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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Thursday 4 June 2015

Jeudi 4 juin 2015

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 4 June 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 4 juin 2015

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ANNUAL REPORT,
FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES
COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that today I have laid upon the table the 2014-15 annual report from the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario.

MEMBERS' EXPENDITURES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I also beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table individual members' expenditures for the fiscal year 2014-15. Members will find copies of these in their desks.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

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

Hon. Jeff Leal: Good morning, Speaker. I believe we have unanimous consent to move forward on a motion without notice regarding private bills.

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

Minister?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I move that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be considered consecutively and the questions on the motions for second and third reading of the bills be put immediately without debate: Bills Pr14, Pr15, Pr16, Pr17, Pr18, Pr19, Pr20, Pr21, Pr22; and

That Mr. Delaney may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr15 on behalf of Mr. Colle; and

That Mr. Vanthof may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr16 on behalf of Mr. Natyshak; and

That Mr. Vanthof may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr18 on behalf of Ms. Fife; and

That my good friend from Leeds–Grenville, Mr. Clark, may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr20 on behalf of Mr. Hudak; and

That Mr. Clark—he's going to be busy again—may move the motions for second and third reading on Bill Pr22 on behalf of Mr. Hudak.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Leal moves that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Carried.

Motion agreed to.

OTTAWA SCHOOL
DAY NURSERY INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Fraser moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr14, An Act to revive Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc.

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

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

OTTAWA SCHOOL
DAY NURSERY INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Fraser moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr14, An Act to revive Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc.

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

Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

DSPT INTERNATIONAL
(CANADA) INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Delaney, on behalf of Mr. Colle, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr15, An Act to revive DSPT International (Canada) Inc.

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

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

DSPT INTERNATIONAL
(CANADA) INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Delaney, on behalf of Mr. Colle, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr15, An Act to revive DSPT International (Canada) Inc.

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

Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

990046 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Vanthof, of behalf of Mr. Natyshak, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr16, An Act to revive 990046 Ontario Inc.

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

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

990046 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Mr. Natyshak, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr16, An Act to revive 990046 Ontario Inc.

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

Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

731149 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2015

Mr. Bailey moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr17, An Act to revive 731149 Ontario Limited.

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

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

731149 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2015

Mr. Bailey moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr17, An Act to revive 731149 Ontario Limited.

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

Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

0910

CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL
GOVERNANCE INNOVATION ACT
(TAX RELIEF), 2015

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Ms. Fife, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr18, An Act respecting The Centre for International Governance Innovation.

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

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL
GOVERNANCE INNOVATION ACT
(TAX RELIEF), 2015

Mr. Vanthof, on behalf of Ms. Fife, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr18, An Act respecting The Centre for International Governance Innovation.

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

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION ONTARIO ACT, 2015

Mr. Rinaldi moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr19, An Act respecting the Supply Chain Management Association Ontario.

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

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION ONTARIO ACT, 2015

Mr. Rinaldi moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr19, An Act respecting the Supply Chain Management Association Ontario.

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

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

NIAGARA CENTRAL
DOROTHY RUNGELING
AIRPORT ACT, 2015

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Hudak, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr20, An Act to amend The Welland-Port Colborne Airport Act, 1976.

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

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

NIAGARA CENTRAL
DOROTHY RUNGELING
AIRPORT ACT, 2015

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Hudak, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr20, An Act to amend The Welland-Port Colborne Airport Act, 1976.

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

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

WEICHE ESTATES INC ACT, 2015

Mrs. McGarry moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr21, An Act to revive Weiche Estates Inc.

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

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

WEICHE ESTATES INC ACT, 2015

Mrs. McGarry moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr21, An Act to revive Weiche Estates Inc.

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

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

1476263 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Hudak, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr22, An Act to revive 1476263 Ontario Inc.

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

Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

1476263 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Clark, on behalf of Mr. Hudak, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr22, An Act to revive 1476263 Ontario Inc.

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

Carried.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

GREAT LAKES PROTECTION ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES GRANDS LACS

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 3, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

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

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

Mr. John Vanthof: As always, it's an honour to stand in this House and represent the views of the folks back home in Timiskaming-Cochrane and of my NDP caucus members. Today I'm going to focus on the role of agriculture with Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin; en français, Loi visant la protection et le rétablissement du bassin des Grands Lacs et du fleuve Saint-Laurent.

With the title of the act, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin, people immediately think of the shoreline of the Great Lakes. As was mentioned yesterday by the member from Essex, we have the longest shoreline on the Great Lakes of all the jurisdictions around it. So we have a big responsibility. There's no question about that: We have a big responsibility.

The Great Lakes also hold 20% of the world's fresh water. So, again, we have a great responsibility. I don't think anyone is denying that we have a great responsibility, along with the other jurisdictions that surround the Great Lakes. There are millions of people who live around the Great Lakes who depend on the Great Lakes.

It's been a very interesting debate. I've heard other speakers say that we are doing better or we are doing worse than other jurisdictions, and while it's valuable to look at what other jurisdictions are doing—it's very valuable—we have to look at what we can do, not what others are doing.

But where we have to be cognizant of what others are doing is when we look at the industries that surround the Great Lakes. One of those industries is agriculture. And one fact that's come up over and over and over—and it's a very interesting fact, and I think a lot of farmers in the province might not know this, but 95% of the agricultural land in Ontario is within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin—95%, virtually all. So this act impacts virtually all

the farmland in Ontario. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but it's a fact.

I'd like to be very clear with this bill: We support the principle of this bill. This bill might be a very good piece of legislation, it might just be a press release, or it might be a very detrimental piece of legislation for the agriculture sector and it might not protect the environment. It all depends on how it's interpreted by this government, when passed, and by future governments. Speaker, the devil is always in the details, and as with many bills, this bill is kind of lacking in the details.

There seems to be a perceived conflict between the agricultural community and the environmental community, and I'd like to set the record straight. Farmers are environmentalists. Farmers are true environmentalists because we have to deal with the environment every day. We live with the environment because we make our living within the environment. The environment to us isn't a talking point or a way to raise money or an abstract thing that we talk about. We deal with it every day. I think that perhaps gives farmers a different outlook than others. That's why we look at this bill a bit more critically than others. We appreciate that we need to work together to protect the Great Lakes. And the agricultural community is a bit—I'm trying to find the right word—concerned that it's to "restore the Great Lakes," because farmers across this province have already made huge strides, as have other industries across the province.

I'm very familiar, Speaker, with what has happened across this province over the years regarding agriculture. I remember when I started farming. It was very common to see manure runoff running off into gullies. That was common; it happened on my farm, Speaker, when I bought my farm. Over the years, we've changed that. We've changed that with the help of various levels of government and various governments. We've changed that.

0920

On our former farm—sold it two years ago—no runoff leaves that farm. They have 300-day storage, and that's very important. It might not be a big deal for lay people, but you have to have enough storage, when you have livestock, so you can store the effluent—the manure from the livestock—so that you can spread it on your fields when it makes the most sense for the environment and when it makes the most sense for the farmer. Manure is a fertilizer, and it doesn't make any sense for a farmer to waste it. That's why we've made huge strides in controlling that. As with any substance, it's a good thing, but if there's too much of it, it's a pollutant; that's the way life works. We've made huge strides with that.

Another area that I know from my dairy farming past: A lot of dairy farms in the past used a lot of soap. If there's one thing about dairy farming, you have to clean your equipment if you milk two times a day—some milk three times a day, and now, with robot milkers, you milk all day. You have to wash all the time. That equipment has to be as clean as any equipment in any commercial

kitchen, because we're producing food. But a by-product of that is that you use a lot of soap. Soap has a lot of phosphorus. In years gone by, some of that phosphorus used to go right into the ditch. That doesn't happen anymore. That's been stopped.

We've had lots of experiments on how to make that work. I know that on our own farm, we had a septic system. Standard septic systems do not work for milk house runoff. They don't work. We tried that; it failed. Every farm has a different system. On our farm, it went into the same storage where the manure went, because phosphorus, if it's not over-applied, is actually a benefit to us all. It's when it's over-applied or used incorrectly that it becomes a pollutant—a very serious pollutant.

We've done a lot of those things over the years.

Another one I did on my farm was grassed waterways, through the Environmental Farm Plan—a great program, actually, that's been cut back severely. One way to stop pollutants from getting into surface water, and eventually into the Great Lakes basin, is to make sure, when you're doing things on the field, that you stay far enough away not only from rivers and streams but creeks and ditches. One way we've done that is grassed waterways. Instead of plowing or chisel plowing right up to the ditch, you leave X number of feet or metres, and that, in normal conditions, stops soil that contains phosphorus and nitrogen from going into the river.

We have made great strides. Farmers are environmentalists. But the difference is that farmers also have to make a living. We have to identify problems, but we also have to provide answers. It's not enough to just say, "Well, we have to stop doing this and this and this, and if you don't, we're going to fine you." That's basically all we read in this bill. We don't see solutions. Hopefully, those solutions are going to come later on when the guardians' council and all these things get fired up.

The more discussion we have, the better. I'm not sure that I would agree with some of the members of the Conservative Party who are worried about regulation on top of regulation. But, again, good regulation is a good thing. It's a benefit to society. Regulation for the sake of regulation is a detriment to us all. Farmers are no strangers to regulation. As farms get bigger, we are subject to more and more regulation, which in itself isn't necessarily a bad thing.

Again, under the Nutrient Management Act, farmers are subject to a lot of regulation. Depending on how many animals you have, you have to have enough land to make sure you can use manure as a benefit to your crops but not a detriment to the environment. You have to have enough land. You have to have enough storage. Those are all regulations you have to comply with. I've had people in my riding who have built barns in the last little while and were shocked at the amount of regulation they had to go through to get planning for that barn, to get approval. That's very frustrating for the individual farmer. We could maybe make it a bit less cumbersome; but the regulation itself isn't a bad thing, because it protects society.

What we're worried about with Bill 66 is that all the regulations that currently exist—the Nutrient Management Act, the Conservation Authorities Act; I believe there are 20 other ones. When you read this bill, it looks like this bill would supersede all those regulations. That's a problem. Because this act covers such a large area, geographically, the central planning idea, where it supersedes local planning, is a problem.

An example of that is the Green Energy Act. How could you screw up green energy? How you screw up green energy is by having the Green Energy Act supersede everything else. It's easier to build a solar farm on agricultural land in my riding than it is to build a farm building. That's wrong. That's where the Green Energy Act went wrong. This act has the danger—and I'm not saying it's going to, but the danger is there.

Interjection.

Mr. John Vanthof: That's not true, sir. In northern Ontario, they're building solar farms on the best land in Timiskaming; they're building solar farms all over, on our best land. This government says that northern Ontario is the future of agriculture. My riding has the best agricultural land in northern Ontario and there are solar farms going all over on the best land in northern Ontario. So to stay that this government is interested in agriculture in northern Ontario—based on that, it's a farce. That's the truth. And that's an example.

We are trying to make this act the best we can. We're not trying to make political speak or anything on this. We're trying to make this the best it can be, and there are problems. Again, we agree with the principle, but the fact that it could supersede everything is a problem. We see in this act there's a whole schedule for the amount of fines that could be levied, but we don't see anything in the act where, "Here is where society is going to help the various industries impacted and here's how they're going to help." We don't see anything in the act like that, and that's a problem.

Because all the advances we've made—we've made a lot of advances for ourselves, as all industry does. Farmers are out to make a living, but farmers are also out to protect the environment because every farmer wants—unfortunately, I didn't have that chance—to turn their farm over to their kids. The only way the kids are going to be successful is if the farmer has protected the growing capacity of his or her farm. And the only way you can do that is to be a good environmental steward. But when society wants to provide a better level of protection—which is society's choice; we agree—society, as a whole, also has to help provide the solutions.

When we were looking at putting grass waterways, when we were looking at going to conservation tillage, through the Environmental Farm Plan, the government, society—was a partner. Now, would we have done the same things without? Yes, but it would have taken long. So society decided that we want to fix any problems that exist as quickly as possible. Great. Then society also has a responsibility not just to say, "You have to do this and you have to do this," but also has a responsibility to say,

"You know, as a whole, we want to protect the environment." Quite frankly, farmland—we're the last ones, because once you've built houses and cities, to talk about protecting the environment—I'm sorry; it's just a moot point. That's a moot point.

0930

To expect the 3% of the population who are still farming the land to do all the things to protect what society hasn't paved over yet, to expect them to bear the full cost—that's ridiculous.

But we don't see that in this act and we're a bit worried, because our last experience—and this a very touchy subject—the neonic experience—society decided, through the government, that we were going to cut a certain usage of a pesticide. We're not opposed to that, but when the Ministry of the Environment asked for their input, they posted on the EBR during planting season, the busiest time of the year; the Minister of the Environment knew that.

That's an example of why, based on our past experience, the agricultural community questions whether the MOE really understands that to solve an environmental issue, you have to work together with the stakeholders and not just tell them and hope it all fares well, because in the end, that probably won't help the ministry, and it won't help the environment either.

Based on that experience, we're worried. The farm community is worried about Bill 66 based on the fact that there are no hearings that are going to be held outside of the hallowed skyscrapers of Toronto—because you know what? This bill isn't going to have much impact on the people who live in the condos that surround this place. It's not. The people who live in the condos have as much right as anyone to have an opinion on the environment—no question. But, honestly, they're not going to be impacted. It's the people who live in the country who are going to be impacted by this bill, and it's them who are going to have to take the steps to hopefully make this bill work. So they should be fully included in how to make this bill work. Will they always agree? No. But that's how our democracy is supposed to work.

It has already been decided we're not going to have any hearings on this bill, on the passage of this bill, outside of Toronto, but I would deeply suggest to the government that they take the time to actually listen to the agriculture community and to other sectors, because you know what? Foresters and miners are also environmentalists because they all work with the environment every day, and they've all made huge strides.

You have to look outside these halls. You have to look outside of interest groups. Interest groups have their place. They have changed our world for the better, but you have to go beyond them to the people who actually make the daily decisions on the land, in the forest and by the streams. Regulations, rules and laws have to be understood and have to make sense to those people, and if they don't, ultimately, we have all failed.

We support this legislation. We support the intent of this legislation, but we urge the government to actually

take this legislation seriously. Take it to the people. Make sure that you consult and make sure that you actually come up with solutions, not just regs and then look the other way when they go wrong. Come up with solutions, because solutions can be found, as has been found in agriculture in the past. I've focused on agriculture, but there are all kinds of other industries impacted here. I'm ag critic, I'm a farmer; I like to talk about farming.

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

Hon. Liz Sandals: I want to comment on the comments on agriculture that the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane made.

I totally agree that agriculture is a very important player in Great Lakes protection and in protection of our water. If I think of some of the things that I've seen happening in my own area—Guelph is in the Grand River watershed. Guelph is located on the Speed and Eramosa Rivers, which then feed into the Grand River. But one of the other rivers that feed into the Grand River is the Conestogo. The Conestogo River is one of those rivers that seems to meander, very flat, through a plain that's very prone to erosion, and if you look at the agricultural practices, historically you would find that the cattle were watering in the river, and of course that broke down the banks and you got the runoff and the cattle in the river and the erosion. It was becoming quite a problem. But with the help of the Grand River Conservation Authority working with farmers all along the Conestogo River, they changed their livestock management practices, got the cattle out of the river, and got the banks built up again with natural vegetation along the banks to stop the erosion.

It's now a totally different river. It's now restored to what it would have been more like historically, before people messed it up. It's a totally different river, and that's because the farmers all along the river, just as the member said, have changed their practices and have behaved like true environmentalists and restored that river to health.

Thank you.

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

Mr. Jim McDonell: It's always great to hear the member opposite's spin on farming, because I come from a farm too.

Farmers are very careful about their land. Over the last 40 years, you see a lot of changes in the way that they work the land. There are a lot of different technologies that have come in that weren't known, but as soon as a better way comes to do it, you see farmers using it. The no-till methods they use—it's all about water management and it's all about tiling and making sure that the land is useful.

Each summer you go through my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry—and our major industry is farming. The vast majority of territory is under crops. It's either under crops or under bush. It's something that farmers have always had a lot of care for.

I think we can look at the farms today and they're really something to marvel at, because they are a picture of production. They feed a lot more people per acre than they used to. If there hadn't been the changes that they've instituted over the years, a lot of people would be worse off in this world.

Canada is a major player in feeding a good percentage of the world, and that comes from the farms in Ontario. They're looking at ways of making even more land available in the North, and the beef farmers are hoping this government will work with them and actually turn over more crown land. As land becomes more and more important and more and more valuable, land is too expensive to graze cattle. So we have to move north, where the climate would work for them. Now it's land that's unproductive. It would be a great alternative for those properties.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Questions and comments? The member from—I've got a mental block.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Nickel Belt.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It's all good, Speaker. It's all good.

Well, although we're talking about the Great Lakes Protection Act, it also covers all of the watershed. You'll be happy to know that the people of Nickel Belt do live in the watershed and will be covered by that bill.

I wanted to give a very clear example. You will remember that in my riding, in Gogama, there was a horrific train derailment, where 33 of the cars caught on fire and crude oil spilled all over the river. It actually derailed on a bridge over top of a river, so you can imagine what the water looks like. You can imagine what all of the surrounding environment looks like.

0940

In all of that, this environmental disaster—although we have a bill that says you will “have to” protect, here we have a disaster where the environment certainly is in need of help, and we have a government that doesn't take CN to court. If it was a farmer who had done that kind of spill that went into a river, that went into the watershed, this farmer would pay the price—would lose the farm, literally.

But when a company like CN—and that wasn't the first time. Three weeks prior to that, on February 14, they had derailed again but that time, away from people and away from the public eye. This time, it was in the village of Gogama, right on the edge. If you drive on Highway 144, you can't miss it. It looks like a moon landscape. Everything has been taken off. There isn't a blade of grass, a stem. Nothing is left but the water and the disaster.

We have a government that doesn't do anything to hold CN to account. It doesn't hit them where it hurts, which is in the pocketbook. It doesn't help the people of Gogama bring those people to court for what they've

done to them. They do nothing but pass laws that will hinder our farmers.

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

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I'm very pleased to rise today and speak on Bill 66. I wanted to just focus a little bit on the Great Lakes. They are indeed one of Ontario's greatest assets. The region has an annual GDP of \$5.2 trillion, which is the fourth-largest economy in the world.

I also wanted to reassure the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane that the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change does have every intention of collaborating soundly with many participants, and just to list a few: the Great Lakes ministers, whose ministries contribute to Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy; and the Great Lakes municipalities. The First Nations and Métis communities have a historic relationship with the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River basin, which is important for my community. The agricultural sector will be consulted. The recreational and tourism sector, the scientific community, environmental organizations and conservation authorities will all be consulted. We will be asking these organizations or these sectors who they would like to have represented. I think that's extremely important to highlight.

We also highly value the input by the First Nations and Métis communities on the protection of the Great Lakes, so they will be consulted as well. They were engaged on the previous versions of this bill, and their submissions were invaluable in informing the strengthened proposed Great Lakes Protection Act.

I'm very pleased to offer my support to this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: I'd like to thank the Minister of Education, the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, my colleague from Nickel Belt and the member from Kingston and the Islands.

I think the member from Nickel Belt gave a very good example. The Gogama incident is what we should really be looking at, looking at how we make sure that the regulations we have now are actually working and that we enforce them. That's a much tougher job than creating new laws, and I think Gogama is a really good example of that.

Just to show you—and I forgot to say it in my original speech—how big an area this impacts, if you go about seven and a half hours straight north of here, you'll hit the Arctic watershed. There's a sign in my riding on Highway 11, and that's the Arctic watershed. From that point south, it goes to the Atlantic. From that point north, the water flows to the Arctic. Everything from that point south and very far west is in the Great Lakes basin. It's a huge area, geographically.

The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry talked about the future of agricultural land in northern Ontario. There is a lot of agricultural land yet to be developed in northern Ontario and, actually, most of it is north of that point. The discussion has to be had on whether we should have different rules for land north or

south, and I would argue no. If you're going to protect the environment, then the rules for farmers should be the same across the province.

That's not addressed in this act, and that's a problem, because you'll have a mishmash of regulations, and you'll have regulations where no one really understands what's going on. That's a huge problem.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 2, 2015, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Murray has moved second reading of Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River Basin.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Pursuant to standing order 28(h), this vote will be deferred until after question period.

Second reading vote deferred.

SMART GROWTH FOR OUR COMMUNITIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR UNE CROISSANCE INTELLIGENTE DE NOS COLLECTIVITÉS

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 3, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 73, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the Planning Act / Projet de loi 73, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les redevances d'aménagement et la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire.

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

Mr. Michael Harris: It's a nice opportunity to speak. It was fortunately brought to my attention this morning that I have the great opportunity to make remarks on this bill. I'd like to thank Jessica, obviously, for allowing me to speak to the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act for 20 minutes this morning.

We've heard that the proposed legislation considers changes to the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act, to update those acts and reflect the need for improvements to keep up with the evolving needs and issues being faced by municipalities across the province.

While we on this side of the House are supportive and understand the need for improvement, in many ways Bill 73 is a bit like putting the cart before the horse—if there are any horses left in Ontario, that is. By bringing forth a bill on needed improvements before hearing from all of those directly impacted, that, in effect, puts legislation before consultation. It's like putting a cake in the oven before you have all the ingredients. In the end, you run the risk of ending up with a result that is only half-baked. Who likes a cake without the ingredients, Speaker?

