 15 lois différentes. Par l'intermédiaire de ce projet de loi, nous envisageons d'apporter des réformes à de nombreux aspects du gouvernement; des réformes qui, dans bon nombre de cas, moderniseront nos programmes et processus, et faciliteront l'accès au systèmes.

I look forward to hearing from the members on this bill as we begin a discussion.

In one way or another, the proposed amendments will affect nearly every resident and business in this province. These changes will ultimately support our government's efforts to keep our economy moving and build Ontario up. Some of the amendments will solidify rights and freedoms of Ontarians and non-residents. Some will provide better support for families. For example, changes to the Courts of Justice Act would reflect the new non-resident divorce permitted under the federal Civil Marriage Act. This legislation applies to same-sex couples and others who were married in Ontario but whose own jurisdiction does not legally recognize their union, making divorce impossible where they now live. We want to make it clear that everyone is treated equally.

Un autre changement proposé devrait rendre la vie des familles avec enfants plus facile. Après la rupture d'un mariage, la question de la garde des enfants et des pensions alimentaires surgit souvent. Nous voulons nous assurer que les enfants dont les parents ne vivent plus ensemble sont entre de bonnes mains et qu'ils reçoivent tout le soutien dont ils ont besoin pour grandir heureux et en bonne santé. C'est pourquoi mon ministère travaille sur un plan qui permettra facilement aux parents de mettre en place et de changer en ligne des paiements de pensions alimentaires.

Proposed amendments to the Family Law Act will clarify that parents who use the online child support service, once it becomes operational, would have the same ongoing financial disclosure obligations as parents who are paying a child support order from a family court.

Receiving updated financial disclosure helps a parent who receives child support decide whether they should

apply to update their child support amount based on the other parent's income. This disclosure is integral to the child support payment process.

We are also looking out for those who watched over us when we were younger. As our parents age, we know how important it is to have trusted people surrounding them and quality services to care for them. Si vous avez un père ou une mère malade qui vit à domicile ou dans un établissement de soins de longue durée, vous savez à quel point le transport est problématique, surtout si votre père ou votre mère doit être transporté sur une civière.

Pour bon nombre d'entre nous, cela signifie utiliser un service de transport spécial avec civière et confier notre être cher à un fournisseur de services privé. Nous voulons nous assurer que les membres de notre famille sont en sécurité et bien soignés, et nous voulons avoir entièrement confiance dans les fournisseurs de services. C'est pourquoi nous proposons des modifications au Code de la route qui imposeraient des règlements rigoureux aux véhicules de transport avec civière et à leurs conducteurs. C'est une industrie qui n'a jamais été réglementée. Si les fournisseurs de services ne remplissent pas nos normes, ils risquent de perdre leur entreprise. C'est très simple.

We are also trying to make it easier to move people on a larger scale. Making investments in infrastructure not only grows the economy, but it puts in place services that people and communities rely on. The proposed amendment to the City of Toronto Act would adjust provisions regarding Toronto Transit Commission operation in nearby municipalities. The TTC and the regional municipality of York have reached an agreement in this regard, and these changes will help make it easier to operate the Toronto-York Spadina subway extension.

Looking even further down the road, this will allow for more collaboration when it comes to delivering regional transit across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. It will give the TTC flexibility to enter into similar agreements with other neighbouring municipalities for future projects. The Toronto-York Spadina subway extension would help both transit commuters and those in their cars. It's expected to add 36 million transit trips and eliminate 30 million car trips each year. It will help get the GTHA moving. These are just some of the proposed amendments outlined in this act.

0910

Même si certains de ces changements semblent relativement mineurs, ils sont conçus pour rendre la vie des Ontariens et Ontariennes plus facile. Ces modifications vont renforcer nos collectivités et stimuler la croissance de l'économie.

Pour satisfaire les besoins constamment changeants des Ontariens et des Ontariennes, le gouvernement doit avoir des services, des programmes et des politiques modernes et efficaces.

Je passe maintenant la parole à mon adjoint parlementaire qui parlera plus en détail de la Loi sur le renforcement et l'amélioration de la gestion publique.

I hope that all members will support the important changes in this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Scarborough Southwest.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to continue debate on the proposed Strengthening and Improving Government Act.

I would first like to thank the Attorney General, Madeleine Meilleur, as well as the Ministers of Health and Long-Term Care; Government and Consumer Services; Labour; Education; Municipal Affairs and Housing; Training, Colleges and Universities; and Transportation. Thank you all for your help in putting together such a comprehensive bill. Without you, this wouldn't have been possible. It's a real demonstration of how every part of this government is working together to respond to the ever-evolving needs of families, businesses and entire communities.

Taken together, this discrete set of significant amendments to 15 Ontario laws will contribute to the government's plan to build Ontario up. With every step we take to modernize the processes and improve the efficiency of government, we are strengthening the foundation of this province.

As I noted a moment ago, the Strengthening and Improving Government Act includes amendments to 15 existing pieces of legislation. They are: the City of Toronto Act, the Highway Traffic Act, the Courts of Justice Act, the Family Law Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act, the Employment Standards Act, the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, and several others as well.

While some of these changes are as small as refreshing the wording of an existing statute, others have the potential to significantly impact the lives of Ontarians.

Earlier, the Attorney General spoke of our proposal to regulate non-emergency transportation services. We entrust the transportation of our loved ones to these unregulated companies and to these drivers. That's why it's so important that we take steps to make sure our family members are treated professionally and are kept safe.

But this is not the only thing we're looking to improve in the Highway Traffic Act. Other proposed changes aim to make paperwork easier for drivers. This would give the transportation ministry options when serving a notice of intention to cancel a vehicle permit or driver's licence. In addition to traditional letter mail, for example, such notices could be delivered at a ServiceOntario counter. This could help ensure that drivers receive their notice before any licence cancellation takes place. They will also be given the opportunity and the appropriate amount of time to respond to any requirements, if need be.

Proposed changes to the Highway Traffic Act will also allow for electronic correspondence relating to commercial vehicle operators' registration. This includes accepting applications, renewals and client updates. It allows the Ministry of Transportation to issue notices, commercial vehicle operator certificates and account updates electronically.

It is all part of how we are planning to modernize government processes. Doing so allows us to evolve and look to the future, all while helping residents by making services more convenient.

You can also see modernization through our amendment to the Provincial Offences Act that allows for certain records to be created and transferred electronically. This change would create a legal authority for provincial offences courts to maintain an end-to-end electronic court record, from the filing of a charge to the disposition of a case.

This would also put in place a framework that would allow municipalities that are equipped to implement new technologies to do so. In municipalities where these new electronic records are adopted, court users would have the opportunity to choose a format to receive documents that is easier for them, such as email. It could also lead to reduced postage costs for the local courthouse.

We have also committed to propose several changes set out in the 2012 Physician Services Agreement with the OMA as part of our promise to provide better health care for all Ontarians—and hopefully prevent sneezing from happening during my debate.

If this bill is passed, the Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act will provide immunity for OMA directors and staff but not the association itself. The point of this proposed provision is to limit legal action against representatives for acts done in good faith during negotiations with the government related to physician agreements and payments, for example, agreements that contain fee changes for certain physician groups.

We need to make these updates surrounding agreements made with those who provide health care for all Ontarians. It speaks to our values that health and safety are of paramount importance for everyone in this province.

This is why we must ensure that the safety of people in the workforce continues to evolve and is made stronger. The amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act would incorporate new standards that could improve worker health and safety, as employers and workers will have access to a wider range of information about hazardous workplace chemicals. These changes are part of a broader national initiative to adopt international standards for classifying hazardous workplace chemicals and providing information on labels and safety data sheets. To adopt the new standards requires changes to federal and provincial or territorial regulations.

Amendments to federal hazardous products legislation and regulations came into force this past February. All provincial and territorial governments are in the process of amending their occupational health and safety legislation and regulations to reflect the federal changes. Now it's our turn. The information will be presented in a standardized format which will be easier to understand than the labels and safety data sheets currently in place. We're looking at all aspects of Ontarians' lives, Mr. Speaker, as you can see from the examples I've set out for you and the members so far. Many changes will be coming.

Consider the amendments to the Vital Statistics Act. They would allow the stock that is used for certificates and certified copies of registrations, which have the signature of the Registrar General and/or the Deputy Registrar General reproduced, to continue to be used when those individuals leave office. This would be the case for documents such as long form birth certificates. Currently, certificates have the signatures of both the Registrar General and Deputy Registrar General, and certified copies of registrations have the signature of the Deputy Registrar General. When these individuals no longer hold office, certificate stock and stock for certified copies of registrations that have reproductions of their signatures can no longer be used. Because of this, the Vital Statistics Act amendment would reduce waste and save costs. This amendment would also align Ontario's practices with those of most jurisdictions in Canada.

I realize this is a lengthy list of amendments; there are even more listed in this bill, beyond those discussed by myself and the Attorney General this morning. We want to improve the efficiency and responsiveness of government for the people of Ontario. They are, and always will be, top of mind, which is why I encourage members to support this bill. It's for residents; it's for businesses; it's for all of Ontario.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I was trying to listen intently, and I had a little trouble following the last part about people who weren't in office anymore, so hopefully in the remaining time for the government side of the House we can learn a little bit more about what that was about, or maybe I can get some more information from the member who was speaking.

I think we all recognize that we're here to serve the public, not just our own self-interests. We're not here just to clap for each other, although some days it certainly feels that way. I think we're here to have the best interests of the public in mind. If we want to safeguard health care and our medicare system, as the member was just saying; if we want to have a top education system in the world; if we want to take care of our seniors; if we want to take care of people with Alzheimer's and dementia—who were visiting us yesterday—and provide support for their caregivers, who are often family members who quit jobs to take care of residents—all these types of things that we're trying to help. I believe that all of us here have the same caring personalities. That's why we're here, and we want to serve the public.

0920

But we also have to understand that we have to watch the revenue coming in and the expenditures going out. Without adequate resources, we cannot hold on to medicare, we cannot help our seniors and we cannot have a top-rated education system in the world.

I'm just hopeful that we can stop the wasteful spending and start streamlining and using the computer systems that so many other governments are using to streamline agencies and to better serve the public, using less of

the valuable resources, so that those resources can go where they're meant to go, to serve the very people who voted us into office.

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

M^{me} France G  linas: I must say that I've been here for almost eight years, and for the entire time that I've been here, I have been pushing this government to regulate the private "looks like ambulance" service that we have in Ontario. The Ombudsman has spoken. The Auditor General has spoken. This has to be regulated. It makes no sense. It puts patients at risk.

So I was pleased to see that, finally, we are doing something. But if all we are doing is changing a few things, so that the ambulances themselves are safer, and putting a little bit of responsibility on the drivers, I would say that I didn't wait for eight years to only get that. I'm not going to stand for this, Speaker.

Are those good steps? Yes, absolutely. Those ambulances—I think the Ombudsman said it best: They look and smell like an ambulance, but they may lose a wheel on their way to the call. It is not what we want in Ontario. Am I happy that we're going to be regulating the actual vehicles? Yes. I don't want the wheels falling off, and I don't want the patients falling out the back door, either.

But this is not enough. To have a vehicle that is safe and worthy to be on the road is one step. To make sure that the people in the back of the ambulance know how to look after your grandfather and grandmother and everybody else that the minister said rides in the back of that ambulance—this has not been addressed.

Sure, the wheels won't fall off of those pretend ambulances anymore; that's good. But New Democrats want way more than that. We want full regulations so that we have quality of care, not just quality of vehicles.

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

Hon. Steven Del Duca: It's a really wonderful opportunity for me to add my voice to the debate and discussion around Bill 85 this morning.

I want to pay tribute, of course, to the Attorney General and to our colleague the member from Scarborough Southwest, who serves as the Attorney General's parliamentary assistant.

There has been a lot of discussion already, particularly from both the minister and her parliamentary assistant, with respect to the wide variety of elements that are included in this legislation.

As the Minister of Transportation, there are two that stand out for me. I'm going to focus, for the remaining time that I have, on the importance of moving forward with the revisions, or the enhancements or improvements, to the City of Toronto Act, even though it doesn't technically fall, as legislation, within the purview of the Ministry of Transportation as a result of what's included here in Bill 85.

It will significantly help with respect to a major transit infrastructure project, the Toronto-York Spadina subway extension, which, as many will know in this House, is a

project that will extend, for the very first time, Toronto's subway system into a neighbouring municipality, into York region, coming up to the city of Vaughan and arriving, ultimately, in the Vaughan Corporate Centre, which is physically located in the riding of Thornhill, but it serves people from the riding of Thornhill, and people from my own riding and my own community of the rest of the city of Vaughan: Woodbridge residents, Maple residents, Kleinburg residents and many others beyond.

But beyond the fact that it comes to the city of Vaughan, it also will provide, for the first time, a subway connection to York University. Somewhere north of 50,000 students a day travel to that campus. By having that subway up and running and by making sure, through Bill 85 and through a number of the other leadership decisions that have been made by the government on this side of the House, the Liberal government, with respect to making sure that we invest in this kind of crucial transit infrastructure—it will significantly help those students, tens of thousands of them, to arrive at that campus. So it's wonderful to stand and support Bill 85 this morning.

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

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'm going to have an opportunity to speak on Bill 85, Strengthening and Improving Government Act, in a few minutes. I understand it is an omnibus bill, and there are some concerns I have on the section on the MTCU and the College of Trades that I just want to bring to the floor again. That has been a very controversial topic in this House, and I look forward to hearing the comments and feedback on that as well.

Mr. Speaker, some of the worries I have with these omnibus bills is that we sometimes think that, just because they cover a bunch of ministries, everything they're covering is going to be—any of the amendments might be perfect. I'm kind of disappointed that the government only took 10 minutes on the leadoff on something that's covering so many ministries. I would have thought there would be a lot more clarification from the government members on it. So I'll try to add a little bit more to my critic's portfolio and deal with some of the issues I see that possibly are not being addressed by some of the things that I think should have been addressed right here in the leadoff and in the general legislation.

I look forward to that opportunity, and I'll be able to speak in a couple of minutes.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I return to the Attorney General. You have two minutes.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Merci, monsieur le Pr  sident. First of all, let me say thank you to the members from Thornhill, Nickel Belt, the Minister of Transportation and the member from Simcoe North for their comments.

Let me address, first of all, a question that the member from Thornhill had. It's very simple: Currently the certificate bears the signature of both the Registrar and the Deputy Registrar General, and certificated copies of registration bear the signature of the Deputy Registrar

General. When these individuals are not employees anymore—when they retire—we have this stack of certificates, and we have to throw them out. We cannot use them anymore.

This will permit the ministry to continue to use these certificates. We're just doing what other provinces are doing. It will reduce waste and save costs. That's what it is. It's very simple.

I just want to talk also about the comment by the member from Nickel Belt. Of course, it's so important to have these individuals who provide non-emergency stretcher transportation services to have good training and that their vehicles are in good operation because—you're right—they do give service to our loved ones, most of the time our seniors. We want to make sure they are regulated and that our moms and dads receive services that are safe and secure.

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

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I want to share the leadoff with at least, I know, the member from Caledon and the member from Kitchener–Waterloo—did I get that right? Kitchener–Conestoga. I get all the ridings mixed up, Mr. Speaker; I'm so sorry.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: You're like me.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I have a real problem. I know Simcoe North, and I know Jim's is Simcoe–Grey.

Interjection.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'm not sure what yours is. It's in the GTA; I know that.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Garfield, we have something in common.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Yes. Okay.

Again, I applaud the Attorney General for bringing forward Bill 85, An Act to strengthen and improve government by amending or repealing various Acts.

Just a note to the Attorney General, first of all, a compliment: Thank you for coming to Simcoe North tomorrow for the announcement of the 400th anniversary of Champlain. The town of Penetanguishene and the area of Huronia have put a tremendous amount of effort into organizing a fantastic event this year on the 400th anniversary of Champlain coming to what is now Ontario. The reality is, we're going to have celebrations on the August 1 weekend, so I want everybody who is possibly interested in celebrating Champlain to come that weekend to Simcoe county and to the town of Penetanguishene.

0930

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Talk about that beautiful park there.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Yes, okay; I'm going to give the minister another compliment here.

We're going to also be building a beautiful park. It's Penetanguishene Rotary Park, and it's on the water. There will be re-enactments and there will be statues. It's really going to be a legacy project for the next 100 years at least.

For the 300th anniversary of when Champlain came here, they had it in 1921. The war was taking place dur-

ing the 300th anniversary. The town of Penetang did a phenomenal job in 1921.

We're very, very proud of what is taking place. The county, the province of Ontario, the federal government and the town of Penetanguishene have all become strong partners in this project. I'm very proud of it, and I know the minister is very proud of it as well.

That takes us back to Bill 85. It's such a long bill. I hope that everybody is going to explain all these sections from the government's point of view even more, because the leadoff wasn't very long. Probably the minister's statement was as long as the leadoff. Anyhow, we're looking forward to it. We're looking forward to seeing some of these things taking place and some of these corrections being made by this legislation.

As the critic for education and training, colleges and universities, I wanted to speak a little bit about one section: schedule 6, the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act. It gives the college registrar the authority to appoint an investigator to investigate the conduct of a member and provides that for the purpose of such an investigation, the investigator has all the powers of a commission under part II of the Public Inquiries Act. This latter act was repealed and replaced by the Public Inquiries Act, 2009. The proposed amendment would replace the reference to the Public Inquiries Act with a reference to the Public Inquiries Act, 2009. The amendment is required to ensure that the statutory cross-references of the act are accurate.

In June 2006, an amendment to the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act provided that each college, rather than its board of governors, was a corporation without share capital. The amendment would provide certainty with respect to the continuity of the ownership of college assets and obligations acquired or incurred before and after June 2006.

The act would be amended to provide certainty with respect to the ownership of assets and obligations, allowing colleges to respond easily to questions about the continuity of ownership, given prior changes in legislation relating to college boards. The second part of that is fairly clear, and I agree with it.

I want to talk, Mr. Speaker, for a minute about the Ontario College of Trades. We fought hard against that. There were two or three ministers, during that period, who we dealt with. Although we're trying to make amendments to this investigator and add this investigator's title to the job, I'm still concerned that this is becoming a bureaucracy that is really not needed in the province of Ontario. I think they have six floors in a building downtown on Bay Street.

We brought the legislation in on the Ontario College of Trades act, and what I would suggest to you is that there was very, very little consultation done with the people who hold a certificate of qualification in the trades in Ontario. Those trades basically apply to 22 compulsory trades—and other people have a certificate of qualification in trades that are non-compulsory but they've taken the full apprenticeship; for example, there are many

people who work as carpenters but they don't have the C of Q.

The problem was that when we brought in the College of Trades act—there are actually 157 trades in Ontario—there was very little notification, even up to the point where people were getting their invoices in the mail. They didn't realize what was actually happening at that particular ministry. So the people that had a certificate of qualification in these trades—the trade of electrician, for example—every three years would pay a total of \$60 to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and the cheque was sent to the Ministry of Finance. They would pay that \$60 for a three-year certification. A sticker would come in the mail, they would put it on their certificate-of-qualification licence, and that would entitle them to practise in that trade for the next three years.

What's happened is, the fees went up substantially; they went up about 676%. They are now \$130 a year plus the HST. That is per year. So it used to be \$20 a year. It's now \$138.50, or something like that, the exact amount of money.

On top of that, why I'm concerned is that, first of all, a lot of people didn't even send their licences in; they didn't send the cheque in—they didn't get it in the mail or whatever. So there's still a lot of turmoil right in that particular area. But on top of that, now they've got the bookkeeping to worry about every year. So for somebody who has been in the trades for the last 20 years and who has been used to doing it every three years, now what's happening? They have to do it every year. Already, people have forgotten about having to make sure their licence is renewed. Once you lose it, we don't know what the long-term impact will be in actually getting that licence back.

The whole consultation that took place around the Ontario College of Trades, I thought, was not done in a very professional manner, and, as a result of that, tradespeople today in Ontario are quite bitter that they had to join this and they've paid these fees that are substantially higher.

The government recognized that, and we certainly mentioned that leading up to the election last June, on June 12. During the election, Premier Wynne announced—they were up in Thunder Bay, and I remember her quote. She said that, based on the success of its first year—the College of Trades—we were going to have a review of it. If you were going to have a review of it, I don't think it was very successful. That's what we asked for. So Tony Dean is actually doing a review of the Ontario College of Trades right today.

The problem is, again, we haven't gone back to the tradespeople. The government has the database to send out the invoices for the renewal of their membership in the College of Trades each and every year. But what I suggest—and I've got it on the order paper as a question—is that a letter, a survey, should also be sent out to all the tradespeople in Ontario; that's all of the people who have a C of Q. They should be able to have a survey on what their feelings were on the College of Trades. It shouldn't be a former bureaucrat here at Queen's Park

saying, "This is what's right and this is what's wrong"; it should be the tradespeople themselves having a say in whether they believe the College of Trades should even be in existence, or where the College of Trades could be a benefit, or what are the negative things. They have not been informed on this at all. So that's every tradesperson who walks to work with their tool box or their lunch box and they're working on these job sites day in and day out; they have no say whatsoever in the review. I think that's wrong.

I know we're making an amendment to the investigator and enforcement section, because the College of Trades has, I believe, 79 vehicles out there now, and they've got enforcement people running around making sure people have their licences and all that kind of thing. But when we're doing a review of something so important, that impacts all the tradespeople in the province of Ontario, I think it's a duty and a responsibility, as part of that review, that every tradesperson should be given a proper survey asking a series of questions, and one of the questions would be, "Should the College of Trades even exist?"

I, for example, am a strong supporter of the community college system in Ontario. As the critic, I've been at, I believe, about 15 of them now. I've actually visited them, right from one end of the province to the other. I've still got to do the ones in northern Ontario and in the Sault Ste. Marie area and Timmins. But the reality is that these community colleges are doing a fantastic job.

0940

I think that the community college system could actually be responsible for all the trades in Ontario, and we wouldn't need to have an Ontario College of Trades. We wouldn't need to have this awkward apprenticeship system we've got today. I think there's a way we can improve the community college system and let them actually be the leaders in it.

If you're applying today to be a doctor, you don't apply to a college of trades. You don't have to work through a group like that. You apply to a university. The proper university will get you into a medical school, if you've got the proper marks, and you go through the system that way.

I think the same thing should apply to the community college system with trades. If you want to be a tradesperson, you go and you enrol in the community college that has the best program—say, for example, if it's electricity and you want to go to Humber College, or if it's welding and you want to go to Seneca, something like that. These community colleges have all of that information available. They have the framework and the infrastructure in place to actually enhance and improve the apprenticeship and training programs right here in Ontario.

I want to just zero in on that for a second. The community college systems will be 50 years old in 2017, I believe it is. I hope a lot of them will be celebrating their phenomenal accomplishments. Every community college I go to has some kind of expertise in certain areas. It's

mind-boggling. They actually don't get a chance to brag province-wide about the types of things that they do in our community colleges.

My friend from Kitchener here, my colleague, he'll tell you all about the things that are happening at Conestoga. It's just mind-boggling. People in London will tell you what's happening at Fanshawe. There are just some amazing programs taking place—

Ms. Cindy Forster: Or Niagara College.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Niagara College, with their partnerships with the grape and wine industry. These are amazing things to see.

Mr. Speaker, if an MPP hasn't been to their own community college in their own area, I would suggest that they make sure they get tours, they get to meet the presidents and the boards of directors. Not only that, maybe go to other areas as well and see some of the expertise that's provided in the other community colleges in other areas. They are really, really remarkable.

I personally work with the community college—mostly, the one I work with is Georgian College, which has seven locations in the county of Simcoe and up into Muskoka and Grey-Bruce. They have unbelievable campuses, leading up to all kinds of expertise in all different fields. I believe the graduation rate at Georgian now—92% of the people will have job within six months of graduation. That's pretty successful.

When I say that the community college system should be responsible for the full apprenticeship program, I mean that sincerely. They should be the people who are taking the lead on what trades become compulsorily certified and what trades remain with the current C of Qs.

Of course, the other thing that they can be zeroing in on is the number of students they allow into the system. We're a supporter of the 1-to-1 ratio, in our caucus. The government and the College of Trades, of course, are not in favour of that. That's a whole complex issue in itself, and I'm not going to zero in on all that today.

The reality is that the community college system in Ontario is capable of doing much of the work, or most of the work, that the Ontario College of Trades is set up to do. It appears now to be no more than a duplication.

Tradespeople with the College of Trades have kind of given up. They say, "Okay, we've just got to pay more. It's another bunch of money." They're not really overly impressed with the enforcement division of it. For example, people can be tradespersons and they can be running a legitimate company, and they have to follow all the rules of the Ministry of Labour—the number of apprentices, the ratio system in the apprenticeship system. They might be paying their taxes and paying the full amount of money, and everything they have to do to survive in business.

What happens is, they could be in an area—say, for example, a cottage area—where new cottages are being built. People will come up on a weekend with a load of electrical wire, they'll wire up a cottage or something, and they won't get any inspections done on it. They buy their wire at Home Depot or Canadian Tire or something,

so they're doing the job cheaper, and they're doing it without any inspections. That's work that the local contractor didn't get that he was actually qualified to do.

Yet the College of Trades enforcement division will go after the local contractor over whether he's got the right number of apprentices or not, and these guys—we call them "fly-by-nights," guys who work out of their trunks—get away scot-free. You can complain to the College of Trades, and no will go after that guy. No one is going to go into a cottage road on a Saturday afternoon in the summer to see if some guy's doing a job illegally. They'll go after the guy—9 to 5, Monday to Thursday—and make sure that he hasn't got a labourer or a 17-year-old kid out of high school working on a construction site who's not an actual apprentice.

These are the things that are not being addressed at the College of Trades. We can fix up these bills, like Bill 85, which makes a minor amendment to the College of Trades act. What I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is the College of Trades isn't working. It's simply not working here in Ontario. It's very, very disappointing that we bring this up over and over again.

There was a chance to fix some of these things; that was with the review that Mr. Dean's doing. I'm really disappointed that a letter couldn't go out, a survey couldn't have gone out, to all these people to say, "What is your opinion on this? Have you got ideas to improve the College of Trades? What would you like to see done with it?" Instead, they're just completely ignored.

There will be changes made to the College of Trades, and the people who will suffer as a result of those changes are the people who are paying the bills now. That's how the College of Trades functions. It functions on the membership fees, and they're not getting an opportunity as a result of that to be addressed in a professional manner. Actually, I would say tradespeople are being treated as second-class citizens as a result of this survey.

I know I'm taking way more time than I should have—

Ms. Laurie Scott: No, no, keep going.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Well, I don't have a lot more to say. How much longer can I go? I need a drink of water.

Interjections.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: It's okay. It's okay.

Interjections.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'm doing this on the fly, Liz, you know.

Anyhow, thank you very much. That was my chance to say a few words on the college. I want to pass it on now to the member from Kitchener, who will continue on.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Kitchener-Conestoga.

Mr. Michael Harris: I appreciated listening to my colleague's remarks; he talks a lot about a lot of things. I'm not going to get up to his riding this weekend, but I wish him and all the folks in his riding a happy anniversary.

Speaker, it's a great opportunity to join the debate on Bill 85, the Strengthening and Improving Government Act, 2015, a wide-ranging act amending 15 pieces of legislation, including the Highway Traffic Act.

I'd like to kick off my comments by noting my clear support for both strengthening and improving government. Clearly, there's no end to the long list of areas where this government could improve. Just look at the latest budget: It reads like a what-not-to-do guide to government.

There's so much room for improving government, as the title of the act suggests, it's hard to know where to begin. Whether it be shell games with our assets to disguise a long-entrenched Liberal government spending addiction, taking money from health care to pay the interest on the debt or picking winners and losers for transit funding, the Ontario budget's direction to build Ontario up points us toward continued economic and labour turmoil that threatens to tear Ontario down.

There are so many areas for improvement, Speaker. As Bill 85 does address the Highway Traffic Act to improve transportation in Ontario, I do want to highlight the many concerns for improved transportation and transit infrastructure that the bill leaves untouched. As I noted earlier, this government's budget announcement and its series of high-profile transit announcements in the preceding weeks saw the Wynne Liberals continue their practice of picking winners and losers, where winners receive funding for LRT or regional express rail while others are left wondering if the Wynne Liberal government will ever deliver on promises in their area.

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Take the \$1.6 billion for funding of the Hurontario LRT, while folks in Hamilton, who were also promised full funding, continue to wait at the end of the table for whatever scraps the government may have left to throw them. Meanwhile, we have the regional government in Waterloo, where I'm from, which was originally promised two-thirds funding for their LRT by the provincial Liberals—funding which was subsequently dropped to only a third, leaving municipal taxpayers on the hook that those in Mississauga and Brampton somehow evaded. That's a true story, Speaker.

Where's the fairness? Where's the consistency? I submit that if we're looking for ways to improve government, we may want to start by ensuring we're not just making our transit plans up as we go along. It's the same situation with regional express rail, the key component for delivery of the all-day, two-way GO promise this government has made to residents in my area of Kitchener-Waterloo and to many throughout the province.

Yes, the minister and the Premier did go to great lengths to get in front of cameras and strike up the band to cheer on regional express rail to Barrie, yet after months of promising all-day, two-way service for the people of Kitchener-Waterloo, expansions on the Kitchener line sadly weren't even mentioned.

While the Premier had indicated expanded GO train service would happen "immediately" prior to the elec-

tion, and the former minister said it could actually happen within five years, the onslaught of new transit announcements contain no mention of when the promised two-way, all-day service the people of Barrie are now welcoming will ever make its way to the region of Waterloo.

Commuters in Waterloo region have been given the impression again and again that two-way, all-day GO service, with frequent trains going east—that's important—and westbound—even more important—all day long, was just around the corner: Buy your ticket now. Now, I don't even think it's clear what this government is committed to.

To add insult to injury, after announcing the Wynne Liberal government plan for selling off Hydro One to supposedly pay for transit priorities, the budget is now telling municipalities who have yet to be allocated provincial funding for their rail extension projects to sell off their assets of their—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock. Point of order, the Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I know this very important legislation is very broad, but I'm pretty sure the member from Kitchener-Conestoga is not within a million miles of speaking to the elements of this particular legislation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you for your point of order. I'm listening very carefully and I was getting close to that.

Continue, the member for Kitchener-Conestoga.

Mr. Michael Harris: A million miles? I mean, jeez, that's what we'll have to drive around this province instead of taking that GO train from Kitchener-Waterloo.

Ms. Cindy Forster: What about the bullet?

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes, or the bullet train from Windsor to Toronto.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I'd ask you to tie it to the current bill as quickly as possible.

Mr. Michael Harris: Obviously, this bill touches on the Highway Traffic Act. I think it's appropriate that we speak to that, and I think it's important. When you talk about the Strengthening and Improving Government Act, that's a pretty broad title. I can loop a lot back in simply by referencing the title.

If we want to talk about improving government, strengthening Ontario, we have to talk about the investments they've made and the ones that they haven't, but promised to. I think it's absolutely appropriate to talk about the promised all-day, two-way GO service for Waterloo region—only to find now that they want us to sell off our assets. That was actually mentioned in the budget.

Look, we could be here all day. I've only got so much time left, because I am sharing with the member from Dufferin-Caledon. That said, when it comes to Bill 85's parameters regarding improvements to the Highway Traffic Act, I feel it's a bit like, in the words of Yogi Berra, "déjà vu all over again." That's because it was only a few short weeks ago that I was debating a bill in

this House attempting to amend the Highway Traffic Act to include penalties for drug-impaired driving as part of the government's Bill 31, Making Ontario's Roads Safer Act. Those penalties proposed by this government, however, never even actually saw the light of day for third reading. That's because government members at committee on day 1 of clause-by-clause had, in a bizarre turn of events, voted out a pertinent section of their own bill that had impacted the sections penalizing drug-impaired driving.

So here we go again, Speaker. When it comes to Bill 31, and now Bill 85's direction with regard to drug-impaired driving, I will repeat what I said a number of weeks ago. We all agree that those impaired, whether from alcohol or drugs, should not be driving, period. We all agree on that. The fact is that Ontario is one of only three jurisdictions in Canada that currently has no sanctions for drug-impaired driving. So the issue finally being addressed again here allows Ontario motorists to have the protection that the other provinces already benefit from. We already have laws to deal with the impacts of drunk driving, so this bill proposes to fill the void in Ontario to take on the impact of drugged driving.

Specifically, the bill will allow for someone's driver's licence to be suspended for three, seven, 30 or 90 days if a driver fails a roadside test and the police officer, trained in standardized field sobriety testing or as a drug recognition expert, reasonably believes that their ability to drive is impaired, depending on the level of impairment.

We've now moved eight years down the road since federal law changes were made to give police new powers to compel suspected drug-impaired drivers to take roadside sobriety tests. While there are a number of technologies out there for testing, whether through a type of breathalyzer or saliva testing, many questions remain with regard to both civil liberties and the actual science behind the procedures.

Question one surrounds the fact that, unlike the 0.08% threshold for blood alcohol concentration, there's no scientific consensus about how much consumption of certain drugs will cause impairment. Some hold that five nanograms per millilitre of blood should be the limit for cannabis, while others have said it should be 10. Yet even as the debate continues, the fact remains that it's the responsibility of us as legislators to address issues surrounding drug-impaired driving because of the harms it may cause.

While we know that many of the problems associated with drug-impaired driving are similar to those associated with drunk driving, there is substantial evidence suggesting that the prevalence of drug-impaired driving may be higher than that of alcohol-impaired driving. And while we're not just talking about marijuana use, there are studies pointing to the fact that driving under the influence of marijuana alone may be more common than drunk driving. That's a significant concern. According to the Partnership For a Drug-Free Canada, "Cannabis significantly affects the skills necessary for driving. Cannabis causes euphoria, slowed thinking, confusion, impaired memory

and learning, increased heart rate and anxiety. These effects are felt within minutes, peak after about half an hour and can last up to two hours." They go on to report that "driving while on cannabis demonstrates slowed thinking, which delays reaction time to important events occurring on the road. It also distorts time and distance perception, making it difficult for the driver to navigate turns into oncoming traffic. Concentration and attention span are also decreased, increasing the likelihood that the driver will be distracted from watching the road. The crash rate of cannabis users can be anywhere from two to six times higher than sober drivers, depending on the duration and quantity of the drug.

"Considerable evidence from both real and simulated driving studies indicates that marijuana can negatively affect a driver's attentiveness, perception of time and speed, and the ability to draw on information obtained from past experiences."

The studies continue. I think I saw an ad on the subway the other day calling for volunteer pot smokers between the ages of 17 and 24 who own a driver's licence to come forward for another study examining the impacts here in the city of Toronto. One of the latest studies from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health estimates that "4% to 12% of motor vehicle deaths or injuries occurred under the influence of cannabis. Based on motor vehicle accident statistics from 2010, this suggests that there were 89 to 267 fatalities, and 6,625 to 20,475 injuries in Canada that year related to cannabis use." This is a cause for concern.

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Beyond marijuana, the drug-impaired driving problem extends much further, to include the use of a wide variety of both legal and illegal drugs, running the gamut from stimulants, depressants, antidepressants, narcotics, hallucinogens and sleeping pills, among other intoxicating substances. So there is little doubt that we need to get a handle on how to address the dire impacts that can result due to any and all types of impaired driving, and yet even as we support the direction toward dealing with the occurrence of drug-impaired driving, we recognize that there will be concerns moving forward.

I remain concerned that with government yet to introduce any reliable scientific testing for drug impairment, the imposition of penalties is left open to question and possible legal challenge. The fact remains that while government has spoken about examining testing procedures in other jurisdictions until some verifiable type of roadside breathalyzer for drugs is proven valid and accurate, we will require further detail, if the legislation moves on to committee, as to how and when a driver is determined to be drug-impaired for the purposes of this legislation.

I know I've only got a few minutes left.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Hear, hear.

Mr. Michael Harris: I could go on. I know the member opposite would appreciate that, but I want to note that Bill 85 also calls for regulation of private sector non-emergency stretcher transportation vehicles and their

drivers, ensuring that they meet specific requirements with respect to vehicle inspection and maintenance, prescribed qualifications for staff, equipment and record-keeping. That's contained in this bill. There is no doubt that the safety of our medical transportation services is important, but given the Liberal government's track record in areas of overseeing medical transportation in the past, we do remain skeptical of government's ability to regulate those services.

I want to remind folks, as it pertains to this bill, that it was just less than a year ago that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts issued a comprehensive, scathing report after a two-year investigation into the Ornge air ambulance scandal. It's not entirely surprising that many in this House today are unaware of the report—I encourage them to pick up a copy and over the long weekend, if they've not already read it, to please do so—because just as it was about to be released publicly, the Premier called an election, successfully burying what she knew would be a highly critical report. Much as the McGuinty pro-rogation saw government attempt to avoid scrutiny for the \$1-billion gas plant scandal, the Wynne government headed straight for the exits when they realized the Ornge was about to hit the fan. When the going gets tough, the regime gets going right out the door, where they don't have to answer our questions.

That said, and even as an ongoing criminal investigation into the Ornge scandal by OPP continues, I thought it's important to note some of the significant highlights of this report—two years in the making—as it pertains to the section in the bill relating to patient transfers etc. The report contained 95 specific concerns that relate directly to decisions made at the most senior levels in the Ministry of Health, concerns that include—and I believe the government should hear these, as we speak to these changes made in this bill pertaining to this section. They highlighted in the report:

- the failure of the minister to respond to the repeated warnings about Ornge mismanagement, and health and safety risks;

- an oversight branch for the air ambulance service whose director and staff have no experience in either air or land ambulance;

- deputy ministers ignoring the advice of senior civil servants against proceeding with the Chris Mazza scheme at the very outset;

- instructing the head of the emergency services branch to stand down and take direction from Chris Mazza; and

- the ministry's failure to exercise even the most basic of oversight responsibilities.

Further, the report exposes Ornge board members for their failure to exercise their fiduciary responsibilities and calls for the government to pursue them—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock. On a point of order, the Attorney General.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I'm trying to understand the remarks from the member of the PC Party, and I cannot relate them to anything in the bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you for your point of order.

I would ask the member to tie his comments to the bill as soon as possible.

Mr. Michael Harris: If the member gives me a few more minutes, I think by the end of what I'm about to say—

Interjections.

Mr. Michael Harris: If she listens attentively, she will actually understand how I am including these important remarks about the public accounts committee back to Bill 85, because there is, in fact, a regulation—and she's the minister for the bill and will know this—of private sector non-emergency stretcher transportation vehicles and their drivers, ensuring that they meet specific requirements. That's exactly how I'm tying this to that, so I encourage her to wait until I'm done and then render a decision, perhaps, on that.

The report—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I don't think it's a decision of the Attorney General. It's a decision of the Speaker. I'm listening very carefully, and I'm actually reading the act, but I'm having trouble also.

Mr. Michael Harris: Okay. Well, I've got three pages left, and we'll figure it out.

Dr. Mazza collected \$9.3 million over six years at Ornge, as he created a complex web of for-profit and not-for-profit entities related to the air ambulance service, all under the nose of the Liberal government and then-Health Minister Deb Matthews.

I think we owe the committee—and specifically the former member for Newmarket–Aurora, Mr. Frank Klees—our gratitude for spearheading this investigation and providing a significant report, which we would all benefit from reading and which I encourage members opposite to do.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would give the member one more warning, and then I'll move to the next speaker. I would like you to speak to the bill—as it relates to ambulance, what's in the bill.

Mr. Michael Harris: We owe it to front-line first responders—the pilots, the paramedics—and the dispatchers and administrators of Ornge to make this report public.

Again, Speaker, while oversight of our medical transportation vehicles, as called for in Bill 85, is probably a good idea, given the history with this current government at the wheel, I do have some misgivings. I think that's fair.

I know my colleague from Dufferin–Caledon wants to chime in on this, so I'd like to thank members for the opportunity to speak today, and, obviously, thank the member for Simcoe North for his thoughts on this wide-ranging proposed legislation.

Speaker, with that, I'll turn it over to my colleague from Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It is a pleasure to rise this morning to speak about the Strengthening and Improving Government Act—I think that's the latest propaganda title—an

Act to strengthen and improve government by amending or repealing various Acts. As you know, this is actually a reintroduction of a government bill from the previous Parliament that died on the order paper.

But I specifically want to—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Order, please.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thanks, Speaker.

I specifically want to add on to what my colleague from Kitchener–Conestoga was referencing, and that was the ambulance non-medical, non-emergency transfers that are under schedule 7, Ministry of Transportation.

In my community, there is a lot of what you call a non-emergency transfer that occurs. It's becoming a real issue, because there do not seem to be any standards in place that ensure that the fee or charge is appropriate or consistent.

I actually have very disturbing examples from an emergency room nurse who has told me directly that people are now making decisions that say, "Don't send my mom or dad"—who is in a long-term-care home—"to the hospital, because I don't want to pay—or I cannot afford to pay—the fee of the non-emergency transfer" that occurs when they leave the emergency room and go back to the long-term-care home.

I have very, very serious concerns with the fact that we need to take a much closer look at that industry and ensure not only that the staff who are manning these vehicles are appropriately trained, but that there is some comfort and consistency in how the costs are decided upon.

If people are actually making a decision that they do not want their loved one to go to the emergency room because they can't afford the return trip in that non-medical transfer vehicle, because they don't have a vehicle that would be appropriate for a wheelchair or the particular circumstances, I think we have a bigger issue than what is specifically referenced in schedule 7 with the amendments that are being proposed here with Bill 85.

1010

Sometimes we learn about these issues just because we get the calls from the constituency. It had not occurred to me that there would be an inconsistency in the rules—well, let's be honest; there are no rules. There don't seem to be any rules as to what cost is appropriate. I would like to see more of that studied, whether it's through the Ministry of Health, or if we want to do it with schedule 7 through the Ministry of Transportation, I don't really care. What I do care about is, I don't want to be in a position where people are saying no to going to the hospital for specific services that they need; perhaps it's a physiotherapy session, and they are concerned that they will not be able to afford the charge that happens at the end of the program.

I would urge the government to look at that and come up with a solution where there is an appropriate and easily understood, transparent view for people to see

what is covered under the non-emergency transfers and what is the appropriate cost for it. Perhaps it's a situation where you need to have a maximum fee. We often talk about the very important value we have in our universal health care. Not everything is free, and if the seniors and people on a fixed income in Dufferin–Caledon are being unfairly or unreasonably charged, I think that we as legislators have a responsibility to move forward and try to fix that problem.

Back to Bill 85: It is an omnibus bill that affects 15 different pieces of legislation across eight different ministries. Some are very basic housekeeping issues. Some are—how shall I say this nicely?—repairing or fixing errors that occurred in previous legislation, and some very current actually. Some of the Ministry of Transportation amendments are in Bill 85 now because there was basically a mess-up at committee, and things got removed that should not have been removed. So we have Bill 85 trying to correct that error.

It is a housekeeping bill, but it does very little to strengthen and improve government within our province and certainly anything related to the fiscal—I'm concerned because the Speaker keeps looking at me like I should sit down. I'll keep going until you tell me to stop.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): No, you have lots of time left.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'd like to spend some time discussing the impacts of Bill 85, specifically as it relates to my responsibility as critic for the Ministry of the Attorney General. Bill 85 amends the Courts of Justice Act to match with federal legislation—the Civil Marriage Act and the Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act—and to the list of statutes which the Family Court and Family Rules Committee have jurisdiction over. Basically this will allow clarity on court proceedings for non-residents, same-sex spouses and First Nation matrimonial property laws. This is basically an update to allow people who do not live in Ontario but were married in Ontario in a same-sex relationship to divorce and separate their assets. In addition, it will allow future federal family legislation to be added to the Family Court and Family Rules Committee's jurisdiction by regulation.

I'll give my regulation rant for a moment. Historically and consistently, I have a lot of concerns with how much of the legislation that we see before us is left to what we call "by regulation." As many members of this chamber know, but I'm not sure the public understands, regulatory changes are something that are not debated or discussed in this chamber. As little as three members of the cabinet—not even the full cabinet—have to look at every single regulation. They can be signed by three cabinet ministers and within days have regulatory changes that have very serious impacts to the people of Ontario. As a general rule, I'm not a big fan of regulations—and I will let the Speaker speak.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30 a.m.

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Please help me welcome to the House the parents of page Megan Chan: Rebecca Yu and Johnny Chan. They're here to see their daughter Megan in action today.

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'm pleased to introduce the mother and father of page Joshua Osborne. Jennifer Osborne and Dr. Raymond Osborne are with us today.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I'd like Queen's Park to give a warm welcome to Special Olympics coach Teresa Demytruk, and a special events coordinator with the Special Olympics, Mr. James Montague, both here from Oakville.

Mr. Joe Dickson: I'd like to introduce Dietmar Arff, the father of page captain Ryan Arff. He will be in the public gallery this morning—if you are, just give me the wave; if not, wave when you get here.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm delighted to welcome Rebecca Horeth, who's in the gallery today. She's from Althouse College, the teachers' college at Western University. Rebecca has been spending two weeks at the Ministry of Education, gaining a better understanding of education policy development. Welcome, Rebecca.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm pleased to welcome Fred Hahn, president of CUPE Ontario, who's joined by Chris Watson, also from CUPE. Welcome.

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: I'm pleased to welcome page Thomas Atkinson's mother, Cindy Atkinson. Welcome to Queen's Park. She will be in the public gallery.

M^{me} France Gélinas: He is making his way in: Kent MacNeill from Sudbury. He's with OECTA and is participating in the rally today.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I just want to reintroduce my nephew Aaron Natyshak, who has been here with me all week, sort of job shadowing. This is his last day here. I had a great time having him here. He learned a lot through his experience, so thank you to all members.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: We have five personal support workers here in the gallery today: Theresa Thomas, Ghiti Iravani, Theresa Matteer, Penney Murphy and Hazel John. Welcome to Queen's Park.

I also want to take this opportunity to recognize PSW Day on May 19, next week.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm always willing to admit my mistakes. Last round, I missed the formal thank you and we made up for it in the afternoon, but I want to do it now to make sure that I don't forget it, because we have a vote after—and that is to say that it is

the last day for our pages. We want to thank our pages for the wonderful work that they've done in this House.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I take it, by that, that you would like to have them come back on Monday?

ORDER AND DECORUM IN CHAMBER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): This morning indicated to me that we could be boisterous to a certain degree. All I'm going to ask is that our energy be positive. I seek co-operation from the House on the issue that I've spoken to before, and that is, when I stand, we need quiet, and no one throws in shots as I'm sitting. I will still be strict on that one. Thank you for your co-operation.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Deputy Premier. Durham students have now been out of school for 19 days. That's the longest teachers' strike in over 25 years. That's the longest students have been out of a classroom in over 25 years.

Deputy Premier, your government has brought this upon itself with a bargaining process that is being described as flawed and dysfunctional. The onus is on your government to get these students back in the classroom where they belong before they lose their year. Will you do that?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: As I've said many times, we agree that the students need to be back in class. We want the students to be back in class, and I agree, they have been out for a distressingly long time. But we also know that the only way that we're going to get them back in class is if we negotiate. We need to have a negotiated settlement, so we are certainly prepared to be at the table and to stay at the table.

I know the school board associations are prepared; I would certainly hope that the unions will be prepared to get back to the table, because the only way we are going to resolve this is through negotiation, Speaker. We know that we have to get a collective agreement. That will end the strikes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Back to the Deputy Premier: Students want to be back in the classroom. Teachers want to be back in the classroom. Parents want their children back in the classroom.

If the Ontario Labour Relations Board's decision is appealed, high school students may be out of the classroom for weeks on end. We're hearing that students at one Durham high school have been told to clean out their lockers because they're not expected to be back in the

classroom before the end of the school year. Durham College has said that if these students don't graduate by August 22, they cannot offer them admission for next year.

Deputy Premier, these students' futures and their careers are at very serious risk. Get the deal done. Get these students back into the classroom and graduating next month as they should be.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm very concerned if that's the information that is being relayed by the party opposite to students and their families because, as things have unfolded, at the moment—

Interjections.

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

Minister.

Hon. Liz Sandals: —my message has been that we fully expect that the kids will be back in the classroom because we expect to succeed with getting a collective agreement.

It's very important that what students are doing right now is making sure that whatever work they can do to keep up their courses—if they have assignments and projects that they know will be required for the end of the semester, they should be doing them right now.

In fact I know that the Durham board, the Rainbow board and the Peel board all have Internet course resources on their websites. I would encourage students and parents to make sure the students go to those websites and they do—

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

Final supplementary.

1040

Mr. Jim Wilson: Back to the Acting Premier: The Premier and this education minister have made no progress on any of the three boards where the teachers are currently on strike. OSSTF is in a position to call strikes in four more boards: Halton, Lakehead, Waterloo and Ottawa-Carleton. Thousands more students could be out of the classroom before the end of the school year. Thousands more students could lose their school year entirely, and their graduation.

Deputy Premier, get the Premier to use those mediation skills she so often talks about, get the parties back to the table and get the job done and the students back in the classroom.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I would like to remind the member opposite that I am not at the Durham table. I am not at the Rainbow table. I am not at the Peel table. I am at the central table and that is where we're working very hard. But I'm really not going to take a lesson from the people who said that they were going to fire 22,700 education workers and teachers. They were asked during the last campaign: "Will it mean fewer teachers?" And their leader said, "It does. It will mean fewer teachers in our system."

If that's how they thought they were going to do labour relations, believe me, that wasn't going to get you labour peace. We know that the way to do labour peace—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Liz Sandals: I repeat: We are ready and willing to negotiate at the central table. I remain committed to that. The Premier remains committed to that. Negotiation is the solution.

TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: My question is also to the Deputy Premier. Deputy Premier, 60% of Durham College students come from the Durham region. As you are well aware, Durham grade 12 students have been out of the classroom for four weeks. Their graduation is at risk. Durham College has said that they can't admit students who haven't graduated by August 22.

Deputy Premier, will you promise these students that they will graduate this year?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: As I've explained before, I've met with Colleges Ontario. I've met with COU, the Council of Ontario Universities. We've met with the application centres and—

Mr. Steve Clark: August 22.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Leeds-Grenville.

Hon. Liz Sandals: What we know is that—

Mr. Steve Clark: Durham College, August 22.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Leeds-Grenville, second time.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Rather than heckling, I would have thought you might actually want the information that was helpful to the students and the parents who are out there worrying about this.

We have the commitment from the colleges and universities that we will work together because we know that we need to find solutions to make sure that these students can get into the colleges and the universities. We will certainly work together to make sure—

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

Hon. Liz Sandals: —that there are solutions—

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

Minister, it's about three times now. When I stand, you sit down. You do not finish. Your time is up.

Supplementary?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Back to the Deputy Premier: 22,000 Durham students are out of the classroom right now. Today is their 19th day. Next week is a constituency week and there will be no question period or accountability. No negotiation or bargaining is taking place. We know, and I think you know now, that Bill 122, the two-tier bargaining, is a complete failure.

Minister, we need this dithering to stop. We need leadership. What action do you propose next week that will guarantee that Durham students will be back in the classroom?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Education.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): No, no, no. The minister already has the floor. Minister.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Sorry. First off, let's just follow up on Durham College. Durham College has already an-

nounced—not a ministry direction—to Durham students that Durham will be accepting students based on the mid-term marks that were already submitted. So in fact the issue that has been raised by the member opposite—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Stormont.

Hon. Liz Sandals: In fact, Durham College has already made the decision that they will accept the mid-term marks, and there is absolutely no problem.

One of the things that we have—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Stormont, second time.

Answer?

Hon. Liz Sandals: One of the things we've noticed is parents being uncertain about putting down deposits. I want to encourage parents to get—

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

Final supplementary.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: It's back to the Deputy Premier, I guess through the Minister of Education: With 72,000 secondary students out of the classroom, you continually finger point the problem at someone else.

The two-tiered bargaining system simply is not working. We all know that; all sides know that. It is a failure, and the victims now are the 72,000 students. It is your Bill 122, it is your two-tiered system that is putting the education system in chaos.

Being mystified or perplexed is not enough. We need leadership, not dithering. Will you promise that the 72,000 students will graduate and not be left disadvantaged when they attend college or university this coming fall?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I think we need to go back and think about how we arrived at Bill 122. We negotiated. We consulted. We talked to all four trustee associations. We talked to the directors. We talked to all the unions. We went through this process of drafting and consulting and redrafting and consulting.

Through all that process of working with all the partners who are concerned with collective bargaining in the education sector, this party remained obstinately opposed to having any part in that negotiation, in that discussion, in that consultation. They just kept saying "No, no, no." Well, I'm really not surprised that the member doesn't like the legislation; they all voted against it in the first place.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): New question. The leader—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There already are three people very close.

New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Acting Premier. History is being made in Ontario today. Ontario's independent watchdogs have written to the Premier saying that her Hydro One sell-off is unacceptable and un-

democratic. That's historic. It shows just how arrogant this government has become.

The Auditor General, the Ombudsman, the Financial Accountability Officer, the privacy commissioner, the Integrity Commissioner and the French Language Services Commissioner: All are calling on the provincial government to reverse plans in the budget bill. Will the Liberals listen to Ontario's non-partisan, independent officers and reverse their plan to sell off Hydro One?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I have to say we welcome the dialogue that's happening across this province about our plan to build more infrastructure and broaden the ownership of Hydro One.