Last fall we saw the Premier, in an attempt to instill confidence in her election, boast of transparency and accountability—that she would soon leave at the curb—and

publicly release a series of ministers' mandate letters to direct their actions over the course of this government. The problem is, in many cases, as we've seen in the months since, these letters turned out to be little more than a public relations exercise not really worth the paper they're written on.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs received one of those mandate letters, Speaker. Do you know what it said? It called on the minister to conduct a full review of the Ontario Municipal Board, yet today we have a bill before us that tables a number of changes to the board before the review is even conducted—cart before the horse, Speaker; perhaps a few ingredients left out of the bowl.

It begs the question: If you know that you are mandated to conduct a full review of the OMB and you know that the government had only just launched the land use planning review of the greenbelt, the Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges moraine and the growth plan—a review that impacts the Planning Act—then why do you go forward, back in March, to bring this legislation forward before the results of those reviews are in?

0950

The answer, Speaker, is that in typical Wynne Liberal government fashion, they don't feel they have to hear the public's opinions that these reviews elicit because they feel they already know what's in our best interests. So they speak first, listen later, and then pat us on the head and tell us everything is going to be okay. Well, it's not all right. There is a need for improvements, and it would have done this government good to listen to what those impacted had to say before moving forward on their own.

In the case of the planning review of the greenbelt, the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges moraine, the Wynne Liberals could have benefited from listening to the some 3,000 people who took time to attend those review meetings and air their concerns. Many organizations took the time and effort to put together comprehensive proposals for change to bring consistency to the three plans while protecting our natural heritage, and to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in the protected areas.

Now, I do recall the minister coming up to Kitchener–Waterloo and Guelph as well. I know that both were fairly well attended, especially the one in Kitchener–Waterloo. I think that they boasted of the fact that they had more than the folks over in Guelph, and that's good. It seems, though, that all the time and effort goes for naught when this Wynne Liberal government introduces legislation to make changes to the Planning Act before the work and input is even reviewed. As our critic, who just arrived here moments ago, noted Tuesday, we're disappointed that the government is making partial changes without taking the time to get it right and without waiting for the results of the review to develop a comprehensive plan.

All that said, Speaker, the reality is that we do have these proposed partial changes in front of us that require our review today, changes that run the gamut from pro-

viding more stability for municipal planning documents and increased municipal accountability, and strengthening the protection of provincial interests, to encouraging more upfront planning and providing enhanced tools at the local level. The bill also proposes to:

- enhance the Ontario Municipal Board's obligation to consider citizen input when making decisions:

- extend municipal official plan update cycles from five years to 10 years, after a new, comprehensive official plan;

- provide the province with documents earlier to review municipal official plans and official plan amendments, when those documents are not exempt from provincial approval;

- modify the maximum alternative parkland dedication rate when giving cash in lieu;

- require municipalities to develop parks plans if they wish to establish the alternative parkland dedication rate and to work with school boards in developing such plans.

Certainly it's a whole list of changes, and a list that may have been more comprehensive and effective if only government had waited to listen first before they actually moved.

But of course we know that the changes to the Planning Act are only half the picture here, as Bill 73 also proposes to bring significant change to the Development Charges Act, 1997. As part of the proposed Bill 73, the government is proposing reforms that would:

- enhance funding for municipal transit systems;

- enhance transparency and accountability regarding payment of development charges and additional fees;

- identify any services which are ineligible for collection of development charges through regulation;

- require municipalities to examine the application of varying development charges within different areas of a municipality; and

- enhance municipal development charges reporting requirements.

As we all know, development charges have always been a delicate balance between encouraging economic activity and ensuring that municipalities have the funds needed to provide services for the added growth. The fact is that while we support funding transit, we have a number of concerns that this act may allow development charges to be increased so much that it slows economic growth.

We've got a very vibrant home-building industry in the region of Waterloo and a strong organization that represents those home builders, the Waterloo Region Home Builders' Association. I've had the pleasure of attending many of their events. Many of the home-building stakeholder groups are very generous in our community, employing thousands of people and building high-quality, affordable homes for families to raise their family in the region of Waterloo.

I remember hearing some stories on how, years ago, development charges were relatively affordable. Now they're getting to the point that, as these costs continue to grow, it is a significant percentage of the overall cost of a

home. That cost, of course, is passed along to the homeowner. Families are already stretched thin as it is, as prices continue to go up, to have an affordable option to raise their family in an area that they want. Not all families can live in condominiums in the downtown core. They want to raise their children, perhaps, in the suburbs where there's a bit more space to have their kids play, go to some schools that they so choose.

We have to realize that these DC charges are a significant concern that goes along with raising development charges—concerns surrounding the fact that a proportion of a home's cost that goes towards government fees has risen from about 3% in the mid-1980s to almost 25%, or about \$100,000 for a \$400,000 home. Speaker, that is an awful, large increase.

One would have to ask if those services that families are funding through DC charges are in fact being put back into the community. Of course, we need our roads, our water infrastructure, our waste water infrastructure. In the south end of Kitchener, where I'm from, we are a small city in essence. I know families are constantly asking for some sort of facility that would have a swimming pool, skating rinks, and they have to drive what they see is a bit far to have to access stuff, and it's DC charges that assist the municipality in paying for these things.

We talk about our fair share of those being reinvested back into the community. Speaker, almost all development charges get passed on to homebuyers in the end, jacking up the cost of homes and making it even more difficult for the young family looking for their first home to ever be able to make that purchase.

This government often perpetuates the illusion that when governments increase fees, charges, taxes and levies, somehow the developer is going to absorb them. As we've seen in reality, that is just simply not the case, Speaker. Development charges become part of the cost of a home and are passed on to people purchasing new homes, condos or renting an apartment, and that cost is significant. In fact, in 2009, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. found that government-imposed charges, including development charges, represented up to 19% of the median price of a single-family new home.

The Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association reported that, for a \$440,000 home, over \$25,000 goes to development charges.

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario commissioned a report called Alternatives to Development Charges for Growth-Related Capital Costs. They found that development charges are now \$30,000 to \$50,000 per single-family home in high-growth municipalities surrounding Toronto. By comparison, it found that development fees in Calgary and Edmonton are less than \$8,000 per unit. That is a significant difference: \$30,000 to \$50,000 per single-family home versus \$8,000 in Calgary and Edmonton, Alberta.

1000

This bill, Bill 73, would increase development charges and, therefore, the cost of housing in a number of ways. First, it would remove the 10% discount on transit costs.

It would allow development charges to be charged on planned future services instead of historical services. It would remove the list of items that are exempt from development charges from the act and allow the government to choose which to exempt. That means that new homeowners and businesses could now be paying development charges to pay for cultural or entertainment facilities, including museums, theatres and art galleries, or to fund a new city hall or a tourism facility such as a convention centre.

One of the items that was previously exempt was the provision of waste management services. The government already indicated that under the new regulations, municipalities will now be allowed to have development charges cover the cost of that. In fact, there have already been municipal requests to expand it further and allow development charges on all of the previously exempt items, including cultural, tourism and entertainment facilities.

Now, Speaker, I want to just go back slightly. We mentioned the fact that one of those items that was previously exempt was the provision of waste management services and that under the new regulations, municipalities will now be allowed to have those development charges cover the cost of that. In the region of Waterloo, there is a significant debate happening right now. In fact, our local councils are making a significant decision that would delay the pickup of garbage from every week to every other week, with a bag limit.

Some will argue that's a long time coming. Somebody who has a young family that generates a significant amount of waste from, say, babies' diapers I think is going to find it difficult for it to happen biweekly. That's not just me; I have heard from families in my area and seniors who are going to have a difficult time with this.

Of course, there is a significant cost savings to that, which we all have to be conscious of. I had an email just recently this week that regional government has grown substantially, and one thing that homeowners expect out of services like waste management or picking up the garbage is that they should be looking elsewhere first instead of always reducing the front-line services while continuing to perhaps not always look within first to do so. So now, under this new piece of legislation, DC charges are going to be allowed to include the provision of waste management services.

Interjection.

Mr. Michael Harris: Same thing: waste management, waste diversion.

Interjections.

Mr. Michael Harris: Look, that's something that I think is an appropriate question that we have to ask.

In fact, there have already been municipal requests to expand it further to allow development charges on all of the previously exempt items, including cultural, tourism and entertainment facilities.

I know we'll be seeing the guys across the way here talk about waste diversion and waste reduction. They brought a bill here last session, the Waste Reduction Act. They couldn't get it right. It was just a colossal failure.

Industry groups, stakeholders, even municipalities felt it was extremely flawed. We'll see what the new minister brings back shortly. It's an extremely important situation here in the province. Our waste diversion rate is a dismal failure in terms of its percentages. I know I asked the former minister, if he was a teacher, if 40% would be a fail or a pass. Of course, we all know it's a fail. We'll see where they go with that.

I understand why municipalities would want those additional development charges. Many of them are struggling to make ends meet and provide the infrastructure and services that residents want. Part of the problem is a provincial government that is more focused on blaming others than actually taking responsibility for the challenges that municipalities face. This year, spending in the provincial budget actually increased by \$2.4 billion, but the Ontario municipal partnership grants that municipalities depend on were being cut again.

Again, we do understand the needs of our municipalities to fund necessary transit improvements across their areas. Certainly, I can speak to the need in my area of Waterloo region.

The region of Waterloo submitted their amendments to this bill on March 24, 2015, which I would like to read into the record. But before I do, the request stems from the fact that the province of Ontario gave the region the shaft when it came to light rail transit funding. You see, Speaker, cities like Hamilton, Mississauga and Brampton got 100% funding for their LRT projects, and Waterloo region's ION got only one third, from the original commitment of two thirds.

Just last Friday, the member from Kitchener–Waterloo and I, as well as our local colleagues the members from Kitchener Centre and Cambridge, called on the government to ask for transit fairness. The Liberal government continues their carrot-and-stick approach, promising yet never quite delivering on transit commitments to Waterloo region.

From two-thirds funding for LRT to all-day, two-way GO, the truth has become more obvious with each subsequent transit announcement elsewhere in the province that when it comes to funding Kitchener-Waterloo's transit pledge, the cupboard is bare. Again, while other municipalities get the gold mine, we get the shaft. With only one-third provincial support while other municipalities get full funding, the region's submissions to amend Bill 73 stem from the province's unfair treatment.

On January 7, 2014, Waterloo region council recommended that the province make changes to the DCA to support the region's transition to a higher-order light rail transit system, specifically by allowing the use of a 10-year, forward-looking level of service as the baseline for calculating development charges for transit and by eliminating the 10% mandatory discount on development charges to pay for transit infrastructure. Council did pass additional recommendations regarding changes to the DCA consistent with the principle that growth pays for growth. I'll get into those to finish up my questions and comments.

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 1007 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mario Sergio: I'm delighted to let you know that a new Ferrari has arrived. Alessandro Sebastiano Ferrari can't be here. He would have loved to be here, but he doesn't have a driver's licence yet. Therefore, we'd like to congratulate papa Gianluca, my senior policy adviser, and mama Daiana on the new Ferrari arrival. We want to wish them happiness, joy, congratulations and best wishes.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Speaker, I'd like to welcome someone from your neck of the woods. Alex Felsky is in the gallery—she is a trustee with the Grand Erie District School Board—and Laura Duguid.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I'd like to welcome to Queen's Park two political science majors from Wilfrid Laurier University, and Oakville residents, Jonathan Ricci and Matt McLean.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I would like to introduce a good friend of mine from North Bay, Terri MacDougall. She's the mother of today's page captain Sheila MacDougall.

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd like to introduce Dorothy McKane, the mother of Martin McKane, my LA. Dorothy is visiting us from Ireland.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Please help me welcome, in the west members' gallery, my intern, Farnaz Yaqubian. Farnaz and her family live in the great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham and she will be entering her third year at Wilfrid Laurier in the fall.

M. Gilles Bisson: J'aimerais introduire Alexandre Fortier, qui est ici avec nous cette semaine de Timmins. Il est un étudiant coop de l'école Renaissance qui est ici pour regarder notre Parlement en action.

Mr. Chris Ballard: I would like to introduce the executive of the Ontario Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, here in the east members' gallery: Betty Colaneri, Pauline Krupa, Marlene Pavletic, Linda Squarzolo and Rosanne Sogan. Welcome.

Miss Monique Taylor: I have some wonderful guests with me today. I have one of my constituency assistants, Christine DiGiantomasso; I have her niece Lyndsay Freeman; and a very, very special welcome to my father, Mike Taylor.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. David Oraziotti: You got it, Speaker. Thank you very much.

I want to recognize our page from Sault Ste. Marie, Katie Woods, who is page captain today. With us in the east gallery are her mother, Jennifer Woods; her sister Rachel Woods; and her aunt Christine Grasy, as well as my wife, Jane, and my daughter, Olivia, who are here today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I would like my colleagues to join me in welcoming an intern who is working in my office this summer, Domenic Bitondo. Welcome, Domenic.

Mr. Granville Anderson: I have the pleasure of welcoming a young man who helped me immensely in my campaign, Adam Jeronimo. I would also like to welcome my executive assistant, Mr. Justin MacLean, and also from my office, Ian McMillan. Welcome.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm really pleased to welcome some of my family members here today. My father, Alan French, is in the members' gallery, and it's his birthday today. Happy birthday.

Sitting beside him is my grandmother Katharine Ross, who just celebrated a birthday. She is 94 years young.

It's their first time to the Legislature.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I would like to introduce, in the members' gallery, Stephen Heckbert, father of our page captain Robert, who is also one of my constituents in the great riding of Ottawa-Orléans. Welcome, Stephen.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I'd like to introduce a former member of the Legislative Assembly, Jean-Marc Lalonde, who is here with us today in the members' gallery. Welcome, Jean-Marc.

Mr. Norm Miller: I am pleased to welcome here today members of the Otter Lake Christian School from Seguin township in Parry Sound district. I assured them that everyone would be on their best behaviour today. Welcome.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I want to also welcome my good friends from the Ontario Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, doing wonderful, dedicated work.

I also have, in the gallery, a member of my constituency office staff who is here today from Thunder Bay, Stephen Margarit. Welcome, Stephen.

Mr. Arthur Potts: It's a great pleasure to introduce a fantastic consultant who is not Howard Brown: Craig Brockwell is in the members' west gallery. I didn't recognize him with his sunglasses on. Welcome.

Mr. Chris Ballard: Also attending today are executives from the Newmarket Seniors' Meeting Place here to meet with us: Maureen Huismans, Anne McGhee and Patricia Berry.

Hon. Bill Mauro: Once again, welcome our page captain from Thunder Bay-Atikokan, Emma Schubert, and her mother, Andrea. They're joined here today, for the first time, by her aunt Karen Ferris. Welcome to the Legislature.

M. Grant Crack: Il me fait un grand plaisir de souhaiter la bienvenue au maire de Clarence-Rockland, M. Guy Desjardins, et aussi à la directrice générale, Helen Collier.

And I know that I'm not allowed to, but I'm going to introduce the councillor for Clarence-Rockland, Monsieur Jean-Marc Lalonde.

Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

M. Bob Delaney: C'est avec plaisir que je dis « welcome back » à mon ami et l'ancien instructeur en chef pour l'équipe de hockey Legiskaters, notre ami M. Jean-Marc Lalonde.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I think we've created the Howard Brown effect.

As is the tradition of the Speaker—at least, from my understanding, done many, many times—in the members' gallery, we have with us the former member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell in the 37th, 38th and 39th Parliaments, Monsieur Jean-Marc Lalonde.

I also understand that there is a very large number of family members in the gallery today—just saying.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Premier. After the budget bill was rammed through committee and after it passed yesterday, it gave me a chance to reflect. It gave me a chance to reflect on its effect on the average Ontarian. Over and over again, I thought about what it will cost them.

Premier, with the payroll pension tax, the aviation tax, the beer tax, the new income tax rate and the skyrocketing hydro rates all included in the budget, will you tell Ontarians how much the budget will cost?

1040

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What the member opposite could have been reflecting on is the investments that will be made because of the budget bill that has been passed: \$31 billion for Moving Ontario Forward projects, transportation infrastructure across this province and a plan for a \$130-billion investment over 10 years. That's roads and bridges and transit in all parts of this province that will allow communities to thrive.

He might have reflected on the \$20 million for three years for the Experience Ontario program that's going to help graduating high school students to better identify their future goals by having a work experience opportunity. He might have thought about the \$250 million over the next two years for a renewed Ontario's Youth Jobs Strategy that has already seen tens of thousands of young people in placements that have led to jobs. He might have thought about those things.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Again to the Premier: It's more than the costs that we know now, it's the hidden costs too. Ten thousand Ontarians reached out to the Ombudsman seeking help for hydro billing errors. The Auditor General made it public that the government wasted some \$2 billion on smart meters. The government's response? Independent oversight at Hydro One has ended. Hydro One raided the bank accounts of Ontarians and these mistakes cost Ontarians \$83 million, all of which was made public because of independent oversight.

Premier, can you explain the cost of secrecy and losing oversight at Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To just follow up on the theme of the budget, the member opposite might have thought about the rate increases of 1% for social assistance recipients. He might have thought about the modernized student assistance program that's going to index the maximum aid to inflation; Ontario will be the first province to do that and that will help our post-secondary students. He might have thought about the \$40 million that we're putting into technology in classrooms for students in kindergarten through grade 12. Those are all aspects of the budget.

The member opposite knows that the oversight of Hydro One will be analogous to the oversight of other publicly held companies. He knows that's the case. He knows there are mechanisms in place already. He knows there will be a special ombudsman for Hydro One. He knows that those oversights already exist.

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: Again to the Premier: Furthermore, the cost doesn't stop with the Hydro One fiasco. Despite some of Ontario's largest employers outlining the costs it will have to Ontario businesses and jobs, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan was rammed through with the budget bill. Large or small, the majority of businesses will be negatively impacted by the ORPP. We asked the government to walk away, hit pause and rethink this job-killing plan, but to no avail.

Premier, how many jobs will the ORPP cost Ontario when businesses fire employees rather than pay this new payroll tax?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let me ask the member opposite what the cost would be to allow a generation or two generations of people—young people now—to age and retire and not have adequate retirement security.

It is the responsibility of government to think beyond the next three years or the next four years. We know, he knows, people across the country know, the federal government even knows that people in their 20s and 30s and 40s cannot put enough aside in order to assure a secure retirement. They know that. So if we all know that, is it not our responsibility to do something about that? Because the cost of not doing anything means that we have seniors retiring into insecurity.

SMART METERS

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is to the Minister of Energy. This morning we learned that a so-called smart meter caught fire and exploded in Collingwood. For months you've been assuring the public that the smart meters in Ontario were not like the ones in Saskatchewan, that ours wouldn't catch fire and that only a few thousand would have to be replaced as a preventive measure in Sarnia-Lambton. Like so many things you've said on the energy file, your talking points, like your smart meters, have flamed out.

Minister, if a smart meter in Collingwood could catch fire and explode despite your assurances, how do we know there are not tens of thousands more just like it in the province of Ontario, waiting to go off?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Yes, there was a fire in one of our 4.8 million smart meters in the last several days. The ESA, the Electrical Safety Authority, is investigating that. There is no indication yet whether it was the meter, the installation or any other cause. We are awaiting the results of that investigation. When we have the results of that investigation, we'll be able to respond.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, meter or installation, whatever the problem is, I don't think that's much of an assurance, Minister.

We know you refuse to admit that your smart meter tax machine program has been a disaster from the start, partly due to your abysmal administration of the rollout. Since the Auditor General's report last December, the public understands that your smart meter fiasco will cost energy consumers double what you claimed it would. Smart meters haven't cut consumption at peak times, and often they don't even relay their information back to the central data centre. Now we learn that these devices may catch fire without warning and burn a ratepayer's house down.

Minister, there are over a million of these so-called meters in Ontario because of you. What is your plan of action today? How much more will this add to your \$2-billion smart meter boondoggle?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member should know that there are 4.8 million, not a million smart meters in the province of Ontario.

The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario says of smart meters, "They are necessary—absolutely necessary for the proper functioning and future functioning of the distribution system for electricity. Smart grid technologies have the potential to improve reliability, reduce system costs, empower customers and lower the environmental impact of the electricity we use."

There are many other endorsements, but Mr. Speaker, if you talk to the LDCs, the electricity utilities, including the one that serves his community, they will say smart meters are a smart thing to do.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, it's great that the minister is smart enough to count them. Maybe he could figure out how to make them work.

Minister, this is precisely the sort of scandal that the Auditor General needs to investigate, but because of your shameful budget passing, she no longer has the ability to do so. Every person who owns a smart meter is now worried that theirs could catch on fire. Families do not trust your government to provide them with the peace of mind that they need on this. This incident proves that your government simply can't be trusted on the issue.

Minister, will you commit to allowing the Auditor General and the Ombudsman to continue to have over-

sight on Hydro One, even though you took it away with the passing of the budget?

Interjections.

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

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member knows that we have retained former Auditor General of Canada Denis Desautels to oversee the implementation of an ombudsman at Hydro One. His mandate is to ensure that the ombudsman will be transparent and accountable. That is moving forward.

Hydro One, as a TSX company, a stock-trading company, will have tremendous oversight. The Securities Act provides oversight, accountability and audited statements for every nature of the operations of a public company. They will be accountable.

Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of restructuring the board of Hydro One. The chair of Hydro One is also in the process of selecting a CEO for Hydro One, moving forward. It's the right thing to do.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: To the Premier, Speaker: The Premier is pushing ahead with her scheme to sell Hydro One. My question is, what's next?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, what's next are those investments in infrastructure that are being driven by the fact that we've found the revenue to make those investments. That's the whole point of this.