Let me be clear: Publicly traded companies have different oversight mechanisms than provincially owned assets, but there are still oversight mechanisms—

Interjections.

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

Finish, please.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I have to say that this was a decision we did not come to lightly. We have very carefully weighed the public interest, and we are convinced that the public interest is met by retaining regulation of the energy industry, but broadening the ownership so we can build badly needed infrastructure across this province—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Kevin O'Leary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins-James Bay, second time.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: That's why we're doing this: to build the infrastructure.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This government is becoming more undemocratic by the day, and Ontario's non-partisan, independent watchdogs are calling the government out.

The Liberals have made it clear they don't respect our independent officers. Well, I can tell you that New Democrats do respect them.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Economic Development.

1050

Ms. Andrea Horwath: These officers have legislated authority to hold governments, provincial agencies and corporations accountable. Why are the Liberals taking a page—

Hon. Brad Duguid: Don't have the courage to build infrastructure.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Economic Development—second time.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: —out of the Stephen Harper playbook by shutting down our independent officers and slamming the door on democracy and accountability?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Just a reminder to the leader of the third party about our commitment—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: That's not very progressive.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins-James Bay is warned.

Carry on.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Our commitment to independent officers of the Legislature is stronger than any government in recent memory.

Let's just review: We actually created the new Financial Accountability Officer. We created the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth. We made the French Language Services Commissioner independent. We expanded the Ombudsman role to include municipalities, school boards and publicly funded universities. The Integrity Commissioner now has strengthened oversight of lobbyist rules and government expenses. There are new, tougher rules for the Information and Privacy Commissioner when it comes to offences.

We are the party that has expanded the number of independent officers and expanded the roles—

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

Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Ontario's watchdogs are independent, and they are non-partisan. Their job is to tell the hard truth, no matter what party is in power. The Liberals are trying to muzzle those watchdogs because they want to keep the Hydro One sell-off and Hydro One going forward secret and under wraps so that the people of this province have no idea what the heck is going on in that corporation.

Ontarians—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. The Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure is warned.

Carry on, please.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Ontarians deserve accountability. Ontarians deserve transparency in their most important utility.

Will the Liberals stop trying to muzzle the Auditor General, the Ombudsman, the Financial Accountability Officer, the privacy commissioner, the Integrity Commissioner and the French Languages Services Commissioner and stop the sell-off of Hydro One today?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I don't think anybody's trying to muzzle anyone. The independent officers of the Legislature have indicated their thoughts and we welcome that.

We are also delighted that Denis Desautels, the former Auditor General of Canada, has now indicated that he will ensure fairness throughout the IPO process. That is a very important role and we are delighted that Denis Desautels has agreed to take on this important responsibility because we agree with the third party. We agree that Ontarians demand that there be oversight and that there be a fair and transparent process.

The member opposite has been talking about the impact on rates. They also know full well that the rates have always been, and will continue to be, set by the Ontario Energy Board. It's—

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

New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Deputy Premier. Not only is this government muzzling the independent officers of the House, they're also muzzling Ontarians. Ontarians have less than five hours to get their names on the list to have their say on Hydro One for only four meager days of hearings here in Toronto.

We've seen tens of thousands of people, of all political stripes, from all walks of life, who want to send the Liberals a message that they don't want to have to pay for the Liberals' sell-off of Hydro One. They don't want to be the ones left paying the price for this wrong decision.

The question is: Why are the Liberals shutting out the people of Ontario who actually own Hydro One? Why are they not allowing hearings to happen around this province? Why are they muzzling Ontarians?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I'm going to disagree with the premise of the question posed by the leader of the third party. In fact, what we are doing is we are enhancing the public's input into our budget process by ensuring that there are six days of committee consideration into the budget by holding hearings at Queen's Park.

The member opposite knows that these six days are three times more than the number of days that have been used by all three political parties who've been in government over the last 25 years in this province when it comes to the consideration of the budget. In fact, I remind the member opposite that when her party was in government, in two out of four budgets they tabled, they only allowed one day each for budget consideration, and for the last two budgets, in 1993 and 1994, they allowed for zero days of budget consideration when they were discussing things like the social contract—

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

Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier knows that there are people from London, from Etobicoke, from Peel, from Sudbury, from Thunder Bay, from Oakville, from Barrie, from Cambridge and from communities across this province who don't want to pay the price for the Hydro One sell-off. They can't afford higher hydro bills. Every Liberal MPP knows this because they've been getting those emails—tens of thousands of people.

Are Liberal backbenchers going to go back home to their constituencies next week, to their ridings, and tell their constituents why it is that they are going to be the ones who are going to pay the price for this Hydro sell-off, and yet they have no interest whatsoever in hearing their opinion or what they have to say?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I can tell you what our constituents are talking about. Our constituents are talking about the need for public infrastructure in our communities. What our constituents want is to put an end to gridlock and congestion on our highways so that they can get to work in an expedient way and home in a timely fashion

so they can spend time with their families. The only thing that the NDP is trying to do is block that kind of progress, because we need to pass this budget in order to have programs that will help to fund our infrastructure, to reduce our auto rates and, of course, to ensure that we have retirement income security through a new pension plan.

What the NDP is suggesting through the leader of the third party is nothing but stalling tactics. They do not want progress—that will help ease the lives of Ontarians—by ensuring that this budget does not pass.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Families and businesses cannot afford to pay the price for the Premier's wrong-headed sell-off of Hydro One. But Ontarians have less than five hours to get their names on the list to be heard at the public hearings. They can call 416-325-3526 or they can email kkoch@ola.org to get on the list and tell the Liberals what they think of Hydro One. The number again: 416-325-3526 or kkoch@ola.org. The Premier is trying to shut people down, Speaker. She's hunkering down here in Toronto—

Interjections.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: She's hunkering down here in Toronto, making it as difficult as she possibly can for the people outside of Toronto to be heard in this process.

When will the Premier, when will the Liberal government, start listening to the people of this province, the people across Ontario, and stop this wrong-headed sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, we are listening to Ontarians, and Ontarians are telling us every single day—and not only us, but all members of this Legislature—that they want us to invest in our infrastructure. They want us to build roads and bridges in our communities. They want us to make sure that we have good public transit and transportation. There is no more time for inaction when it comes to building 21st-century infrastructure in the province of Ontario.

The only thing the NDP is interested in, the only thing the NDP wants to do is block this budget so those investments are not made in our communities. That is unacceptable, Speaker. We want this budget passed so that we not only build critical infrastructure in our communities across the province but also reduce our auto premium rates and also ensure retirement income security for Ontarians.

NURSES

Mr. Victor Fedeli: My question is for the Deputy Premier. As we begin to celebrate Nursing Week in Ontario, there are more than 1,000 nurses who are not celebrating. You are firing nurses at hospitals right across the province. We all, here in this House, have examples. In my hometown of North Bay, you have fired 94 full-time

health care workers, including 54 RPNs, and you fired 34 part-time workers, including 14 RPNs.

Tomorrow I'm at our hospital's Take Your MPP to Work event. Deputy, what should I tell the remaining nurses who fear you'll be firing them next?

1100

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: One of the things you can tell them is that there are 24,000 more nurses working in this province than were working here 10 years ago. In fact, you can also tell them that more than 3,500 nurses were added in 2013 and a similar number in 2014.

You can tell them that we've worked hard to increase the proportion of nurses working full-time in the past decade. We've increased the percentage of nurses in this province working full time by 14%. You can tell them that we've had more than 18,000 new nursing graduates go through our nursing graduate guarantee, getting them that first experience in the workplace. You can tell them about the late career nursing initiative; more than 20,000 experienced nurses have been provided with the opportunity to benefit from that program and work in less physically demanding circumstances in hospital and other environments.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Deputy, nobody believes any of the numbers you ever tell us. You're the same people who told us the gas plant cancellation would cost \$40 million—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Someone's edgy. I'm standing.

Please finish.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you.

These are the same people who said the gas plant scandal would cost \$40 million when it's over \$1 billion. You say you're hiring nurses—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Transportation.

Mr. Victor Fedeli:—but you're actually firing nurses. In New Liskeard, 18,000 hours of nursing care were cut. In Timmins, 40 front-line health care workers were fired. In the Soo—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Transportation, second time.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): No, you were too busy heckling to hear me say it the first time.

Please finish.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: In the Soo, 12,500 hours of nursing care are gone. All beds in Penetanguishene hospital are closed. Quinte lost 58 RNs. Cuts in Scarborough, Petrolia, Stratford, Seaforth, Clinton—the list goes on.

Deputy, why do you continue to say one thing when the exact opposite is the truth?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I find it unbelievable that the member opposite is speaking this way because the way

that they would have chosen to get to balance was by firing thousands of health care workers and thousands of nurses across this province. I find it unbelievable to hear this coming from a party that referred to our nurses as obsolete hula hoops.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville is warned.

Finish, please.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: That party referred to our professional nurses around this province as obsolete hula hoops.

We know that your plan to get back to balance was to cut 100,000 jobs. We know many of those jobs would have come from our nurses.

In fact, yesterday I had the privilege of announcing changes to home and community care across this province, which includes substantial new investments in nurses and nursing hours to benefit people living in the home and community environment.

TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Hundreds of teachers are rallied outside—actually, thousands and thousands of teachers are rallied outside—to tell the government to stop sitting on the sidelines of negotiations. Tens of thousands of students are out of class and wondering if the school year is lost. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been cut from our already-underfunded education system. Our schools have been thrown into chaos. Contrary to Liberal spin, Ontarians know that the government holds ultimate responsibility over education in this province.

Why is this Liberal government forcing students and families to pay the price for their reckless cuts and their neglect on the education file?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm not sure what school system you're talking about, but the one I want to talk about is the one where we've made major investments in our school system.

They keep saying that we cut special education. I'd like to tell you something about special education funding, Speaker. Let's have a little bit of actual information. We have increased special education spending by \$1.1 billion, up to \$2.72 billion. That is a 68% increase in special education spending. Do you know how much that is in comparison to the cost of living? That's about triple the increase in the cost of living, Speaker. So I'm not going to take any lessons from these people, who actually campaigned—campaigned—

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

Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Instead of lighting a fire under negotiations, the Premier and her government are playing the blame game—blame the teachers, blame the school boards—but never admitting their government is failing families across this province. The Minister of Education,

this minister, is sitting on the sidelines and doing nothing while the process is being circumvented.

Will the Deputy Premier and her government stop sitting on the sidelines and get up and start making sure that students get back into the classroom, where they belong?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I really would like to know exactly what it is she's proposing. However, I can say two things.

Number one, we are at the central table, willing to negotiate with any of our partners who would like to be there.

But what I would also like to talk about, because she keeps saying we've got the education system in chaos—I talked to you about the special education funding. One of the things we've been able to do with that special education funding, Speaker, is actually look at what our special education students are able to achieve. When we use the EQAO results to track our special education students, we find that the grade 3 writing scores for our grade 3 special education students have gone up 39%. What that tells me is that—

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

New question.

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

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

I'm going to warn the minister: It has been four times now where I stand and you continue. You're warned.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Throw her out.

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

YOUTH SERVICES

SERVICES À LA JEUNESSE

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Ma question est pour la ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse.

May 14 marks Children and Youth in Care Day, an opportunity to recognize the resilience and strength demonstrated by young people in the care of the province. As someone who began her career as a social worker working at the children's aid society, I understand that the most important action we can take for children, and especially youth in the care of the province, is to give them a strong foundation for a bright future.

Nous savons que la plus importante action que nous pouvons prendre pour les enfants, et spécialement les jeunes qui sont pris en charge par la province, est de leur donner une base solide pour un avenir meilleur.

In order to help mark this special day, can the government inform this House on ways in which it is continuing to help youth who have been in care reach their full potential?

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I want to acknowledge the MPP from Ottawa–Orléans for her question and the work she has done in child welfare. Thank you so much.

I just want to add, Speaker, that a number of us this morning were at a celebration of Children and Youth in Care Day with our provincial advocate and the foundation of the children's aid societies. I was there with both my critics, and MPP Wong as well, who actually put forth the motion, the private member's business, to create Children and Youth in Care Day.

We know that by supporting youth leaving the care of the province during their late teens and their twenties, we're focusing on their education and well-being. We have a lot of new programs and services to help youth transitioning into adulthood, and we've increased the minimum financial support for these youth to \$850 a month.

We know there's more to do, but we—

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

1110

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: J'aimerais remercier la ministre pour sa réponse.

I'm glad to hear that our government is taking the voices of youth and children in care into account and helping them transition into adulthood. The foundation of success is education, and it is therefore crucial to make sure youth leaving care can access the programs and training they need.

Could the government highlight some of the ways it is helping youth leaving care get the education they need to lead successful adult lives?

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Our government is focusing on ensuring that youth transitioning from care get a great opportunity for education and success. We provide \$2,000 a semester to youth formerly in care who are enrolled in OSAP-eligible post-secondary training programs. We also cover up to 50% of tuition for more young people, thanks to expanded grant eligibility, and we partner with 30 post-secondary educational institutions to cover full tuition for crown wards in Ontario and youth formerly in care.

We know that education is key to a prosperous future for all young people, so we'll continue to make education services and programs accessible for all youth, particularly the youth who are leaving our care.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My question is to the Attorney General. Do the justices of the peace you appoint have a code of conduct they are expected to follow?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Yes, indeed, the justices of peace, the judges, have a code of conduct to follow, and they are held to the highest manner of discipline that the position calls for.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I would suggest to you it needs updating.

Your Premier posted on Twitter: "Whether or not it's caught on film, sexual harassment at work is no joke." We agree.

Hydro One fired Shawn Simoes less than a day after he made sexual comments to Shauna Hunt, so why did it take you five years, two separate convictions and multiple women having to come forward on sexual harassment for you to fire Errol Massiah as a justice of the peace?

Interjections.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): No, I'm getting quiet.

Attorney General.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: As I said, Mr. Speaker, the justices of the peace are held to a very important level of discipline—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin-Caledon.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: If people have a concern about what they're doing, they should put in a complaint against them.

There is a committee that is very independent from the government that reviews the situation and then brings about recommendations for the action that we should be taking.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin-Caledon, second time.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: It's very important that the public knows that they can trust the process, that the review of the discipline of the situation is—

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

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Today, legal experts released an opinion that says that Liberal plans to sell off Hydro One will end public control of the company. Those experts say the budget bill makes it clear the government's "true intent is to relinquish control and stewardship of the electricity market. The provision for the purported retention of 40% public ownership is essentially a marketing ploy for legislative reforms that will certainly abandon public control of Hydro One."

Does the Deputy Premier think that anyone believes her marketing ploy?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to talk about some of the oversight mechanisms that will be in place when Hydro One becomes a publicly traded company.

We are absolutely committed to doing what is in the public interest, and when it comes to hydro rates, the Ontario Energy Board will continue, as it does now, in the future to set those rates as it does for other energy companies.

We are committed to selling no more than 60% of the company, and we are ensuring that major decisions made by Hydro One will require a two-thirds vote, giving us de facto control of the company. We will have the ability to fire the whole board of directors, and we will nominate 40% of the board of directors. So we are finding that right balance, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: The Liberals' marketing ploy on the Hydro One sell-off is all based on keeping a minority 40% stake. But the experts are clear: There is nothing to prevent private investors from outvoting the government. They say, "Even if a 40% stake is preserved, effective control can shift to the private sector." Those same experts confirm that Ontario could end up with well under 10% in public hands. The government is trying to sell Hydro One to the bankers, and they're trying to sell Ontarians a pig in a poke.

Will the government stop the sell-off today?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, we are committing to build the infrastructure that this province so badly needs. The party opposite might think that there's some other pot of money under the rainbow we can build the infrastructure with, but I tell you, Speaker, on this side we know that infrastructure costs money, as did the NDP during the last election.

We are looking carefully at the assets we already have that we can put to better use by building the assets of infrastructure. We're committed to improving the infrastructure in the province. We will use the resources of the people of Ontario, whether it's buildings that we don't need to own, whether it's land we don't need to own or whether it's a share in Hydro One. We're putting our assets to work on the priorities of the people of this province.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Mr. Yvan Baker: My question is for the Minister of Labour. Earlier this week, there was a front-page story in the Toronto Star about the rise of temporary work in the GTA and what that means for today's economy. It's clear from that and other signals that our economy has evolved significantly over the last number of years. It's clear that workplaces are having to adapt to this, and employees are having to adapt to this new economy as well.

Minister, could you share with us what our government is doing to ensure workplace laws keep up with this evolving economy?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you to the honourable member for that excellent question. The government recognizes that Ontario's labour relations and employment standards laws should keep up with the changing economy. In fact, in the mandate letter I received from the Premier last year, the Premier asked that I undertake a review of Ontario's changing workplaces with a view to ensuring that our labour laws and our employment standards do indeed meet the needs of our modern economy. In that regard, we've appointed two excellent special advisers, labour lawyer Michael Mitchell and former

justice John C. Murray, both of whom have excellent reputations and some expertise in labour law.

The advisers will conduct broad consultations across the province with respect to the Labour Relations Act and the Employment Standards Act. They're going to consider the findings from these consultations when they make the final recommendations to me.

Speaker, I look forward to sharing more in the supplementary about the process as it unfolds.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Yvan Baker: Minister, you mentioned that Justice Murray and Mr. Mitchell will be conducting broad consultations across the province. I know you announced the appointment of the advisers in February, but I'm sure there are many members of the public who are eager to know when and how they can provide input. Workers and employers alike in almost every corner of this province have expressed interest in sharing their thoughts, but as MPPs, we have not yet been able to direct them as to how they can share their perspective.

Minister, could you please give the members of this House and the public an idea of when they can expect those consultations to get under way?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you again to the member. This is something that I would hope would be of interest to all members of this House, and I'm asking that they advise their constituents of the information that I'm about to give. We're certainly trying to get it out through social media and on the websites that the Ministry of Labour has. I'm very pleased to announce that the special advisers will be kicking off their public consultations right here in Toronto on June 16. From Toronto, they'll travel to Ottawa, to Mississauga, to Guelph, to Windsor, London, Sudbury, Hamilton and Thunder Bay, and then they'll be returning in the summer to Toronto.

1120

Members should also note that if groups or individuals, for some reason, cannot make it to a hearing near them to give oral testimony, they can offer written submissions via email to the ministry. Information is available on the ministry's website, along with a guide to the consultations. It's going to outline the process for the submissions to all the interested parties. The Changing Workplaces Review will help ensure that our labour relations laws keep up with the modern economy.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Norm Miller: My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, your government is allowing the OPP helicopter base in Sudbury to be shut down. This helicopter has been providing vital search and rescue services for the north, First Nations and the northern part of Parry Sound district since 1991. Sudbury enjoys good weather for flying most of the year, while the Orillia base is in the snowbelt and experiences lake-effect weather conditions.

Minister, why are you lowering the capabilities at the OPP to support front-line officers and provide search-and-rescue operations in the north?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I thank the member opposite for asking this important question. As the member may recall, I have spoken on this issue before in the House when a question was asked by the member from Sudbury, who I am working very closely with on this very important issue.

I want to start by saying that I'm sure the member opposite knows very well that when it comes to decisions that are operational in nature, like a decision made by the OPP as to where to locate their various assets—that's an operational decision. That's a decision that is made by the OPP. That's a decision that is, of course, taken at the behest of the commissioner of the OPP. There's little, if any, influence that is exerted by the government. We need to be mindful of that.

Our number one priority is the safety and security of every Ontarian, which is extremely important. We need to make sure that all the responsibilities and the mandate that is laid out in the Police Services Act is available, and I'll add more in—

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

Mr. Norm Miller: Minister, you're the minister responsible for the OPP.

Just this past Sunday, the Orillia-based helicopter was called to find two lost hikers in Sudbury. When the emergency call came in, they couldn't fly out because of poor weather. Luckily, the Sudbury-based helicopter that was on duty in the north was able to return before dark to locate the hikers. This case demonstrates how safety standards in the north will be negatively affected by the closure of the Sudbury base.

Minister, will you commit to doing whatever you can to ensure an OPP helicopter remains based in the north?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Again, I thank the member opposite, and I want to restate that our number one priority is the safety and security of every Ontarian. Given that the question has been raised about this locally, I have asked my Deputy Minister of Community Safety for more information about this decision. It is important to have the necessary information about how Sudbury and the north are served by aircraft in search-and-rescue operations and how this decision may impact service across the north.

The OPP are mandated to provide certain police services across the province, including aviation support. Of course, they have a responsibility to communicate their decisions effectively so that all communities in Ontario get the information they need to feel safe.

I also want to add that the OPP works very closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and continues to use ministry aircraft based in Dryden, Thunder Bay, Timmins, Muskoka and Sudbury. I will continue to work closely with the members on this issue.

NURSES

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée.

Yesterday we learned that more nurses are losing their jobs. This time, it's at CHEO, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. The government promised that health care would not shoulder the brunt of their austerity agenda. Clearly, though, it's our front-line nurses who are taking the biggest hit.

Losing a nurse is never good, but losing 27 pediatric nursing positions at CHEO, which cares for some of the sickest children in our province, is just plain wrong. Does this government austerity agenda know no bounds?

How does the minister feel to be balancing the province's budget on the backs of some of the sickest children in this province?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Perhaps, unlike the member opposite, I trust the professionals who work in our hospitals, and I trust the professionals who work in our LHINs, who make those difficult decisions, so that they can ensure that the highest quality of care is provided to Ontarians wherever they may live, whatever age they might be.

I think she understands that we're also in an important transitional period, because when that announcement was being made yesterday, I was making an announcement which would result in a dramatic increase in the number of nurses working in the home and community sector. As we're providing care for individuals and their families closer to home, in their communities, where they want to see that care, where they can be surrounded by their loved ones, where evidence shows that we can care for them effectively—as that transition takes place, we do need to adjust, from time to time, in terms of the funding levels and how we deploy our nurses and other health professionals around the province.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Well, 27 full-time equivalent pediatric nursing positions are being cut at CHEO.

Since January 2015, ONA has told us that over 400 full-time-equivalent nursing positions have been cut—the equivalent of close to 800,000 hours of quality RN care cut.

Our most vulnerable deserve more nursing hours, not less. The scientific evidence is clear for everybody to see: Every nurse being cut out of our hospitals puts patient care and patients' lives at risk.

Speaker, this government chose a very, very sad way to ring in Nursing Week, by cutting pediatric nurses at CHEO.

My question is simple: How many more nursing positions will be cut from our Ontario hospitals?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: The member opposite is a health care professional, as I am. She understands that when a position in one part of the hospital goes away and emerges in another program in another part of the hospital, that actually results, in the near term, in a reduction in one position and that position being added elsewhere in the hospital.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: It's the net that matters.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: It's that net figure that matters most.

I was at CHEO recently, making an announcement for a brand new pediatric chronic pain clinic at that hospital that will result in a significant number of new positions.

Similarly, at the Ottawa Hospital right now, there are active positions for 50 new nurses—50 RNs—that need to be employed at Ottawa Hospital.

So we are making those investments. There is an ebb and flow.

I trust our health care professionals in our hospitals, in our LHINs around this province and in Ottawa to make the right decisions for our patients.

POLICE SERVICES

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Ma question s'adresse au ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels.

This week, we are celebrating Police Week in Ontario, an opportunity to honour and recognize the bravery and sacrifice of the men and women from across our province whose life-saving actions keep us safe.

In my community of Burlington, we are fortunate to be ably served by the women and men of the Halton Regional Police Service, whose civilian and sworn officers do an outstanding job in each of Halton's communities.

My late husband was a police officer who served 24 years, first with the Toronto Police Service and then the Ontario Provincial Police, in seven communities across our province. As a result, I have a special appreciation of the important role that police officers play on the front lines every day. Whether they are delivering safety and awareness programs in our schools, attending the scene of a collision, investigating criminal activities or working to prevent serious crime, police officers play a critical role in keeping Ontarians safe.

Mr. Speaker, through you, can the minister please inform the Legislature what we are doing this week to honour the work of Ontario's police officers?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I want to thank the member from Burlington for her question and thank her for her passion for public and community safety. As she mentioned, she's part of a police family, as I am. My grandfather was a police officer. I share her passion, and I thank her for her advocacy on behalf of community and public safety.

Speaker, each and every day, we are thankful for the hard work and dedication Ontario's police officers show in keeping our communities safe, but this week we are especially thankful to the men and women of our police services, because it is Police Week in Ontario.

Tomorrow is Peace Officers Memorial Day, which is recognized across the world.

It's my privilege to recognize and thank our police officers, along with all the members of the Legislature, for protecting us from harm.

The theme of this year's Police Week is "Discover Policing." Police services across the province have been promoting the profession of policing to the communities they serve and encouraging the public to learn more

about their jobs. Our government is proud of the work they do and the partnership we have with our police officers.

1130

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you, Minister, for your response. Clearly, our police community is a passion we both share. I appreciate your commitment to honouring the service of the police officers who work hard to keep our communities safe.

Since 2003, Ontario's crime rate has dropped by 36% and Ontario's violent crime rate has dropped by 27%. In fact, Ontario has had the lowest crime rate of any province and territory every year since 2004. We owe a great deal of this progress to our police services.

As we honour them and as we honour their work during Police Week, it is important to reflect on the work that the government can do to help make Ontario even safer. Moving forward, it is important that we work together to develop solutions that will help to address the root causes of crime and other social issues.

Mr. Speaker, through you, can the minister please explain how he plans to build even safer communities across Ontario?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: As we dedicate this week to honouring the commitment of our police forces to keep us safe, it is important that we look at ways in which we are working to build even stronger communities across the province.

We have worked hard to build safer communities. Now we must work smarter to make our communities even safer. Our Strategy for a Safer Ontario is focused on finding smarter and more effective ways to build safer communities across our great province. We are forming collaborative partnerships that include police and other key stakeholders, such as education and mental health and addiction specialists. This is about bringing more people to the table to address the issues that confront our communities at their root cause. This will ultimately help make our communities safer, and our police officers safer as well. Speaker, collaboration and partnership is key in order for us to make decisions around our community safety in a smarter way.

I also want to encourage people, as we celebrate the May Two-Four weekend, to be safe and drive safely as well.

PESTICIDES

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Minister, I invite you to join me to acknowledge local success. Specifically, the 2014 Provincial Apiarist Annual Report produced by your government says, "Protective measures brought in by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency contributed to a 70% decline of in season bee mortality during the 2014 corn and soybean planting season."

Considering the success of actions taken by Ontario farmers and Ontario industry, why won't you listen to

reports coming from both the Ontario and federal governments, and why are you so intent to rush through regulations that will devastate Ontario farmers?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: As the member may know, we had over a 34% loss in bees this year.

The US Department of Agriculture just reported record losses in the United States of 42%—

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Let's talk about Ontario.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I just said Ontario. That's where I started. So maybe just listen to the answer.

The second thing: We know we've got very significant problems with wild pollinators, for which we do not have numbers yet. We know that this is water-soluble, breaks down and becomes much more toxic, and we're now picking it up in our river streams. Quebec just found it above safe levels in all 20 rivers they studied.

We're applying a precautionary principle, because the science is showing very grave dangers to species, to the integrity of our ecology and to our water invertebrates. We're taking this very seriously and monitoring the science very carefully.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Minister, may I remind you that just last week at a conference you spoke at, you said—and I paraphrase—that politicians go off the rails when they don't focus on science. In that spirit, I'd like to share with you that the current provincial apiarist report from your government noted that the Ontario honeybee sector is growing and actually ended the 2014 season with a 15% increase in the number of colonies.

Considering these significant numbers show that the honeybee population is growing in Ontario, what is really behind your push to destabilize the \$9-billion Ontario grain sector?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I've been going out on Fridays to visit soy and grain farmers. I was actually in Huron county, Perth county and Wellington county recently. It has been quite interesting, as I've met a number of grain farmers who share the government's concern. These were people, actually, who wrote me letters, because they were quite upset about it, because they'd gotten a lot of disinformation.

Farmers are going to continue to use neonics on a limited basis. If they have the pests, they will be able to use it. We're working very closely with our friends in agriculture to put in integrated pest management. We're not banning it, and quite far from damage.

We also know that the studies coming out right now from the EPA show no yield benefits for soy, so we're also reviewing the efficacy of both of these on corn and soy, while they're effective on others. There will be PMR studies coming out from the federal government in the very near future—

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

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. In 2006, the government approved the

four-laning of Highway 3 from Windsor to Leamington, and promised that the entire project would be completed by this year. The government got most of this project done, but the last phase, from Essex to Leamington, is still incomplete.

In 2013, we were told that shovels would be in the ground by 2018, but late last year, we found that the government is rebuilding this section of Highway 3 without the four-laning.

Minister, does this mean that the government intends on ripping up the road, repaving it and then ripping it up again in 2018 for the four-laning, or has the government decided to postpone the highway widening for another generation?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I thank the member from Essex for his question. He alluded to this in his question, but of course he would know that to date our government has invested nearly \$50 million to widen the 13 kilometres of the highway from the city of Windsor to the town of Essex. He would also know that the work to widen the remaining two-lane section of Highway 3 between Leamington and Windsor is listed as part of our southern highways program under planning for the future.

What I certainly find remarkable when I hear questions like this coming from members of the NDP caucus is that day after day in this chamber, week after week, for as long as I've served as a member of Parliament representing Vaughan, that member and that party have consistently voted against every single budget measure that will help us invest in transportation infrastructure. They fought us every step of the way. It's a shame that they don't want to put our money where their mouths are.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My predecessor, as the member for Essex, the late Bruce Crozier, called the four-laning of Highway 3 one of his greatest accomplishments. It was one of his many accomplishments; I respected him a lot. He knew that this highway was a vital link for our economy, especially the expanding greenhouse industry, and for the safety of drivers.

When he died in 2011, the highway was aptly named Bruce Crozier's Way. Will this government finish what Bruce started and commit to the four-laning of Bruce Crozier's Way from Essex to Leamington in the next update of the government's five-year southern highways program?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I didn't get a chance to say in my initial answer that in 2014-15 this government, under the leadership of Premier Kathleen Wynne, is investing almost \$2.5 billion to expand and repair Ontario's highways, roads and bridges.

But again, what's remarkable is that we are dedicating this \$2.5 billion to support highways, roads and bridges across the province of Ontario, including in southwestern Ontario, as part of our budget, both budget 2014 and budget 2015.

The people living in Essex need to know, as I know they do, that that member in 2014—and again in 2015, I assume, I presume, given the tenor of the debate that you've brought forward so far, will also reject this budget.

Interjection: Shame.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: It's a shame.

Thanks very much.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock on a point of order.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'd like to introduce my guests this morning: Darin Meek, Kathleen Meek and Taylor Meek from Prince Edward Island, brought to Queen's Park by their cousin, Amanda Meek, who was formerly a Queen's Park aide. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'd also like to welcome Mark Shirdown, Tyler Thompson and Quinton Herbul. They've travelled from the Huron-Perth area to Queen's Park for the youth civics day.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I ask all members of this House to join me in welcoming Shalini Inham and Martin Inham, parents of the OLIP intern in my office, Justin Khorana-Medeiros. Please welcome them to the House.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd just like to add to my colleague from Kawartha Lakes: Amanda Meek and her family are here to raise funds for the Walk So Kids Can Talk fundraiser, in memory of her cousin Chalyce. Best of luck.

DEFERRED VOTES

BUILDING ONTARIO UP ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR FAVORISER L'ESSOR DE L'ONTARIO (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1140 to 1145.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On April 30, 2015, Mr. Sousa moved second reading of Bill 91. All those in favour of the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McGarry, Kathryn
Anderson, Granville	Fraser, John	McMahon, Eleanor
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	McMeekin, Ted
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoggarth, Ann	Meilleur, Madeleine
Ballard, Chris	Hoskins, Eric	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Mitzie	Murray, Glen R.
Chan, Michael	Jaczek, Helena	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Colle, Mike	Kiwala, Sophie	Naqvi, Yasir
Coteau, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Potts, Arthur
Crack, Grant	Lalonde, Marie-France	Qaadri, Shafiq

Damerla, Dipika
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad

Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill

Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Sergio, Mario
Takhar, Harinder S.
Vernile, Daiene
Wong, Soo
Zimmer, David

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

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Bisson, Gilles
Clark, Steve
Dunlop, Garfield
Fedeli, Victor
Fife, Catherine
Forster, Cindy
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne
Gélinas, France
Gretzky, Lisa

Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Michael
Hatfield, Percy
Horwath, Andrea
Hudak, Tim
Jones, Sylvia
MacLaren, Jack
Mantha, Michael
Martow, Gila
McDonnell, Jim
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul
Munro, Julia
Natyshak, Taras

Nicholls, Rick
Pettapiece, Randy
Sattler, Peggy
Scott, Laurie
Singh, Jagmeet
Smith, Todd
Tabuns, Peter
Taylor, Monique
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vanthof, John
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Yakubski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 51; the nays are 41.

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

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 13, 2015, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

Before we recess, I would like to offer to all of the members a safe and restful break, but I know that all of you do have other work in your riding and that continues day to day. I appreciate the work that you do.

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

The House recessed from 1149 to 1300.

ESTIMATES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I have a message from the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, the Lieutenant Governor, signed by her own hand.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the year ending March 31, 2016, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly. Toronto, May 13, 2015. Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Michael Coteau: Joining me in the Legislature today is the Minister of Culture from the province of Nova Scotia, Minister Tony Ince. Nancy Radcliffe is with him; she works with him. Also, Peter Flegel; he's from the Michaëlle Jean Foundation.

Just behind them, I have another special guest: Ylana Harel, a personal friend of mine. Welcome to the Legislature.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I think many are still arriving, but I really want to send a warm welcome to everyone who is here today for Youth in Care Day. That includes staff from the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, from YouthCAN and from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. Youth and staff from children's aid societies from across the province are here at Queen's Park to learn about civics, Speaker.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I would just like to introduce also in the Speaker's gallery Velma Morgan, who is with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport but is a teacher on leave from a school in my riding, Rawlinson public school. Welcome, Velma.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: It's my pleasure to speak to Endangered Species Day, which takes place tomorrow, May 15. It is a day that we can celebrate the vast wildlife that we have in our province. It is also a day to take note of the serious problems facing over 217 species at risk here in Ontario.

When the Endangered Species Act took effect in 2008, the Blanding's turtle was added to the list. In fact, the UN has designated the Blanding's turtle as a globally endangered animal.

Just last month, the Ontario Court of Appeal ruled that the nine industrial wind turbine projects planned in Prince Edward county would cause "serious and irreversible harm" to the Blanding's turtle. It was gratifying to see someone finally standing up to this Liberal government.

An article in the Globe and Mail from April 21 of this year revealed that three years ago, believe it or not, the Minister of Natural Resources granted this particular wind farm in Prince Edward-Hastings county an "overall benefit permit" which would allow the company to "kill, harm, harass and destroy" habitat for those species because it intended to make up for the harm.

Speaker, the green energy scheme has failed Ontarians. I can only say, in respect of tomorrow, that we can never put the needs of industrial wind turbine companies before our habitat, endangered species or Ontarians. Endangered Species Day and the Blanding's turtle should remind us of that each and every day, all year.

CHILDHOOD APRAXIA OF SPEECH

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I'm very pleased to rise today, May 14, to mark Apraxia Awareness Day. I want to bring awareness to the community about this speech problem in children, because it is still little known, very misunderstood, and has a huge impact on kids and families.

Childhood apraxia of speech, CAS, is a speech disorder that seriously interferes with a child's ability to develop clear speech. CAS makes it difficult or impossible for an affected child to plan the movements of the lips, tongue, jaw etc. that are needed for speech. Children with CAS generally have a good understanding of language and they know what they want to say, but have difficulty learning or carrying out the complex movements that underlie speech.

Apraxia is one of the most severe of childhood speech and communications disorders. Speech and communication are critical skills for young children to develop. We need to find ways of supporting children with apraxia and their families because speech therapy, the only proven treatment for apraxia, is quite costly and will extend over many years for these children. These children must work and struggle so very hard just to learn a skill—speaking—that comes effortlessly to other children.

I want to acknowledge my constituent Kathryn Ruppert-Dazai for her tireless efforts to improve the lives of Ontario's children struggling with apraxia. Lastly, I want to let Rowan and other children suffering from apraxia know that we care and we support you through your difficult journey.

Learn more about apraxia at apraxia-kids.org.

ISMAILI COMMUNITY

COMMUNAUTÉ ISMAÉLIENNE

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: Es salaam aleikom and Ya Ali Madad. I offer you these greetings, first of all, not only on behalf of the Premier and indeed all caucus members of our government, but all members of provincial Parliament, to the Ismaili community of Canada.

Unfortunately, we learned the tragic news that there was a major attack affecting dozens and dozens of individuals who were murdered in cold blood in Karachi, Pakistan. I have just gotten off the phone with Mr. Mohamed Dhanani, who is the CEO of the Aga Khan council of Canada, to express, on our collective behalf, our shock, our outrage, but perhaps more importantly, our sympathy and our prayers and our pledge to stand firm with the Ismaili community.

I have to say that I have personally benefited very recently from attending a lecture series on pluralism and harmony and global inclusiveness which was being held at the jewel of the crown in Don Valley East, this architectural masterpiece of the Aga Khan Museum and centre. It is deeply tragic and ironic and unsettling that while the lectures themselves are about trying to bring out the very best in us, we still have to confront these types of issues.

Mes pensées et mes prières vont aux familles et aux amis des personnes qui ont péri.

LEGISLATIVE PAGE PROGRAM

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I wanted to do something a little different today. I want to mention a few words

about the page program here at Queen's Park. I think it's one thing we really do right here at Queen's Park. We run a phenomenal page program bringing these young men and women in grades 7 and 8 here to become part of the legislative process in our great province.

I'm very honoured: In 2012, my granddaughter Rachel came and she fell in love with the page program. She still talks about it to this day. I'm really pleased that for the last five weeks I've had my granddaughter Madison with us. She's a jewel in our family. We love her to death and she's done a phenomenal job.

These young men and women are potentially community leaders of tomorrow. Many of them, I know, right in the building, get involved in political parties, political activism, because at the age of 14 you can get a membership in a political party. I hope it's the Tory party for you folks.

I also want to thank the legislative staff here, because there's a beautiful picture downstairs on the wall of the page program from about 1907 or 1908. I've got a copy of it right here, and I asked the staff here to take a picture, very similar, with this year's page program. I'm going to sneak a quick picture of it to everyone. There's the, like, 1905, and this is the 2015 one. It's available to the pages as well.

I just think it's a wonderful program. I'm so pleased you're here and I'm so proud to have my granddaughter here. I think it's a real asset to the province of Ontario that we have the page program.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Miss Monique Taylor: This is National Nursing Week, a week when we honour and celebrate the incredible work done by our nurses. The date was chosen by no accident for this week. It is built around the birthday of Florence Nightingale, a remarkable woman famous for her services during the Crimean War, but renowned for her social activism and research into the social determinants of health. I had intended to use my time to speak about the nurses and the job they do, but the outcry I have heard from the people of Hamilton Mountain about this government's plan to sell Hydro One demands that I bring their message to this House.

1310

Their message is very clear: Do not sell this vital public asset. They know that Hydro One provides income that helps pay for health care. They know that more privatization in our energy sector means even higher energy bills and, for many, less food on the table. They know who owns Hydro One: the people of Ontario. They know they have never been asked if they want to sell it. Considering this deep concern for social welfare, I feel confident that Florence Nightingale, were she here today, would agree. Do not sell Hydro One.

ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I'm rising today to recognize a tremendous milestone in Davenport. On April 18, St.

Mary of the Angels Catholic School celebrated their centennial anniversary. With Thomas Cardinal Collins on hand, a fantastic celebration was hosted at St. Mary of the Angels Church to commemorate this tremendous milestone. At the event, St. Mary's presented a wonderful video of the school's history throughout the years and also encouraged all attendees to contribute to their time capsule.

St. Mary's of the Angels is a wonderful school located just south of Davenport Road on Dufferin Street. St. Mary of the Angels was constructed for the Davenport community in 1915. Since then, St. Mary of the Angels has been at the forefront of guiding and educating Davenport's young people. This makes St. Mary of the Angels one of the oldest Catholic schools in the entire city of Toronto.

Reflective of my riding of Davenport, students at St. Mary of the Angels are from diverse ethnocultural background. In fact, students from St. Mary's come from around the world; 14% of students were born outside of Canada, and over 63% speak a language other than English at home.

I am so proud to represent this fantastic school here at Queen's Park. I would like to recognize all the past and present principals, teachers and staff for their commitment to students and education. In particular, I would like to thank principal Manuela Sequeira for her leadership in our community.

CAILYN PERRY

Mr. Bill Walker: I'm pleased to rise today to recognize a very impressive, young and very bright constituent from my riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. Cailyn Perry, whom you've all gotten to know while she has served so dutifully as a legislative page in the assembly, received recognition on May 2 during the Grey and Simcoe Foresters Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps 117th Annual Review in Owen Sound. Although I won't have enough time to recognize all of Cailyn's accomplishments, as there are so many, I'd like to mention a few of them.

Cailyn has been with the Owen Sound junior naturalists since she was seven years old and was twice awarded with Camp Kawartha environmental leadership. As a Girl Guide, Cailyn achieved all badges possible in Sparks, Brownies and Guides and received the Lady Baden-Powell award. No doubt there will be more awards for young Cailyn when she returns to Pathfinders next year.

Cailyn is also a founding member of the first corps Navy League Cadet Corps in Owen Sound and earned awards in best dressed, best department, perfect attendance for all four years, Esprit-de-Corp and overall top cadet. She also achieved top rank of Chief Petty Officer First Class and Company Coxswain. Furthermore, Cailyn holds Lance Corporal rank with the Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps and was recognized as Top First-Year Cadet.

Academically, Cailyn is top-notch, too, and makes honour roll every year. She was speech finalist in grades 4 to 6 and semi-finalist in grade 6 regionals. In grade 7, she achieved gold at both school and Bluewater regional science fairs.

In her spare time, Cailyn is a member of the school band and choir and regional track, as well as serving on the environmental club and volunteering as a kindergarten helper, lunch monitor, office helper and bus monitor. Cailyn is also a budding ballerina and aspires to study engineering.

Mr. Speaker, I invite members to congratulate this spectacular young lady from Chatsworth, Ontario, and to join me in wishing her continued success in the future and asking her to keep her eyes and heart on her dreams.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Best wishes to all the pages.

NURSES

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: It's a great pleasure, as a nurse, to rise today in acknowledgment of National Nursing Week.

National Nursing Week is from May 11 to 17 and occurs, not only alongside the International Nurses Day, but also Florence Nightingale's birthday on May 12. This year's Canadian Nurses Association theme, "Nurses: With you every step of the way", emphasizes how important nurses are in all of our lives, at every age, in all health situations, for all Canadians.

My nursing colleagues in Cambridge Memorial Hospital and indeed across Ontario walk alongside their patients each and every day, providing a supportive hand to those just learning to walk again after a stroke, supporting those trying to adopt healthier lifestyles and encouraging others who have mental health or addictions issues.

Nurses in community, CCACs and nurse practitioner-led clinics help to teach new parents how to care for their babies, demonstrate how to use crutches or wheelchairs, and care for patients nearing the end of their life—sometimes, in my community, at Lisaard House.

Nurses dedicate themselves to their profession in a tangible way, touching the lives of patients young and old and from all walks of life.

This past April, the Two Rivers Family Health Team in my riding of Cambridge was designated as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization by the RNAO. That was a very proud designation. Two Rivers is the first family health team to achieve this designation and has implemented various nursing best practice guidelines, ensuring that nurses stand with their patients at each and every stage.

Our nurses help, and they heal. Thank a nurse today.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE DAY

Ms. Soo Wong: Celebrating the second anniversary of Ontario Children and Youth in Care Day, I had the

pleasure of attending the first-ever five14 Talks this morning, hosted by the Children's Aid Foundation and the Provincial Child and Youth Advocate.

Children and Youth in Care Day provides a yearly opportunity to recognize issues facing current and former children and youth in care, reduce stigma and celebrate their contributions to the province.

The creation of this day was based on the recommendations from the 2011 Youth Leaving Care Hearings and was realized through a private member's bill put forward by the former MPP Teresa Piruzza in 2012, and myself in 2013.

In 2014, the Children and Youth in Care Day Act was passed. As the Provincial Child and Youth Advocate said, this day "will help take children and youth in care out of the shadow. It will confirm their importance to us and in so doing allow us to celebrate them and recommit to their well-being."

Thank you to all the former and current children and youth in care for sharing your experiences and encouraging us to do better. Thank you to all of the organizations and the individuals who advocate for children and youth on a daily basis and support these young people.

Mr. Speaker, today is one more way to show that we value our young people and acknowledge the unique experiences they face, but it also acts as a reminder of our commitment to help them reach their full potential.

MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

Mr. Steve Clark: Point of order.

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

Mr. Steve Clark: Point of order, Speaker: In our Westminster system it's very important for the House leaders to get along, so as House leader for the PC Party, I ask all members to join me in wishing the member for Timmins–James Bay a very happy birthday.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Point of order, the member from Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I had warned members of my caucus that if anybody did this, they would get midnight sitting duty for two weeks straight. I'm putting him on.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Now I know why the member was a little antsy this morning in question period.

I thank the member for his point of order.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made in the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Ms. Thompson assumes ballot item number 72 and Mr. Dunlop assumes ballot item number 76.

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INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

APRAXIA AWARENESS DAY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR DE LA SENSIBILISATION À L'APRAXIE

Mr. Colle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 102, An Act to proclaim May 14 as Apraxia Awareness Day / Projet de loi 102, Loi proclamant le 14 mai Jour de la sensibilisation à l'apraxie.

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. Mike Colle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Childhood apraxia of speech is considered a neurological speech disorder that affects a child's ability to clearly and correctly pronounce syllables and words. The most obvious thing that others notice is the child has significantly limited or unclear speech.

I would like to thank young Matthew Brennan who lives in Mississauga, who has apraxia of speech and has now overcome it with the help of speech therapists and is doing really well. Congratulations, Matthew, and to the parents who went and signed petitions all across Ontario to try and bring awareness to this important childhood speech disorder. I'd like to thank Matthew's parents, David Brennan and Lisa Marie Ruffolo Brennan, for their great work on this important childhood issue.

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

Introduction of bills?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: A point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A point of order, the member from Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, you will know that we are going to be out of an Environmental Commissioner by Monday. I would seek unanimous consent to move the unanimous consent motion to appoint a temporary Environmental Commissioner.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins–James Bay is seeking to put forward a motion—putting forward a motion to extend the Minister of the Environment's—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I need to have consent to put forward a motion without notice. That's what I'm doing.

Do we agree? I heard a no.

A point of order, the member from Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, I just have to say that we do need to make an appointment. I have a motion here that would extend that for six months or until such

time that a new person is hired. That is what we've always done in this assembly, and I seek consent—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I don't need the explanation because the motion has been turned down.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE DAY

JOUR DES ENFANTS ET DES JEUNES PRIS EN CHARGE

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Good afternoon. I am very proud to stand before this House as we—all Ontarians—mark Children and Youth in Care Day.

Monsieur le Président, je suis fière de m'adresser à cette Assemblée alors que nous, et tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes, soulignons le Jour des enfants et des jeunes pris en charge.

In 2014, our government proclaimed May 14 of every year as Children and Youth in Care Day. Today, we recognize the strengths and resilience shown by these children.

I'm happy to introduce 120 youth in care and their chaperones here today in the House—many in the gallery, I see—who were with me earlier attending a Youth Civics Day reception, hosted by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and the Ontario Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth.

They're all here to celebrate this important day and also learn about the Legislature, how their democratic institutions operate, and to meet their local representatives. This day is an opportunity to raise awareness about children and youth of the province and to reaffirm our commitment to supporting them in reaching their full potential.

It was in 2011, when I had just become an MPP, that young people currently and formerly in the care of children's aid societies told us of their personal journeys during the Youth Leaving Care Hearings right here at Queen's Park. As a new legislator at the time, I remember hearing the stories and being very humbled by them, and I was very inspired by their courage.

Building on those hearings, a Youth Leaving Care Working Group was established to build a plan for change to Ontario's child welfare system. The final report, called a Blueprint for Fundamental Change to Ontario's Child Welfare System, told us that children and youth in care need stability in their relationships. They need support to succeed in education and need help with transitions while in care and when leaving care.

Our government has listened carefully and we continue to take action. Notre gouvernement a été à l'écoute et nous continuons à prendre des mesures concrètes.

These young people now have access to a range of new resources and supports that will help them stay in school, pursue post-secondary education and training,

and maintain stronger relationships, all to help them better prepare for leaving care.

For example, we know how important a good education is. That's why our government is providing \$2,000 a semester, through the Living and Learning Grant, to youth formerly in care enrolled in OSAP-eligible post-secondary and training programs, to assist them with their living expenses. We also expanded eligibility so that more youth can receive the Ontario Access Grant for Crown Wards. This grant covers 50% of tuition, up to \$3,000 per year. And we partnered with 30 post-secondary education institutions across the province to cover the full cost of tuition for crown wards and former youth in care.

Our government also knows how important stability is to young people who have experienced upheaval. That's why we've increased the minimum monthly financial support for youth leaving care to \$850, and that's why we are funding 60 youth-in-transition workers to help youth in and leaving care to access the services they need in their communities. And we've partnered with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies to introduce the new Aftercare Benefits Initiative that provides former youth in care with access to prescription drugs, dental and extended health benefits.

And our work continues.

We are developing new resources and training for our front-line staff and caregivers of LGBTQ children and youth in and leaving care. And we're developing mentorship resources so children and youth in care are supported as they transition to adulthood.

All of these initiatives have been informed and developed with youth, by youth, and we'll continue to engage youth as we move forward.

Formally recognizing children and youth in the province's care through a Children and Youth in Care Day will help keep the issues that affect the lives of children and youth in and from care in the public spotlight, and it will remind this House and all Ontarians to stay focused on the children and youth who depend on us.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It's now time for responses.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'm pleased to respond to the Minister of Children and Youth Services regarding Children and Youth in Care Day.

This is the second time Children and Youth in Care Day has been celebrated in Ontario. However, it's only the first time we can dedicate the appropriate time to recognizing this occasion in the Legislature, as last year the date fell in the middle of a provincial election.

I'd like to begin by thanking all members who made the Children and Youth in Care Day possible, including the member from Scarborough–Agincourt, who sponsored Bill 53 and made today's events possible.

Being taken into care is undoubtedly a shocking experience for any child, as the familiar environment they grew up in is taken away from them. There are many reasons for a child to need care. Parents can become sick, incapacitated or addicted. Sometimes children have to be

rescued from abusive environments. It is imperative, therefore, to ensure that the care system works for the child and eases their transition into and out of the system.

In 2011, the Legislature held the Youth Leaving Care Hearings, the first of their kind in Canada, giving a voice to those who should have had a say all along in the care system they had to experience. We heard how children and youth in care often felt left out of the decision-making about their own lives, or left without supports following their exit from care. Clearly, as legislators, we could do and had to do better.

Currently, there are 48,000 families being followed by children's aid societies, and 23,000 children in care. While the total number may be decreasing, the challenges they face aren't. Sometimes they are compounded by the current regulatory environment around children and youth in care, which can place them in a no-win choice.

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For instance, we heard in the pre-budget consultations from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies that an adopted older youth will pay for the stability of a permanent home with the loss of many educational supports, such as those for higher education, that they would have continued to receive if they had stayed a child in care.

For other youths aged 16 and 17, a sudden need for first-time children's aid society services is bound to be unmet as the Child and Family Services Act bans CASs from helping 16- and 17-year-olds who haven't been one of their clients beforehand. These youths are left to navigate the difficult nexus between the child support system they are too old for and the adult system that sees them as too young.

Moreover, agencies trusted to manage care arrangements for Ontario's children in need are facing the prospect of the delayed implementation of the Child Protection Information Network by as much as five years. As it is rolled out, we see the close technical cousin of CPIN—SAMS—causing widespread concern among agencies regarding the system's accuracy and stability.

Children's aid societies are also feeling the pressure of stagnant or decreasing funding. In my own riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, the CAS is facing the real prospect of having to cut services in order to stay afloat. At this time, when the prevention workload is increasing, this kind of neglect puts more children at risk of requiring being taken into care, rather than being followed in their own families. This is unacceptable.

As the critic for children and youth services, I will continue to pressure the government to address these challenges as children's lives and well-being are at stake. They deserve nothing short of a total and unconditional commitment to their safety, happiness and success. This year marks a particularly important step in addressing these failures in the design of our care system as the Child and Family Services Act undergoes a thorough review.

As we celebrate children and youth in care, we must keep in mind our promise to them: to make it easier for

them and their families to leave the care system sooner, easier, happier and better.

Miss Monique Taylor: It gives me great pleasure to speak today on behalf of the NDP caucus as we celebrate Children and Youth in Care Day.

Children and Youth in Care Day is the result of a recommendation in My Real Life Book, the report from the Youth Leaving Care Hearings. What the hearings and the report demonstrated was that children and youth in care have something to say—they want to be heard and they want to contribute to make the system work for those children who will follow behind them.

Speaker, their voice is essential as we move forward, and the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth has continued to promote youth engagement through the I Do Care Project and Feathers of Hope, an initiative that engages First Nation youth.

Today, allow me to hand the floor over to a few of those youth in the only way I can in this chamber—by giving a voice to their words.