I have said it over and over again in this House: I understand that this is a difficult decision. I understood, when we said that we were going to review our assets, that that was a difficult thing to do. But it is motivated by our understanding, our knowledge, that if we do not invest in the roads and bridges and transit that are needed in this province, Mr. Speaker, then we will rob future generations of economic prosperity that is necessary. It's as simple as that. We know we can thrive. We know that we can compete, but we can't do that without making these investments, and that's why we're making them.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Yesterday, the Minister of Finance was asked what the next thing on the auction block was going to be. He said, "Right now there is no determination." Now, I know the Premier says that she has been clear about her plan to sell off assets. Will the Premier make clear, then, exactly what the Minister of Finance was referring to yesterday? What is the next asset that is up for sale?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'll let the Minister of Finance speak to the details in the supplementary, but what we are doing right now is we are working on making the investments in the roads, bridges and transit infrastructure that we know is necessary.

The leader of the third party, when she talks about assets, has no solution for the investments in infrastructure. She wants to talk in isolation about a particular

ideological position that is underpinned by a total lack of confidence in anything that the private sector does, which I think is an interesting position for a responsible politician to take.

The fact is, government has to work with the private sector. It is absolutely essential that we work with all sectors in the community—with labour, with the private sector—to make sure that we get public policy right. This is public policy that is going to build assets for the people of Ontario for this generation—

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

Interjections.

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

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier says she was clear in her budget and in her platform about her plan for asset sales. Then she denied she was selling assets. Now she's denying that she ever even made that denial and she won't say whether there are more sell-offs in the works.

It's getting pretty ridiculous. Why doesn't this Premier stand in her place, take this opportunity to be upfront with the people of Ontario and tell them exactly what is next on the auction block?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: It was very clear on page 73 in terms of what it is that we are doing. I did respond and I did actually follow up in determining what some of those properties would be. I listed them in the budget. We talked about the Seaton and Lakeview lands. We talked about OPG's head office. We talked about a number of—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: We talked about a number of properties that were unproductive that we wanted to ensure that we maximize by reinvesting them into infrastructure, into public transit, into things that will generate greater returns to the people of Ontario. It's clearly laid out. Read it if you wish.

We're taking care of business, and we'll continue to help the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): New question. The leader of the third party.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I'd advise you to lock up the mace; that might be next.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier. The Premier kept Ontarians in the dark about her scheme to sell off Hydro One—

Interjections.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: She kept Ontarians in the dark about her scheme to sell off Hydro One, she kept her ministers in the dark about her scheme to sell off Hydro One and she kept her backbenchers in the dark about her

scheme to sell off Hydro One. This afternoon, this House is going to vote on whether or not to actually listen to Ontarians.

Will this Premier allow her MPP backbenchers a free vote on whether or not they should be listening to the people in their ridings and hold a referendum on the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let me say to the leader of the third party once again—and I will go through the statements we made. April 11, 2014: “The Ontario government has appointed a council to recommend ways to improve the efficiency and optimize the full value of Hydro One.” In our budget 2014: “The government will look at maximizing and unlocking value from assets it”—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The two-way conversation that’s going on is not helpful, and finger pointing doesn’t change my mind at all.

Carry on.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —including real estate holdings, as well as crown corporations such as” OPG, Hydro One and the LCBO.

Page 257 of our budget 2014: “Exploring options to unlock the full value of a wide range of valuable provincial assets ... specifically the LCBO, Hydro One and” OPG.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton Mountain, come to order.

Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Why is this Premier more interested in hearing from a very small group of her friends, her very powerful friends, than she is from the people of Ontario, from Ontario families—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Deputy House leader.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: —in a referendum on the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I went through the quotes of what we said we were going to do. They were very clear.

There was an election on June 12, 2014. That election was based on the statements that had been made by the various parties. Our statements were very clear about the fact that we were looking at unlocking the value of our assets. We hadn’t been explicit about what exactly that was going to mean, but we were clear enough that the leader of the third party said—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We were clear enough that even the leader of the third party could understand. She said, “The budget says in black and white that the government is looking at the sale of assets, ‘including ... crown corporations, such as Ontario Power Generation’”—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I have all kinds of rights, and asking the House to come to order is one of them.

Premier, finish please. You have one wrap-up sentence.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Just to say that that was the budget we campaigned on. We had the election, and we are moving ahead to implement that plan.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, I can tell you that the leader of the third party knows exactly what the Liberals are up to, which is why we didn’t support their budget in the first place—because we knew that this Premier was not being honest and upfront with the people of Ontario. That’s what we saw in that budget.

Ontario families actually own Hydro One. They deserve a say on the Premier’s plan to sell off Hydro One. In fact, the backbenchers actually deserve an ability to cast a free vote—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Trinity–Spadina.

I’m going to ask the leader to withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I’ll withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I will now ask you to finish putting your question.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The bottom line is, the Liberals pulled a real sneaky fast one on the people of Ontario, and what we want to see—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That’s not acceptable. Please withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The people of this province, whether the Liberals like it or not, own Hydro One. It is their right to decide whether or not it gets sold off. Will she hold a referendum and give them their voice?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

1100

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, we’re on the cusp of royal assent of budget 2015, Building Ontario Up. It is one of the most progressive budgets to date, investing critical investments for future generations of our province while enhancing and preserving the quality of life of people all across Ontario. We’re also making a very prudent fiscal plan to balance while so doing. But it’s possible because of the vision and the integrity of the Premier of this province. We stand behind Premier Kathleen Wynne for all that she has done. Thank you for your support.

Interjections.

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

New question.

TEACHERS’ LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I’ll try to tone it down a bit here, Mr. Speaker.

My question today is to the Minister of Education.

Minister, no doubt you are happy to see this session come to an end. It ends with our education system in complete turmoil. We know that almost non-stop bargaining and negotiations will have to occur to avoid turmoil on September 8. I've heard you say that a lot of bargaining can take place in three months. We have 96 days left until the new school year.

Can you outline to the House your plans, as minister, to avoid turmoil on September 8?

Hon. Liz Sandals: That's very simple. We will be at the bargaining table, we will be negotiating, we will be working with the unions, we will be working with the school boards: That's the plan. We are quite willing to spend the summer negotiating. Only through negotiations will we actually be able to arrive at a collective agreement.

When we introduced and passed Bill 122, we understood that we need everybody involved in this discussion at the table. We understood that we need the government as the funder. We understood that we need to restore collective bargaining to the unions. We understood that the school boards have a role because they're the employers, and that all three of those parties—

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

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Minister, I must say I have enjoyed being your critic this past session or two. Since July of last year, I've actually gained a lot of new friends as education stakeholders. Like you, I have a passionate interest in the education and training of the two million students here in Ontario.

Minister, we have no agreements in place—with none of the educators of the 72 boards in Ontario as of now, and it started last fall. My question, as your critic, your friend and your colleague here in the Legislature, is this: Will your office send me a daily update on the process, the bargaining that's taking place throughout the summer months so that I can pass it on to my leader, Patrick Brown, and the rest of our PC caucus?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I don't recall writing into the legislation a clause that said, "Update your critic daily on what's happening at the bargaining table." In fact, I think I've said repeatedly that the only way—

Interjections.

Hon. Liz Sandals: And this is serious—the only way we're actually going to get agreements is if we bargain at the bargaining table. Bargaining through the critics, bargaining through the Legislature, bargaining through the media doesn't work. The only place that bargaining works is at the bargaining table, and that is where we intend to be.

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Ever since the Premier blindsided Ontarians with her plan to sell off Hydro One—and the question is to you, Premier—the Premier has claimed that the Ontario Energy Board would protect Ontarians from

a privatized Hydro One and its desire for much higher rates. Then we learned she's stacking the OEB with energy industry insiders. Then we learned she's trying to get rid of consumer intervenors at the OEB hearings. And the other day her government tabled a bill that would allow the government to bypass the OEB altogether whenever it wants to push through costly and risky mega-projects that consumers will pay for.

Why is the Premier weakening consumer protections at the Ontario Energy Board?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, that accusation is so sweeping, so incorrect, it's very, very difficult to answer. I'll answer that by saying that he already knows that the Ontario Energy Board has been reducing and cutting back requests for increases in rates. He already knows that we've introduced legislation that—

Mr. Paul Miller: Not anymore.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Yes—gives us the authority to initiate transmission projects, which he calls a project that we should not have the authority to do. We've had people say that we're going to lose authority over the system because of Hydro One. Now he's telling us that we ought not to have the power to initiate transmission projects.

Mr. Speaker, he's all over the map, he's inconsistent and he's repeated again for the third time the conflict-of-interest issue at the Ontario Energy Board, and he's dead wrong.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I can't see why having an evidence-based process for making a decision is a problem; nonetheless, that's the way the government sees it.

Under the current law, the Ontario Energy Board must weigh the costs and benefits of a transmission project to see if it's in the public interest, but the government's new bill would bypass this open review process, allowing the government to ram through megaprojects based on politics, not on evidence.

Why does the Premier need yet another way to put her own political interests ahead of the interests of consumers and Ontario families?

Interjections.

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

Minister.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The proposed enhancements would provide—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton Mountain—second time.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: These improvements would provide cabinet with the clear authority to identify priority transmission projects and eliminate the requirement—eliminate the requirement—for the OEB to spend further time on basic principle of need. All other elements of the OEB's existing approval processes, including reviewing costs, prudence and allocation, would remain in place,

except as we have further expanded their authority in the legislation that we've introduced.

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Ms. Daiene Vernile: My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Minister, the week of June 1 to 7, Ontario is celebrating Local Food Week, giving us the opportunity to thank our farmers for the safe, high-quality and tasty food that they've produced.

By buying local food, Ontarians not only have access to food that's nutritious, delicious and environmentally friendly, they're also supporting local farmers and the local economy.

Minister, I want to tell you that I'm personally looking forward to the first crops being produced by Fertile Ground in Waterloo region—that is a farm-share program to which my family belongs.

Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs please update the House on Local Food Week?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the hard-working member from Kitchener Centre for that wonderful question this morning. We do know the Kitchener area is the home of the famous market in Elmira.

We're supporting our local food as part of our government's plan to grow the economy, create jobs and foster a strong and vibrant agri-food sector.

Some time ago, we introduced the Local Food Act, which was a product of all parties in this Legislature. I always recognize the work that was done by the honourable gentleman from Sarnia.

As part of Local Food Week, we were proud to announce that VG Meats will receive up to \$948,025 through the Local Food Fund, to help bring Ontario beef to more than 25 Longo's grocery stores right across Ontario, one being in the wonderful riding of Vaughan. Today we're holding our eighth annual Queen's Park farmers' market on the front lawn after question period, and we'll be releasing our first-ever Local Food Report, detailing the progress we've made and our goals and targets established by the Local Food Fund—

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

1110

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you to the minister for his answer. Minister, I invite you to come to Kitchener Centre to visit our famous farmers' market soon.

Minister, it is great to hear that the Ontario government is continuing to make these key investments in local food projects across Ontario. We all know that farmers do feed cities, and our government must continue to support farmers, to build Ontario up. Farmers work hard all year round to bring food to our tables, and we know that Ontario consumers appreciate fresh, local foods—I know I do.

In 2013, the Premier challenged the agri-food sector to double its annual growth rate to create 120,000 new jobs

by the year 2020. Could the minister please inform this House, during Local Food Week, on the local food strategy to contribute to the Premier's agri-food challenge?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the member for Kitchener Centre for her supplementary.

I do take the opportunity to visit farmers' markets right across the province of Ontario, whether I'm in Elmira, Ontario, or Cobourg, Ontario, or Collingwood, Ontario, or communities right across the province. There's no better experience than to visit a farmers' market.

Since the Premier issued the growth challenge to our sector last year, we have created 17,000 new jobs in the agri-food sector in Ontario, which has led to \$1.1 billion in new exports. This is all about making our investments in the agri-food sector.

Just last week I had the opportunity to be with my good friend the member from Wellington-Halton Hills to announce our great investment in the new Elora dairy research station, something that will put Ontario on the market internationally when it comes to the dairy sector. This new state-of-the-art facility will help develop—

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

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Jack MacLaren: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, your management of our health care system is a failure. You are cutting physiotherapy for seniors. You are cutting home care for people who want to be at home. You are cutting funding to hospitals, and nurses are being laid off. And now you are cutting fees for services paid to doctors.

Our doctors are the foundation of our health care system. They are not your employees; they are your partners—your partners in health care delivery.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: You are not treating them with the respect that they are due. You are not dealing with them responsibly. You are not negotiating in good faith.

Minister, will you talk to our doctors in the mutually respectful manner they deserve? The integrity of our health care system is at stake.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: It's partly because we are increasing our investments into community and home care—it's partly because we are increasing our investments and hiring more nurses and making sure that we're investing in those aspects of health care that truly do support our seniors and other vulnerables in society—that we've asked our doctors to work with us in this difficult and challenging fiscal time, to actually pause in terms of their remuneration. That's all we're talking about here. We're talking about the compensation the government provides to our doctors.

After a year of negotiations with the OMA, we brought in an umpire. We brought in retired Justice Warren Winkler to bring the two parties together to try

and reach an agreement. At the end of the day, we were unable to do that. Judge Winkler implored the OMA to accept our offer; they didn't. But we are going ahead and implementing precisely what Winkler had recommended.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Minister, there are 28,000 doctors in Ontario, who treat 320,000 patients every day of the year. Our population grows by 140,000 people every year, and our aging, high-needs population is also growing rapidly every year. The demand for medicare in Ontario grows by 2.7% every year, and yet government has committed to fund only 1.25%, or less than half, of that growth.

Dr. Stephen Grodinsky, a pediatrician in my riding, tells me that two pediatricians are retiring in Ottawa and there are no new doctors to replace them. We need more doctors, and your response is to cut fees for services paid to doctors. That is not going to work. This is a major disincentive for doctors to practise in Ontario.

Minister, think of the 320,000 patients per day. They need our doctors. Will you get back to the bargaining table and do what is right?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that we actually have more than 5,000 more physicians than existed in Ontario when we came into office in 2003.

Our doctors are precious to the health care system in this province. I'm a family physician and a public health expert myself, and a member of the OMA.

I had the privilege, just two days ago, of sitting down with Dr. Michael Toth, who is a family doctor from southwestern Ontario, the new president of the OMA. We had a very positive and engaging discussion. I know my ministry is actually sitting today, again, with the OMA, as part of the Physician Services Committee to look at ways that we can move forward and come back to negotiations and discussions.

There are many, many important issues that we depend on our doctors in Ontario to help us work through. They are important partners. They are a big part of the foundation of health care in this province. I look forward to continuing to strengthen that relationship and working with them.

CLASS SIZE

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, the Minister of Education has finally admitted that class size caps are on the table. The minister has also acknowledged that the government is a party at the table. But it's alarming that the minister stubbornly refuses, day after day, to commit to keeping current class size caps under any deal she signs.

There's frankly no excuse for not stepping up and protecting the small class sizes and one-on-one time that families expect. Those small class sizes are at the heart of what quality education means—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Deputy House leader, a second time.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: —and our kids deserve nothing less. If the Liberal government refuses to step up and do their job for the families of this province, they'll be forcing all of our students into even larger classes this September and forcing our kids to pay the price in overcrowded classrooms.

Will the Premier finally do the right thing? Will she do what her minister refuses to do? Will the Premier guarantee to families and kids today, right here, right now, that current class size caps will be protected because that's the right thing to do for schools in Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the Minister of Education is going to want to comment on the supplementary, but I just really need to remark that this is a party that apparently is trying to find its way back to its voice and believes in collective bargaining, Mr. Speaker. I would just remind this party that part of that voice they're trying to recapture is a belief in the relationship with labour. That means collective bargaining. As the minister has said over and over and over again, the only place we're going to find a deal—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —the only place we're going to get a deal is at the table. So I would expect that of all the parties in this House, the leader of the third party would support a collective bargaining process. That's what we're engaged in and that's what we're going to let run its course.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I'd like to remind the Premier that some of these staff have been without a contract for nine months. You should try coming to the table rather than legislating them back to work.

Back to the Premier: The Liberal record on education is abysmal at best. Not only have the Premier and government thrown our schools into chaos because of more than a decade of chronic underfunding, they have also shown zero respect for education workers, their professionalism or their work environment.

They brag about frozen funding. They brag about cutting \$250 million from education. They refuse to admit that special education funding has been cut in many schools, including \$6 million in Toronto alone. With one hand they commit to community hubs, and with the other they have closed, or want to close, more than 125 neighbourhood schools. Now, after all that, they want to go even further to jeopardize small class sizes and one-on-one time our children deserve.

Will the Premier stop the chaos her government has caused to our children's education by committing to protecting small class sizes today and getting—

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Education.

1120

Hon. Liz Sandals: You know, I'm really not going to take a lecture here from the party whose only education

platform in the 2014 election was, “Let’s take \$600 million out of the spending on education and health care,” and whose position just last week was, “Let the teachers go back again,” 10 days after we ended one strike because it was deemed to be unlawful. They voted for the teachers to go back out on strike again instead of getting kids back in the classroom. That’s their record in education.

What I would say is the same thing I said to my critic for the official opposition—

Interjection.

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

Answer.

Hon. Liz Sandals: The critic for the third party is not part of the negotiating process. I’m not negotiating with her.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Chris Ballard: My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. It’s imperative that students across Ontario have access to high-quality post-secondary education. That’s why last year, our government issued an open call for proposals for post-secondary institutions to expand capacity in underserved areas as part of Ontario’s Major Capacity Expansion Policy Framework.

Minister, I understand that a panel evaluated 13 proposals based on a number of clearly outlined criteria, including their ability to increase spaces in underserved areas and offer a broad range of innovative, high-demand programs. Many of my constituents in Newmarket–Aurora were delighted to hear that the province is supporting a new York University Markham Centre campus in partnership with Seneca College to the south of my riding.

Can you please inform the members of the House of how our government is making post-secondary education more accessible in York region through Ontario’s Major Capacity Expansion Policy Framework?

Hon. Reza Moridi: I want to thank the member from Newmarket–Aurora for that very timely question.

A couple of weeks ago, I was pleased to be joined by several of my colleagues to announce our support for the first-ever university campus in York region. After an open and transparent selection process, York University’s proposal was most clearly aligned with the criteria set forward by the evaluation panel set up by my ministry.

The new campus will offer programs that incorporate experiential learning with an academic focus on business, the arts and social sciences. The campus received great support from the city of Markham, from York region and also from employers. The campus will be close to local transit options and other facilities, such as sports fields, the YMCA and the Atos Markham Pan Am/Parapan Am Centre.

I want to congratulate York University, and also I want to thank all the institutions—

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

Supplementary?

Mr. Chris Ballard: Thank you to the minister for that answer. It’s reassuring to know that our government is committed to helping more students pursue post-secondary education by putting the right spaces in the right places.

For many municipalities, having a post-secondary institution is important for economic and regional development. At the same time, it’s absolutely necessary that our government ensures Ontario taxpayer dollars are being invested in areas where post-secondary education and training are most needed.

York region is just one Ontario area that is experiencing significant growth of college- and university-age students. I understand that our government will be issuing a second call for proposals in spring 2016 for another expansion project to serve local demand in Peel and Halton regions.

Minister, can you please inform the members of the House more about this second call for proposals in Peel and Halton regions?

Hon. Reza Moridi: I want to thank the member again for that question.

Mr. Speaker, the member is absolutely right: It’s imperative that Ontario’s tax dollars are invested in areas where the demand for an undergraduate degree education will be strong and gaps in access are expected. That’s why I was also pleased to announce that our government will be issuing a second call for proposals in spring 2016 for another campus to serve the local needs in Peel and Halton regions. Currently, the combined 18- to 24-year-old population in Halton and Peel region is about 200,000. Despite such a large university-age population, these regions only have one university campus, with 10,000 undergraduate full-time students.

Our government will continue to make post-secondary education more accessible to our young people to make sure that our people will get the best education they can ever receive.

ABORIGINAL LAND DISPUTE

Mr. Toby Barrett: To the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Since November of last year, native militants have shut down construction of the provincial Highway 3 bridge at Cayuga, a \$20-million project just down the Grand River from Caledonia. The Haudenosaunee Development Institute and the Six Nations Men’s Fire activists have forced construction workers off the bridge. Now, we’ve been waiting over six months to replace a deteriorating, 1924 steel truss bridge.

Minister, patience is wearing thin. When will your government restore peace, order and construction workers on the Cayuga bridge?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Once again I remind the member that when it comes to matters of policing operations, that is within the jurisdiction of the Ontario Provincial Police, a very highly regarded professional organization that

does excellent work across the province. I think it would be highly inappropriate for any member of this House, especially a member of government, to be speaking about police operations and decisions that they make.

We support the work that our Ontario Provincial Police do, especially the work they do in conjunction with our First Nations to ensure that we are working in a respectful and healthy relationship. I urge the members to do the same.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Toby Barrett: This Cayuga bridge shutdown requires urgent action. After years of delay, constant repair, load limits and lengthy detours, the bridge is not safe for heavy trucks or oversized farm machinery.

Haldimand county has no authority to force militants off the bridge when they've threatened construction workers. The Ministry of Transportation has had no success, in spite of seven years of negotiation and in spite of conducting lengthy environmental and archaeological reviews demanded by the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the same group that you have permitted to occupy Douglas Creek Estates in Caledonia for more than nine years now.

This militant action continues on a provincial bridge, on a provincial highway, under a provincial contract. When will your provincial government step in and allow the safe opening of the Cayuga bridge?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Again, when it comes to issues around maintaining peace and order, we rely on our provincial police—the Ontario Provincial Police, as everyone knows. They make those determinations.

I think what we should be promoting is a more peaceful resolution of any dispute, as opposed to sowing seeds of discontent.

We very much appreciate and recognize the work that the OPP does with local communities in finding those resolutions. I wholeheartedly support them and will continue to work with the OPP and let them do the work they do so well in our communities across the province.