From Patricia: “I have come to learn that the most important things in life are family and permanency. Less changes in a youth-in-care’s life means more time to focus on something else like post-secondary education.”

Brandon said, “I already had my family taken away once, and it was probably the hardest thing in my life. I didn’t know where else to turn or what I was going to do, and when I turn 21, it’s all going to happen again.”

For First Nations children, the problems are often exaggerated. One aboriginal child, who chose not to be named, said this: “I did not have a say if I wanted to attend my cultural things as in pow-wows or sweat lodges. Instead, I went to church.”

These are a few of the quotes from My Real Life Book that indicate how much we have to do. We are all aware of the tragic stories that highlight some of the failures of our system.

But the report includes some comments that reflect good experiences and offer some hope for the future if we attack the problems and learn from our successes.

Kayla, for example, was well-served by the system. She said, “My CAS worker is like the dad I never had. And since my CYW has taken me under her wing, I know I can get through pretty much anything.”

These differing experiences can perhaps be explained by a recent media report which highlights disparities in our child welfare system across the province. From an analysis of reports received by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, it was apparent that the services children in care received depended to a great extent on where that child lived. Significant variations were found in areas such as availability of social and health services, availability of foster homes, the use of group homes, and the number of placements that were imposed on children.

One of the recommendations made by the Youth Leaving Care Hearings Team was to commit to collecting and publishing information on how children in care are doing. They recognized three years ago that this

information was essential, but the government has pretty much ignored that recommendation.

The inquest into the tragic death of Jeffrey Baldwin recommended that a database be established for the entire province by February of next year. The government says they won’t deliver until 2020. That’s almost 20 years after Jeffrey died.

The Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth has said the system is “at best fragmented and at worst confused.”

Millions and millions of dollars are being spent on a database system that can’t be used for another five years, and the relationship between it and the failed SAMS system is not lost on anyone.

This government needs to understand its responsibility to children and youth in care goes beyond handing \$1.5 billion to 46 agencies to do the job in the way that they see fit. They have a responsibility to ensure the well-being of children wherever they may live.

Speaker, Children and Youth in Care Day serves as a reminder each year of the responsibility we share to provide a safe environment where children in the care of the province can flourish and prepare themselves for successful, fulfilling lives as adults.

And it is very much our responsibility. When we take a child into care, we assume the role of parents, and who among us in this chamber who are parents do not see that as the primary responsibility in our lives?

I will give Justine, a former youth in care, the final word: “We are your children, Ontario.”

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A point of order from the member from Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I just want to make clear that I want to move a unanimous consent motion without notice, for the appointment of a temporary Environmental Commissioner for a period of six months, so that we can have somebody in place by Monday.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins–James Bay is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree?

Interjection: No.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I heard a no. It is now time for petitions.

PETITIONS

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

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

“Whereas the Liberal government has brought forward a payroll tax in the form of a mandatory Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP); and

“Whereas the Liberal government has not conducted nor released a cost-benefit analysis of this new payroll tax; and

“Whereas internal Ministry of Finance documents show that the Liberals are aware that the ORPP will increase the cost of doing business in Ontario and kill jobs in the province; and

“Whereas a McKinsey and Co. survey shows that more than four out of every five Canadians already save enough for their retirement; and

“Whereas the Canadian Federation of Independent Business has stated that a majority of its members would have to lay off workers; and

“Whereas the government’s plan would force the cancellation of many existing retirement plans that have better employer contribution rates; and

“Whereas low-income earners will have their retirement savings clawed back under this scheme; and

“Whereas Ontarians cannot afford another tax on top of their already skyrocketing hydro bills and ever-increasing cost of living;

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

“To abandon the idea of an Ontario pension tax.”

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Cindy Forster: “Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

“Whereas once you privatize Hydro, there’s no return; and

“We’ll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

“We’ll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

“We’ll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what’s happened elsewhere;

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

“To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come.”

I support this petition and affix my signature.

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TERRY FOX DAY

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas on March 26, Bill 61, the Terry Fox Day Act, passed second reading with unanimous support from the Ontario Legislature;

“Whereas if passed at third reading before the Legislature rises in June, Bill 61 will proclaim the second Sunday after Labour Day in 2015, September 20, as Ontario’s first Terry Fox Day;

“Whereas the second Sunday after Labour Day is the day on which the Terry Fox Run is traditionally held, and September 20, 2015, marks its 35th anniversary;

“Whereas on November 27, 2014, Terry Fox’s home province of British Columbia passed similar legislation

proclaiming this same day as Terry Fox Day starting this year;

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

“That the Legislative Assembly move quickly to pass Bill 61 at third reading before the end of the current session, ensuring that on September 20, 2015, Ontarians can celebrate Terry Fox Day.”

I support this petition, sign it and send it to the table with Joshua.

HYDRO RATES

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

“Whereas Hydro One rates continue to rise causing undue hardship for Ontario residents, families and businesses;

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

“By far the major cost associated with our hydro bills is the delivery charge, which is exceeding the price of hydro itself. We demand the removal of all the hidden charges that make up the delivery charge to be replaced with a standard charge, the same for all customers in Ontario that reflects the actual cost of hydroelectric delivery.

“Regulatory charges are inexcusable and need to be removed.

“We demand the immediate removal of the HST on hydro bills. Why is the province of Ontario charging HST on what is, and always has been, a necessity?

“We demand the immediate removal of the debt retirement charge for all customers.

“The time-of-use smart-metering system is also causing serious problems with everyday life. Faulty meters continue to create overbilling issues for thousands of residents. Instead of resolving these overcharges Hydro One continues to force payment through harassment and threats of disconnection.

“Therefore, we demand the removal of all smart meters to be replaced with analog meters.

“We want to be billed a fair and accurate rate for hydro for all customers and we demand action on this matter immediately!”

I agree with this and would pass it on to page Joshua.

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 Jae Min to bring it down to the Clerks' table.

STUDENT SAFETY

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have a petition here addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there are no mandatory requirements for teachers and school volunteers to have completed CPR training in Ontario;

"Whereas the primary responsibility for the care and safety of students rests with each school board and its employees;

"Whereas the safety of children in elementary schools in Ontario should be paramount;

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

"To work in conjunction with all Ontario school boards to ensure that adequate CPR training is available to school employees and volunteers."

I agree with the petition, affix my name and send it with Colton.

TRESPASSING

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas when private property is damaged it is left to property owners to repair these damages, and the costs can quickly add up to thousands of dollars. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture has asked for a minimum fine for trespassing and an increase on the maximum limit on compensation for damages;

"Whereas Sylvia Jones's private member's Bill 36, the Respecting Private Property Act, will amend the current Trespass to Property Act by creating a minimum fine of \$500 for trespassing and increasing the maximum compensation for damages to \$25,000; and

"Whereas the Respecting Private Property Act will allow property owners to be fairly compensated for destruction to their property, and will also send a message that trespassing is a serious issue by creating a minimum fine;

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

"To support Sylvia Jones's private member's Bill 36, the Respecting Private Property Act, and schedule public hearings so that Bill 36 can be passed without further delay."

For obvious reasons, I support this petition, affix my name to it and give it to the page to bring to the table.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that has been collected by Stephanie Harris. She's from Sudbury. Given that it's Nursing Week, it's my pleasure to read it. It reads as follows:

"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 in-patient 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;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"(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."

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Abdullah to bring it to the Clerk.

WATER FLUORIDATION

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have a petition here addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, a concentration providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentration to protect against adverse health effects; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable

to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

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

“That the ministries of the government of Ontario amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario.”

Speaker, I agree with the petition, sign my name to it and send it down with Megan.

DEMONSTRATION AT QUEEN’S PARK

Mrs. Gila Martow: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“With great urgency we write to call public attention to the repeated demand of a group of public citizens to stage a demonstration of a deeply offensive and deplorable nature on the grounds of Queen’s Park;

“The Al-Quds Day tradition was initiated in 1979 by Ayatollah Khomeini to endorse and promote a fundamentalist strain of Islam as well as the hatred and destruction of both the Israeli state and the Jewish people. In recent years, rallies have occurred across the globe, including in a number of cities in North America. Organizers and attendees chant slogans that perpetuate these obscene sentiments and wave placards and flags that signify the banned terrorist organization Hamas;

“Regretfully, Al-Quds Day has been celebrated for several years on the grounds of the provincial Legislature, the very institution that acts to protect the rights and dignity of each and every single Ontarian, regardless of religion, creed, orientation or ancestry;

“Although the spirit of Queen’s Park seeks to encourage and foster healthy democratic discussion and debate, we, the undersigned, believe a gathering of such a reprehensible nature and blatantly racist ideology should not be permitted on the grounds of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario nor the premises of any provincial or federal institution.”

I’m affixing my signature and giving it to Cailyn.

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ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Miss Monique Taylor: I have a petition to save the ODSP Work-Related Benefit.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the \$100 ODSP Work-Related Benefit provides a critically important source of funds to people with disabilities on ODSP who work, giving them the ability to pay for much-needed, ongoing work-related expenses such as transportation, clothing, food, personal care and hygiene items, and child care; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services plans to eliminate the Work-Related Benefit as part of a restructuring of OW and ODSP employment

benefits, and has said that ongoing work-related expenses will not be covered by its new restructured Employment-Related Benefit; and

“Whereas eliminating the Work-Related Benefit will take approximately \$36 million annually out of the pockets of people with disabilities on ODSP who work; and

“Whereas a survey conducted by the ODSP Action Coalition between December 2014 and February 2015 shows that 18% of respondents who currently receive the Work-Related Benefit fear having to quit their jobs as a result of the loss of this important source of funds; 12.5% fear having to reduce the amount of money they spend on food, or rely on food banks; and 10% fear losing the ability to travel, due to the cost of transportation; and

“Whereas people receiving ODSP already struggle to get by, and incomes on ODSP provide them with little or no ability to cover these costs from regular benefits; and

“Whereas undermining employment among ODSP recipients would run directly counter to the ministry’s goal of increasing employment and the provincial government’s poverty reduction goal of increasing income security;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the provincial government’s plan to eliminate the ODSP Work-Related Benefit.”

I couldn’t agree with this more. I’m going to affix my name to it and give it to page Mira to bring to the Clerk.

STUDENT SAFETY

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have another petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there are no mandatory requirements for teachers and school volunteers to have completed CPR training in Ontario;

“Whereas the primary responsibility for the care and safety of students rests with each school board and its employees;

“Whereas the safety of children in elementary schools in Ontario should be paramount;

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

“To work in conjunction with all Ontario school boards to ensure that adequate CPR training is available to school employees and volunteers.”

I agree with the petition, affix my signature and give it to Jae Min to bring down.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: A point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): A point of order. The member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, you know that we lose our Environmental Commissioner on Monday. I would seek unanimous consent to move a motion without notice to appoint a temporary Environmental Commissioner for a period of six months.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I am advised that you've already done this, and it was refused.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: A point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): A point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: There is no limit on seeking unanimous consent motions. People can change their minds. It's been done a number of times.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I am advised that that's not accurate; you cannot ask to receive consent over and over.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: To be clear, Speaker—point of order—this means we can no longer move any unanimous consent motions with regard to the Environmental Commissioner—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): To the member: Because the request has been made, it's really in the Speaker's discretion if he thinks the vote will change, and I believe it will not.

Orders of the day.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: A point of order. How do you know what's in the minds of members?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I don't want to be difficult, but I'll move on with business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRAITE DES PERSONNES

Ms. Laurie Scott: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government should immediately create a provincial task force to combat human trafficking in Ontario, with such task force having a structure, complement and funding model similar to the existing guns and gangs provincial task force.

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

The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I rise today to introduce my private member's motion on the creation of a provincial task force to combat human trafficking.

Human trafficking is a very serious issue that is currently plaguing our province. Not nearly enough is being done to raise public awareness, to help victims of human trafficking when they break free from their trafficker, or to effectively prosecute and convict the perpetrators of this heinous crime.

Many people think of human trafficking as a faraway problem, one that conjures up images of desperate young women brought to Canada under false pretenses, lorded over by violent, leering men who take pleasure in forcing the helpless into a life of brutal servitude. This char-

acterization, while maybe slightly fantastical, is not incorrect. But if this is the sole impression one has of human trafficking—which I'm afraid is the case with many people—they are misinformed about its scope and pervasiveness in our great province and country. While you may think human trafficking doesn't affect us, it does.

The misconceptions are many. One might think that the majority of human trafficking victims are foreign-born, imported for this form of modern slavery, but in reality, at least 97% of victims are Canadian-born. This province is home to the largest number of domestic human trafficking cases, where victims are born and raised right here in Ontario. One might think that the victims are forcibly plucked off the street by a shadowy, unknown man pulling the strings that control their life, but in reality, about 85% of victims were recruited through human contact, and 34% were in the sex trade and pimped by their boyfriend.

Young women are lured in through personal relationships, systemically isolated from family and friends, psychologically and physically abused by those they trusted and, in some cases, loved.

Victims are sexually exploited, earning their traffickers over \$280,000 per year for just one victim. Traffickers advertise the sexual services of their victims, some as young as 14, through online ads and social media. I've been told that on any given day, about 500 of those online sex ads are for victims of human trafficking.

To make progress in our fight against human trafficking, we need to make serious changes to the way in which we combat it. This means changing public perception of who is a victim of human trafficking, because, quite frankly, she is the girl next door. She's the pretty and popular girl who hopes no one ever finds out that deep down inside she doesn't feel pretty at all. She's the girl who never wants her parents to learn about the embarrassing pictures taken of her at a house party. She's the lonely girl who is often seen walking home alone from school.

I've heard stories of girls being targeted at the mall food court, the parking lot at their high school or a house party they attended with friends. This is in stark contrast to how many people perceive human trafficking and it shows that while at-risk individuals do face the greatest threat of being trafficked, human trafficking is a scourge that can affect anyone, no matter their background or socio-economic status.

Regardless of how these victims are brought into the system of human trafficking, victims are constantly in danger. Victims are manipulated by their trafficker and removed from their normal life to live and work in horrific conditions. They may also face fatal consequences if they attempt to escape.

The crime represents a consistent and pervasive assault on the fundamental human rights of its victims. A report entitled *The Incidence of Human Trafficking in Ontario* from the Alliance Against Modern Slavery lays out the vastness of the human trafficking problem in Ontario and steps that can be taken to fix it.

This organization does admirable work in combatting human trafficking worldwide and they, too, believe that a provincial task force is necessary. In its report, the alliance found that 96.5% of victims experience some form of violence and that over half of them were held captive for some period of time.

These shocking and horrifying statistics make it clear that there is no time to waste when it comes to taking action on human trafficking. There is an immediate need to change how we investigate and prosecute the criminals behind the human trafficking rings.

1400

The problem does not stop when these victims are found. This week in the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, we heard from two survivors of human trafficking who now work with NGOs to help others.

Casandra Diamond from BridgeNorth spoke of the very unique needs when delivering services to victims. She explained, "When I'm working with women, I care about the recidivism rate. I don't want them going back. So there are two things that we have to concern ourselves with... Housing is primary. Then it's like a tie for second: counselling and job opportunities. Because if you cannot make enough money to provide for yourself or your family, again, the vacuum just sucks you right back up and you're stuck."

We also heard from Katarina MacLeod, who spoke about the difference in victim service needs of those who have been exploited in the sex trade from those who have experienced sexual violence or harassment. "It's totally different," she said. "Abuse is abuse regardless of where it happens, how it happens, but when there's sexual exploitation, there's something that changes inside of you. There's a shift in the way you feel, in the way you think, how you think men are. Your body is being used and degraded over and over again. You're being raped every day for a service that is provided to men. So the long-term damage that is happening to these women is very crucial, and I, being one of them, am still suffering and will probably suffer the rest of my life."

We need to change how we interact with and help survivors. This is why I'm proposing the immediate implementation of a provincial task force to combat human trafficking, in the same style as the provincial guns and gangs task force. This would improve province-wide coordination in fighting human trafficking. The guns and gangs unit includes police officers, crown prosecutors and victim assistance workers, who all collaborate from the first day of the investigation. Through this combination of expertise, the task force achieves the dual purpose of apprehending criminals and also assisting their victims. The guns and gangs task force has been successful, and the implementation of a similar structure regarding human trafficking is crucial.

Currently, jurisdictions are independently investigating trafficking crimes, but given these crimes' highly transient nature, the efforts of law enforcement are hindered by multiple investigations of the same perpetra-

tor of crimes in multiple areas. Under the proposed task force, investigation and prosecution would be coordinated between the different police services, making for easier and faster criminal proceedings and hopefully resulting in a prosecution rate higher than the 25% that it is currently. From survivors and experts, we know that victims are moved from community to community, particularly along Highway 401, which makes information-sharing between multiple jurisdictions crucial.

It would also help victims, as the current way in which human trafficking victims are assisted is extremely patchwork and not comprehensive. Groups such as Covenant House in Toronto are doing remarkable work in trying to help those victims who make the decision to break free of their captors. However, the overall quantity and effectiveness of services available to victims is well below what it should be. This is not because the advocates and social workers are not trying hard enough; rather, it is because the current system makes it extremely difficult for places like Covenant House not only to immediately help victims but also to keep them safe and away from the clutches of their abusers.

One aspect where a provincial task force would be immeasurable would be its ability to help facilitate the creation of safe houses solely for the purpose of sheltering human trafficking victims. Currently, no such facility exists. Victims end up at a variety of already-existing shelters, but these are not specifically suited for them. Whether it is due to the focus of the shelter or certain restrictions on entrance, like age, victims of human trafficking often end up back in the clutches of their abusers after only a few days in a shelter.

Recognizing this problem, Interval House, a centre for abused women and children, tried to set up a human-trafficking-specific safe house in Ottawa. However, they were unable to obtain provincial funding necessary to be able to complete the project.

Mr. Speaker, this is a tragedy, but luckily one that can be rectified. Safe houses specifically for human trafficking victims are a necessity because these victims' needs are different from the needs of victims of other crimes. Particularly, they urgently require one-on-one companionship with support staff and access to a trauma counsellor.

The Alliance Against Modern Slavery report notes that the first 72 hours with a trafficking victim are crucial. If they are not helped within this time period, they are significantly more likely to fall back into the life they were so desperately trying to escape.

Additionally, trafficking victims often require longer-term assistance than is provided in the current facilities that are available to them. They are usually pushed out after a specific time when they are deemed to be able to reintegrate, as opposed to a more flexible schedule based around the individual healing and recovery process.

There is a need to train police, prosecutors and particularly judges on the unique nature of human trafficking, especially how these victims recall and recount memories. Probation officers need training to identify

victims, as many of these young women find themselves in the judicial system. Nurses and doctors need training to identify victims, as many may be brought into the ER or treated for sexually transmitted diseases, injuries, or pregnancies. Lastly, municipal employees need training to identify victims, when many apply for an exotic dancing licence so that they are able to work in local bars.

I'm reminded again of testimony from Casandra Diamond of BridgeNorth, who spoke to the select committee this week. She said, and I quote, "Violence against women and inequality are amplified when licensed. Each and every prostituted person, every day, would be able to make a claim under WSIB had they had been in any other industry."

I believe that we can—we must—attack this problem head-on, which is why I propose this private member's motion. We cannot wait any longer to take action.

Thank you.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I am pleased to rise as MPP for London West and also as the women's issues critic for the NDP caucus to speak to the motion from the member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. As she pointed out, human trafficking is very much a women's issue. We know that about two thirds of those who are trafficked are women and girls, and in virtually all cases of trafficking for the purposes of sex exploitation, the victims are women.

Women are more vulnerable to trafficking because they are more likely to be poor. Poverty is one of the clearest risk factors for trafficking, and that's particularly the case for immigrant or First Nations women. Another risk factor is low education. We know the kinds of barriers that First Nations people faced in accessing education or employment and the legacy of residential schools that continues to create barriers to First Nations women.

But, of course, human trafficking does not only affect women; it also affects those who are children. About half of victims of trafficking are under 18 years of age. As the member said, the more high-profile cases involve people from other countries who are trafficked and brought to Canada to work as migrant workers on farms or construction sites, their papers and passports confiscated—forced to work without pay and without adequate food.

New Democrats will be supporting the motion. We certainly agree that a task force would be a good idea. The little research that has been conducted on this issue suggests that Ontario is actually where the majority of victims of both foreign and domestic human trafficking live.

There is clearly a need for much greater federal-provincial coordination on this issue. Other provinces—British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba—have all moved ahead to create formal task forces such as the one that is proposed, but Ontario has no formal anti-trafficking program in place, no system to deal with this issue.

But we also want to emphasize that, more than just combatting human trafficking, which is what this motion

calls on the government to do, what we need in this province is a system of supports to assist victims of trafficking. We need training and services for front-line agencies that are dealing with victims of trafficking, and for law enforcement officials. We also need to address root causes: poverty and lack of opportunity, as I mentioned.

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We know that in February 2011, the Ontario government announced just less than \$2 million over three years to combat human trafficking, but in Manitoba, where they have about one thirteenth the population of Ontario, there has been a commitment of \$10 million a year to fund anti-trafficking programs.

I want to close with a quote from the research report that was completed in June of last year called *The Incidence of Human Trafficking in Ontario*. That report says, "Human trafficking victims in Ontario report inappropriate and inadequate services, along with frustration of lack of coordination and consistency in services provided. This frustration is echoed by dedicated law enforcement officers, service providers and NGOs who face barriers in providing and obtaining services for victims."

We know that a policing and enforcement response is important, but you can't fight human trafficking without providing supports for the victims. You can't only target the traffickers; you have to look after the victims, you have to invest in front-line services, and you have to address root causes.

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

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: As the minister responsible for women's issues in Ontario, I'm very pleased to rise today to speak on this motion related to human trafficking. I want to use my time to speak a bit about what investments have been made in Ontario and some of the initiatives we're currently working on.

Let me first say that we know what a devastating crime human trafficking is, and that women and girls are particularly vulnerable. Human trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation affects vulnerable people right across Canada. It's a complicated issue that requires collaboration with community organizations, between ministries, police forces and international partners, which is why we did not wait for this motion today to take action on this issue. We have been front and centre in fighting against human trafficking.

The Ontario Women's Directorate and other government partners have been investing in programs aimed to prevent human trafficking, to improve law enforcement and the prosecution of offenders, and to ensure that victims receive the support they need. For example, an additional investment of \$1 million to the Language Interpreter Services program was provided annually to expand services to victims of sexual violence, including human trafficking, to help them access health care, legal and social services they need, in more than 70 languages in various local communities.

Last year, we provided \$225,000 in funding to the White Ribbon Campaign to help it develop and promote resources that engage young men in ending human trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation of women and girls.

The Ministry of the Attorney General also provided support for the development of a comprehensive, province-wide online training program for front-line workers. The program became available to service providers at the end of January 2014.

We are also working with our federal partners to support the implementation of the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.

A couple of things I just want to touch on that relate to the supports and services from community safety and correctional services: Since 2003, that ministry has provided funding to 11 projects, for a total of approximately \$1.4 million under Ontario's Proceeds of Crime Front Line Policing Grant Program, to help police services combat human trafficking in Ontario. These funds helped police with special investigations into this trade, created education campaigns for potential victims and witnesses, provided for increased surveillance and improved officer training, and supported human trafficking investigators.

The OPP also worked closely with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canada Border Services Agency on several border enforcement teams that take a coordinated approach to organized crime, including human trafficking.

In Ontario, we have launched a very coordinated approach to combat human trafficking and raise awareness of this very serious issue. There are a number of initiatives focused on prevention, enforcement and support for victims that the OPP, Peel region and Toronto police have provided. There are financial supports for projects driven by local police services to fight human trafficking in communities.

There's information, support and referral services available 24/7 in 150 languages; and additional supports to emergency services and community agencies to better assist victims of human trafficking.

There are new specialized human trafficking crown attorneys to help build strong cases and prosecute offenders.

And there's been an awareness campaign to help victims.

Ontario has established a human trafficking advisory committee as well, made up of police service reps, victim service providers, experts and survivors to provide advice on priorities and community needs.

Our government will continue to work with our partners to combat this very serious issue.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to rise in support of my colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

I just listened to the Liberal minister and, with the greatest of respect, this is not about, "We've already done

stuff. This is our issue." This is about trying to help young people who are in very, very nasty situations.

I really have to say thank you to a couple of friends of mine in my community, one crown attorney and a couple of OPP police officers who are on the front line dealing with this human trafficking issue. While it is lovely to talk about what has happened, what the intention is or that another advisory committee has happened, these are young people who need help right now. The people on the front line, the people who have spoken to my colleague, to d myself, who have presented at the select committee, say that a provincial task force is what is needed.

If you want to have some reading that's going to keep you up at night, start with *Somebody's Daughter*. It's Julian Sher who wrote it. As a mother of a young teenager, it scares me like nothing else. These are people, as Laurie—sorry. As my colleague said, these are our neighbours. These are our children. These are 97% Canadian-born kids who need help today, right now.

The police officers who have talked to us about human trafficking say that one of the things these human traffickers do is, they swap girls. They swap them from community to community, so that as soon as the OPP in Dufferin county starts to figure out there's an issue, they take them and move them to Chatham. Then they stay in Chatham for a couple of days, and if it gets hot, they go to London. So there's no ability for those local police officers who actually have a lot of front-line experience on this to actually get the job done, because the girls are being swapped. It's a terrible, terrible story, and what we are hearing is, "The provincial task force will assist." They've seen it succeed with the guns and gangs, and they know and they believe that it will help with human trafficking.

So if we can do one thing this afternoon, let's not get into this "We're a Tory and we believe this," and "We're Liberal and we've already done this, so let's move on." Let's actually do something that will proactively help our children, help our neighbours, and get moving on this provincial task force.

While my colleague was speaking, I was very quickly going through all of the ministries that this scourge impacts, and it's substantial: community safety and corrections—obvious; Attorney General—obvious; education; colleges and universities.

One of the things they do is, they recruit off our college and university campuses the shy girl, the girl who takes a little longer to find friends. They're going on to our college campuses and recruiting those young ladies.

Municipal affairs and housing—Laurie spoke about the need for unique housing; government and consumer services; children and youth; health; community and social services; aboriginal affairs; women's directorate.

Law enforcement obviously plays a big role. Our crown attorneys, who have to become experts in this seedy world where we actually think that a young girl is a commodity that can be swapped and traded. How despicable is that?

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Finally, when you actually have the ability to pull some of these young ladies back: PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder. The young lady who appeared at the select committee this week had been out for something like three or four years. She's going to therapy now.

We can do something collectively, as parliamentarians, if we move forward and say, "Yes, we believe that the model that is already out there, which relates to the guns and gangs task force, can actually work with human trafficking."

Please set aside your stripes for a few hours this afternoon and move forward on this provincial task force. And if you really need to have some sleepless nights, read *Somebody's Daughter*.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: I want to commend the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock for bringing forward this motion. There has been a lot of growing awareness of human trafficking at the federal level and at the provincial level. I want to commend her for actually developing this motion so that it focuses on the coordination of services. That's the missing piece right now in the province of Ontario.

It's true, as the minister says, that there are little bits and pieces of money all over, and they're announced in very public-relations-like ways. But actually, victim services is still waiting for some funding from the Attorney General from 2012. It's a consistent issue that victim services continually brings to this Legislature.

There is also a mention of what's happening at the federal level, and I think it's safe to say that this motion is stronger than what is happening at the federal level—that's very much focused on a policing perspective. The issue of human trafficking is so complex that you just don't want to pick it up downstream when it gets to the police. The best solution is through education and through supporting people who have actually been through this cycle.

Kitchener–Waterloo is a thriving economic community. Waterloo was voted one of the most intelligent communities in Ontario and Canada, and human trafficking is happening in our communities, right under our noses. What adds insult to injury for a lot of people, I think, is that when it is that girl next door, as other members have mentioned, when they actually have the courage to come forward and finally tell their story about being exploited, about being manipulated, about being used and exposed to a kind of violence that none of us would even like to think about—when they do come forward, the services are not there to help them through that process. In fact, they are re-victimized because of shame. There is absolutely so much more that we can be doing.

It's hard for me not to think about a healing circle that I attended in Kitchener, where a First Nations woman told her story about how she was literally lured into this circle by attention, by gifts, by promises of perhaps going

to school—of education. She was completely and utterly manipulated, and then came the drugs and addiction, and the need to stay in that cycle of poverty and oppression and exploitation just to exist.

And when she was finally, through a huge support network, actually pulled back out, she was tempted again and again to fall back into that cycle because there were no supports to hold her in place. The safe houses are absolutely a key part of that. These women live on the margins of society, and they live next door to us. What needs to happen is greater coordination of services.

I also want to make mention of the special task force that is dealing with the sexual exploitation around human trafficking. These officers see things that no one should ever have to bear witness to, especially when it's children.

I want to commend the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock. This motion is needed. The coordination of services is needed; more leadership on this issue is needed. We can do this today, and I hope that this motion earns the full support of this House today.

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

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I welcome the opportunity to speak to this motion today, and I thank the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock for her passionate words and for introducing it so eloquently.

Human trafficking is a grave violation of basic human rights. Every country in the world, including Canada, is affected by trafficking, whether as a country of origin, transit or destination for victims. In fact, trafficking does not necessarily involve any movement from one place to another. Traffickers reap large benefits and profits while robbing victims of their freedom and their dignity.

Trafficking victims are some of the most vulnerable and marginalized individuals in our society—held against their will; deprived of their dignity and their identity documents; forced to work or provide services ranging from forced labour to commercial sexual exploitation to organ trading to forced servile marriages.

Victims are subject to sexual abuse, threats, intimidation, physical violence and isolation, and for victims who find themselves in such situations, escape can be very difficult and dangerous. Furthermore, those who do escape face tremendous challenges in reintegration, due to stigmatization and intolerance, and many of them may already have fallen afoul of the criminal justice system.

Unfortunately, organized crime and its deep underground human trafficking networks are difficult to detect and investigate. This is why it's so important to provide our protection agencies with the extra resources and training they need to combat human trafficking.

Since 2003, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has provided funding to 11 projects of a total of approximately \$1.4 million under the proceeds-of-crime front-line policing grant. These funds helped with special investigations, educational campaigns for potential victims and witnesses, and improved training for investigators.

A province-wide human trafficking network has also been established to facilitate information-sharing between police forces. Similarly, the Ontario Provincial Police are working closely with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canada Border Services Agency on coordinating approaches to human trafficking. To help build strong prosecution cases, Ontario has also established new specialized human trafficking crown attorneys.

Due to the dreadful accumulated trauma that trafficking victims have experienced, agency support and assistance are essential to help those affected to recover and piece their lives back together. The Ontario government is proud to support our community partners in this respect. The government has also established a human trafficking advisory committee to help inform the province's approach to human trafficking.

With the excitement continuing to build to the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games—in only two months' time—we are aware of the increased potential for human trafficking at that time. I was pleased to hear that Ontario's human trafficking committee is working with the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games joint intelligence group to share information to mitigate trafficking during this event.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the work of our police forces on this issue and share with you and the members of this House a success story. Last year, the Durham Regional Police Service and the OPP coordinated two successful operations to raise awareness and reach out to those exploited in the sex trade. The second operation, in October 2014, resulted in the arrest of nine traffickers and the rescue of 18 victims, one as young as 12. In addition to the 33 charges that were laid, dozens of ongoing investigations derived from the intelligence that they gathered.

These are only a few of the actions that Ontario has taken to address this grave human rights violation taking place right here in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to lend my support to this motion, and I want to thank the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock once again for bringing it forward.

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

Mr. Michael Harris: It is a great pleasure of mine to have an opportunity to speak to this timely motion calling for province-wide approaches to the disturbing realities and impacts of human trafficking.

As we've heard, the dire impacts of human trafficking worldwide—and right here in Ontario—are far-reaching, exceedingly hurtful, and as real as they are hidden.

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We as legislators have a responsibility to ensure the safety of people in Ontario and, given the impact, I think it's vital that we live up to that responsibility when it comes to addressing human trafficking right here in our province.

Certainly, there are many good organizations that work diligently to shine a light on the despicable prac-

tices occurring every day within our province, and many working to help the victims, whose deep scars may never heal.

In my area, the Waterloo Region Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition has been struck between 11 different organizations, to develop partnerships and protocols to identify and assist people who have been trafficked for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation, forced labour and forced marriage in the region of Waterloo.

The coalition links people who have been trafficked to appropriate services and supports, and works to increase knowledge and awareness of the issue of human trafficking in Waterloo region.

The coalition is made up of representatives—and I want to highlight these groups, because they are extremely important—providing services in my community: Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region; the Highland-Stirling Community Group; the House of Friendship; the Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre; the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre; the Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre; the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region; Victim Services of Waterloo Region; Walk With Me; the YWCA Kitchener-Waterloo; and, of course, the Waterloo Regional Police Service.

In the words of our Waterloo regional police chief, Bryan Larkin, "The exploitation of women in our region is occurring daily. It is comforting to know community members are engaged and leading the charge for awareness and support alongside the Waterloo Regional Police Service." Just this past winter, Chief Larkin and Waterloo Regional Police Service joined forces with Walk With Me to collect new pyjamas for victims of human trafficking.

This follows work by the Waterloo Regional Police Service in partnership with the Kitchener detachment of the RCMP last year, in a national enforcement initiative to address the criminal elements forcing young women into the sex trade. Operation Northern Spotlight was a co-operative effort involving 26 police services in over 30 communities across Canada. As part of the local investigation, police located an 18-year-old female victim from Toronto who was allegedly exploited and forced to work as an escort in the region. Two males from Toronto were subsequently arrested in Kitchener.

It's thanks to the attention and the understanding of the men and women in our local police services that authorities are able to apprehend some of the perpetrators in these despicable crimes. But more must be done to help them address these situations before young people in our communities are victimized in the first place.

And so the work continues, to raise awareness and help victims. The Waterloo Regional Police Service also recently threw its support behind a fundraising initiative launched in February by a local victim of human trafficking. Timea Nagy, founder of Timea's Cause, raised funds to increase awareness among 1,250 police officers and social service workers, to provide them with the training to help victims escape sex trafficking. She started Walk

With Me in Hamilton in 2009, to help victims, and has trained 10,000 officers and social service providers across the country.

I'm proud today to voice my support for the motion brought forward by my colleague from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock and look forward to seeing the rest of this House do the same, for a timely creation of a provincial task force to combat human trafficking in Ontario.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to add a few words to this deeply troubling debate.

La traite des personnes désigne, entre autres, « le recrutement, le transport, le transfert, l'hébergement ou l'accueil de personnes, par la menace de recours ou le recours à la force ou à d'autres formes de contrainte, par enlèvement, fraude, tromperie, abus d'autorité ou d'une situation de vulnérabilité, ou par l'offre ou l'acceptation de paiements ou d'avantages pour obtenir le consentement d'une personne ayant autorité sur une autre aux fins d'exploitation. L'exploitation comprend, au minimum, l'exploitation de la prostitution d'autrui ou d'autres formes d'exploitation sexuelle, le travail ou les services forcés, l'esclavage ou les pratiques analogues à l'esclavage, la servitude ou le prélèvement d'organes. »

I was participating in an international forum on this topic, and I was shocked when the statistics for Canada were presented. I thought that this is something that happened elsewhere; this is not something that happens in Ontario or in Canada. No, no, this is something that happens in Third World countries—not at all, Speaker, not at all.

The RCMP presented the statistics in black and white, and it is enough to make you cry. Did you know that right here, right now, in Ontario we can expect that there are at least 240 women who are being sexually exploited and who need our protection? Did you know that right here, right now, in Ontario there are at least 320 people, mainly women, being exploited to work in private people's homes? They are only the tip of the iceberg. Those are the statistics that the RCMP could give us, but they were really clear that the situation is way worse than what they were able to present, because what they were able to present was people they have been able to identify, but of course a lot of what goes on—nobody ever knows those people are even there.

They went on to say that people who come from other countries will transit through Ontario to find their way to the States. This human trafficking route mainly takes the route of Ontario or British Columbia, and the numbers are staggering. We're talking 2,200 people going through Ontario and British Columbia through the human trafficking trade. None of this I knew even existed.

When I was presented with this, we saw what other countries internationally are doing and, let me tell you, Speaker, they are doing a whole lot more than we are doing here in Ontario. Some of it could be basically copied as to what they've done in France and Belgium, in

some of the other western countries of Europe, and brought here if only we had this task force to start to talk about it, to have an open dialogue. I have no problem patting ourselves on the back for the little steps we have taken, but there is so much more we can do. We should do this for those 240 women who are presently being used as sexual slaves, and we should do this for the 320 mostly women and children who are being abused as domestics.

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

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'm pleased to rise today to speak to private member's motion number 48. I want to thank the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock for speaking so eloquently earlier.

There's no question that human trafficking is an issue that our government takes extremely seriously and I know that the members on this side definitely take seriously. This is a disturbing, horrible crime that robs its victims, who are mostly women and young children, of their most basic human rights and freedoms. They are forced into labour or sexual services, often through coercive practices like intimidation, force, sexual assault and threats of violence to themselves or their families. Those who are socially or economically disadvantaged—aboriginal women, youth, children, new immigrants, teenage runaways—are at greater risk of becoming victims.

Between 2011 and 2013, there were 551 reported cases of human trafficking that were at least in some way linked to Ontario. Of course, this doesn't take into account the unreported crimes. And contrary to popular belief, it's not just international citizens who are targeted as victims. In 2010, a study estimated that 71% of all cases of human trafficking in Canada involved domestic sex trafficking. That same study found that 63% of victims of trafficking cases in the province of Ontario were Canadian citizens. Imagine that, Mr. Speaker. For so many of us here in the House—parents, grandparents—the thought of someone from our families or friends or neighbours being taken and forced into what basically amounts to modern-day slavery is horrifying. These victims are being beaten, emotionally abused, and live in constant fear. They need help, and we have a duty to help these victims.

But I am pleased to say that our government has not been blind to these deeply troubling and significant issues. Ontario has been and continues to be front and centre in the fight against human trafficking, but we recognize that there is more work to do.

1440

Since 2003, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has provided funding to 11 projects. There has also been the establishment of a human trafficking advisory committee, and we are working with the human trafficking committee with the Pan/Parapan Am Games jointly.

I'm sure that we can all agree that these are despicable crimes and that perpetrators must be pursued and brought

to justice. It's something we must work on together. I support this motion from the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. It is imperative that we deal with this immediately.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm very happy to rise today to support my colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock on her private member's motion which is seeking to create a provincial task force to combat human trafficking, which, as we're hearing today, is definitely a scourge here in Ontario.

I'm sure a lot of people here, now that the nice weather is here—you go for a walk, and you hear a little noise, and you look over, and there's a racoon digging around in somebody's garbage, and you're reminded of the thousands of raccoons and rats living right under our beautiful city. That's kind of what's going on with human trafficking. It's an invisible epidemic.

I want to just quote from a study. The author of the study said, "Child sexual exploitation is the most hidden form of child abuse in the U.S. and North America today."

I want to remind everybody that human trafficking often involves children. It involves young girls. It can involve boys, as well, but it is predominantly women who are subjected to it. These are lives ruined—not just the girls themselves, but their entire families are forever shaken up.

As awful as it is for any of us to imagine losing a child, in a way this is worse, because there's no closure. You know that your child is always out there somewhere suffering, because even if you can get them off the streets, it's hard to get them rehabilitated and get them the help they need.

I've been given some information from Peter Casey. He's a detective sergeant with York Regional Police. What he has explained to me is that York Regional Police has created a vice team to combat human trafficking, and they've been very successful. They went from a unit enforcing and charging sex trade workers to a unit that recognizes that the vast majority of women and girls involved in the sex trade are victims—so to help them, not be treating them as the criminals. The criminals are the johns and the pimps. This York Regional Police vice team did not charge a single female with solicitation over that seven-year period. So they completely changed the way that they're operating. They're taking this new approach, working with all kinds of community organizations and trying to train others, and they definitely want to see a provincial task force similar to the guns and gangs task force, which we all know was so successful.

I think that there should be support here in the Legislature. Why? Because I think that there's support at home. The people who put us here want us to do better in terms of combatting human trafficking. They're upset when it's their daughter who has gone missing and they hear that girls can be moved around from town to town and hotel to hotel, and the police put up their arms and say, "We have no jurisdiction to go in over there."

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge everybody here to do better, to create that task force. Let's stop talking and get working.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I want to thank the members of the Legislature who spoke in favour. It's a frightening issue that's occurring out there. It terrified me when I first delved into it.

I want to thank the many, many police officers I spoke to and thank them for their dedication in working on this. It's very difficult to work in this field to help these victims. The great organizations that came forward and told their stories—and there are many more I need to hear. And the survivors who came forward, either if they just spoke to me personally or they actually came to committee and told their stories—I think that was incredibly impactful on all of us.

To know that it's the girl next door—97% are Canadian-born, I think—was the most shocking statistic that I had heard in our research.

The minister spoke of the monies invested. It's many-ministry facilitated and we need to coordinate. That's the issue that I'm bringing forward: replicating the guns and gangs task force. We need a coordinated effort.

I think, from what I heard today and the people that I have spoken to, there's an absolute willingness. It's imperative that we do something to combat human trafficking. It's going to help the physical, mental and emotional well-being of the trafficking victims and allow the police to more effectively prosecute these criminals who perpetrate these despicable crimes. As you've noticed, it's an issue I feel quite strongly about, and it does need immediate attention. We don't know who the next victim is going to be. We don't know where they'll come from.

I call on all my fellow members to support this motion—I appreciate what I've heard so far—to make this task force a reality and put an end to human trafficking in the province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will take the vote on this item at the end of private members' business.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Transportation should amend the funded projects identified by the province's southern highways program for 2015-19 to include the expansion and widening of the Essex-to-Leamington section of Highway 3, Bruce Crozier Way, in keeping with the identified safety, economic development and infrastructure priorities of the region.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: As always, it is an honour to rise in this House to speak on behalf of my riding and my constituents, perhaps particularly more so today on such

an important infrastructure project with such importance to my riding.

This is titled “Prioritize the expansion of the Bruce Crozier Way.” It simply is that simple. It’s about prioritizing this last phase, the third phase of Highway 3. It is also a promise that I made to my community during the last election to fight for the completion of this phase of the highway. I’m happy to use my first private member’s slot since the election to do so. It’s something that I want to see, that our community wants to see: for this government to finish what they started.

The stretch from Leamington to Windsor on Highway 3 is about a 50-kilometre stretch. Historically, it was a two-lane highway, and my predecessor, Bruce Crozier, a man who held the seat for 17 years, saw fit to fight and to lobby the government—as a member of the government—to widen that highway. He garnered large support from community members, stakeholders, businesses and municipalities for that endeavour and he was successful. He committed a large portion of his career to ensuring that that link, that vital throughway, was completed. It was aptly named for him, unfortunately, after he’d retired and after he’d passed.

However, it’s come to the attention of myself and to our community that the plan has changed. In 2006, the government had approved this project. It promised that it would be completed by 2014-15. But now we’re seeing that the government is potentially poised to delay the project and potentially by a generation. We know that the greenhouse industry in Leamington, Kingsville and southwestern Ontario; the winery industry—we have dozens of world-class wineries that are in operation. And the tourism industry—Peele Island and the Erie coast peninsula is really a wonderful, burgeoning tourism destination and something that requires connectivity and something that requires good infrastructure. This is vital to our region. It’s an integral component to our growth. If there was ever an area in Ontario that we know requires economic generation and stimulus, it is southwestern Ontario. Windsor and Essex county have, unfortunately, the highest unemployment rate in the province. That’s not a distinction that we like, but despite our efforts to do the right thing and to attract those jobs, we’re not feeling as though we have a partner, especially when it comes to the infrastructure needs of this highway.

The EA, the environmental assessment, was performed in 2006 and was granted for this project. The Highway 3 expansion was split into three phases. Phase 1 and phase 2 are completed, and they are wonderful. They’re double-laned and they provide smooth transit for commuters who are coming into Windsor.

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They also link up to what we all know now, today, is being named the Gordie Howe International Bridge. Now, we can argue whether that’s appropriately named, the new bridge that will cross from Windsor into Detroit; however, that Highway 3 link connects to the Herb Gray Parkway, which then will connect to the Gordie Howe bridge. It’s going to allow us to grow and to blossom; no

pun intended in reference to our greenhouse industry. But they desperately need this connectivity, and when you get to the point where phase 2 has ended, you find a massive bottleneck. It’s an 80-kilometre highway, and people hit that 80 kilometres at 110, as we typically drive on 80-kilometre highways. So we need that widening, not only for connectivity and for our economic growth needs, but there are incredible safety implications that demand that we do this, and do this now.

Speaker, I introduced a petition signed by many members of our community two weeks ago, and unfortunately, three hours later a rollover accident claimed the lives of two people on that stretch of highway, the exact same stretch that I’m speaking of. It was a terrible example of why we need this, but all the more reason for the government to act swiftly to deliver what they promised.

I come from a region where we value the virtue of doing what you say you’re going to do. When you say you’re going to do something, do it, and if you can’t do it, come up with a good reason; tell us why you can’t do it. But if you are going to do something, stay true to your word. That certainly is what Bruce did. He fought and dedicated his life to doing that.

I don’t know if there are any members in here who sat with Bruce.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I did.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Yes. So you remember him. He was a consummate politician. He was an incredible gentleman, and despite our—

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: The bow tie.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Of course, he had the bow tie. We know the quintessential bow tie.

He taught me a lot. He taught me a lot about how to be a good politician. I learned from him. Although I never had the chance to let him know that, I really did. He was well respected across party lines. You don’t get elected for 17 years running without doing what you say you’re going to do.

When I took up the challenge, when I made the promise to my community to do that, I did so not only as their representative but as what I think Bruce would want me to do. If I started something as a member and wasn’t able to finish it, it would be my hope that the person that came next to me, despite their partisan affiliation, would actually endeavour to finish that work and would continue that work. Not—don’t do it for me, but do it because at least they know that I had the support of my community in trying to accomplish that.

This is one of the main impetuses for this bill, Speaker. It’s certainly something that we know is needed. It’s something that Bruce fought for from the beginning of his tenure in 1993, something that is widely supported by municipalities. There are letters of endorsement that I’ve sent to the minister from the county of Essex that support my motion. Mayor John Paterson in Essex and Deputy Mayor Richard Meloche expressed frustration at the recent announcement, asking why the plan doesn’t include the long-promised expansion of the road to four lanes.

Here's maybe a point that I didn't raise or I forgot to raise: The MTO has recently initiated a—they are going to resurface at the bottleneck portion. So we're going to have that phase 3 resurfaced, which gives us concern. Why would we resurface a road that is already planned to be doubled and widened? We will then be wasting money. You're going to lay down asphalt and, according to the plan, you'll have to rip it up by 2018 if you're going to fulfill your commitment under the southern highways plan. That's our concern: that by resurfacing, the signal is that we will lose this doubling of the last phase for a generation. We can't afford that. Our community can't afford it. Our small businesses can't afford it. Our tourism area can't afford it. And certainly the safety of commuters on that highway doesn't deserve it. We deserve what we were promised by this government, and that's what this motion is today. Fulfill your promise. Finish what Bruce started and deliver vital infrastructure to southwestern Ontario.

Speaker, the greenhouse industry in Leamington is at this very moment ready to invest half a billion dollars in our area, boosting the economy by something like \$580 million a year. But the greenhouse industry has said that expansion requires expanded infrastructure, particularly hydro, but also highway capacity.

Ms. Wynne challenged the agriculture industry to double its growth rate and create 120,000 jobs by 2020. Well, we need some help if we are going to do that in our agriculture heartland.

The mayor of Essex, Ron "Tout" McDermott—a shout-out to Tout—said, "The agriculture industry is going full bore now and we're getting things over [to] the States. There's a major need to expand out this way with the four-lane highway."

As I mentioned, the town of Essex passed a motion on May 4 in support of my call to widen this link.

I know that the government is under various forms of duress, whether it's teachers who are protesting or the need to find dollars anywhere. However, this is a promise that is not linked to the 2014 budget. It isn't linked to the 2011 budget or the 2008 budget. This is a promise that was made in 2006.

Today, when I asked the question of the Minister of Transportation, he seemed offended that I would even ask that we want you to finish the job. He seemed offended: "My goodness, why would you even ask the question?" It has been since 2006. How much more time do you need, Minister, to complete this for our region? How many more roads are out there that have not been completed or will not find the funding that is being promised or being touted by the government? That's our major concern.

In lobbying for this widening and seeking support, I reached out to Joan Crozier. Joan is Bruce's wife. I wanted to chat with her, as I always appreciate doing, just to get her sense and, really, to get her validation that I was on the right path. She certainly agreed that this was something that Bruce would want me to do and would want our community to have. I want to thank her for her acknowledgement and for her support on this.

I also want to thank all the members of our various municipalities who, for a long time, have pushed the government to give us an answer on whether this highway was going to be completed.

I've taken up 12 minutes of this debate. It shouldn't really take more than two minutes. Are you going to give us what you promised? Are you going to deliver and finish the job you started, or are you not? It is as simple as that.

If this government is so focused on infrastructure spending and they understand the need for infrastructure spending, then let's go back to some of your previous promises for communities that are still lagging behind in their connectivity and the need to advance and modernize their infrastructure. That would be us. That would be Essex county.

I would point to the fact that this has lingered for so long as being one of the measures of us having challenges throughout our economy. Allow us the opportunity to flourish. But you have to give us the appropriate tools. This is something that can easily be done. It is not a contentious issue, and it is well within the parameters and priorities and abilities of your government.

Today's motion simply does that. It calls on you to deliver what you promised—to finish what Bruce started. It also honours the legacy that Bruce had in our community by hopefully finishing what he started and honouring exactly his namesake, Bruce Crozier's Way. Indeed, if Bruce Crozier was to go after his own government, he would have done it. I'm proud to carry on that legacy and to fight for our community and see Highway 3 expanded.

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

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I'd like to thank the member from Essex for bringing this motion forward, and draw attention to the importance of quality and safety on our roads and highways in the province of Ontario.

We certainly must pay attention to usage and safety on our highways. I also acknowledge that widening Highway 3 is a very important matter for not only the constituents of Essex but the surrounding areas. I commend him for working for the people of his riding.

As the member opposite knows, the Ministry of Transportation has prioritized Highway 3, which runs from Windsor to Leamington. In 2006, the ministry completed a transportation environmental study report, which focused on the widening of Highway 3.

Two phases of the widening are now complete, from the city of Windsor to the town of Essex. This government has invested almost \$50 million into this portion of the Highway 3 widening, and 13 kilometres have been covered.

We are currently working on the final phase of the Highway 3 widening. The recommendations and the environmental assessment from 2006 have to be updated, and this project is listed under the southern highways program.

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In the interim, the ministry has been working to improve portions of Highway 3 from Essex Road 27 to Essex Road 34. This improvement project will be carried out this summer and will include full-depth pavement reconstruction over 10 kilometres of the highway as well as drainage improvements, left-hand turn lanes and improved traffic signals. The ministry will also resurface over nine kilometres of Highway 3 from Essex Road 8 to Essex Road 27 this year.

These upgrades and improvements will improve the quality of the highway and ensure safe usage for years to come. I know the member opposite has been wondering about this as well, so I just want to reassure the member from Essex that these current reconstructions will continue to be utilized in the future because the upgraded portion of Highway 3 will soon become the westbound lanes of the expanded four-lane highway. We're not wasting that, Speaker; it will be used as other portions of the highway.

As I said, the update to the 2006 transportation environmental study report lies under the purview of the southern highways program, which will determine the best way forward in terms of future work to expand Highway 3.

We are also continuing with key expansion projects in the area, such as the Rt. Hon. Herb Grey Parkway. When I was there for a recent unveiling of the border services crossing building in Windsor, I was able to go on a tour of the Herb Grey Parkway. I know that it's opening this summer, and it's going to be an excellent piece of infrastructure for the people of Windsor.

Under the southern highways program, this government has been doing an excellent job of improving the quality of Ontario's highways and ensuring safe rides for Ontario's drivers and commuters. As a matter of fact, Speaker, we should be very proud that, thanks to government prioritizing, we Ontarians drive on some of the safest highways in North America. Commuters can be confident that the Ministry of Transportation is consistently working to improve the roads and reduce congestion in order to serve Ontario's driving population.

In the 2014-15 year, the Ontario government is committing around \$2 billion under the southern highways program to improve, expand and repair Ontario's highways and bridges. Among other projects, there will be lane widening, bridge rehabilitation and reconstruction projects for Highway 401, and seven bridge rehabilitations on Highway 403. These projects are expected to create and maintain 19,500 construction jobs in this province, both directly from the road work and indirectly stemming from related projects. The Ministry of Transportation will continue to provide an economic boost to all Ontarians.

It's interesting to note, Speaker, that the member of the third party has voted against the budgets that have contained the commitments to the investments in these important infrastructure projects, so I am encouraging him and all members of the third party to support the

budget investments for infrastructure that are contained within it.

For the reasons that I spoke to in my comments, the process to update the environmental assessment is under way, and this process cannot be bypassed. We need to do this expansion safely. We need a current, updated environmental assessment from the 2006 model. The first section has already been upgraded. Once the process is completed, this project will be completed in the next few years. I just encourage the member opposite to encourage his party to support the budget with the infrastructure investments contained within it.

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

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's my pleasure to rise today in support of the member for Essex's motion.