PAN AM GAMES

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. The Pan Am Games kick off in a month. The CEO of the games committee has said that “this will be a summer you will never forget.” Unfortunately for us, this quote came from an article about traffic congestion.

In less than four weeks, Pan Am lanes will be blocked off on highways into, out of and through Toronto. At the Minister of Transportation's—

Interjections.

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

Minister of Energy.

Please ask.

Mr. Paul Miller: At the Minister of Transportation's technical briefings, a rosy picture was definitely painted: No real impacts on traffic, he said. But all this was contingent on his faith-based transportation plan that 20% of drivers will stay off the road.

Minister, what evidence do you have that this will work, number one? What metrics are you using? How will you measure your achievement against the 20% target: during or after the games?

1130

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I know that on this side of the House and right across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area—right across Ontario—there is a ton of excitement about the fact that the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games will be starting shortly.

That member should know, of course, that when we announced and provided the technical briefing with respect to the Pan Am/Parapan Am transportation plan, we did discuss a number of initiatives that are being brought forward and have already been brought forward.

For example, we're allowing spectators to use their games tickets to get onto public transit. We're expanding the high-occupancy-vehicle lane network temporarily for vehicles with three or more people, public transit, games fleet vehicles, emergency vehicles and taxis. We're providing accessible transportation options, including pre-booked accessible parking, public transit—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

Hon. Steven Del Duca:—specialized transit services. We're also providing information and planning tools to help people plan ahead and avoid any challenges they might have.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Paul Miller: It is clear that the government has been expecting massive congestion all along and has decided that it just can't be helped. They've decided that it is the price the public has to pay, although they've never asked. I call it their Ontario traffic premium plan.

The minister talks a lot about the evidence from London and Vancouver. Let me give you some numbers, Speaker, on what happened in London and Vancouver. London achieved only a 9% reduction in peak-hour p.m. traffic during the Olympics and during the Paralympics an abysmal 2%—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'll move to a warning.

Please finish.

Mr. Paul Miller: London achieved only a 9% reduction in peak-hour p.m. traffic during the Olympics, and during the Paralympics an abysmal 2%. They invested—this number is mind-boggling—billions in transit and still couldn't achieve 20%. We know the consequence of failing to reach a target: the Don Valley Parkway at a quarter of its normal speed, an hour and 15 minutes from the Gardiner to the 401, and similar numbers throughout the whole network.

Can the minister tell us what his plan B is to avoid traffic chaos—

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

Minister?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I thank the member for the follow-up question.

What I didn't get a chance to talk about in my original answer was that this coming Saturday, the Union Pearson

Express will launch and go into service in time for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, as this Premier and our government promised.

What I also didn't mention in my original answer was that the West Harbour GO station, formerly called the James Street North station, in that member's community, will be ready in time for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games.

Interjection.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: That's right.

I will wrap up by reminding all members in this House that perhaps the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek would know all of this if he had—

Interjections.

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

New question.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: My question is for the minister responsible for seniors affairs. I got to know many seniors while working as a nurse, and I know the importance of sustaining healthy, active and engaged older adults. I am proud of the dedication of the minister and this government to take action to help seniors live their best life.

This June, we celebrate the 31st annual Seniors' Month in Ontario. In my community of Cambridge and Waterloo region, Seniors' Month is an important occasion filled with many local events and activities that engage and celebrate the active and vibrant seniors in my community. For 31 years, we've honoured the many contributions that seniors have made to this province, and we recognize their spirit that continues to shine regardless of age.

Can the minister please share with us more details about Seniors' Month and how Ontario recognizes and celebrates seniors?

Hon. Mario Sergio: Thanks to the member for Cambridge for the question.

Indeed, we are happy to celebrate Ontario's 31st anniversary of Seniors' Month. Our theme this year is "Vibrant Seniors, Vibrant Communities," acknowledging the remarkable spirit of our seniors.

I was delighted to kick off Seniors' Month on June 1 at Ryerson University, where there is clearly a strong commitment and a strong community dedicated to continuous learning for seniors.

This Seniors' Month and beyond, I encourage everyone to reach out to the seniors in your lives and let them know we appreciate the work they have done for our home, Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Minister. I know how important it is to have activities that interest, engage and inspire the seniors in our communities, especially during Seniors' Month. I've had the pleasure to regularly host events to connect with them in order to learn and discuss the issues facing seniors. Next week, in

fact, I'll be visiting Heritage Meadows retirement home and listening to the seniors living in my riding of Cambridge.

It's essential to remember that the number of seniors in Ontario will double over the next two decades—including many in this House—and the work we do for them is becoming increasingly important. Speaker, could the minister please elaborate on the progress we're making as we mark the 31st annual Seniors' Month in Ontario?

Hon. Mario Sergio: Speaker, our action is strengthened by the work of hard-working local leaders like the member from Cambridge, who is so dedicated to seniors in her community.

Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors covers many issues that affect seniors and has had a very overwhelming positive response. For example, we launched the very successful—first year, first time—Seniors Community Grant Program, reaching out to some 46,000 seniors in the first year, and this year, Speaker, doubling the grant. Thanks to the Premier and Minister Sousa, we are reaching some 72,000-plus seniors in every corner of our province.

I'm proud to witness the strides we are making to help Ontario become the best place to age.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Minister, I know from our personal conversations that you have a deep and abiding sense of the importance of heritage in the province of Ontario, and I commend you for that. You've also shown an interest in a particular piece of heritage in my riding, the Vineland schoolhouse.

As you know, the original schoolhouse was built in 1895. It's an extraordinary example of 19th-century architecture. It has been important in the community not just as a school, but a living, so to speak, example of Beamsville brickwork. There's an awful lot of history packed into that tiny schoolhouse.

Here's the problem: 120 years of history is going to come to an end on June 19. That's when the wrecking ball comes to town and knocks it down.

Minister, will you use your authority under the Ontario Heritage Act to intervene and save that schoolhouse?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I want to thank the member opposite for the question, but also for his advocacy on this issue. I know that over the last several weeks we've had many opportunities to talk about this specific schoolhouse. You know, 120 years: That's lot of heritage, a lot of local heritage, and a beautiful example of the type of architecture that was developed 120 years ago.

In fact, I did receive many letters from Friends of Vineland Public School, and they have officially requested, as well, for provincial designation.

Mr. Speaker, the Ontario Heritage Act gives municipalities the tools they need to manage and protect the heritage assets in their communities. We've connected

with the local municipality, the township of Lincoln, and presented some options for them. I hope they make best use of those options to save this particular piece of infrastructure and history.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I do want to say to the minister, I do appreciate the fact that you contacted the town of Lincoln and you gave them options. Unfortunately, the town of Lincoln decided not to pursue those options. Their concern is that they would be sued by the local school board because the previous council had issued the demolition permit.

The notion, and I think you would share this with me, of one publicly funded institution suing another publicly funded institution to get more money from the taxpayers to go to lawyers is preposterous. The schoolhouse gets knocked down all the same.

1140

So let me put this on the table because, as you know, come June 19, this piece of history is gone forever, and, as the expression goes, they don't make them like that anymore. Minister, will you use your authority as minister—I have been in that position. I know the minister and I know how much they care about heritage and I know your phone calls get returned. Would you contact both the school board and municipality and try to pull them together with heritage groups before June 19 to keep that living history alive?

Hon. Michael Coteau: As I was saying, we did contact the municipality of Lincoln and we have presented some options for them to assist in preventing any type of litigation against any of those publicly funded organizations. We believe that we've presented an option for them that would allow them to take local control and really develop a solution that would work for everyone.

At the ministry, this government, we are committed to preserving heritage here in the province of Ontario. In fact, the Premier has asked me to revisit culture and build a new framework for Ontario. I know heritage will be a big part of that discussion in the fall. I'm going to work with the Minister of Education. I will work with other ministries and the people of Ontario to look for better ways to preserve our history in the province of Ontario.

Again, I want to thank the member for his advocacy on this issue. We'll continue to work with both the school board and the municipality, if required.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. Major infrastructure projects like the Pan Am Games are generating massive volumes of contaminated soil. The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change does not track this soil and has no idea where it winds up. We do know that much of this contaminated soil has been dumped on prime farmland and protected lands in the greenbelt and the Oak Ridges moraine, with the property owners believing they were accepting clean soil. Last October, the

minister called this a top environmental and economic concern for Ontario, and promised action by the spring. Well, the spring session wraps up today, and nothing has been done. Why has the minister failed to take any action?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: In preamble, I just want to say one thing. I was the mayor who hosted the last Pan Am Games in Canada, in 1999. It's amazing to me how that party has found every opportunity to absolutely dis and degrade what is one of the most exciting events. It's the first time the Toronto area has had a major event. You don't know what you're in for, but we're about to have the most historic moments in our province's history, Mr. Speaker.

The waste guidelines that were put out last spring are being reviewed very actively, as is the development of the Waste Diversion Act. I look forward to reporting back to the House and working with my critic on that.

But it's a sad day, on the eve of what will be a historic summer in Ontario and Toronto and Hamilton's history, that that is the kind of lemon-sucking we get from the party opposite.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'd like to do this and then I'll come back to the member.

I have three quick comments before we move on.

ANNE STOKES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Just before we do move on to bills, I would like to draw the members' attention to the fact that our table Clerk Anne Stokes has announced that she's going to be retiring later this month. Therefore, this is her last day serving the table, and I hope that all members would join me in thanking Anne for a very long and successful career in public service and wish her the best in her years of retirement.

Applause.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And to make sure that you understand I didn't miss it this time—and we're on a happy note—I have a sad note: This is the last day for our pages. But we do want to thank them for the wonderful work that they've done for us these last two weeks.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On a point of order, the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek.

Mr. Paul Miller: Thank you, Speaker. Just to correct the record, I'd like to inform the minister that my entire staff were at all technical briefings on the Pan Am Games. He's incorrect.

Interjections.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew has an extra chip in his pocket.

VISITORS

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

Hon. Michael Coteau: It is my pleasure to welcome Monica Xu, Loreta Chan and Michelle Lu, who are part of the TO2015 Youth Summit joining us here in the Legislature today. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Just before we do our last, I do want to wish all of you a safe and healthy family time break, but also to reinforce what I've said time and time again: Thank you for the hard work that you do, even when the House is not sitting. I know you go back to your constituencies and work hard. Please be safe this summer. Enjoy yourselves and enjoy your families. Thank you.

I would also like to say to the staff here, to the clerks at the table and to all the staff here at the Legislature, thank you for a hard job done well. Thank you.

DEFERRED VOTES

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR JOBS
AND PROSPERITY ACT, 2015LOI DE 2015 SUR L'INFRASTRUCTURE
AU SERVICE DE L'EMPLOI
ET DE LA PROSPÉRITÉ

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

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 / Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité.

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

The division bells rang from 1146 to 1151.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On June 3, 2015, Mr. Naqvi moved third reading of Bill 6.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gates, Wayne	Miller, Norm
Anderson, Granville	Gélinas, France	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gravelle, Michael	Moridi, Reza
Arnott, Ted	Gretzky, Lisa	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Murray, Glen R.
Baker, Yvan	Harris, Michael	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Balkissoon, Bas	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Ballard, Chris	Hoggarth, Ann	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Pettapiece, Randy
Bisson, Gilles	Hudak, Tim	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwala, Sophie	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	Kwinter, Monte	Sattler, Peggy
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Singh, Jagmeet
Crack, Grant	MacLaren, Jack	Smith, Todd
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Tabuns, Peter

Delaney, Bob	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
Dhillon, Vic	Martins, Cristina	Thibeault, Glenn
Dickson, Joe	Martow, Gila	Thompson, Lisa M.
DiNovo, Cheri	Matthews, Deborah	Vanthof, John
Dong, Han	Mauro, Bill	Vernile, Daiene
Duguid, Brad	McDonnell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Dunlop, Garfield	McGarry, Kathryn	Wilson, Jim
Fedeli, Victor	McMahon, Eleanor	Wong, Soo
Fife, Catherine	McMeekin, Ted	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McNaughton, Monte	Yakabuski, John
Forster, Cindy	Meilleur, Madeleine	Zimmer, David
French, Jennifer K.	Milczyn, Peter Z.	

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 95; the nays are 0.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

GREAT LAKES PROTECTION ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES GRANDS LACS

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

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

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

The division bells rang from 1155 to 1156.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On March 26, 2015, Mr. Murray moved second reading of Bill 66.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	French, Jennifer K.	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Anderson, Granville	Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Moridi, Reza
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Gretzky, Lisa	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoggarth, Ann	Oraziotti, David
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Hoskins, Eric	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chan, Michael	Hunter, Mitzie	Rinaldi, Lou
Chiarelli, Bob	Jaczek, Helena	Sandals, Liz
Colle, Mike	Kiwala, Sophie	Sattler, Peggy
Coteau, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	Lalonde, Marie-France	Singh, Jagmeet
Damerla, Dipika	Leal, Jeff	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Mangat, Amrit	Taylor, Monique
Dhillon, Vic	Mantha, Michael	Thibeault, Glenn
Dickson, Joe	Martins, Cristina	Vanthof, John
DiNovo, Cheri	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
Dong, Han	Mauro, Bill	Wong, Soo
Duguid, Brad	McGarry, Kathryn	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Eleanor	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMeekin, Ted	
Forster, Cindy	Meilleur, Madeleine	

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

Nays

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Clark, Steve
Dunlop, Garfield
Hardeman, Ernie

Harris, Michael
Hudak, Tim
MacLaren, Jack
Martow, Gila
McDonnell, Jim
Munro, Julia

Nicholls, Rick
Pettapiece, Randy
Smith, Todd
Thompson, Lisa M.
Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 73; the nays are 17.

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 June 2, 2015, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

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

The House recessed from 1200 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jack MacLaren: It's my pleasure to introduce John Wakefield and Ed Maloney from Duoro-Dummer township. They're here about solar panels on farms that they object to.

As well, we have special guests from the Crimean Tatar Association of Canada: Liudmila Davydovych, Consul General of the Ukraine; Rustem Izsaev, president of the Crimean-Tatar Association of Canada, and his wife, Elvira Maksudova. We have Volodymyr Paslavskyi, president of the Young Professionals and Skilled Workers Association. We have Peter Schturyyn, vice-president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress from Toronto. We have Olga Klymenko. We have Walter Kish, vice-president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, provincial council, and we have Lydia Falcomer from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Holodomor genocide committee.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's my pleasure to introduce many activists from the LGBTQ community: Thomas Zaugg, Robert Savarie, Catherine Savarie, Vincent Bolt, Rita OLink, Jessica and Stella Skinner, Richard Hudler, Debbie Wooldridge, Darlyn Hansen, Gillian McKeown, Christine Newman, Susan Gapka and Pearse Murray. We welcome them to the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Further introductions? The member from Dufferin-Caledon?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I was trying to be patient to see if our guests could make it. In the meantime, Speaker, when they are able to join us, will you please join me in welcoming some special guests who are here to honour

our colleague the member from Oxford for his life-saving bill to require carbon monoxide detectors?

In the members' gallery, imminently: From Brampton Fire Services are Fire Chief Michael Clark, Deputy Fire Chief Brian Maltby, Division Chief Andrew von Holt and Assistant Division Chief Tina Hickey, as well as Councillor Michael Palleschi from the city of Brampton. They are joined by Mary Ellen Sheppard and John Gignac, co-founders of the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation for CO education, and Doug DeRabbie from the Insurance Bureau of Canada.

I want to welcome them all to Queen's Park and thank them for their work in raising awareness for the need for carbon monoxide detectors.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: It gives me great pleasure to introduce several family members who are here for the first time ever at Queen's Park. We have, from the riding of Willowdale, my parents, Carmine and Antonietta Vernile. We have my in-laws, who have made it here from Kitchener: Tony Matlock and his lovely wife, Jean Matlock. Tony is a former Ontario seniors' golfing champion. Sitting behind them is my husband, who's very patient and is driving everyone around today as the chauffeur: John Matlock.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CRIMEAN TATARS

Mr. Jack MacLaren: Today, I rise in the House to raise awareness among Ontarians about one of the cruellest moments in the history of humanity: the deportation of Crimean Tatars from Crimea in 1944, orchestrated by Joseph Stalin.

Under the false accusation of collective collaboration between Crimean Tatars and the Nazis, the Soviet government evicted over 240,000 Crimean people from their homeland in order to destroy them as an ethnic group. Within months, half of them died of cold, hunger, exhaustion and disease.

After the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014, the Crimean Tatars have been facing a new wave of violence and hatred. Their national leaders are banned from entering Crimea. Dozens of people were imprisoned during and shortly after the annexation, and many others are still missing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to reaffirm my support for Canada's position on this issue. As Prime Minister of Canada the Right Honourable Stephen Harper said last spring, "Canada will never recognize this annexation as being the genuine will of the Ukrainian people." Crimea is Ukraine.

Let us not forget the victims of the Soviet regime. Let us not allow such atrocities to happen again in the future. Slava Ukraini.

PAN AM GAMES

Mr. Paul Miller: In five weeks, the Pan Am Games will open in Toronto. The largest event, the soccer tournament, will be hosted in my home city of Hamilton. Some of North and South America's finest players will be playing there.

You may have heard me from time to time question the management, planning and spending around these games, and with good reason. But have no doubt: I'm excited that the games are almost here. It has been 85 years since Hamilton hosted a major sporting tournament, the first Commonwealth Games, then known as the Empire Games. I'm proud that major international sport has returned to my city 85 years later.

Last Friday, I attended an exhibition soccer game at the new Tim Hortons Field in Hamilton. The soccer and football stadium, although substantially delayed, will be home to the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, Ontario's premier CFL team. I was delighted to watch Canada defeat England, and their fine performance shows that our women's team will truly be going for gold this July. I hope that as many Ontarians as possible come to Hamilton this July to cheer them on.

We, as a province, and as a community, have invested a lot—an awful lot—of time and money in the Pan/Parapan Am Games. I hope that the facilities developed and the dreams kindled there are supported and nurtured, so that we can see a legacy that endures for decades coming along.

I welcome the athletes, the coaches, the families and the spectators of the Pan/Parapan Am Games to Ontario, and I hope they have the time of their lives. They will find that the people of Hamilton are warm, gracious and love their sports.

CAMBRIDGE SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: It's my pleasure to rise today and talk about an event in Cambridge from May 2. I was very pleased to attend the Cambridge Sports Hall of Fame annual induction ceremony in my riding. The Cambridge Sports Hall of Fame celebrates excellence in sports displayed by residents from around the Waterloo region. It has been a staple in Cambridge since it introduced the first class of inductees in 1997.

I was thrilled to be asked to present certificates to the honourees and again thank them publicly for serving as inspirational figures for my constituents.

The inductees into the hall of fame for this year were: hockey players Steve McKenna and Clarence "Dolly" Dolson; soccer player Robert Benedetti; ringette player Glen Gaudet; and harness racer Casie Coleman. Two teams were also inducted: the Cambridge Winter Hawks, who won the Sutherland Cup in 2006 and 2007, and the 2007 Southwood Sabres basketball team. Speaker, I have raised several Southwood Sabres, so I can't resist saying today, "Go, Sabres, Go!"

Steve McKenna spent several seasons playing with the Los Angeles Kings, Minnesota Wild, Pittsburgh Penguins and the New York Rangers.

Glen Gaudet coached a national ringette team in 2011 and led Ontario to gold medals in the Canada Winter Games three times.

Robert Benedetti started for Team Canada at the Pan Am Games and was named Ontario athlete of the year in 1967.

All of these athletes achieved great things in their sports. I was very glad to have the chance to honour them.

MEMBER FOR OXFORD

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Earlier this afternoon I introduced representatives from the city of Brampton's fire department. They are heroes in our community, people who put their lives at risk to save others. But today they're here to recognize one of our colleagues as a hero for his work in saving lives.

The member from Oxford had a tragedy in his riding when OPP safety officer Laurie Hawkins and her family were tragically killed by carbon monoxide that had built up in their home. Since then, the member for Oxford, working with Laurie's uncle John Gignac, has made it his mission to try to prevent more tragedies like this.

1310

The member for Oxford—can I call him Ernie?

Mr. Tim Hudak: Yes.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Ernie introduced a bill which would require carbon monoxide detectors in all of our homes. Thanks to his work, every home in Ontario with a fuel-burning appliance or attached garage is now required to have a carbon monoxide detector.

The Brampton fire department is here today because they've seen first-hand that this law saves lives. A Brampton couple, Fahad and Serena Dharani-Fasih, bought carbon monoxide detectors for their home because of the new law. A short time later, they were woken in the middle of the night by the detector sounding. The heat exchanger on their furnace had cracked and was leaking carbon monoxide. With the levels in their home, they might not be alive today if they hadn't installed the carbon monoxide detector.

I'm pleased that the Brampton fire department has come to honour my colleague, especially as he celebrates his 20th anniversary as Oxford's MPP next Monday. I want to add my congratulations and praise for all of the work that he has done and will do.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

M^{me} France Gélinas: Today I rise to reiterate what a raw deal Sudbury Downs got from this cash-strapped government. Before the Liberals wasted \$1 billion to save a few seats in Mississauga, Sudbury Downs was a prosperous and popular racetrack, a racetrack that led to farmers growing hay, boarding and training horses, and even growing veggies for our local market thanks to the income that the horses were providing.

But when the Liberal government eliminated the Slots at Racetracks Program in 2012, it was the beginning of the end. Sudbury Downs tried and tried to get a five-year or even a four-year commitment from OLG, a commitment needed to attract horses and breeders to northern Ontario, but to no avail. This led to all the related businesses to wither on the vine.

Why, Speaker? Because this government and the OLG want casinos. Their greed stinks of desperation. The OLG exists to raise money for the government and to serve the public good.