We share a riding border, and we share an interest in and passion for this issue. All this motion is asking is that the government honour a commitment that was made to the region in 2006. They promised that Highway 3 would be a four-lane highway from Windsor to Leamington and that it would be finished by this year. Of course, that promise has been broken.

Prior to the 2007 election, Liberals in southwestern Ontario campaigned on a promise to widen highways, most notably Highway 3 and the 401 between Ridgetown and Chatham, in my riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex—another promise broken.

It has been nearly a decade, and these highways have gotten even more dangerous. Sadly, Speaker, families have lost loved ones. Last year, a 13-year-old Windsor girl and her 35-year-old uncle were killed in a horrific crash on the 401 near Chatham. A tractor-trailer crossed into the oncoming traffic and struck their vehicle. In this area, there is no centre divider, just a small grass dip. Neglect of our highways has caused deaths that could have been prevented.

But this motion from my colleague from Essex is an effort to continue the good work done by the late Bruce Crozier, the former Liberal MPP who fought to have a portion of Highway 3 widened. The highway now bears his name as a lasting tribute: Bruce Crozier's Way.

Now, think about this, Speaker: Right now, we have a PC member standing in support of an NDP motion which is seeking to continue the work done by an effective Liberal MPP. This is a non-partisan issue. A good idea, no matter what it is—you know, a good idea doesn't care who owns it, doesn't care who champions it. As a matter of fact, this is a belief that Patrick Brown, the new leader of the PC Party, also shares.

That's why I was ashamed that the Minister of Transportation failed to address a direct question about Highway 3 this morning, and instead resorted to cheap partisan shots. He was asked why his government had broken its 2006 promise to Leamington and Essex. In his reply to a question about safety on a highway that saw tragic deaths just weeks ago, the Minister of Transportation somehow felt it was appropriate to go on the attack. He said, "It's a shame that they don't want to put our money where their mouths are."

Well, I'm sorry, Minister, but that money is not yours. Tax dollars belong to the people of Ontario, and they should serve the people of Ontario.

It's disappointing that that minister refuses to apologize or even accept blame on behalf of his government for deaths directly caused by their dangerous cutbacks on winter road maintenance, as an example. And now he has needlessly injected partisanship into a fair request to honour a past government commitment to widen roads for public safety.

But I know the government is capable of more. They can do better. They can honour the legacy of former MPP Bruce Crozier, who served in their government and fought hard to protect drivers along Highway 3. He would not accept the answer given this morning.

Mr. Speaker, we need to look at this objectively, with an eye for evidence, and the evidence is clear: Highway 3 is not safe. If you talk to people from my riding or from neighbouring ridings, they will tell you that not a day goes by without witnessing a close call along Highway 3.

A big part of the problem is that certain individuals feel the need to fly along this stretch of road as if it were a drag strip. A lot of times, people are travelling home from work in Windsor, and they want to get home as fast as possible. Many of my constituents prefer to take back roads, even though it adds to their travel time. That's how dangerous Highway 3 is at the moment.

Today, in order to pass a driver, you have to move into the oncoming traffic. This has had disastrous consequences and caused many fatal crashes. Widening the highway would allow slower drivers to move to the right lane, while faster drivers could pass safely in the fast lane.

As the PC critic for community safety, I stand in support of my colleague the NDP MPP from Essex. I stand in support of the motion calling on this government to honour its past promises, not only to the 401 between Ridgetown and Chatham, but more specifically, as it pertains to this motion, to the widening of Highway 3. It is a public safety issue, and every day the government delays action is another day where lives are put in jeopardy.

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I ask each and every member of this House to support this motion, as well. Their action, as opposed to their inaction, can in fact save lives along the Bruce Crozier parkway, located partly in Leamington and running through Essex county to Windsor.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm pleased to rise on my colleague's bill on Bruce Crozier's Way. Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to speak today on this motion being presented by my colleague from Essex.

Looking at the history of Highway 3, representatives have been trying to get this highway four-laned for two decades. I haven't been here for two decades. I'm looking at its history, and I'm seeing once again that promises were made to this community regarding

transportation and they haven't been delivered. I can certainly understand the frustration that comes with that. The people of my riding of Niagara Falls were told that getting the GO train from Niagara Falls to Toronto was a priority. They presented a very affordable and responsible business plan to the Minister of Transportation, and yet we're still waiting, even though we've been told it's a high, high priority.

When it comes to transit, people should never have to wait dozens of years to know if they're going to have proper access to highways. These kinds of questions play a big role in people's lives. Knowing that they'll be able to drive easily to work without having to wait hours in traffic is a fact that plays a big role when families get together and make decisions about where they want to move to and settle down. It means a lot for communities, and they need to know that the commitments made to them are actually coming.

When we look at the case of Essex, the stretch of highway between Leamington and there—and quite a lot of economic development depends on promises actually coming true. There are jobs that depend on these commitments. There's money going into communities and people going to work. It's all part of knowing whether or not there will be reliable transportation. It's too important to commit to doing something and then not follow through once you're elected.

Mr. Speaker, those are all important issues, but there's one thing I'd like to focus on today. It's something that should always be our focus in this House, and that's road safety. Simply put, road safety comes second to none. Making sure that the people of this province never have to fear for their lives when they're driving on our roads is critical. This government should always be doing what it can to promote road safety.

I know that when it comes to Highway 3, petitions have been entered into this House before, calling on this government to complete the approved four-laning project that will keep the Windsor area safe.

Those of you who have been reading the Auditor General's report that came out a few short weeks ago know that road safety is a major concern. In case you missed it, the Auditor General proved that this government had been giving contracts to companies to clear our highways of snow and ice—the problem is, they awarded these contracts to the lowest bidders, companies that didn't even have the proper equipment or enough chemicals to remove the salt. It's easy to see what happened here: Roads became unsafe.

Mr. Speaker, I know you're interested in this. The companies that had been contracted to provide these services were told to report their own work—think about that—and let the ministry know if they thought they were meeting the standards. This is why it's important; this is why it ties into Windsor. In Niagara, the contractor that won the bid refused to even report the work they had done. To this day, we have no idea if they did their job or not. Do you know why? They never reported it. The government has never asked.

In Niagara, we knew our roads were unsafe. We contacted the MTO in the winter and they assured us that everything was fine. Our office was told, "Safety is our top priority at this ministry." They also said, "The ministry continuously monitors the contractor's compliance in meeting winter maintenance standards and ensures highways are safe for winter travel."

Well, the Auditor General's report shows clearly that this wasn't the case in Niagara and across the province of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you can see what I'm trying to illustrate here and why it relates to the motion. The people in this province knew their roads were unsafe in the winter. We proved that with the winter roads report we launched when we were receiving complaints from across the province. This government received warnings over and over and over again that winter roads were not being cleared properly. In my office, we inquired directly to the minister regarding a stretch of the QEW between Sodom Road and Lyons Creek Road in Fort Erie. We were told that the government was properly monitoring this. We know this wasn't the case. We saw dozens and dozens of accidents in my riding that could have been prevented if this government had listened to the community.

This government knew they were receiving complaints about unsafe roads. They knew those receiving these contracts could not properly clear our roads. In fact, their own ministry officials told them that. Your own ministry officials told you that. So if this government knew our roads were unsafe, they had an obligation—as the government, you had an obligation—to fix this problem to protect the people of the province of Ontario.

I'm going to tell you a quick story because I think my time is just about up.

My mind goes to a GM employee driving to work on the QEW in my riding who lost control of his vehicle, crossed the highway—if anyone's been in Niagara, the highway goes like this, side by side—on a slippery road. Do you know what happened there? It took his life. I believe, and the community believes, that if we made sure our roads were safe, that accident would never have happened.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for my time. I fully support the motion.

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

Mr. Chris Ballard: Thank you for the opportunity to address this private members' bill. I think it's a very important bill. It's very important when any member of this House, whether they be third party, opposition, or government, stands up to advocate on something that they believe to be very, very important in their community. For that alone, I think that's a very good thing.

I remember back to my days in municipal government when one of the hottest topics, especially around budget time, was about reconstruction of city roads. If you wanted to get a group of citizens into your budget meeting who were hot under the collar, it was to change

priorities to discover that another road in another part of the town was, in fact, in far worse shape than you had anticipated and that your plans, whatever they may have been, to construct a new road or reconstruct an existing road would have to be bumped back in order to accommodate higher-priority roads. I know that sometimes is hard to swallow but, in municipal life and in provincial life, that is the way things are.

I just wanted to touch on a couple of things to carry on. In the 2014-15 budget, we committed to spending almost \$2 billion to expand and repair southern Ontario highways and bridges. It's estimated that that \$1.95 billion of investments will create 19,500 jobs in southern Ontario. This is part of the southern highways program.

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I'm proud to say this: Ontario roads are among the safest in North America. In fact, I've read that in the previous years we were either number one or number two for having the safest roads in North America. I think that demonstrates the commitment that the workers—our staff, our employees—place on making sure that our roads are among the best and among the safest.

I know that the government has been investing to keep Ontario's highways and bridges in good repair to reduce congestion, improve safety and promote the economy. The Highway 404 extension north of my riding was on the books for years and years and years. Finally, after probably about 20 years, it was opened this year. It's a good thing because it's taking about 20,000 cars off the road each day. But it took a long time for it to be built, primarily because there were other priorities where roads and bridges were crumbling and in great need of repair. We're also continuing with key expansion projects such as the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway and Highway 407 East.

As I said, our government is focusing resources where they're needed the most: the rehabilitation of Ontario's pavement and bridges. When I did a little research about this particular road, it seems to me that it has not been forgotten. It is on the books, and currently the government is undertaking a study to update the 2006 design recommendations. So it has not been forgotten, in my books.

The ministry is investing nearly an additional \$50 million to widen 13 kilometres of Highway 3; that's phase 1 and 2. The one that leapt out at me, when I was reading through some of the literature, was that work to widen the remaining two-lane section of Highway 3 between Leamington and Windsor is still listed in the southern highways program under planning for the future. In the meantime, the government is reconstructing Highway 3 and those reconstructed lanes won't be torn up. It's not a waste of money. Those reconstructed lanes will become the future westbound lanes of the four-lane highway. That's where I'll leave it for now.

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

Mr. Ted Arnott: This is an important debate that the member for Essex has initiated this afternoon. What he's

asking for—obviously it's a priority in his riding of Essex—is that the widening of Bruce Crozier's Way, Highway 3, be undertaken between Essex and Leamington, and that this project be placed on the southern highways program, the Ministry of Transportation's five-year plan. He has talked about the history of this issue and the fact that apparently a campaign promise was made by the government in 2006 to finish this work by 2014-15 and it's still not done.

I have an opportunity occasionally to visit the Windsor and Essex area, and to drive the roads, of course. I am very well acquainted. In fact, the former member for Essex, Bruce Crozier, was a very good friend of mine because we served together as presiding officers, and I came to know he and Joan very well. I was very, very pleased when it was decided that Highway 3 would be named to remember and honour Bruce Crozier. It was very fitting and appropriate that that was done.

I certainly want to, again, comment about what a great man Bruce Crozier was and what an outstanding member of provincial Parliament. It would be inappropriate for me to purport to know what he would say on this issue, but I certainly know of his commitment to his constituency. He was certainly willing to speak up on behalf of his riding, if need be, challenging the powers that be in his own party. Obviously, he was that sort of a member and in that way he was an example, I think, to all members. The member for Essex is certainly bringing forward an idea that needs to be brought forward.

Coincidentally, I actually have a private member's resolution that is before the House too, as future business. It was actually the very first one on the order paper that was tabled on July 3, 2014, the very first day it was possible to table a private member's resolution. I think we had the throne speech that day, if I'm not mistaken. I call upon the government to put the Highway 6 Morriston bypass project on the southern highways program, the ministry's five-year investment plan for new highway construction in southern Ontario.

Obviously, I want to support the member for Essex in this regard. I'm not suggesting that I'm going to support his resolution and ask him to support mine, but clearly he's doing the same sort of thing I was trying to do, which is to bring this forward in the Legislature and encourage the government to give consideration, but also to highlight the importance of the project.

Now, we've heard from government members in the context of this debate that the government plans to spend \$2 billion on the southern highways program. That's a big number; there's no question. But, of course, it leads us, as opposition members, to say, "Okay, where are our projects in that \$2 billion?" I think it's a legitimate question.

The government obviously has all kinds of various projects before it, but we, as opposition members, have an obligation to bring forward these particular projects and try to raise awareness about the need, and try to get the government to listen, pay attention and hopefully respond.

The very day after the election, June 13 last year, I went to work in my riding office. The first thing I did was write a letter to the Premier, and I said this to her: "As you know from your tenure as Minister of Transportation, Highway 6 serves as a vital link between the 401 and the Hamilton/Niagara region and the US border. However, drivers travelling this route encounter a severe bottleneck in the community of Morriston, in Puslinch township, just south of the 401. Oftentimes traffic is backed up for kilometres in both directions.

"By constructing the Highway 6 Morriston bypass, this bottleneck would be eliminated, and traffic and goods could flow back and forth from Hamilton to the 401 more" easily and "quickly and safely. There would also be a" huge "positive economic benefit for a large region of the province. There is huge economic cost related to the current congestion at Morriston.

"As you know, I've been raising this in the Legislature for many years.

"Working with the township of Puslinch and the county of Wellington, I have repeatedly written and spoken to successive Ministers of Transportation urging that the Highway 6 Morriston bypass project be placed on the Ministry of Transportation's southern highways program, MTO's five-year plan for new highway construction. I have also raised the issue many times in speeches in the Legislature."

In fact, we had an important meeting with the former Minister of the Environment, John Gerretsen, a few years ago, where we pushed him to ensure that the environmental assessment could be concluded on this project. That was part of the work we did some time ago, and I would draw to the minister's attention again that the Morriston bypass environmental assessment has been concluded. Obviously, it's been a few years now, but we've got to keep momentum going forward.

I continued my letter to the Premier in this way: "During the most recent provincial Parliament, after you became the Premier, I introduced a private member's resolution again calling on the Minister of Transportation to put the Highway 6 Morriston bypass on the ministry's five-year plan for highway construction. My resolution," even then, "was the very first item on the order paper, as I tabled it the same day as your government's throne speech on February 19, 2013.

"This project has been talked about for a generation. It is time for this project to proceed.

"Once more, I urge you to prioritize this project and ensure that it is placed on the Ministry of Transportation's five-year plan for highway construction."

Of course, we were called back into session in July, Mr. Speaker, as you know, right after the election. I again tabled this private member's resolution, and it is, indeed, the first item on the Legislature's order paper.

On October 6, a group had been formed, called the Morriston Bypass Coalition. They met with many ministry staff, including staff of the Premier, and made a number of recommendations.

I'm unfortunately running out of time.

I have asked the current Minister of Transportation to meet again with the township of Puslinch and the Morriston Bypass Coalition. I know there are a number of other members interested in this project, and I want to invite them to show their support as well. We're going to keep working on this too.

I congratulate the member for Essex for bringing his local issue forward, and it certainly has my support.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to add my support to the member from Essex.

You see, Speaker, when I was in office 159, Bruce Crozier's office was just across the hall from me. For some reason, we both came in through the east door and sort of got there at the same time. Bruce was a gentleman in everything he did.

We would come in on Monday, and he would talk to me about the weather in his riding. He came from way south, and I came from up north. Of course, the weather was really different. He would talk to me about all the greenhouses that had started in his riding, and I was under four feet of snow and ice. But it didn't matter. It was pleasant to talk to him.

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He was one of those dedicated MPPs who cared for the people he represented. He would share stories with me. And certainly this road, Highway 3, is something that he was putting his career on the line for. This was something that he understood, that, above all, everybody in his riding that he represented needed to have this highway four-laned for what it would bring in economic growth and for the safety of the people he represented.

He was very eloquent. He did what he was told. He sat on committee. He paid his dues. He tried really, really hard to be a good MPP. And he was part of the Liberal Party. I would ask the members of the Liberal Party to honour one of your own. He is somebody who is deserving of honour. He was an honourable member of this House. He convinced your government that this highway needed to be done. You named it in his honour. Don't dishonour him now. Finish this 50 kilometres so that we can all be proud of the legacy that Bruce Crozier brought to his riding and to this province.

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

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you to the member from Essex for his motion today. I, like the member from Essex, represent a riding that sits along the edges of a larger city. Like Essex lies between Windsor and Leamington, Durham sits on the eastern fringes of the greater Toronto area. We in Durham know very well the necessity of the highways that lead from the cities into our communities, ones that have to adapt to traffic that begins in urban areas and gradually becomes more rural.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, I also know that the Minister of Transportation must consider the needs of everyone in our province, and I am sure that he has his priorities straight. Part of Highway 3 in Essex will be

reconstructed. The ministry has made a significant investment, with an accommodation for further expansion in the design. That I take as a positive sign for the spirit of the member's motion and a positive action on behalf of our government. We must be prudent when we are considering our infrastructure, and I know that as we are building Ontario up, we must look at our province as a whole: urban, rural and all.

In my riding of Durham, we have a lot of projects on the go and a lot of projects that, in my estimation, would have taken priority as well, such as the extension of GO train services to Bowmanville and Courtice, such as rural roads in places such as Scugog, and culverts in need of repair in places such as Uxbridge. All of these are projects that take priority in my riding, and I know the government will adopt and will do these projects as time permits and as finances allow us to do so.

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

Ms. Cindy Forster: I thank the member from Essex for bringing this issue forward, but I kind of have some bad news for him, if I relate this to a story in my riding of Welland. I can remember in 1999, just before a provincial election, standing on Canadian Tire property at the corner of the 406 and Main Street in Welland. Tony Clement was the member then. I was there with our dearly departed friend Peter Kormos. Tony Clement promised my community that the 406 extension, the double-widening, would happen if Frank Sheehan was elected: "If you elect Frank, this is going to happen in the next couple of years." Well, that was in 1999; it is now 2015. The project is almost completed; it's probably a year or a year and a half away from completion. So it took almost 20 years to actually get that work done.

Like Essex, my riding of Niagara has a great agricultural background. We have flower greenhouses and we have fruit farms, and we have vegetable greenhouses as well. Those people need to get their product to market. We hear every day in this Legislature about the gridlock in Toronto and the loss to the economy here in the city of Toronto, but our communities—our rural communities and our small communities in the north, the south, the east and in the west—all have those same challenges. They can't attract new business and they can't attract more population growth if they do not have the tools, the roads and the hydro that they're looking for as well in Essex.

I think that when governments actually take on a project and they make municipalities do five- and 10-year plans, they should actually meet those commitments. If you're going to build 80 kilometres in Essex, then it should be done in a reasonable period of time. In my case, it was really only 30 kilometres in the expansion and it took almost 20 years.

I hope you support the member from Essex's motion today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Essex.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I want to thank the members from Chatham-Kent-Essex, Davenport, Niagara Falls,

Newmarket–Aurora, Wellington–Halton Hills, Durham and Welland.

That is a tragic story of a promise that isn't kept. It doesn't really leave me very optimistic, unfortunately, but nevertheless I will endeavour because I think that that is what my predecessor would want me to do. The late Bruce Crozier, as the road is aptly named after his effort, I think would lobby his own government if this was the case, in which a promise was made and a promise was not kept.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, I come from a place where we value that. It's a virtue and it's something that Bruce held. I think it was a large degree of his success that he did what he said he was going to do. That's all this motion does.

This isn't a project. I appreciate that all of our regions have various infrastructure needs and priorities that we all would like to see completed or even started. The difference here is that this project is two thirds done. It was promised in 2006. We were told that it would be done by 2015. We are in calendar year 2015, and we see no effort or action on the part of the government to begin the process of finishing Highway 3. Our communities need it. Our small businesses need it. Our agriculture communities are demanding it and deserve it, frankly, for the amount of contribution that they put into our GDP and the effort and the growth that they've given to our agriculture industry.

We need this; we deserve it. It is my honour to stand here in this House today to fight and to champion it on behalf of my region. It's a promise that I made during the last election, and this gives me the first opportunity to continue to fight for it.

Your vote as government members will seal your fate in southwestern Ontario when it comes to your electoral success, because you will once and for all prove that your word is either good or not worth anything. This is your opportunity to show us that you can fulfill a promise. We hope that you do that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will take the vote on that item at the end of private members' public business.

VACCINATIONS

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Legislative Assembly should recognize that evidence clearly shows vaccinations keep Ontarians safe and protect children from many serious, preventable diseases which are easily spread in schools and public places, including to individuals who are unable to receive vaccinations due to medical conditions or their age, and that the Legislative Assembly should strongly encourage all parents and guardians to ensure that children who are medically able are vaccinated.

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

Ms. Daiene Vernile: This motion addressing the importance of vaccinating our children is intended to bring

clarity to the confusion now undermining the science behind life-saving immunization. The vast majority of Canadian children—about 95% of them—are protected by vaccinations by the time they enter school at age five. Their parents recognize the proven science which underscores the medical evidence that immunization works. It not only protects children from disease but also those around them.

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But in recent years, we have seen a troubling new trend. With families opting out of vaccinations here in Ontario, those children are not only at risk of harmful and sometimes deadly diseases, but they are also putting other children at risk at school and in the community.

There are children who are not able to participate in our immunization program due to medical reasons. It's our responsibility as parents to ensure that we are protecting these children by vaccinating our own children.

In our province, for over a century, dedicated researchers and health care professionals have worked tirelessly to reduce and eliminate a long list of infectious diseases which at one time ravaged our population: cholera, smallpox, tuberculosis, diphtheria, typhus, polio, tetanus, whooping cough, rubella, meningitis and measles. If you ask your grandparents or your great-grandparents, if they're still alive, they'll tell you what it was like when there was an outbreak of one of these debilitating diseases in their community.

Polio, for example, left many children paralyzed. At its height in 1953, polio caused about 500 deaths in Canada, while disabling thousands more. But two years later, when a polio vaccine was introduced, the incident rate dropped dramatically. By the mid-1990s, Canada and all of the Americas were certificated as polio-free, and today around the globe, polio has been virtually eliminated.

Another contagious disease that has afflicted millions of people around the planet is measles. Also known as rubella or red measles, this disease is a highly contagious virus. Symptoms of measles include fever, cough and a blotchy rash. It's easily spread from person to person through direct contact or through the air from sneezing or coughing. A severe case can bring on brain swelling, pneumonia and hearing loss. The World Health Organization has stated that measles is the leading global cause of vaccine-preventable deaths in children under five.

Before a vaccine was introduced in Canada in the early 1960s, we averaged about 400,000 cases of measles every year. By the mid-1990s, that number had dropped dramatically, to just over 2,000. Immunization is truly one of the most significant advancements in public health in this country and has saved more lives than any other health measure.

So considering the benefits to the health and well-being of all Canadians, why do we now see the emergence of skepticism questioning the efficacy of immunization? We've heard the fear mongering expressed by those who are opposed to vaccinations. Some claim that the vaccines contain dangerous chemicals. Others believe

that they can combat potentially deadly diseases using so-called alternative treatments.

If you enter “anti-vaccination” on an Internet search, you will find a Wild West of fear mongering and conspiracy theories. There are those who suggest that there’s a link between immunization and autism. Celebrities Jenny McCarthy and Alicia Silverstone, preaching from a wide-reaching soapbox, have fuelled this debate.

Anti-vaxxers point to a 1998 study that suggested a possible link between the MMR vaccine—that stands for measles, mumps and rubella—and autism. The study, which appeared in the medical journal *The Lancet*, set off a firestorm of controversy but was later debunked as being fraudulent and misleading. In fact, 10 of the 13 authors of that paper later said that they should not have published it. *The Lancet* even discredited the claim that the MMR vaccine is linked to autism spectrum disorder.

But the damage was done. There are parents today who honestly believe that they’re making the right choice for their children by saying no to vaccinations. Sadly, they are putting their children and others at great risk.

We saw this recently as measles flared up in parts of Ontario. The first cases appeared in Toronto and were soon followed by several reported cases in the Niagara area. Starting on February 2 of this year, there were four confirmed cases of measles in Toronto, and that number across Canada surged to 137. There were a total of nine cases in Toronto, six in the Niagara region and one in both Peel and Halton regions. But the worst-hit region was the Lanaudière area of Quebec, where there were 119 confirmed cases of measles, and that truly is a troubling figure.

Coming into contact with this virus can be devastating, not only for those who contract the virus but also for everyone in the household and those who come into contact with them.

A troubling example of this is the case of a young family in York region. A mother of two small children was called by York Region Public Health on February 9 after visiting her doctor’s office in Markham. She was told that a patient who had visited the same office had been diagnosed with measles. Now, her baby, not old enough to be vaccinated, and her toddler, only having received one dose of the two-dose vaccine, were forced to stay at home for the 21-day incubation period.

These vaccine-preventable diseases are incredibly contagious and especially dangerous, as many do not show signs or symptoms of infection for anywhere between seven and 21 days. It’s for this reason that we do need to protect the most vulnerable who are unable to protect themselves, especially where these diseases are being spread by unsuspecting carriers in public places.

In Ontario, we do have a very strict protocol for the vaccination of children. Legally, if you attend school in this province, you must be vaccinated. The Immunization of School Pupils Act, the ISPA, requires that parents of children attending primary or secondary school provide their local medical officer of health with proof that their child had their immunization against the designated diseases, but exemptions are allowed on the basis of a

parent’s religious or philosophical beliefs. Only about 2% of Ontario students, on average, are opting for this exemption.

Immunization authorities tell us that an estimated 95% vaccine coverage is needed to stop the spread of a virus. This is referred to as “herd immunity.” It is true not just for measles but for all vaccine-preventable illnesses. So some parents may think that their kids are safe from these illnesses because their classmates are vaccinated, but if too many parents are of this mindset, we’re going to see lower vaccination rates in our classrooms, putting all students at risk, putting younger siblings at risk, and putting the general public at risk when they leave the classroom.

Mr. Speaker, you may have heard of the recent outbreak of mumps in the NHL this past winter. Nine players were affected from the New York Rangers, the Minnesota Wild, and the Anaheim Ducks. They missed up to eight games each. Now, team doctors were quick to act and gave the players booster shots, stopping the spread of the virus.

The importance of vaccinating is simply unquestionable. Preventing illness is not only good for our public health; it’s also the best option for our public purse. Preventing illnesses with vaccines keeps Ontarians out of emergency rooms and doctors’ offices, leaving space open for patients who do need critical care, preventing the spread of the virus, and leaving funds available for other important services within our health care system.

Vaccines have saved more lives in the last 50 years than any other health intervention program in Canada. I’m proud of this government for having such a strong immunization strategy.

In Ontario, the provincial government currently funds 22 vaccines, providing protection against 16 different illnesses. Publicly funded vaccines are provided through many different programs. There’s the infant and childhood immunizations, school-based immunizations, adult immunizations, the Universal Influenza Immunization Program, and high-risk immunization programs. The research is currently under way for new vaccines, and we all need to be concerned about this.