This government doesn't understand that although the minute the slot machine rolls off the assembly line in China and gets plugged in, sure, it adds to the bottom line, but it doesn't create value-added. It doesn't serve the public good.

By contrast, when a horse pulls around the last bend and sprints toward the finish line, behind it are trainers, breeders, veterinarians, jockeys and 100 real jobs in agricultural areas of Nickel Belt. It is disappointing that our agricultural Premier can't understand that, although she promised just that three years ago.

ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Earlier this week, I joined my colleagues on the front lawn of the Legislature to mark Italian Heritage Month, recognizing the important contributions and achievements of Italian Canadians. Ontario is home to more than 1.3 million people of Italian heritage, including a few thousand in Kitchener Centre.

These immigrants began arriving in significant numbers in the early 20th century to work on farms, in factories and mines. But it was after the Second World War that a huge wave swept in from regions with names such as Lazio, Abruzzo, Friuli and Calabria. These war-impooverished immigrants came looking for opportunities and a peaceful place to build a new life.

Among the hundreds of thousands who poured in were my own parents back in 1957; I just introduced you to them. Newly married and just 23 and 25 years of age, they had about 50 bucks in their pocket, did not speak the language and had little education, but they were ready to work and to contribute.

Their story is similar to Italian immigrants who worked hard in this country. They bought a house. They raised children. They grew an awesome garden in the backyard which still features a fig tree today. Food, wine and familiar songs are part of what connected them to their beloved Italia, but what distinguishes them as part of the narrative of Ontario's story today is their unmistakable achievement of helping to build this province.

Remarks in Italian.

DOROTHY RUNGELING

Mr. Tim Hudak: Speaker, a constituent of mine had always been afraid to fly. Planes terrified her—that is, until her five-year-old son, Barry, goaded her one day to

get up in a plane for a test run. Now, since Bill Pr20 passed this morning—and I'm thankful for the support from all three parties here in the Legislature—they are going to name an airport after her.

I'll take you back to that day in 1948. She was 37 years old. On that first flight, the bug bit her. After she went up with her five-year-old son—the next day—without telling her son or her husband, she went back to the airport and took flying lessons. Before you knew it, she was the first woman in Canada to fly in international air races, one of the first Canadian women to hold a commercial air licence, the first Canadian woman to fly a helicopter solo, and the first to hold an airline transport licence. She won a national aviation reporting prize. She blazed trails for women in flight right across Canada and North America.

That's not it, by the way. She also was the first female councillor in the town of Pelham. She, with her husband, Charles, ran a car dealership in Welland. She was an equestrian, a musician and an artist. She has published four books.

Here's the happy news too: She turned 104 just a couple of weeks ago.

Dorothy Rungeling, now 104, doesn't fly quite as much as she used to. But because the bill passed with all-party support, I'm pleased to say that the Niagara Central Airport will now be the Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport.

I thank members for their support. It's an historic day in the town of Pelham and the peninsula. I thank Cindy Forster, the member for Welland, who has been a big supporter of this bill as well.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. My goodness, we're all happy.

PORTUGAL DAY

Mr. Han Dong: I rise today to recognize and celebrate Portugal Day. Although officially observed only in Portugal, Portuguese citizens and emigrants throughout the world celebrate this important holiday. The day commemorates the death of national literary icon Luís de Camões on June 10, 1580.

Interjection: Camões.

Mr. Han Dong: Camões—that's right. Thank you.

In Toronto, over 200,000 Portuguese Canadians celebrate by holding a multitude of events surrounding the date of June 10. The week-long festival ends with the Portugal Day parade on Dundas Street, in the area known as Little Portugal. The parade ends near Trinity Bellwoods Park, where concerts, cultural events and other activities take place.

The Portugal Day parade is Toronto's third-largest street festival, and was first celebrated in 1966. This is a much-anticipated celebration in my riding of Trinity-Spadina and in MPP Cristina Martins's riding of Davenport.

Portugal Day demonstrates our cultural diversity in Toronto and is an excellent opportunity for us to cele-

brate our multicultural heritage. I invite all members of this House and all Ontarians to join in the celebration of Portugal Day and to join us on June 10 to raise the flag of Portugal outside the Legislature.

SENIORS' MONTH

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'm pleased to rise today to talk about the wonderful seniors of our province. This June marks the 31st anniversary of Seniors' Month in Ontario, and it's a time for us to recognize and celebrate the remarkable impact that seniors have had on all of our lives. It's also a time to think about how we can assist and support our seniors after they have given us a lifetime of service.

Building a greater understanding of seniors and their needs is one of the best ways that we can express our appreciation for what they have done for us and what they are still doing today. Seniors are deeply involved in our communities, and their contributions benefit Ontarians of all ages.

Our government is committed to providing care and support to residents at every age. That's why I'm proud that Ontario is working hard to develop a comprehensive strategy for Alzheimer's and dementia care. It's an issue that touches so many people's lives, and it's one of the most pressing and serious matters facing seniors today.

Celebrating Seniors' Month raises awareness about the difficult challenges and adjustments our aging residents experience every day. It's not enough just to be aware of these difficulties; we must invest our resources to meet the needs of our elderly citizens.

I look forward to taking part in many of the events this month, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to offer a final thank you to all the seniors in this province and across the country for all they have done to build Ontario up.

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

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON JUSTICE POLICY COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA JUSTICE

M. Shafiq Qadri: Je demande la permission de déposer un rapport du Comité permanent de la justice et je propose son adoption.

Speaker, I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Justice Policy and move its adoption, and send it to you via page Robert.

1320

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Trevor Day): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regard-

ing efforts to change or direct sexual orientation or gender identity / *Projet de loi 77, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées à l'égard des interventions visant à changer ou à influencer l'orientation sexuelle ou l'identité sexuelle,*

The title of which is amended to read:

Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity / *Projet de loi 77, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées à l'égard des interventions visant à changer l'orientation sexuelle ou l'identité sexuelle.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LES LIMITES DES CIRCONSCRIPTIONS ÉLECTORALES

Madame Meilleur moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 115, An Act to enact the Representation Act, 2015, repeal the Representation Act, 2005 and amend the Election Act, the Election Finances Act and the Legislative Assembly Act / *Projet de loi 115, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur la représentation électorale, abrogeant la Loi de 2005 sur la représentation électorale et modifiant la Loi électorale, la Loi sur le financement des élections et la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative.*

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: If passed, the Electoral Boundaries Act would help ensure that Ontarians continue to have a strong voice and effective representation at Queen's Park. The proposed legislation will create 15 new ridings in southern Ontario in areas that have seen substantial growth in recent years. This change will align these ridings with the new federal boundaries.

It is important to point out that, while we are aligning with federal boundaries in the south, in the north the boundaries will not change. The 11 ridings in northern Ontario will stay the same to ensure that northern communities continue to have effective representation in the Legislature.

I urge all the members to support our proposed legislation for a stronger and more inclusive Ontario.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES STAFF
RECOGNITION WEEK ACT, 2015
LOI DE 2015 SUR LA SEMAINE
DE LA RECONNAISSANCE
DU PERSONNEL DES SERVICES
CORRECTIONNELS

Ms. Naidoo-Harris moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 116, An Act to proclaim Correctional Services Staff Recognition Week / Projet de loi 116, Loi proclamant la Semaine de la reconnaissance du personnel des services correctionnels.

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.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: The bill proclaims the week commencing on the first Monday in May each year as Correctional Services Staff Recognition Week.

Correctional services staff dedicate their lives to protecting the public with skill and professionalism. They work hard to keep communities safe. Their public service deserves to be recognized and honoured. I look forward to discussing the merits of this bill in the near future.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 77

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 79(b), the order for third reading of Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity, may be called today; and

That the order for third reading of Bill 77 be immediately called; and

That the question be put on the motion for third reading without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that, notwithstanding standing order 79(b), the order for third reading of Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Carried.

Motion agreed to.

AFFIRMING SEXUAL ORIENTATION
AND GENDER IDENTITY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L’AFFIRMATION
DE L’ORIENTATION SEXUELLE
ET DE L’IDENTITÉ SEXUELLE

Ms. DiNovo moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change sexual orientation or gender identity / Projet de loi 77, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées à l'égard des interventions visant à changer l'orientation sexuelle ou l'identité sexuelle.

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

Be it now resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

PETITIONS

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr. Jack MacLaren: I have a petition here concerning the Green Energy Act and the wrongs it puts on people's private property.

"The residents of Douro-Dummer township and the greater Peterborough area are against the proposed 150-200-acres solar project planned for the 8th Line of Douro between County Road 4 and County Road 32:

"(1) The property in question contains numerous pockets of prime (CL 1, 2, 3) agricultural land and organic land.

"(2) The property in question is a tiled farm (excellent drainage) with some of the best, productive farmland in Douro-Dummer township.

"(3) The Douro-Dummer council has unanimously voted down this solar farm proposal.

"(4) Thousands of foundation holes will be drilled into the bedrock during the construction phase, which can increase the risk of soil contamination from petroleum lubricants and chemicals (which may be used to kill vegetation near the solar panels).

"(5) After the 20-year project phase is over, this farmland will never be returned to its original, pristine state.

"(6) ORCA (Otonabee Regional Conservation Authority) development lines run through the proposed section of land, as do several underground streams, some of which run through a Trent source protected drinking water zone, past dug wells, and into the Trent-Severn waterway. Risk for contamination during construction is real.

"(7) Productive farmland in Ontario is disappearing at an alarming rate. Industrial solar projects should be built solely on rooftops and poor quality brownfields only.

“We, the undersigned, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to put a stop to the solar project planned for the 8th Line of Douro.”

Mr. Speaker, I agree with this petition. I affix my signature to it, and I give it to page Madeleine to take to the desk.

MINING INDUSTRY

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

“Whereas we, the undersigned residents of Ontario, draw the attention of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to the following:

“That Ontario is the only province to not apply its environmental assessment process to the full extent for mining projects; and

“That Treasury Metals’ open-pit Goliath gold mine project in Wabigoon, Ontario, is proposed to develop on Thunder Lake very near to human habitation; and

“That the mine shall impact residents living near the mine site in terms of noise, light and dust pollution; and

“That the proposed plan for effluent dispersal is into Wabigoon Lake, which serves as drinking water intake for the town of Dryden, Ontario, as well as being a local and tourist fishing site; and

“That the proposed effluent dispersal site is near a sensitive fish spawning area (Christie Island); and

“That a tailings pond breach or spill would seriously impact the health of all local residents, potentially jeopardizing the local drinking water supply; and

“That an individual environmental assessment would evaluate the environmental and health risks of a large-scale and complex mining operation; and

“That an individual environmental assessment would allow for a more in-depth commentary period with input and involvement from those familiar with the local landscape and community;

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

“Require that the Treasury Metals’ Goliath mine project be subject to an individual environmental assessment under the Environmental Assessment Act.”

I will affix my signature.

1330

CREDIT UNIONS

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I have a number of petitions here that are addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and read as follows:

“Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario support our 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families to buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

“Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario want a level playing field so they can provide the same service to our members as other financial institutions and promote

economic growth without relying on taxpayers’ resources;

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

“Support the strength and growth of credit unions to support the strength and growth of Ontario’s economy and create jobs in three ways:

“—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

“—show confidence in Ontario credit unions by increasing credit union-funded deposit insurance limits to a minimum of \$250,000;

“—allow credit unions to diversify by allowing Ontario credit unions to own 100% of subsidiaries.”

I agree with this petition, am going to affix my name and send it to the table with page Jany.

HEALTH CARE

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

“Whereas the regulation surrounding patient repatriation to Ontario is failing the people of the province;

“Whereas many patients that fall ill outside of Ontario do not fall under Ontario’s life-or-limb policy or repatriation guide;

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

“The provincial government should ensure that all Ontarians are treated fairly and in a timely manner regardless of the location where they fall ill; and

“That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care develop a comprehensive strategy and updated legislation and regulation surrounding repatriation measures for those who fall ill outside of Ontario.”

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

WAY-FINDING SIGNS

Mr. Michael Mantha: This petition is for way-finding signs on MTO roads in northern Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the MTO currently does not allow established trail way-finding signs on MTO highways, and way-finding signs are helpful in guiding cyclists in northern Ontario where we often have no other options than using MTO roads;

“Whereas cycling tourism has become a significant part of Manitoulin’s tourist economy, with an established network of cycling routes, many of which cannot be done without travelling on portions of MTO highways;

“Whereas Manitoulin’s economic development hinges on making tourists feel welcome and safe;

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

“To allow way-finding signs on MTO roads in northern Ontario and to immediately allow a pilot project of way-finding signs on MTO road sections of cycling

routes found in MICA's Manitoulin Island and LaCloche Mountains Cycling Routes and Road Map."

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

WATER FLUORIDATION

Mr. Bob Delaney: I'm pleased to present this group of petitions addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly and supplied by many of our local dentists and signed by hundreds of their patients. They're entitled, "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water." They read as follows:

"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."

I'm pleased to sign and support this petition and to send it down with page Emma on her last day with us. Have a good summer, Emma.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Mr. Bill Walker: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking, memory and physical functioning to become seriously impaired;

"Whereas there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias also take their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners; and

"Whereas Alzheimer's disease and other dementias affect more than 200,000 Ontarians today, with an annual total economic burden rising to \$15.7 billion by 2020; and

"Whereas the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges; and

"Whereas there is work under way to address the need, but no coordinated or comprehensive approach to tackling the issues; and

"Whereas there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches;

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

"To approve the development of a comprehensive Ontario dementia plan that would include the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, in caregiver support and investments in research."

I fully support it, will affix my name and send it with page Jany.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Cindy Forster: I have thousands of petitions here.

"Whereas the decision to close the Welland general hospital was made without consultation with the residents of south Niagara, and without regard for potential social and economic impacts of this closure; and

"Whereas the recommendations to the government contained in Dr. Kevin Smith's report on restructuring of the Niagara Health System included no evidence to support the closure of the Welland general hospital; no needs assessment for the residents of south Niagara; no costing of the entire restructuring plan; and no proposals to mitigate the impact of reduced hospital access;

"Whereas the catchment area of the Welland general hospital includes four municipalities, with a population of over 90,000, including a high percentage (+25%) of seniors and people living in poverty;

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

"(1) Stop the planned closure of the Welland general hospital;

"(2) Conduct a proper third-party evidence-based study to assess the present and projected health care and hospital services requirements of residents in the catchment area of the Welland general hospital;

"(3) Hold public consultations, not only during the assessment process, but also on recommendations resulting from this study."

I support this petition, affix my signature and send it with page Ram.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I have a petition for the Toronto French secondary school.

“Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to publicly funded French-language education; and

“Whereas there are more than 1,000 children attending French elementary schools in east Toronto (Beaches–East York and Toronto–Danforth) and those numbers continue to grow; and

“Whereas there is no French secondary school (grades 7-12) yet in east Toronto, requiring students wishing to continue their studies in French school boards to travel two hours every day to attend the closest French secondary school, while several English schools in east Toronto sit half-empty since there are no requirements or incentives for school boards to release underutilized schools to other boards in need; and

“Whereas it is well documented that children leave the French-language system for the English-language system between grades 7 and 9 due to the inaccessibility of French-language secondary schools, and that it is also well established that being educated in French at the elementary level is not sufficient to solidify French-language skills for life; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of French-language schools in all of Toronto and even provided funds to open some secondary schools, and yet, not a single French secondary school has opened in east Toronto; and

“Whereas the commissioner of French-language services stated in a report in June 2011 that ‘... time is running out to address the serious shortage of at least one new French-language school at the secondary level in the eastern part of the city of Toronto’; and

1340

“Whereas the Ministry of Education has confirmed that we all benefit when school board properties are used effectively in support of publicly funded education and that the various components of our education system should be aligned to serve the needs of students; and

“Whereas parents and students from both French Catholic and French public elementary schools in east Toronto are prepared to find common ground across all language school systems to secure space for a French-language secondary school in east Toronto;

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

“That the Minister of Education assist one or both French school boards in locating a suitable underutilized school building in east Toronto that may be sold or shared for the purpose of opening a French secondary school (grades 7-12) in the community by September 2015, so that French students have a secondary school close to where they live.”

I sign this petition and hand it to Kerry.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

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

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

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

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

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

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

I fully support this and will affix my name.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition, and I’d like to thank Diane Luttrell from Garson for collecting it. It reads as follows:

“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 fully support this petition, will affix my name to it et je demande à mon page Julien de l’amener à la table des greffiers.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’
PUBLIC BUSINESSENDING PREDATORY ELECTRICITY
RETAILING ACT, 2015LOI DE 2015 SUR L’ÉLIMINATION
DES PRIX ABUSIFS DANS LA VENTE
AU DÉTAIL D’ÉLECTRICITÉ

Ms. Campbell moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 111, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 to eliminate fixed rate electricity

contracts between retailers and consumers / Projet de loi 111, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2010 sur la protection des consommateurs d'énergie pour éliminer les contrats de fourniture d'électricité à tarif fixe entre détaillants et consommateurs.

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

Ms. Sarah Campbell: It is a pleasure to rise and debate Bill 111, entitled the Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act, a bill I am proud to be reintroducing in this Parliament. When I first introduced this bill in November 2013, it passed first and second reading and was referred to committee, but we didn't see any further action from this government on this particular file other than the Ontario Energy Board's review of the Energy Consumer Protection Act, which was completed just this past Monday, and the government's newly introduced Bill 112, which was also introduced this week and which seeks to further regulate electricity retailing across the province. It's my hope that we can take Bill 111 all the way through to royal assent this year.

I would like to start by welcoming my family, who has joined us here today at Queen's Park this afternoon: my partner Scott and our beautiful baby girl, Paisley. They have had to make a quick exit to do that kind of baby thing that sometimes happens at not quite the most opportune times, so they're watching from my office. Nevertheless, they're here, and they made the trek from Kenora–Rainy River.

Over the past several years in particular, we, as legislators in this House, have devoted a lot of time to the affordability of electricity across Ontario. It's safe to say that it's one of the greatest concerns facing Ontarians today, especially for those of us living in the north. Since 2003, when the Liberals took over, our hydro rates have climbed 300%. This has pushed many families and seniors to the brink of not being able to afford to live, as their Hydro One bills continue to gobble up increasingly more of their paycheques or pensions, leaving less and less money to put other essentials—like food—on the table.

To add insult to injury, a few years ago the Liberals told us to brace ourselves and to expect our hydro bills to soar another 46%—46%. This year's budget, which the Liberals so exuberantly passed yesterday, also guaranteed the elimination of the clean energy benefit, a modest yet much-relied-upon 10% reduction of the price of our hydro bills. And in doing so, the Liberals have effectively shut the door to any kind of hydro relief.

It is this kind of situation—already unaffordable hydro bills coupled with a horrifying commitment to a huge rate hike and the loss of any kind of financial relief—that makes the prospect of “fixed rate” electricity contracts seem attractive, especially to people who are just barely keeping afloat as it is. But make no mistake: If you're looking to save money on your hydro bills, staying public is your only option.

Electricity retailers are a bizarre holdover from the PC government's brief experiment with rate deregulation, an

era that ended over 10 years ago. During the brief period of rate deregulation, electricity retailers were permitted to enter the market to offer consumers competition and choice. They marketed themselves as a means to bring stability to our hydro bills when ongoing prices were uncertain. The electricity retailer concept, legislated in part V.1 of the Ontario Energy Board Act, provided that in a competitive market, retailers would be allowed to serve consumers by allowing them to pay higher electricity rates in exchange for the price stability and predictability that a fixed contract provides.

But shortly after the PC's embraced deregulation, the government turned away from the open market concept for electricity and the Ontario Energy Board instituted the Regulated Price Plan, which guarantees relatively stable rates and where consumers pay for electricity that better reflects the price paid to generators, without paying private companies the added padding of profits.

With the introduction of a regulated price plan, there is no reason for the energy retailing industry to exist. Nevertheless, consumers and customers continued to sign on with private electricity retailers in the belief that future prices—future higher prices, I should say—can be avoided by signing a long-term contract with a retailer. But contracts with retailers are usually for the cost of power only, and they don't protect against increases in delivery, regulatory, global adjustment or other non-energy charges, which leaves customers paying more—much more.

In fact, the continued presence of electricity retailers affects the entire rate base, imposing regulatory and enforcement costs, distorting price signals and limiting the government's efforts to encourage energy use during lower-peak hours.

A brand new report by the Ontario Energy Board entitled *Consumers Come First: A Report of the Ontario Energy Board on the Effectiveness of ... the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010*, which was released this past Monday, found that consumers who had signed a five-year, fixed-rate contract between 2006 and 2009 were paying 82% more for electricity than they would have paid if they had stuck with their local utility. These customers were paying more even though the reason that they were signing these fixed-rate contracts was to save money. The report says, “There seems to be a disconnect between what consumers say they want and what they are actually getting.”

The OEB's new figures are even worse than the terrible numbers from the Ontario Auditor General's 2011 annual report, which reported that approximately 15% of the province's customers are currently signed up with a retailer and paying between 35% and 65% more than customers paying regular hydro rates to their local utilities.

I've personally heard from and met with hundreds of people who have been negatively affected by a bad deal with an electricity retailer. I've heard from pensioners, families and single people who have signed up, desperate for some sort of reprieve from the gargantuan hydro bills

they have been receiving. People with English as a second language, professionals, and even a well-meaning Ontario Works administrator, who signed up all of her clients: These people signed up, either thinking that they would finally receive a much-needed break on their hydro bills, or because they were, in one way or another, misled or coerced into signing a contract. But all of these people, rather unfortunately, only ended up locked into the opposite scenario, where they were stuck paying significantly more and making an already unaffordable situation worse. From the conversations that I've had with other members of this Legislature, I know my constituency isn't alone in having these experiences.