Health organizations in Ontario do work very closely with Health Canada studying newly approved vaccines, always looking for new, innovative ways to keep Ontarians healthy and at their very best.

Mr. Speaker, you might have heard the recent good news of the very special gift that Canada has offered to the newly born Princess Charlotte, the latest addition to the royal family. In her name, our federal government is making a charitable donation of \$100,000 to Immunize Canada. This is an organization that promotes the safe use of vaccines across our nation. The funds are going to be used to educate the public on the benefits of vaccinating. We know that having access to life-saving vaccines will ensure that children coast to coast will have the best start at life.

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Mr. Speaker, while I was preparing to present this motion to you and to the House today, I was reminded of

what I saw on a number of occasions while producing television documentaries from parts of sub-Saharan Africa. I saw mothers and fathers lined up for hours seeking basic health care for their children. I saw young people afflicted with diseases which are easily preventable in this country because of our access to vaccines. Where immunization is offered, those parents that I saw considered themselves to be fortunate to receive this treatment for their children.

Mr. Speaker, despite the skepticism and the naysayers, the science is very clear. The history is clear. Immunization saves lives, and we are so fortunate in this province to have fully funded access to vaccinations. So I encourage my colleagues from all sides of the House to support this motion to protect all Ontarians from vaccine-preventable illnesses.

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

Mrs. Julia Munro: I just want to take a couple of minutes to put some views on the record. My first comment will be that I will be supporting the initiative of the member.

I want to mention three groups of people that we have to recognize. The first are those who have, for whatever reasons, unfounded hesitation about using vaccinations. As I think has already been pointed out and certainly will continue to be pointed out, this is a group that are not only a risk for themselves, but they are also a huge risk for the second group of people. This is, fortunately, a small group of people who cannot accept inoculation; for whatever medical reason, they can't. The third group is the almost 99% of the population that should and does immunize their children. The reason for that importance is for that second group I mentioned. They need to be in the presence of the vast majority of people having received inoculation, because they have no ability to protect themselves.

I would say today that what we should conclude with is the important role of education and information that must go out to those people who for unfounded hesitation have not had their children vaccinated.

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

Ms. Cindy Forster: It's an honour to rise to speak to this private member's motion on vaccinations. I'm a registered nurse who worked for many years in the field. I saw first-hand the need for education and awareness around immunizations. Only in the last few months we've seen a resurgence of measles. In my own area of Niagara, they had to open immunization clinics actually, and six children were diagnosed with measles most recently. Back in the early 2000s, we saw the outbreak of SARS, which took the lives of many health care workers and many Ontarians over a period of a number of months. Then in 2011 in the Niagara region, we saw an outbreak of *C. difficile* where I think as many as 16 patients were affected. Some of that could have been avoided because some of it was due to cuts in budgets around housekeeping and disinfecting in hospitals.

But to go back to the bill, infection spreads very easily, very readily. So I think that it's important that not only Ontarians, not only the people who are responsible for making sure their kids get the vaccinations, but also physicians, health care workers and public health departments do a great job of trying to educate parents about the importance of vaccinations and making sure they're kept up to date, that they're medically necessary, except in those few cases when it is medically—

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: Contraindicated.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Contraindicated, right. That's the word, yes—medically contraindicated to the patient.

Unfortunately, there's still a small number of people who are misled into thinking that vaccinations are dangerous. There's been this whole discussion in the last couple of years about vaccinations and autism, although there isn't any medical evidence, I think, to totally support that at this point. There can be complications from these contagious communicable diseases, like measles, that can be much more problematic than the actual disease itself, things like encephalitis, inner ear infections and pneumonia that people can actually get when they're not vaccinated.

The bill is encouraging legislators to encourage parents, but I don't really know that it's our job to do that. It's the job of the health care workers. It's the job of physicians. It's the job of our community health centres, our family health teams and our public health units. I think the job of the government is to make sure that those particular agencies are appropriately funded so that they're not having to constantly cut back their resources. If you have enough people working in those particular agencies to actually educate and bring awareness to the issues and the importance of vaccination, I think that is more important than actually asking legislators to encourage parents to do this.

I know that this government has certainly had a failed strategy around immunization over the last short while. In 2014, the Auditor General actually reported that when she reviewed the immunization strategy, she clearly stated the government was failing to protect Ontarians, and she was distressed to know that 20% of Ontario's flu vaccine goes missing each year. That's a lot of money. That's a lot of money going somewhere. We're buying these vaccines—sometimes it's problematic to even try to get them in a timely way. Then they go missing and the government can't find out—they have no tracking system to find out where those hundreds of thousands of dollars in vaccines disappeared to.

There were 21,000 instances alone last year when the minister paid physicians and pharmacists to administer the flu vaccine more than once to the same patient. I hope the government has actually gone back and retrieved those overpayments from druggists and physicians.

I find it strange that, in this modern day, the government still doesn't have an appropriate tracking system for immunization in the province. The federal government as well, their leadership is lacking too, because they need to create a national database.

Already the new Panorama database has doubled its original budget—another example of poor public policy by the government. It's like another SAMS debacle, except now it's with the immunization program. The government spent \$142 million to better track vaccinations and children who have not had their vaccinations, but it's still not working. Local health officials have reported that there are so many problems in that current database system that they can no longer warn or suspend those who put their classmates at risk. Thousands of records were accidentally duplicated across health units in the province, making officials unable to know who was immunized and who wasn't immunized. They've wasted so much time sorting out those duplications that children in kindergarten and grade 1 haven't even been added to the new system. If we see an outbreak of measles in a classroom, health officials will be unable to isolate vaccinated or non-vaccinated kids.

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The new system also doesn't permit any temporary exemptions for parents who need time to find their missing records. This means that parents won't get a reminder from the system for their child when they need a booster shot.

Once again, although the intent of this private member's bill is good, we are reminded of the importance of accountability and transparency around public policy. We're also reminded of the waste of public tax dollars when systems don't work. I hope that this debate gives some momentum to improve the immunization strategy as we raise these problems for you today.

Certainly, New Democrats support having every person immunized who is medically able to be. But we also support appropriate funding and not freezing of budgets for public health units, community health centres, hospitals and family health teams, because when you freeze those budgets, you end up actually cutting their budgets. They have to cut somewhere. As I said, during SARS and particularly during the C. difficile in Niagara, it was due to budget cuts that people got infected and lost their lives.

I'm happy to have had the opportunity to speak to this. Thank you.

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

Hon. Dipika Damerla: I'm pleased to rise and speak in support of this motion that has been introduced by the member from Kitchener Centre, which says "that the Legislative Assembly should strongly encourage all parents and guardians to ensure that children who are medically able are vaccinated."

I'm just surprised that, in the 21st century, we even need to have a motion like this because, as the member from Kitchener Centre quite correctly said, I don't think there is a single medical intervention in Canada or anywhere in the world that has saved more lives, or saved more people from disabling diseases, than vaccinations. So it's very telling that we actually have to have a motion around this and a debate around this.

I do want to speak to something, Mr. Speaker. I want to share a story, because I remember it so vividly. When I was in grade 5 and grade 6—I even remember the grades—my sister and I would walk a short distance to school every day with my friend and her brother. The four of us would walk.

Our school had a school uniform of a white blouse, and a blue skirt that had to be up to the knee—or not, but anyway. This friend of mine had special dispensation to wear a long skirt. She wore a skirt all the way to her ankles, because she had had polio. As kids, we would all walk together, and we often tried to keep pace with her, but as kids, we would often skip ahead of her. I can still remember, in the image of my mind even now, the three of us way ahead and she walking slowly, limping, coming up at the rear. At the time, we didn't think much of it, but now that I'm much older, I try to think of how hard it must have been for her to be always catching up. I have no recollection at all of her ever complaining.

What's really telling is, this was not in the 1950s, as Daiene was talking about polio in Canada. This was in the 1980s. As late as 1988, in India, there were annually 200,000 cases of polio.

But what's really remarkable is that in 2011, against all odds, India finally became polio-free, because for three years, in a population of 1.2 billion people, there was not a single case of polio. That is considered one of the biggest, biggest triumphs of public health and modern medicine, and that is the true story of vaccinations.

But here sometimes, I think we become a victim of our own success, because we have forgotten the lives that vaccinations save. There's an entire generation that has probably grown up without actually seeing a friend with polio. So I think there's a little bit of complacency as—you know, this debate around whether we should vaccinate or not.

When you look around the world; when you've grown up like I have, with a friend who had polio—and I know many people, depending on your demographics, even in Canada, may have remembered friends who had polio—you really begin to realize the value of these vaccinations and the tragic consequences of not vaccinating.

That was brought home to me by an article I read in CNN that talked about this young five-year-old girl in India who became the last person to contract polio. Her story is a story of parents who had vaccinated their three other kids but for some reason didn't vaccinate this child. They live with that regret, that this child is the poster child, the one who became the last person in a population of 1.2 billion to contract polio.

I think we need to bring these stories to life to remind people that we cannot take these gains for granted and that it's really important that all of us who can and are medically able to should get vaccinated, for ourselves and the greater good of society.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I wish we didn't have to all still be talking about trying to convince parents to vaccinate

their children. I think that a decade ago, it wasn't so difficult, but over the last eight or nine years it's been very difficult to convince parents that, yes, vaccines are safe. We're hearing stories of parents who had embarked on a program of vaccination for their children, because they had been convinced, but they hadn't yet been able to complete—because we know you can't suddenly give all the vaccinations at one time—and their children contracted measles or rubella.

It is heartbreaking when we think about medical professionals, people who graduated medical school, who had to retract their studies. They did fraudulent studies which convinced many in the communities—parents, and celebrities, unfortunately—to jump on the bandwagon to convince parents that there's a connection between autism and vaccines. My husband will always say, "Well that's an association, not a causation." He's a physician. His favourite example is that people who have Jacuzzis have more heart attacks. It doesn't mean that if you get rid of your Jacuzzi, you're going to have a lower incidence of heart attack. It just means that there is an association between Jacuzzis and maybe a sedentary lifestyle, a more affluent, going-to-restaurants-more-often lifestyle. It is not a cause of the heart attacks.

I think that it's our job here as legislators to serve the people who elected us, who put us here, and to explain the science. Not to focus on the political science, not to just create legislation to force people to do things, but to have people understand the science behind vaccination, to understand that it's about being part of a community and doing what's helpful to your community. There are people, we've heard, who are in the community who cannot be vaccinated, and it means that everybody who can be vaccinated must be vaccinated. We can all do better.

I remember when the chickenpox vaccine came out because that was in my time as a parent. My two older children had the chickenpox but my two younger children had the chickenpox vaccine. I considered myself a little micro-study in whether or not you should give your children the chickenpox vaccine. I know people who had chickenpox as an adult. It's not pretty and it's not comfortable, Mr. Speaker. I think you'll agree with me on that.

Japan started with the chickenpox vaccine about 10 years before us, and we were a little slow to jump on the bandwagon. I want to remind everybody that it's not just that it's inconvenient to have children have the chickenpox—although, I'll say it was a pleasure not to have to deal with it two more times—it's that the vaccine for chickenpox is also the same vaccine for shingles. It's a real problem in our communities: elderly parents, immunocompromised people and pregnant people who end up getting shingles. It can be very damaging to themselves and an unborn fetus. We can do better, and we will do better.

The Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care spoke about polio, and I'm reminded of a great-aunt I had who was what we call a *chalutz*, somebody who

helped create the state of Israel. Her name was Rochel, which means Rachel. She had polio; she had the special shoe which had, like, a six-inch platform, and a hip that didn't work properly.

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It didn't stop her in her life, and yes, she did manage to have some children and adopt some children, but what a struggle her life was because of that. Like the associate minister said, she didn't complain but that doesn't mean that within she didn't have those struggles.

I hope that everybody here does their part in their community. Maybe we can go and speak when those meetings are held at local hospitals to convince people to ensure that their children are properly vaccinated; to not listen to these sort of Internet scientists, as I guess you could call them, who think they know what they're talking about—we all know they don't—and to instead immunize their children, and maybe to create that proper registry, as we heard from the NDP member, so that people can easily go on and ensure, if they're divorced, that their ex-spouse is indeed vaccinating their children and not just telling them they are, so that they can actually track it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really think it's an important topic.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: I wanted to share a story with the people in this House and the people listening.

Today, we're talking about the importance of vaccinations for children, and I do believe that it is very important for everybody to have their children vaccinated, if the children are healthy enough to receive the vaccination, of course.

But words come cheap around here and sometimes actions speak a little bit louder. I would encourage all of my peers to really think about it seriously when a parent comes to you and asks you to sign one of those forms to have their children excluded from vaccination. I won't name names or point fingers, but there are a lot of people in this House who may be speaking in favour of having every child in Ontario vaccinated and about all of the good that vaccination has made, and some of the horrific consequences of those diseases that are now gone—for a generation now they are gone because we have those vaccines—but then, when they are face to face with the parent—and think of it as being face to face with somebody who votes for you or against you—they make the wrong decision.

They say the right thing. They say that every child in Ontario should be vaccinated, but when that parent, who makes it clear that he or she is not going to vote for you anymore if you don't sign this piece of paper that says that you don't have to have your child vaccinated—do you know what they do, Speaker? They sign their name to it. They sign their name to it, and then the child does not have to receive vaccinations and the child is allowed to go back to school. There are many MPPs who have done this in this House.

Interjections.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm being asked to name a few of my colleagues who have done this. This is not the point. The point is really to show that we have a responsibility as MPPs to do what is right for the people of this province. To do what is right for the people of this province is to speak with our words and to speak with our actions.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Minister of Municipal Affairs, come to order.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you, Speaker.

I encourage every member of this House to really think about it strongly. Next time one of your constituents comes to your office or comes to one of your constituency assistants and asks to have this form signed because they are somebody who supports you, do the right thing: Send them to a health professional and tell them that as an MPP, you won't be signing those dispensations because you believe in vaccinations and you believe that every child in Ontario should be protected.

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

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's my pleasure to stand in the House today and speak to this motion. I want to, in so doing, thank my colleague from Kitchener Centre for facilitating this important conversation.

You know, Speaker, it's always good to hear support for vaccinations from all sides of the House. I always welcome, and I know my colleagues do too, positive suggestions based on evidence and not on rhetoric, because support for robust public health should never be grounded in partisanship.

Keeping the citizens of Ontario safe and healthy is one of our government's highest priorities. Some of the recent global health crises go to show how quickly and terribly an illness or disease can spread through a population if the proper precautions are not taken. Indeed, they are reminders of just how fortunate we are to live in a society, in a province, with strong public health infrastructure in place where all Ontarians can access and benefit from the life-saving benefit of vaccinations.

I had the privilege of recently hearing a talk in Burlington given by a constituent of mine, Dr. Anthony Ford-Jones, a renowned paediatrician who has dedicated his life to treating and helping children. Last year, Dr. Ford-Jones received the Distinguished Community Paediatrician Award at the Canadian Paediatric Society annual conference in recognition of his significant contributions to the field of community paediatrics.

Dr. Ford-Jones's talk focused on the health and well-being of our children. In it, he spoke of his concerns regarding the "anti-vaccination movement," which he characterized as misguided. He went on to say, "It makes me sad, mad and frightened to see whooping cough and measles cases." In a conversation we had recently, he reminded me how terror-stricken parents were in the 1950s because of polio. They wouldn't let their children swim in public pools and they avoided public places until a vaccine was developed. Only then did they breathe a sigh of a relief.

He noted a more recent case and situation in the Russian Federation in 1990 where, in order to save money, the government stopped vaccinating for diphtheria, thinking the danger was over. Sadly, close to 157,000 cases were reported throughout the region, with close to 5,000 deaths—which is absolutely remarkable for such a preventable cause—until control measures were brought to bear.

Dr. Ford-Jones also underscored the important public health benefits of vaccination from the perspective of vaccinating one's own children. Some children, he noted, are hard to protect: Those on steroids, those who have suppressed immune systems, transplant recipients, those with irradiated blood diseases and leukemics. All are susceptible, as they cannot be vaccinated. These examples highlight the importance we all play in ensuring public safety and the health and well-being of one's own children as well as others.

In short, there is significant scientific proof to show that vaccinations are one of the most effective means of preventing the spread of infectious diseases in our population. So it is our duty to ensure that we can offer this preventative measure to as many Ontarians as possible who are medically able.

By ensuring that most of the population is immunized against common ailments such as measles, the mumps or rubella, we can also protect those in our communities who are not medically able to be vaccinated.

Our government is committed to ensuring that Ontarians in communities across this province can go about their lives without fear of infection from these common yet highly contagious and potentially deadly diseases, especially amongst our children. We recently enhanced our Immunization of School Pupils Act, which aims to help protect our children from many serious diseases that can easily be spread in schools by ensuring their vaccinations are up to date. I would encourage all Ontarians to check and make sure that their own immunizations are up to date as well.

Despite the overwhelming support from the medical community and myriads of studies that show the effectiveness of vaccinations, there are individuals and groups out there that believe that getting a needle is bad for you and can cause all kinds of long-term effects. The reality is that there is no convincing evidence that vaccines are in any way harmful to your health. Virtually every study that has shown negative long-term effects from vaccines has failed to stand up to the peer review process and has been debunked entirely.

It would be irresponsible for us to risk the health of our communities over misplaced fears and bad science. Encouraging all of our citizens who are able to get vaccinated would go a long way to protect the health of every citizen in our province.

I will be supporting this motion and I encourage all of my colleagues in this House to do the same, not just for our own health but for the health of our children and grand-children.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It's a pleasure to speak to this motion from the member from Kitchener Centre. I'm happy to support it. But I have to tell you a quick story.

I don't know how many of you are involved in the Equal Voice program called Girls Government, but I've been working with two schools in my community since January, and the member from Kitchener Centre will be pleased to know that this was one of our points of discussion.

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As you know, with Girls Government, what happens is that young ladies in public school who proactively choose to participate in this program have a little bit of a debating session. I talk about the shield in the Legislative Assembly. It's in Latin, but when you translate it, it says, "Hear the other side." We were talking about how you don't always have to support, but it's always respectful, and you should always listen to the conversation and the debate. Then we got into, "Now let's think of some ideas"—hopefully provincial—"that we need to do or you collectively would like to see come forward."

One of the ideas was that all children who attend public school who are medically able to—you could have actually had them write it for you, because it was very similar—be vaccinated. If they're not vaccinated and there is no medical reason for them not to be vaccinated, these young ladies felt that they shouldn't be allowed in school, because they were going to impact and hurt their fellow classmates. It was a very interesting conversation and debate, so when I saw this resolution, I was reminded of that very interesting and exciting debate that young ladies in grade 5 and grade 6 were involved in.

Sometimes we don't give our young people enough credit that they're paying attention. Of course, this was all coming forward at a time earlier this year when there were some very serious problems happening—primarily in the States, but as with everything that happens in the great USA, it tends to trickle across the border and we start dealing with it here in Canada as well.

They felt very strongly that people who are attending public school systems should be properly vaccinated in order to protect everyone who is in the school system. I just found it a great point of discussion and wanted to share that, because it does bolster your argument for supporting your resolution, which I'm pleased to do.

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

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: At the outset, I would like to compliment and salute my colleague from Kitchener Centre for bringing forth this particular motion, which once again re-emphasizes, underlines and accentuates the importance of vaccination—not, by the way, merely for children, but also into adult life.

As a physician, Speaker, I can tell you that we vaccinate for a whole host of diseases between zero to five, diseases which include diphtheria, pertussis, polio, tetanus, haemophilus influenzae B, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, meningitis and so on. The list goes on.

As has been mentioned, the idea of vaccination and immunization—by the way, Speaker, particularly during National Immunization Awareness Week—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We've got about 20 conversations going on, and it's very difficult for the speaker and myself to hear, so if I could ask everyone to keep it down.

Proceed.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I appreciate your persistence, Speaker, but all these parallel conversations are about what I'm saying right now, so not a problem.

I want to say first of all that, as has been mentioned, vaccination is perhaps the single most important and efficacious or effective manoeuvre that has happened in the history of medicine.

I remember, for example, before our government authorized vaccinations for meningitis for two million Ontario children, the presentation that was made here was by a pediatric neurologist from the Hospital for Sick Children whose own daughter had suffered the consequences—or the sequelae, as we say—of deafness post-meningitis infection. I remember the extraordinarily compelling presentation he made. He said, "The last thing she said to me was, 'Daddy, why are you pretending to speak to me?'"

I can tell you, Speaker, it was that kind of personalized story that mobilized the government, and we more or less instantaneously signed into law the fact that children—two million strong across Ontario—would be benefiting from meningitis vaccines.

There are a number of important points that were made. Now this is a little bit bizarre to explain, but vaccinations are offered at a particular age. They don't cause problems, but because they happen at the sort of same time as other conditions may develop—for example, autism and so on—people think that there's an association with it or a causality, but that's not true. For example, let's say people thought of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine, which is given to children at age 4 or 5, "Oh, that causes you to go to kindergarten." It doesn't cause you to go to kindergarten; it just happens to happen at approximately the same time. So that's an association, not a causality.

This is where I think we need to educate our peers and Ontarians about the science of what is actually going on. The science tells us that not only should we support these vaccinations, but others, including human papilloma virus, hepatitis A, hepatitis B and so on.

I salute the member from Kitchener Centre.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: I support this resolution because I recognize the impact of vaccines and immunizations in protecting people. As I said last month in my statement on National Immunization Awareness Week, immunization can be heralded as one of the greatest achievements in public health of the 20th century. Vaccines have resulted in the control, eradication or near-elimination of numerous infectious diseases and saved more Canadian

lives over the past five decades than any other health intervention.

Vaccines are the single most proactive measure against potential illness, yet Ontarian's seven-year-olds are below the national target for vaccination against the measles, mumps and rubella, and chicken pox. I think it's troubling that we have taken for granted the impact that vaccines have had on our society, which is leaving some people with the false comfort that their children can go unvaccinated.

We know that there is an association between this growing trend of people refusing vaccines and the growing spread of disease. Ontario had 18 cases of measles between December 2014 and March 2015, an outbreak that began in December at Disneyland. While public health officials are now confident that our province is measles-free, I think we still need to do better to protect the young, the old, the vulnerable and everyone in between. The death of one is one too many.

One such measure would be better tracking of how many residents are vaccinated against diseases such as measles, a problem that was highlighted by the Auditor General last December. There is no denying that our schools are safer and our students healthier when they are immunized. Thanks to immunization, it is almost unheard of today that a child in Ontario or Canada will die of smallpox or diphtheria.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Kitchener Centre. You have two minutes.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Let me first start by thanking the member for York-Simcoe, the member for Welland, the Associate Minister of Long-Term Care and Wellness, the members for Thornhill, Nickel Belt, Burlington, Dufferin-Caledon, Etobicoke North and Grey—sorry, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. I should know where you are because I'm a neighbour of yours on occasion.

Mr. Bill Walker: You're welcome any time.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: This weekend, I'll be up there. The only thing standing between me and the weekend is getting through this. So here we go.

This motion is supposed to recognize something that we all assume is really quite simple, and that is the scientific evidence that vaccinations do keep us healthy and safe and that parents are responsible for ensuring that their children are vaccinated from preventable diseases. There was one member who asked, "Why are we even talking about this issue here? Is this not an issue for health care professionals?" But I think that we do need to talk about this here as legislators. We need to underscore that we believe in evidence and not in fear-mongering.

There are a couple of reasons why this is important to me. First of all, as a mother of three, I was always very concerned with their health and very committed to making sure they were healthy and safe. I consider us to be very fortunate in this country that we do have access to these immunizations.

Secondly, as a former news broadcaster, I have to tell you that it troubles me when I see misinformation that puts people at risk. We have this research-based evidence

that's very clear that vaccinations do work. We know that immunizations are one of the most important advancements in public health in this country. They have saved more lives than any other health measure.

I encourage all members on both sides of the House to support this very important motion, and I look forward to seeing how you all vote.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will deal first with ballot item number 52, standing in the name of Ms. Scott. Ms. Scott has moved private member's notice of motion number 48. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Natyshak has moved private member's notice of motion number 46. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay." In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will deal with the vote at the end of this business.

VACCINATIONS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ms. Vernile has moved private member's notice of motion number 47. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1631 to 1636.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Can I ask members to please take their seats?

Mr. Natyshak has moved private member's notice of motion number 46.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Arnott, Ted
Barrett, Toby
Bisson, Gilles
Clark, Steve
DiNovo, Cheri
Fife, Catherine

Gretzky, Lisa
Harris, Michael
Hudak, Tim
Jones, Sylvia
Mantha, Michael
Martow, Gila
McMeekin, Ted

Nicholls, Rick
Sattler, Peggy
Scott, Laurie
Singh, Jagmeet
Tabuns, Peter
Taylor, Monique
Vanthof, John

Forster, Cindy
French, Jennifer K.
Gélinas, France

Miller, Paul
Munro, Julia
Natyshak, Taras

Walker, Bill

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Baker, Yvan
Ballard, Chris
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Chan, Michael
Coteau, Michael
Damerla, Dipika
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dong, Han

Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Jaczek, Helena
Kiwala, Sophie
Kwinter, Monte
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor

Milczyn, Peter Z.
Murray, Glen R.
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Naqvi, Yasir
Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq
Vernile, Daiene
Wong, Soo
Zimmer, David

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 28; the nays are 31.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I declare the motion lost.

Motion negatived.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order, the member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I seek unanimous consent to move a motion without notice to make an appointment for a temporary Environmental Commissioner for a period of six months.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member has requested consent to move a motion. Agreed? I hear a no.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Point of order, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order, the government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding appointment of a temporary Environmental Commissioner of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The government House leader seeks unanimous consent. Agreed? I hear a no.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

Miss Monique Taylor: Point of order, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order, the member for Hamilton Mountain.

Miss Monique Taylor: I'd like to correct my record, Speaker. I said "exaggerated" instead of "exacerbated."

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you to the member for Hamilton Mountain. A member is always given the opportunity to correct their record.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I'll try this one more time because maybe the opposition wants to hear the motion this time.

Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding appointment of a temporary Environmental Commissioner of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The government House leader seeks unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Agreed? I heard a no.

MIKE O'LEARY

Mr. Ted Arnott: Point of order, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Point of order, the member for Wellington–Halton Hills.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I actually have some sad news. I wish to inform the House of the passing of a municipal councillor in our riding of Wellington–Halton Hills, Councillor Mike O'Leary, who served with distinction on the town of Halton Hills council going back to 2003. I know I speak for all of us in this House when we extend our condolences to his family and our prayers.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much for your point of order. Please extend our condolences.

Orders of the day?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Agreed?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This House stands adjourned until Monday, May 25, at 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1642.

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 Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
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

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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

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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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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**

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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**

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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**

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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**

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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
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