1350

In an article in the Hamilton Spectator in April 2014, well-respected professional engineer and Ontario energy consultant Bruce Sharp advises people, "Learn to open and close the door in one smooth motion," and reject energy retailers. He goes on to write, "On the surface, energy retailers' message that contracting with them can provide protection has some appeal. This is false."

Energy retailers impose huge regulatory and enforcement costs on the whole system. Retailer practices such as door-to-door sales and the use of misleading information account for 70% to 90% of complaint calls to the OEB. The OEB has also found that 60% of all fixed-rate contracts do not survive the OEB's verification process.

The government's newly introduced Bill 112 is just their latest attempt to rein in runaway electricity retailers. If passed, it would attempt to reform the electricity retailing industry by allowing the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations establishing rules governing the manner, time and circumstances under which a supplier or salesperson may advertise or market the sale of electricity or gas to a consumer in person at the person's home. This is, as I mentioned, just the latest attempt to try to level the playing field and create some fairness for the consumer.

Shortly after the rate deregulation that gave rise to electricity retailers in 2002, the government made amendments to the 1998 OEB act to include an energy consumers' bill of rights. But despite this change, complaints persisted and the volume of complaints soared. Then, in 2010, after hundreds of complaints every year of unethical business practices, the government revisited the issue of consumer protection and passed the Energy Consumer Protection Act. The ECPA, although designed to eliminate customer complaints and offer some protection, has failed to do its job. While complaints were reduced, the OEB is still receiving many complaints, including those around pitches, contracts, reaffirmation and verification of contracts, cancellations and renewals.

Now, through Bill 112, introduced earlier this week, the government is proposing to make changes to the selling of these contracts on the doorstep and increasing the length of the cooling-off period, during which time people are free to change their minds and cancel the contract without penalty. But given all the complaints brought forward to the Ontario Energy Board and the

various failed attempts made by the Ontario government over the years to curtail electricity retailers, it's clear that electricity retailing needs to be phased out, not reformed. Not only would phasing out private fixed-price contracts for residential customers offer the ultimate protection to Ontarians, but the Electricity Distributors Association states that it will save the electricity system—meaning those of us who haven't signed on with an electricity retailer—approximately \$260 million per year.

Let's turn to the contents of this bill and see what it seeks to do. It essentially has four parts. It will disallow further new, private fixed-rate contracts for residential customers. The bill provides that contracts between retailers and consumers for the provision of electricity at a fixed rate that are entered into after a specified day are deemed to be void.

It will phase out existing retailer contracts with residential customers by allowing them to expire. All standing contracts held between customers and electricity retailers would be allowed to expire. The retailer will not be allowed to seek renewals with customers, and the contracts will be void on the expiry date.

It will allow private electricity retailing in circumstances where institutional, industrial and commercial customers decide that it is in their best financial interests.

And it will offer consumer protection. The act further provides various protections to consumers who enter into contracts that are deemed to be void under the act. Such protections include the right to a refund of money paid under a void contract and the freedom from liability for obligations under such a contract.

Considering the cost to consumers, the costs associated with increased regulatory burden, the fact that numerous government attempts at regulating electricity retailers have failed to adequately protect consumers and that the regulated price plan has effectively made private electricity retailers redundant and obsolete, I believe it's incumbent upon all the members of this House to ban electricity retailers from selling to low-volume residential consumers in the province of Ontario.

I sincerely hope that members will see the merits of this bill and vote to support it at second reading today.

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

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, I'm pleased to provide some comments on the bill put forth by the member.

The bill before the Legislature will not save consumers money, nor will it protect consumers and households from fly-by-night energy vendors. Indeed, in the event it should ever be adopted, it will merely require electricity vendor charlatans to slightly change their marketing tactics. Banning fixed-rate electricity contracts would not only not do what the bill asserts it would do, but it would also end up wasting a lot of public money in futile legal fees until the measure would either be struck down in the courts or ruled unconstitutional, whichever comes first.

Indeed, should the Legislature refer this bill to a committee, the various participants in the electricity sector,

both legitimate and undesirable, will weigh in to demonstrate the unworkability of the proposal made by the member.

As proposed, all a vendor needs to do is offer a contract that, for example, charges a slightly different rate for even a brief period of time. Technically and legally, such a vendor would not violate any law arising from this bill, and that's just one easy way to circumvent it.

The member, however, makes a valid point in stating that private energy vendors include some entities whose marketing practices are dishonest, deceitful and predatory. At my own home, I have answered the door to be greeted by smiling people with laminated ID cards with company names purposely similar to an established and reputable vendor. The so-called sales literature is laughable, and I actually wonder how they find people to go door to door with a business pitch so obviously greasy and manipulative.

While I have the floor, let me remind my neighbours in Lisgar, Meadowvale, Streetsville and throughout western Mississauga that Enersource, which distributes our electricity—and which is a private company, by the way—does not go door to door. If someone rings your doorbell and asks you for a copy of your electricity bill, your gas bill, your water bill, your phone bill or any bill, for that matter, close the door and send them away. Reputable companies don't do business that way.

Rather than this fatally flawed proposal, what could Ontario do that would be constructive? As far back as 2010, our government brought in the Energy Consumer Protection Act, to ensure that consumers receive accurate information from energy retailers before signing a contract or renewal. It gives consumers much stronger measures to cancel a contract than this bill proposes.

The Ministry of Energy is proposing amendments to the Energy Consumer Protection Act. Among the proposals in the amendments tabled by the ministry would be measures to ban door-to-door sales of electricity and gas contracts. It wouldn't matter how you propose to charge for it; you couldn't close a deal door to door should the proposals by the ministry receive approval.

The proposal before this House is not an effective way to protect consumers.

In closing, may I congratulate the member and her family on the birth of her new baby and wish her a pleasant summer.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise to discuss Bill 111 before the House. I want to welcome the member from Kenora–Rainy River back, congratulate her and wish her nothing but the best with her family addition. I have to confess that I don't know if it's a boy or a girl.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: A girl.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Paisley.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Congratulations on Paisley. It's nice to see you back as well.

Now to the bill: I share some of the views—what's going on here: the member from Mississauga–Streetsville and I starting to think alike? This is very, very concerning. I just hope that the Kool-Aid line that runs into the Liberal caucus room hasn't somehow leaked into the PC caucus room and I got some of it.

1400

There are definitely some challenges with regard to this bill, but let's talk about why the member from Kenora–Rainy River, Ms. Campbell, has brought out this legislation. There's no question that, over the years, we have seen horror stories about the practices of unscrupulous energy retailers. The issues were before this House prior to my arriving here almost 12 years ago. I remember the discussions. If I recall, if I'm not wrong—and Jim Bradley will nod or shake his head; one or the other—I believe that David Ramsay brought forth a private member's bill to deal with energy retailers at one time. I think the House then probed, and I believe that was Gerry Phillips, as the minister, who brought forth a bill that actually dealt, in a more concrete way, with the challenges. You'll all remember the Marketplace story about the abhorrent practices—of these energy retailers at the time. To be fair, a lot of that has changed and a lot of it has been cleaned up.

Myself as an MPP, I can't tell you how many people we have fought for successfully and gotten them out of electricity contracts. When I first came here, there were a lot of people that also signed gas contracts. They were happier than could be, because shortly after I got here, the price of gas escalated almost two and a half times. Those people who had gas contracts thought that, my God, they'd died and gone to listen. My brother in Owen Sound had a gas contract. He couldn't believe it. He was just laughing all the way to the bank when the gas went up. However, today, gas has gone down again, other than spikes because of some weather issues last winter—not this past winter; the winter before.

The risk goes both ways with a fixed-rate contract. That's essentially what Ms. Campbell's bill will do: end the practice of fixed-rate contracts. They won't be allowed in the future. Even fixed-rate contracts that exist today: At the time of their expiration, the details would have to be rewritten and they could not re-up on it unless they could cancel with notice but without penalty on the part of the consumer.

Some of those are some very good things, but Mr. Delaney raised some very good points with regard to the constitutionality because—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would just ask the member to remember that we refer to members by riding, not name,

Mr. John Yakabuski: I did refer to the riding, but anyway, whatever; I'll do my best. Sometimes I forget.

The member from Timmins–James Bay and I may want to engage in a contract for whatever. That should be within our rights to do so, providing that both of us are cognizant of our risks and possible rewards within that contract. This would essentially not allow people to enter

into contracts. So I have some concerns about that. I'm not the legal expert here, but I'm sure that there will be some legal people concerned about that very part of it.

As I was saying, I can't count how many contracts we got people out of and were able to make the argument that they were coerced into it; that they were not done in a fair way. Probably the most famous one—I don't say the most famous one, but the one I remember the most—was my own mother-in-law. At the time, my mother-in-law would have been in her late seventies. She came here from Germany—Lithuania prior to that—and was not well versed in English, and she signed one of these energy contracts. It went on for months. She didn't want to say anything to me about it because I think she was embarrassed. But finally my wife's sister said something to my wife, and I said, "Elma, why didn't you call me?" "Oh, I just felt so stupid." She just blamed it on herself. And, my God, she was just getting hosed. Anyway, we got my mother-in-law out of that contract. So it's not maybe the most famous one, but it's certainly the one that was most clear to me that the practice needed to be reformed.

The government did bring in a bill in 2010 that essentially did bring a lot more reforms to this field and, with all due respect, the number of complaints did drop dramatically. The retailers got it and the people got it, and they knew that the legislation did have some teeth in it, that it was not going to be a free-for-all anymore.

But some of the practices were absolutely heinous, the way they were able to get away with it. As I say, if you remember that Marketplace exposé back around 2005, or 2006 maybe—I can't remember exactly when—it was pretty graphic about the practices that were going on. One of the challenges was these people would be hired as door-to-door representatives, and the only way they ever made a nickel was if they sold that contract. The incentive to sell that contract was stronger than the incentive to be honest, I guess. Unfortunately, that is part of the human condition sometimes, and they fell victim to that themselves; they could not handle the temptation to sign that contract and proceeded to do so in an unethical way.

One of the differences is—I'm sure the member from Kenora–Rainy River has given this some consideration—there are still energy retailers out there. They certainly have cleaned up their act, but many of the contracts that they work with today are not fixed-rate contracts but flat-rate contracts. Your legislation says nothing about flat-rate contracts. A flat-rate contract, Mr. Speaker, is one in which you and I have a contract—I won't speak to you by name because that would be against the rules of the House. The member from Scarborough–Rouge River, who is also the Speaker here today—if you and I enter into a flat-rate contract, then I'm agreeing to sell you electricity at, say, \$40 a month, with no adjustment year-end. So \$40 a month times 12: That's the flat rate I'm selling you electricity at.

People have this budget billing with hydro, where they pay the same amount every month so that they're able to

budget for it, but at the end of the year they have an adjustment. They may have to pay a little top-up or they may get a credit on their bill, but it's done in a way that they use the past history of a person's billing and they assess it and say, "Well, if everything goes according to Hoyle and things haven't changed, then this should be about what you're going to use per month."

In the case of the member from Kenora–Rainy River, or people like her—let's say somebody has four kids all of a sudden in the house. You know what? Their electricity use is going to change dramatically. If they're on a budget billing, they're going to find that, "Whoa. I got a bill at the end of the year from Ontario Hydro," or Hydro One now, "and it just blew me away." Your usage has changed. That's why you always have to be cognizant of that and watching your monthly usage to ensure that at the end of the year you don't get hit with a big bill or a surprise.

The flip side is that if you've got a family of four, and three of them all go away to university at the same time, you just got rid of three teenagers who use a lot of water, lots of showers and baths, lots of laundry. You know what? Your bill might go down. You might get a good surprise at the end of the year because you might be getting a credit.

That's the point I'm trying to make: that what we have today often is the case of a flat-rate contract. I don't believe your bill will do anything where someone has signed a flat-rate contract with an energy retailer, because it only speaks—and one thing about laws: You can't assume anything. It says "fixed-rate" contract. It doesn't say "flat-rate" contract, so I think you may need to amend that when it gets to committee if you're going to deal with all electricity retail contracts. Or that's something the government may consider, should this get to committee.

The reality is that the government has brought out their own bill. Ironically, this is Bill 111; the government brought out Bill 112. Bill 112, which was introduced the same day, right on the heels of the member from Kenora–Rainy River, whose name I cannot use but everybody knows it—right on the heels of Bill 111 was Bill 112.

1410

Now Bill 112, interestingly enough, is going to ban the practice of selling—not marketing a contract door to door, but selling a contract door to door, because that is indeed where the rub is, folks: where that person signs that contract at the door. That's where the pressure is: "No, no, no. If you really want to take advantage of the special we're offering you today, Mr. member from Scarborough–Rouge River who does not have a name, you must sign it today, and you'll really prosper because you're going to save a lot of money." Well, the government's bill won't let you do that. You won't be able to sign that contract at the door, and even any contract that you do sign will have a 20-day cooling-off period as opposed to a 10-day period. So it'll be interesting when the government brings that bill forward for debate.

I have so much more to talk about. I'm glad that none of my colleagues butted in on me and wanted to speak.

They said, “Oh, Yak, we’re going to give you the whole 12 minutes if you will take it.” I shall thank you very much, because there’s so much to talk about this that I will use all the time.

We’ll be waiting for that vote. We’re going to support the measure, but we have severe reservations.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. I now recognize the member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It certainly helps that the member says that he took all of the time because they shared it. It also helps that he happens to be the chief whip for his party, and I’m sure if he wanted the time, he would just take it.

I just want to say before I start out that we have with us in the members’ gallery Rosario Marchese, the former member from Trinity–Spadina. Mr. Speaker, I’m sure that we would like to have a unanimous consent motion to give Rosario five minutes to give another speech in the House. Unanimous consent, anybody?

Interjection: Yes.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes.

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: What do you mean, no? Oh, you guys aren’t fun. I can tell you, the former member from Trinity–Spadina—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock for a second. It’s not to cut the member off, but it’s the Speaker’s privilege to recognize former members. So I’d like to recognize the former member for Trinity–Spadina, originally Fort York, Mr. Rosario Marchese, in the 35th and 36th Parliaments for Fort York and the 37th, 38th, 39th and 40th Parliaments for Trinity–Spadina. Welcome.

I now recognize the member for Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, Mr. Speaker, I and my good friend Rosario, as I call him, were elected, along with Mr. Arnott and Mr. Wilson, in the same Parliament. We came here in 1990. I sure wish you were still here, Rosario. I miss you each and every day.

This is an opportunity in this debate to talk about what has gone wrong in our energy sector, specifically electricity, and to speak specifically on the bill from the member from Kenora–Rainy River, because she’s right. There is a problem in this province when it comes to people coming and knocking on your door and saying, “Hey, trust me. We’ve got this great deal. All you’ve got to do is sign up over here, and we’re going to save you lots and lots of money.”

We all as members around here have had those same poor citizens who sign these contracts with either energy marketers for gas or electricity come to our constituency offices to do what? “I can’t afford to pay this bill. It’s gone through the roof.” We as members—all of us on all sides of the House—have contacted the company in question and have done the work that we have to do as members in order to get people out of these deals. Why? Because a lot of times, they’re very bad deals.

We pay enough for electricity in this province since the Liberals privatized part of the generation side, which

has raised electricity rates by 320% since they’ve come to office. Can you imagine that? Your record, since coming to office for some 12 years, is that you can boast that electricity rates in Ontario have gone up 320% as a result of your own government’s move to privatize, I would say, about 30% of the generation side of hydro. Now this government says, “Hey, we want to sell off 60% of the distribution and transmission side.” If it went up by 320%, oh my God, it’s going to go up even beyond that. I’ve got to say, if that’s the legacy and the record of this government, we can’t take no more, because we can let alone pay the regular hydro bills without having to deal with energy marketers who come to knock at our door and say, “We’re going to sell you electricity at a good price,” where it actually turns out to be a higher price than would be the high price that we pay today—under Ontario Hydro’s billing system that the Liberals have allowed rates to go up 320%.

But the government has an answer. It says, “You know what? You want to save electricity? You can cook at 2 o’clock in the morning. You can get up. You can do your laundry at 2 o’clock in the morning. You can heat your house at 2 o’clock in the morning. But don’t do those kinds of things during the peak times”—which happens to be when? When you’re normally in your house having to do those things. Because you get home at 5 o’clock. It’s cold in the winter because it’s dark. The heat has to go on. You’ve got to wash the kids’ clothes, and you’ve got to cook the food. You’ve got to do it at peak times, because this government has got this silly system in place that has very little to do with conservation and has more to do with whacking you in the pocket-book when it comes to what it’s going to cost you to pay for electricity.

So, yeah, the member from Kenora–Rainy River comes to this Legislature and says that we need to do at least this in order to try to protect consumers so that we don’t have energy rates going through the roof when it comes to what energy marketers can do to electricity bills or gas bills, when it comes to them signing at the door.

I want to say something about the member from—I’m doing a Rosario now; you realize that. I want to say something about the member from—the whip. What’s his riding, Speaker?

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mississauga–Streetsville. That’s why I will never be the Speaker: because I never know the ridings.

The member from Mississauga–Streetsville, the chief government whip, says, “Well, you shouldn’t let anybody come and knock at your door, because what they’re selling probably ain’t good.” Well, you’d better not go back and knock on doors in your election next time around, because, God almighty, you’ve been knocking on doors along with us and all the members of this assembly for a number of years, and you’re suggesting there are certain people who shouldn’t knock on doors. I think you should look in the mirror.

When you go in the next election and you go knocking on doors, you should remind them that, as of this day,

electricity rates have gone up 320% as a result of the actions of your government. In three years' time, when we go back again and you go knock, knock, knock, people are going to be yelling at the door, because it ain't going to be 320%; it will be substantially more than that. I'm sure that you're going to remind each and every person in Mississauga–Streetsville that your government's record, when it comes to the price of electricity going through the roof, has led to people not being able to pay their bill.

Certainly, we're going to support the member from Kenora–Rainy River's bill. Why? Because we need to do all that we can in order to be able to protect consumers in this province from the policies of this awful, awful Liberal government.

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

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: A point of order.

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

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: A point of order, Mr. Speaker. I'm the member from Parkdale–High Park, by the way, just so you know.

I just wanted to introduce some of the luminaries who are over here. We've got Fred Hahn from CUPE. We've got Smokey Thomas from OPSEU. We've got these fabulous city councillors, Gord Perks and Janet Davis. Welcome—and to everyone else as well.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I remind the member that that's not a point of order. If you wish to introduce guests, you have to do it out of your speaking time.

Further debate?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's my pleasure to stand in the House today and speak to Bill 111, the Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act, 2015. I'd like to thank the member from Kenora–Rainy River for tabling this bill in the Legislature and for starting this conversation, and add my voice to the members opposite and congratulate my colleague on the birth of her new child, her new daughter. What a blessing. Congratulations to you. I'm very happy for you. I look forward to photographs; I haven't seen any. I'd love to see some.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Paisley is beautiful.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes. Like her mother, I might add.

Mr. Speaker, protecting the vulnerable segments of our society is of utmost importance. Not only is it the right thing to do; it also makes economic sense. When vulnerable members of our communities, particularly seniors, are taken advantage of, nobody wins.

I'm particularly sensitive to this issue as, in my riding of Burlington, one in five residents is a senior citizen. Protecting them and ensuring that they are not forced to spend larger portions of their income on these types of fixed contracts will ensure that they are able to live comfortably and with dignity in their retirement.

This bill would eliminate entirely any and all fixed rate electricity contracts between retailers and consumers

in the future. It will also allow consumers to seek compensation if they are billed under an existing contract after it has been deemed void by the legislation.

1420

While protecting Ontario's energy consumers is one of our government's top priorities, an outright ban on all fixed-rate contracts may not be the best way of achieving the desired outcome. There will undoubtedly be a portion of consumers who want to enter into fixed-rate contracts, and denying them this choice because some contracts attempt to take advantage fails to address the underlying issue.

The Minister of Energy has proposed legislation that would enhance consumer protection by banning door-to-door sales while still allowing consumers to engage in fixed-rate contracts should they so choose. Our government believes that making sure consumers have all the information required to make an educated decision on their energy purchases is the way to go.

Since the Energy Consumer Protection Act was implemented in 2011, consumer complaints registered with the Ontario Energy Board against energy retailers have dropped dramatically, from 6,013 in 2008 to 797 in 2014. This demonstrates that the protections put in place by our government are having the intended positive effect, protecting consumers from contracts that seek to take advantage. It also serves to protect them against unscrupulous door-to-door salespeople.

This does not mean that our work is done. In fact, the Minister of Energy has proposed amendments to the ECPA that would provide further protection to consumers in Ontario. These changes would allow Ontarians to make more informed choices about where they get their energy.

That being said, I agree with the spirit of this bill, Speaker. Any legislation that would grant further protections to the vulnerable in Ontario, including seniors, is something that we must seriously consider. I do feel, however, that some changes need to be made to this particular proposal to ensure that it does not, in its pursuit to provide consumer protections, have the added effect of removing choice from the marketplace.

To say that all fixed-rate energy contracts are bad is to oversimplify the problem. It is true that there are many energy retailers that have overcharged users or coerced consumers into unfair contracts with confusing language and a lack of useful information, but there are others who offer legitimate contracts to consumers who are able to make informed choices.

By delving further into this complex issue, there may be a solution that will help to address all aspects of this problem. I look forward to exploring those possibilities.

I will be supporting this bill and encourage all of my colleagues here in the House to do the same. I again thank the member opposite for introducing this bill in the Legislature and, again, for facilitating this conversation. I look forward to further conversation in committee and further debate on this issue.

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

Ms. Cindy Forster: I want to thank the member from Kenora–Rainy River for bringing forward this bill and for actually coming back to visit with us—and her new daughter, who we were all excited to see.

This whole consumer protection thing is even bigger than Bill 111. I know, in my own constituency office, the numbers of people complaining about energy contracts have gone down; they are still there. But the number of people complaining about the other consumer protection door-to-door issues is increasing. Every week in my constituency office—I have a constituency assistant. His name is Mike Haines. He is a pit bull on these issues. But I have people coming into the office every week being sold furnaces, air conditioners, water softeners, heat pumps. These things are being sold to people who are 80 years old, with a 15- or 20-year contract—an \$11,000 furnace and air conditioner, for example, that they could have gone down to Sears and bought and had installed for about \$7,000. Immediately, they're paying \$4,000 more because they got it sold to them at the door, and then they are finding out a month, sometimes two months, later that in fact their contract then got sold to the finance company, and in addition to the \$11,000 they're now paying for this furnace, they are paying another \$13,000 in interest. So it's \$25,000 for a furnace and air conditioner over the next 180 months. Some of these people will be deceased before these contracts are ever finished.

Many of them talk about the unscrupulous people at the door who are pushy, overbearing, push themselves into their house, tell them that they're getting a good deal—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Sounds like the member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Exactly. But at the end of the day, they're not getting a good deal.

Back in 2013 there was a government bill on consumer protection. We tried to make some amendments that would have improved some of these practices, but we were unable to be successful in getting those moved forward.

Ontarians are getting ripped off in this process. I mean, how do you buy a hot water tank that you could buy for \$800 and end up paying for it for the next 20 years at 30 bucks a month? You end up paying \$3,000 or \$4,000 for a hot water tank that was worth 800 bucks, tops, installed. There's something drastically wrong about that.

The member from Timmins–James Bay talked about the increase in hydro rates. That is a real problem in the north, where they have a lot of hydroelectricity: a 320% increase over the last 15 years, 13 years—however long the Liberals have been here—another proposed 46% increase in hydro rates in this province over the next five years and then a 60% Hydro One sell-off. Well, shareholders in every sector want to get some return on their investment. They're going to be looking for an 8% to

10% return on their investment, so how could the hydro rates not possibly go up when you're actually going to sell off 60% of the shares?

Somebody talked about consumer protection. It will be gone completely with this hydro sell-off. We'll have no Ombudsman oversight. We know that the current Ombudsman had—I don't know—81,000 complaints over hydro bills. But there will be no oversight from the Ombudsman; there will be no oversight from the Integrity Commissioner; there will be no oversight from the Auditor General. You talk about bringing in Bill 112, which will improve consumer protection, at the same time that you're going to do a major hydro sell-off in the province of Ontario.

I have letters from at least a dozen of my constituents in Welland riding, and I'm sure that many of the MPPs who are here today—

Mr. Arthur Potts: We're all here.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Well, you're not all here.

Many of our constituents come into our offices every week, and I can tell you that my staff spends the vast majority of their time dealing with these kinds of contracts. I think the government, when they're moving forward with Bill 112, needs to put in better consumer protection to make sure that the people in this province who can least afford it—I have one example here where these people signed this contract. The person selling the contract never put the final figures on the bill they actually received. Two months later—so, after that 10-day cooling-off period—they actually got the contract in writing from the finance company, only to find that they were paying 13% interest.

When we investigated this complaint, what we got from the company that actually sold them the furnace and the air conditioner was, “Well, we put them into our second-look program,” without telling them. They didn't qualify for a lower rate of interest, but nobody picked up the phone and told these people, “You're not going to be paying 5% interest over the next 25 years; you're actually going to be paying 13%, because we just chose to move you into this higher-rate finance company, and at the end of the day you're going to be paying \$30,000 for a furnace and an air conditioner that you could have bought somewhere else for \$6,000.”

Thank you to the member from Kenora–Rainy River for looking after Ontarians and our province.

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

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Please let me also acknowledge the member from Kenora–Rainy River and her new family. I had the delight of meeting little Paisley yesterday, and it was the best part of my day, getting to see your beautiful little girl. Thank you for bringing her to the Legislature and giving that beautiful moment to all of us.

I also want to commend the member from Kenora–Rainy River for bringing forward her private member's bill, the Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act. I know that the purpose of the bill is to amend the Energy

Consumer Protection Act, 2010—the ECPA—to eliminate fixed-rate electricity contracts between retailers and consumers.

1430

I think it's important because, as the MPP from Kenora–Rainy River has noted in the past, she really believes that some private energy retailers employ dishonest practices to take advantage of vulnerable consumers, notably seniors, in order to have them sign up for fixed-rate contracts that provide poor value relative to market rates for electricity.

Again, I echo the member from Burlington and others around here who really want to ensure that our seniors in particular, and other vulnerable citizens at home, are protected from these kinds of practices that are not transparent in their dealings with these vulnerable citizens.

As a former care co-ordinator for CCAC, I know that in my office, we were always on the lookout for these types of unscrupulous business dealers that perhaps were not giving the best story to the individuals at home and were taking advantage of them.

I also am proud of a government, too, that recognizes that the protection of Ontario's energy consumers is a top priority. That's why we introduced the Energy Consumer Protection Act in 2010. Under these rules, the ECPA ensures that energy consumers are receiving accurate information from energy retailers before entering into or renewing a contract, and it gives consumers greater ability to cancel their contract, and I think this is really key.

This government is also committed to ensuring that all Ontarians are aware of their rights, as energy consumers, when dealing with electricity retailers and gas marketers, especially at the door.

The Ontario Energy Board is responsible for ensuring that retailers comply with the ECPA, and it is taking the necessary steps to hold electricity retailers and gas marketers who have failed to comply with the legal or regulatory requirements of accountability.

The OEB recently completed a review of the ECPA and submitted a report, *Consumers Come First*, to the minister, with recommendations to further strengthen the effectiveness of the ECPA.

The Minister of Energy has proposed legislation that, if passed, would enhance protection for consumers who sign retail energy contracts, by banning door-to-door sales of retail electricity and gas contracts; doubling the cooling-off period from 10 days to 20 days; and requiring that all contracts are subject to a verification process.

Speaker, I really did want to point out that that cooling-off period would also be consistent with the current 20-day cooling-off period for hot water heater rental contracts, under the Consumer Protection Act, 2002. I certainly think that compliance with this is going to enhance consumer protection at the door. I know that the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services was consulted on the proposed amendments, and they also agreed with this cooling-off period.

In closing, Speaker, I know that the Ministry of Energy is doing some work, and I acknowledge that, but I also support—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Thank you very much. I thank everyone for their comments.

I now return to the member for Kenora–Rainy River. You have two minutes for your reply.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Thank you to the members of this House who took the time to weigh in on this bill.

I wanted to make two comments. First of all, I wanted to respond to some of the comments that were made by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke when he talked about how some electricity retailers are offering flat rates. I wasn't really sure if he was talking about that as a positive thing or a negative thing. It almost sounded like he was saying that was positive.

But I wanted to draw to the member's attention that such a thing exists with our public option through Hydro One, and that's equal billing. For anybody in this province who might be worried about having high bills and low bills at certain times of the year, they're certainly welcome to talk to Hydro One and to enrol in that kind of thing, which can help insulate people, especially north-erners, from some of those hot and cold months that we can have.

Secondly, I wanted to address Bill 112. That's the bill that the Liberals introduced, right after my bill, which would ban electricity retailer contracts from being sold door to door. My response to that is that retailers will find a way.

I remember when I worked in a constituency office; I had a steady stream of folks who, through one way or another, found themselves enrolled in some of these really awful contracts. They thought they were finally done. Their contract was up, and they received this little cheque in the mail that had marketed itself in such a way that it seemed like it was a return for being such a good customer: "Here, we've actually overcharged you." So they went promptly to the bank, cashed these things and in fine print on the back it said, "By cashing this cheque, you agree to re-enter into another contract at such and such a rate." Boom; they're suckered again.

I want to say that we have had years and years of government after government trying to regulate these things, and nothing works. They will always find a way. I think the only way that we can get rid of these guys is to ban them completely, and I'm asking people to do that today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will take the vote on this item at the end of private members' business.

LISTENING TO ONTARIANS ACT
(HYDRO ONE AND OTHER
ELECTRICITY ASSETS), 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA NÉCESSITÉ D'ÊTRE
À L'ÉCOUTE DES ONTARIENS (HYDRO
ONE ET AUTRES ÉLÉMENTS D'ACTIF LIÉS
À L'ÉLECTRICITÉ)

Ms. Horwath moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 107, An Act to require a referendum before the disposition of the Crown's electricity assets / Projet de loi 107, Loi exigeant la tenue d'un référendum préalable-ment à la disposition des éléments d'actif de la Couronne liés à l'électricité.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I'm honoured to be able to rise today to speak on behalf of the Ontario NDP caucus in favour of our bill to call for a referendum on the sale of Hydro One.

I'm also proud that we've had some people joining us here in the galleries, because not only am I speaking on behalf of the NDP caucus in regard to a referendum for Hydro One's sell-off; I'm also talking and speaking on behalf of not only the scores and scores of people who have joined us this afternoon but literally tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Ontarians who think this is absolutely the wrong direction for the province of Ontario.

Speaker, it's not just New Democrats who feel this way. You may know that I have been travelling this province, working with a number of other interested parties. In fact, we have a number of leaders in our communities who are here today. We have some city councillors. We have some school board trustees. I see Gord Perks is here. Janet Davis is here from the city of Toronto. Alex Felsky is here from the city of Brantford. She's a school board trustee there. We've got union leaders here. We have Smokey Thomas here—the president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. We have Fred Hahn here—the president of CUPE Ontario. There are many other labour leaders, many other community leaders and many other elected people. In fact, you'll know that municipalities across this province are sending correspondence, first of all, through resolutions through their council tables and then correspondence to this Premier and her government to stop this wrong-headed sale of Hydro One.

The problem we have, of course, is that the Premier is ignoring the voices of these Ontarians. The Premier has shut down any discussion whatsoever of this very important issue, and it's not just a very important issue. I believe fundamentally that this is one of the biggest, most monumental shifts in public policy that this province has seen in a generation, and yet not a single Ontarian has had their voice heard in regard to whether or not they agree with this Liberal government's behaviour, with this Liberal government's actions, and that is unacceptable.

We were just at the polls a year ago, and not one, single Liberal, including the Premier herself, was up front with Ontarians. Not one, single Liberal back-bencher, cabinet minister or the Premier herself was up front with the people of Ontario about their intention to sell off Hydro One. In fact, you may recall that the leader of that party, the Liberal Party, the woman who is the Premier of this province, stood in that seat right over

there in October of last year, months after the last election—and it's in Hansard; it's on the public record—and she looked me in the eye, she looked every single MPP on all sides of the House in the eye, and said she was not going to be selling off the assets of Ontario. What a disgrace, because here we are, a couple of months later, and lo and behold, one of the most important assets is on the auction block. It's a disgrace.

1440

I said that I've been talking to a lot of people all around this province, and I certainly have. And I have to tell you, not a single person has told me that they think this is a good idea. Thousands upon thousands upon thousands have told me they think it is a very bad idea. The response that I get from people ranges from absolute distrust of the Liberals, absolute anger on the one hand—they're distrustful because they weren't told the truth by the government; they are angry because they feel frustrated that the government has shut them down and not listened to them—and then, on the other side of the spectrum, people have a deep, deep, deep sense of disappointment in Kathleen Wynne, the Premier of Ontario, who said she was going to do things differently in Ontario; she was going to govern differently. She's not doing anything differently.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Same old.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: She's doing the same old thing that the Liberals do when they have power, which is talk to a small group of their most powerful friends and decide what's best for them. When it comes to listening to the people of Ontario, well, the ears are closed; the mind is closed. It's all about the small group of insiders, of close friends, of people who are going to benefit and profit from this kind of action.

I'm saying that because we know what will happen with the sell-off of Hydro One. We've seen this movie many, many times before. We saw it right here in Ontario when the Harris and Eves government decided they were going to start selling off some of our hydro generation. That was in the early 2000s. What happened? Almost overnight, electricity rates in this province went up by 25%—almost overnight.

Every single family that I've talked to for years now—not just on this issue, but for years now—has been rueing the fact that they are falling behind. They can't pay the bills. They can't afford the pressures of day-to-day life. They're already struggling to pay their electricity bills.

I was in Brantford recently. There was a woman who literally broke down in tears because she firmly believes that any further increase in her electricity bill is going to literally have her and her husband out on the streets, without being able to afford a roof over their heads anymore.

I was in Kingston recently and I heard from a family in a co-op who said that one of their neighbours literally lived the entire winter in one room of their house, because they are heated by electricity and they could not afford to heat the other rooms of their house. An entire family in Kingston lived in one room in their townhouse

in the co-op because they couldn't afford their electricity. What are they going to do next year or the year after, when the Liberals have privatized our electricity system? How are they going to be able to afford the bills then?

That's what we're facing here. We're facing a crisis already in the cost of electricity. Now we're going to see it go even further. The rates are one issue. But it's more than just that. It's more than just the rates. If this sell-off of Hydro One goes forward, we are going to have a situation where the interest of this corporation is not going to be the public interest. Every decision being made by that corporation is going to be made in the interests of the shareholders, not of the public.

That is why another historic thing happened here in the province of Ontario when virtually every single watchdog the people of Ontario have—the Ombudsman, the Auditor General, the Financial Accountability Officer, the French Language Services Commissioner, the child advocate, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, all of these watchdogs—jointly signed a letter to say that this is the wrong thing for Ontario because all of the oversight and all of the accountability will be gone. In fact, it is gone, because the Liberals passed their budget yesterday. Now, today, none of the watchdogs that look after the public interest are able to ever again look into what's happening at Hydro, and we know that those watchdogs have done a great job.

So there's a complete lack of oversight, a complete lack of accountability. We have rates going through the roof. We have a system that we cannot confirm will continue to be reliable for the people of Ontario, because who knows what the interest is of the companies and of the shareholders when it comes to the running of our hydro system? It might be better off for them to allow for electricity, for example, to not be as reliable. We saw that in California. We saw rolling brownouts in California when they privatized their electricity system. Why? Because it was in the corporate interest to allow that to happen. It wasn't in the public interest, though.

So we're really concerned about reliability and we're concerned about safety. That's one of the things we're concerned about.

But we also know that our electricity system, our transmission system, our Hydro One, can be utilized for other goals as well. It can be utilized to help us with conservation. It can be utilized to help us with other goals around the green economy. It can help us with economic development goals. But that's only if it's operated in the public interest, because those other activities are things that we want to incur and we want to embark on on behalf of the people of Ontario, on behalf of making our province a better place for everyone.

So the rates are going to skyrocket. We don't know what's happening with the reliability. We're losing an asset that helps us a great deal in terms of other economic opportunities. There is no reason for us to go down this road. The Premier likes to put a false choice in front of people—a false choice, I say. She keeps telling people that the only way that we can actually invest in things

like infrastructure and transit is by selling off our biggest asset, one of our most important assets.

That's the other thing. This asset generates for us right now hundreds upon hundreds upon hundreds of millions of dollars each and every year into our revenue stream. That goes to pay for education. That's used to pay for health care and for infrastructure. But guess what? We are not going to be getting that money anymore, because that money is going to be used as a payoff to the shareholders that are investing. It's all about return on investment for shareholders once it's a private corporation. It's not about revenue for the people of Ontario.

But you know what? In this province, this is the first time in our history, since Sir Adam Beck plugged in Niagara Falls, that there has been a Premier who has not been able to figure out how to maintain a public electricity system that's in the best interests of the people while at the same time investing in infrastructure and in transit—the first time ever. How shameful. What a lovely legacy for the Premier of Ontario.

She's putting a false choice in front of Ontarians. There are lots of other ways to find revenues. This government has wasted billions and billions. I know my colleagues are going to talk about that. We have in this province a corporate tax rate that is lower than that of Alabama. So let's start talking about the real choices and not put false choices in front of the people of Ontario.

Interruption.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Sit down, please. Sit down, please. Sergeant-at-Arms, can we clear the gallery?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I remind our guests that we welcome you here to witness the proceedings, but do not participate.

Further debate?

1450

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate the opportunity to highlight our responsible plan to utilize Ontario's assets in a way that creates important value for average Ontarians, and helps fund important infrastructure projects as well, by moving on those crucial transit investments.

It was the member opposite who herself had the same plan in her platform during the last election—

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Not true.

Hon. Charles Sousa: She even said, in an interview on May 7, "There's no doubt we did talk in our platform about looking at some of the physical assets that the province owns. I mean, you can never be closed-minded about that."

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Stop the clock.

I would ask the member for Hamilton Centre to come to order. You had your opportunity; the House was very quiet. I would expect other speakers to get the same.

Continue.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate that interjection, because the member opposite said, "I mean, you can

never be closed-minded about that”—about the very issue we’re talking about today.

Our government is doing what is necessary in making the single largest infrastructure investment in Ontario’s history: \$130 billion over 10 years. This is why a key part of our platform in 2014 was to maximize the value of our assets. We ran on maximizing those values and re-investing those funds in our vital long-term infrastructure needs. The people of Ontario endorsed our plan, and we’re now delivering on that commitment.

Our government has been clear that we will broaden the ownership of Hydro One and protect ratepayers.

We’ll retain considerable influence over how Hydro One’s finances are managed: “Hydro One will become a large multi-billion-dollar public-private mixed enterprise with substantial control imposed by the Ontario government.” That was Jack Mintz of the National Post on April 21, 2014.

Ontario will remain the largest shareholder of Hydro One and will nominate the key directors of the board. A two-thirds board vote will be required on major decisions, and we’ll have the power to unilaterally dismiss the board.

We’ll also introduce legislation which would mean that the government cannot sell less than 40% of Hydro One shares, while no other shareholder would be allowed to own more than 10%. Here’s another quote: “That should alleviate any fears of an aggressive buyer leveraging up the company,” says Julian Pope, head of credit trading and sales with Desjardins.

Furthermore, we will look to set aside stocks for individual investors. Elliot Fishman, director of US and international trading with ScotiaMcLeod, says that the decision to set stock aside for retail investors—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Could the member for Hamilton Mountain come to order.

Hon. Charles Sousa: —“is a smart move as it gets the securities into ‘safer hands.’”

Another factor is this: All of Hydro One’s officers would be required to reside in Ontario, and the Ontario grid control centre and head office would be required to be maintained in Ontario.

Hydro One would be prohibited from selling other transmission or distribution businesses or assets, because those are regulated by the Ontario Energy Board. And note, Mr. Speaker, that Hydro One would not have the power to set its own rates. They will continue to be set by an independent OEB.

The crux of the matter is creating greater value for Hydro One and other public assets. Just in the Hamilton region alone, we’ll invest \$13.5 billion over 10 years and increase weekly GO rail trips from 1,500 to 6,000.

We pledged to support SmartTrack; we pledged funding for Hamilton RT; we pledged \$1.6 billion for the new Hurontario-Main LRT.

Unlocking the value in our assets will also allow us to invest \$1 billion in the Ring of Fire, \$230 million for rural and northern natural gas expansion, \$15 million

annually for the new Connecting Links program, \$100 million for the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund and \$272 million for the Small Communities Fund. Furthermore, unlocking the value of assets allows for unprecedented investments in other types of infrastructure across the province. That \$130 billion goes toward bridges, roads, transit, hospitals and schools.

The thing is this, Mr. Speaker: The third party, frankly, has no plan at all. The NDP know this is a good plan, because they based their nine-page platform on our fiscal plan, including maximizing the value of our assets. Now they oppose our prudent plan to build infrastructure and transit that Ontarians need. The NDP has no plan, no idea when it comes to the economy or job creation. Because of this, they have no faith in the private sector. By opposing this plan, they would have Ontarians sitting in gridlock rather than being home with their families.

I understand that the leader of the third party will be touring the province. That’s great. Well, I hope she comes clean to Ontarians about what projects they would cancel. Would it be delivering 15-minute service from Union Station to Bramalea? Would they cancel the northern Ontario highway projects?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Would the member from London West and the member from Hamilton come to order? Member for Hamilton Mountain, this is the second time.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Would they end the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund? We’re forthcoming with our plan and how we plan to pay for it. The NDP like to point to their proposed corporate tax hikes, but that money wouldn’t be available for infrastructure, because the NDP has already allocated their revenues to their other commitments. These tax hikes themselves would do damage to Ontario’s economic recovery and growth. Ontario is currently, by the way, the top destination in all of North America for foreign direct investment because of our dynamic and competitive business climate.

Mr. Speaker, we have been open and transparent about our plan to maximize the value of our assets. We disclosed that in our 2014 budget. We disclosed it in our 2014 platform—which, by the way, the NDP and the PCs endorsed in their own platforms. We reintroduced that platform and that budget in 2014 a second time. We included it in our economic statement in the fall. Then we reintroduced it in the 2015 budget, with many discussions around the province, including the people of Ontario especially. We actually even did two reports from the advisory council on this very issue.

This will provide Ontario with a strong public corporation. It will enhance that value, and we will be able to reinvest that for the people of Ontario to enhance even greater value overall.

The Leader of the Opposition is playing political games. They know that full well. They had it in their platform. Now they’re double-speaking and basically saying to the people of Ontario that they would have

done it; now they say they won't. Mr. Speaker, that is not being clean.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I would ask the Minister of Finance to withdraw.

Hon. Charles Sousa: All right. I withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's a pleasure to join the debate today on Bill 107, calling for a referendum—An Act to require a referendum before the disposition of the Crown's electricity assets. I've got to tell you straight out front that a referendum is not the way that I'd like to be dealing with this. But I have to tell you, we've tried an awful lot of other ways since the government announced their plan to dispose of Hydro One—or at least, I should say, 60% of Hydro One. We've tried in various ways to convince them that this is the wrong way to go and the wrong reasons for doing it.

The reality exists—the leader of the third party touched on that—that if you had managed this province properly, if you had planned properly, if you had managed the economy, if you had managed the budget, you wouldn't be selling assets to pay for infrastructure. You'd be doing it the same way that everyone else did over the decades, and that is by managing the province's finances. But these people have failed.

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I know the minister is all upset because maybe he's not selling enough tickets to Pan Am—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I say to the members on the government side that I would expect the same respect for the person speaking in the opposition.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Durham, if you're going to continue to heckle, I'd ask you to take your seat.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pardon me for one second. I'd like to apologize to the member for London West. I meant for the member for Windsor West to come to order.

Now I recognize the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke again.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that intervention, because all the time while the minister was speaking, you never heard a peep out of me, which is the way I try to perform in this House as much as possible.

But yes, if the government had managed affairs properly, we wouldn't be talking about selling Hydro One.

1500

They're not selling Hydro One because they have some philosophical belief that they need to rid themselves of assets. No, they're desperate for cash and the minister knows it. They know that the only way they're even going to have a ghost of a chance of balancing the

budget by 2017-18 is to try something different because they don't have the wherewithal or the willingness to make the fiscal decisions to get there by managing the finances of the province on their own. So they're going to have a fire sale and here they're starting with one of our biggest assets, and that's Hydro One.

We've told them from the start that this is the wrong idea, but I'm not sure why the minister would listen to me.

Hon. Charles Sousa: You're a good guy.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, I try to be, and I try to be helpful.

But surely the minister would want to listen to the member from St. Catharines when he was asked about the sale of Hydro One, the Minister without Portfolio, the deputy government House leader and a man who has been here longer than—my God, he's been here since Moby Dick was a minnow, as they say—Jim—oh, I can't say his name—the member for St. Catharines: “I think anyone who looks objectively at Hydro One, the transmission grid in this province, would recognize that it would naturally be something that is best kept in public ownership and public hands.”

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Jim, what happened?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, but he wasn't the only one. He wasn't the only current cabinet minister. I have a quote here from the Minister of Agriculture, the sitting member from Peterborough. He said, “We've been pretty clear: We'll keep Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One in the public's hands, as they should be...”

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, but wait, wait. There's more.

Interjection: There's more?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes.

The member from York West and the minister responsible for seniors: “There is nothing the public of Ontario ... will benefit from with the sale of Hydro One.... That is why we should try to protect this wonderful facility which, if sold, will not come back into the hands of the people of Ontario anymore.”

Is he right or is he wrong?

Interjection: Have you got more, John?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, I have more. Then there are former members. I've got more quotes here than Carter has pills, I'm telling you. How about former Premier Dalton McGuinty?

“The sale of the grid that carries electricity to their [families'] homes is a disaster for consumers.”

“Stop the sale of Hydro One, at least until the people have their say in an election.”

“Families know that selling Hydro One and Ontario's power grid is just plain wrong.”

“Selling off this valuable public asset is something the public should be consulted with in an election. Take it to working families and let them have their say.”

But Dalton had more to say: “Let the people decide the future of hydro and the future of Ontario in a general

election,” and he said the government is “poised to sell off Hydro One in a desperate bid to get cash.”

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, yes he did; yes, he did. But how about my predecessor, Sean Conway, from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, who sat here for 28 years—

Mr. Grant Crack: He should have stayed.

Mr. John Yakabuski: But he couldn't because he had to free up the spot for me. He probably regrets that decision, eh?

Sean Conway, Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and energy critic—and this was when they were thinking of selling off Hydro One in the past—said, “The Tory government has no mandate to sell off the grid and there has been no [public] consultation [or debate] about such a sale.... The transmission grid—located in the heart of North America—is one of Ontario’s most valuable assets. It is unbelievable that it is being sold without any discussion or debate.”

Or how about this one: “Selling the crown jewel of our electricity system is a very serious mistake. Let the voters decide the future of Hydro One”?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Kathleen Wynne.

Mr. John Yakabuski: No, that's still Sean.

“The grid is a natural monopoly, is one of the province’s most valuable assets, and ... it should stay in public hands.”

Or this one—you could be making these quotes. They could probably be yours, as well, but they're Sean Conway. “At no time ... did [they] ... campaign on the sale of the transmission grid and therefore they have no mandate from the people to proceed with the sale.”

Mr. Gilles Bisson: But Yak, he was talking about you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: We're doing good here, Gilles. Be quiet.

He's talking to the Premier of the time. He says, “Drop” your “ill-conceived plans to sell off our transmission grid or he”—meaning Eves—“will delay any decisions on the grid until after the next provincial election.”

“The Ontario Liberals believe that the only meaningful”—

Mr. Paul Miller: Have you got a quote from Mike Harris?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Paul. Paul.

“The Ontario Liberals believe that the only meaningful consultation on this sale would be the one that takes place during a provincial election campaign.”

“Even those who are not opposed to the sale of Hydro One were unable to show us a business case that justifies the sale of the grid. They can't show us because it doesn't exist.”

“Ontario Liberals have argued that putting the transmission grid in private hands will weaken regulation ... and that it should remain a public responsibility so that the government can safeguard its security.”

“Liberals stand squarely on the side of keeping the transmission grid in public hands.”

Applause.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, no, no, no. Thank you very much, but I'm not a Liberal. These are actually their words. I'm not doing a Liberal speech right now; I just want you to understand that.

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: No, Jim; don't get too upset. I am going through the chair.

Michael Bryant—do you remember former Attorney General Michael Bryant? And an energy critic: “Hawking Hydro One without an electoral mandate, and without even pretending to consult the public. This is an election issue.”

Gerry Phillips, a great member: “It's time for the Premier to step in and ensure that Hydro One management's vested interest is in the long-term, effective management of Hydro One, not in its sell-off.” He's a very reasonable man.

And how about Dwight Duncan? A little bit from Dwight Duncan here: “We do not believe it's in the province's interests, nor do I, to sell Hydro One. Hydro One is the nerve centre of our province. It's our power grid. It takes power from where it's generated to our retail suppliers in communities and it makes money.”

John Gerretsen, a member from Kingston and the Islands and holder of several portfolios.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I talked to him the other day. He still has the same opinion, I bet you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, my, John Gerretsen. I think he said this to us: “They may very well use it in order to balance their budget in this year and the next. For us to sell one of the main assets in the province of Ontario for that purpose is absolute lunacy. It is an asset that's owned by the people of Ontario and should remain in the people's hands.”

Mr. Gilles Bisson: He was telling you that.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Never mind who he was talking about, Gilles. Gilles, I think there's a phone call for you in the lobby.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Let somebody else speak.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, no, they've mandated that I have to do 12 minutes. I'm doing my best. I'm almost out of time. No more time for quotes.

1510

Look, I think what I've been trying to point out here is clear. It's not whether or not we support the referendum tool; we agree and we have stated clearly that they're doing the wrong thing in the wrong way for the wrong reason. But what is even more clear is that they believe they're doing the wrong thing in the wrong way for the wrong reason, because if you look at what they've said for the past 12 years, everything they've said is against what they're doing today. And what they're doing today is exactly what John Gerretsen said: They're doing this because they're desperate for cash. Thank you, John Gerretsen, wherever you are. Come on down. We'll bring

you in today and maybe we'll get you five minutes on the floor, like we tried to get Rosie Marchese.

But that is what's going on with this government: They're desperate—desperate—for cash, and they're willing to sell off anything to get it. That's the wrong way for the wrong reason, and the people are—

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

Interjections.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker?

Interjections.

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

Hon. Charles Sousa: Rosie, come on down.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Minister of Finance, I'm standing.

Member for Toronto—Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, it's clear that Mr. Yakubski wasn't able to say his last few words, which were, "Repent, repent." He used the words of the Liberals that were used against the Tories the last time this crazy idea was put on the floor.

Speaker, everyone in this room knows that this government does not have the mandate to sell off Hydro One, to trigger a massive innovation of the electricity system in this province, unprecedented in the province's history.

Speaker, I went to hear the Minister of Finance at the Economic Club of Canada last April, and I heard him use the words, "We're going to sweat these assets." I heard him talk about maximizing the value. I saw him go through a speech that was crafted by lawyers and communications, working back and forth to make sure that it was not clear for the moment that they were going to privatize and sell off Hydro One—not there.

I have to say, I listened to his speech when he introduced the budget last year. Again, the words "privatize" and "sell off" were absent. Lots of wiggle words, but the clear intent of this government to sell off—privatization—has come later, notwithstanding their protestations that it's been clear from the beginning.

Speaker, through the last election I went to all candidates' meetings. I heard no Liberal say, "We're going to privatize Hydro One." I saw no literature saying, "We're going to sell it off. That's how we're going to pay for anything that our hearts desire." It wasn't there.

Last fall, the Premier ridiculed Andrea Horwath when she asked the question, "Are you going to sell it off?" "No, no. Big confusion. Not going to happen." Not true. Not true, Speaker.

A few days ago, the Minister of Energy was asked about this particular decision, given that it's very controversial, and he said, "You know, we brought in the HST and we got re-elected. So we got away with it." He didn't say, "We got away with it." That's my paraphrase, my accurate paraphrase of those remarks.

I'll remind the Liberals over there: When you came to the 2011 election, you were in trouble. You had to spend

a billion bucks relocating gas plants to make sure you got the seats you got. Your number of seats went down and you became a minority government. You were lucky. You blew the billion bucks; you got what you wanted. But I want to say to you: With this, you're going to be running out of Teflon. The tank will be empty, and you will become the Velcro party, and every piece of lint, every unpleasant piece of gum, every bit of pain that arises from this initiative will stick to you. When the lights go out, when the prices soar, it will stick to you.

When the mayors of Toronto, Ottawa, Oshawa and Kingston start to stand up in their councils and say, "We have to sell off our hydro utilities. Thank God, the Liberals made it possible by changing the law. They say we have to put money in for this infrastructure. We'll sell the hydro utilities. We'll have the cash," you will have made that possible—without a mandate, without the will and the support of the people.

This is very dangerous for Ontario—very dangerous for Ontario—and, I'll just add, very dangerous for you politically, but I know you'll do your best to spend whatever public money is necessary to get re-elected. It's just a very expensive way to go into an election.

Speaker, you don't sell your wiring so you can put in plumbing. You don't sell off the heritage of a century so that your books can look better. That's what this is all about.

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

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, why do we need a referendum to tell us that our cities are choking on traffic? It takes me about 90 minutes to drive only about 43 kilometres to get here to Queen's Park, and I know all the back routes and the shortcuts. Finding some of the money to build transit to move people in Canada's wealth-creation epicentre through a partial sale of a government asset like Hydro One is what I ran on in 2014.

Last June 12, we had the referendum that the member suggests, and Ontarians spoke decisively. They said to their Legislature that we needed to break the gridlock deadlock, and they elected a majority government to do it.

In breaking that gridlock deadlock, good for Toronto Mayor John Tory: Instead of continuing the debate about a Scarborough LRT or a subway or more studies on the Gardiner Expressway, he gets the imperative of making a decision and sticking by the decisions that have been made.

Move on to the next step. That's what Ontario needs. That type of action is exactly what our party pledged in 2014 during the election. As a government, we meant what we said in last year's election, and we will do what we promised.

Our government built the Lisgar GO station in my area ahead of schedule and well within the budget. On Saturday, passengers will begin using the new Union Pearson Express, also completed within both budget and schedule. We can no longer look on transit as something that happens in fits and starts, a bit in one decade and then nothing until 10 or 15 years have elapsed.

I listened to the bafflegab about the loss of control of Hydro One. Let me quote from a 2015 article I looked up in a US legal newsletter called Law360. It states, in part, “The definition of ‘controlling party’ always has been something of a moving target, said Bernard Black, a finance and law professor at Northwestern University.

“Back in 1988, the Chancery Court held that a 39% stake in Macmillan Inc. was enough to give a hostile buyer effective control. Seven years later, in a heavily litigated battle for Unitrin Inc., the court said 28% was not. So when it comes to stock ownership, somewhere between 28% and 39% is a fuzzy line that denotes control, moving with the facts specific to each case, Black said.”

Ontario will retain 40% ownership. No other entity or person would own more than 10%, and it would take 67% of the shares in order to make structural changes. Clearly, Ontario will retain control of Hydro One with its 40%.

Hydro One is an entity that arguably will benefit from the rigours of the Ontario Securities Commission’s disclosure, transparency and filing requirements.

We suggest to our MPP colleagues not to spend public money refighting last year’s election based on a promise that Ontario has kept. As well, let’s get on with building the transit we need to keep our people, our economy and our businesses moving.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: My friend Howard Hampton wrote the book on public power 12 years ago. I’ve been re-reading that book lately. It’s a great history on how we got to the Hydro One of today. It’s worth a read. I recommend it to the Liberals, especially the minister and the Premier.

Previous Premiers nurtured and grew our public power system in Ontario. They fought long and hard to keep it out of private hands. Premier James Whitney, back at the turn of the century—that’s when we were just beginning to harness the hydroelectric power at Niagara Falls. When he took office in February 1905, he stated, “I say on behalf of the government, that the water power all over the country should not in the future be made the sport and prey of capitalists and shall not be treated as anything else but a valuable asset of the people of Ontario, whose trustees this government of the people are.”

Whitney was such a great visionary and Premier, future generations named an entire legislative block in his honour. As a matter of fact, that’s where the Premier and cabinet do a lot of their business. Imagine what the former Premier would be saying to this group had he the occasion to say so today, Speaker. It was Whitney who established the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario, the forerunner to today’s Hydro One.

1520

A former mayor of London, Sir Adam Beck, was named as the first chair of that body. Together they fought some hard battles against those who felt privatiza-

tion was better than public power. But they believed in democracy, Speaker. They ran a referendum. They asked the voters of Ontario who would be using hydro power from Niagara Falls what they wanted: public or private power. That was on January 1, 1907. It was the most significant referendum in Ontario’s history by a huge majority. Public power was chosen over private interest. Voters in Toronto, Hamilton, Brantford, Guelph, London, St. Thomas, Stratford, Waterloo and Woodstock, as well as in 10 other communities, made it really clear. They wanted public power then, just like the people of Ontario want public power now.

By 1913, in Ontario, more than three dozen municipalities, including Windsor, had voted to join the public hydro family. In 1917, Premier William Hearst ran another referendum and, again, another huge majority for public power. Hearst is another Premier who was so revered they named an entire block after him, and it’s home today to the Ministry of Energy. How ironic is that?

To this day, Hydro One is still the only transmission network anywhere that was created by a direct vote of the people it was meant to serve. Sir Adam Beck, Hydro’s first chairman: Among his last recorded words were, “I had hoped to live” long enough “to forge a band of iron around the Hydro to prevent its destruction by the politicians.”

There are political consequences to selling public utilities: Cleveland, 1977, the mayor and seven councillors were defeated after they tried to sell the city’s municipally owned utilities; Calgary, 2001, the mayoral candidate and, again, seven councillors were defeated when they ran on a campaign of selling Calgary Electric—at least they were up front about what they were going to do, unlike what has happened here in Ontario, Speaker.

Hydro One belongs to the people of Ontario. It doesn’t belong to the Liberal Party. It’s an asset to be treasured and not leveraged. It’s an asset that returns close to \$800 million a year to the province, money that can be used for infrastructure as well as education, health care and the protection of the environment.

It’s never too late to admit to a mistake; there’s no shame in admitting to a mistake. Selling Hydro One is a major mistake. It’s a short-term solution with long-term negative results to the taxpayers of Ontario. Premier, if you won’t admit to making a colossal blunder, will you at least commit to holding a referendum to gauge public opinion and live by whatever voters decide?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate? Further debate? Further debate? I’ll call the question if there’s no further debate.

Mr. Arthur Potts: What a pleasure to speak to this bill today. This bill and this tactic characterizes what I’ve seen as a strategy of the third party in the course of this session of the Legislature. It’s a strategy which I would describe as a petulant, political prank. If I could, I draw attention to the fact that your own policies have been rejected at the polls.

I want to be very clear. When I ran in Beaches–East York, the number one reason that the previous member said he did not support this budget was the “hidden” plan, as he called it, to sell the LCBO, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation. He made that very clear. We had a public debate on that exact issue in the riding—on the Rogers debates, you can go there and see it. This was his number one concern.

This is our mandate. We ran on it, and guess what? After Ed Clark released his findings, the people of Ontario knew this was the direction. We had a by-election. We had a by-election once this was all even more publicly disclosed. Do you know how odd it is in a by-election, Mr. Speaker—do you know how rare it is—for a government to recover a seat from an opposition party in a by-election? Unprecedented. That is because the people of Ontario spoke.

I’m delighted that we have Councillor Davis in the House here today. Councillor Davis, welcome to Queen’s Park.

Councillor Davis has had an ongoing Twitter campaign against the Hydro One sale, and I appreciate it. I appreciate this wonderful ad that our friends at CUPE and OPSEU have put in there, because this ad has meant that finally some people are contacting my office about this issue. When I tell them the truth—that it won’t result in soaring privatized electricity rates—they support it. Thirty-five people have contacted me as a result of all the twittering and all the advertising.

It’s the right thing to do, and we’re moving forward to build Ontario up.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, Mr. Speaker, really, really—Earth calling Arthur Potts and the rest of the Liberal Party: You guys, in the last general election, by no means, way or shape, ever ran—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Beaches–East York. Refer to him by his riding name.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Earth calling the member from Beaches–East York.

Anyway, my point is that nobody—no Liberal—in the province of Ontario, in the last election, went to an all-candidates debate and said, “Vote for me, and I’m going to privatize hydro.” Do you know of any on this side of the House?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Do you know of any on that side of the House?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Absolutely not. I know Michael Prue, and there’s no way you said that. You’re just full of it.

Listen, when the government says in this House—

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: That’s not unparliamentary. When the member—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Sit down. Yes, I would ask the member for Timmins–James Bay to rephrase that comment, because it could be taken as unparliamentary.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Full of hot air—how’s that?

So I say to the members across the way: There are none of you that ran on the privatization of Hydro One. If that had been the election issue, I can tell you that the result would have been awful different.

I’ll tell you what you did run on: You ran on Tim Hudak. That’s what you ran your last election on, and they’re the guys who tried to privatize it before you guys tried. So after all, you guys do not have a mandate to privatize Hydro One.

Our leader, Andrea Horwath, is putting forward this legislation. Why? Because the people of Ontario own Ontario Hydro, and the people of Ontario should be the ones who have a say when it comes to being able to sell it—yes or no.

I ask this question to the honourable members across the way: What are you afraid of? If you’re so sure about how this is a good idea, and how well it’s supported across the province of Ontario, then what are you afraid of? Then support the legislation, allow it to go to third reading, and let’s have a referendum, and if you’re right, you’ll be vindicated.

But I can tell you what they’re going to do. They’re going to vote against, because the Liberal Party knows (a) they never ran on this in the last election, (b) they never ran on it in the by-election in Sudbury, and (c) they know that if there was a referendum, they would lose it, because people are opposed to the privatization of hydro, pure and simple.

So I ask you again: Do the right thing. Vote for this bill, and allow the people of this province to have their say on the selling of Ontario hydro.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton Centre has two minutes to reply.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It’s very, very clear that the Liberal government does not have a mandate to sell off Hydro One. They put the enabling legislation to sell off Hydro One into a Harper-style omnibus budget bill that they rammed through the Legislature just yesterday. They allowed a couple of days of public hearings on this bill, here in Toronto. They didn’t talk to anybody around the province about their intention to sell off Hydro One, either during the election or during their budget bill process.

There is not a single Ontarian who went to the polls knowing that it was going to be the Liberal intention to sell off Hydro One. So this bill actually does what the government should have done. It does what the Liberals should have done. It attempts to give the people who own Hydro One a say in the sell-off of Hydro One.

I can tell you, Speaker, and my members can tell you as well, that we have been talking to Ontarians. We have been hearing what Ontarians have to say. They have been very clear: They do not want Hydro One sold off. They know it’s the wrong decision for Ontario.

Everyone else also understands that, Speaker. The Toronto Star says, "Privatizing the electricity grid was a bad idea when Mike Harris' Conservatives came up with it in 2001. It still is."

1530

The Globe and Mail writes that the sell-off has been "flawed from the outset" and is "more of a cash grab than a considered approach to maximizing value and making sound energy policy."

The Toronto Star again writes, "Rushing this risky deal into law is wrong. It needs a rethink before it's too late."

So Ontarians don't want it. All of the public opinion commentators are saying it's the wrong thing to do. Have some respect for the people of Ontario and put this wrong-headed decision to a referendum.

ELECTORAL REFORM

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I move that, in the opinion of this House, a select committee of the Legislative Assembly should be formed to investigate the electoral administrative process, voting procedures and complaints, make recommendations to amend the Elections Act to improve said processes, and, while conducting the review, the committee shall focus on specific issues of concern, including:

(1) the quality and integrity of the permanent electors list;

(2) the quality and integrity of voter identification documents and verification of Canadian citizenship and residency required;

(3) improving the roles and rights of candidates and/or their representatives in their ability to verify proper identification and citizenship requirements have been met for all voters;

(4) the establishment of a third-party review and complaints system to provide impartial investigation and resolution on conflicts that may arise as a result of irregularities identified by candidates, a candidate's representative, electors and individuals of the public, including issues identified with the operations by Elections Ontario; and

(5) Improving the record-keeping process for all challenged ballots/voters to facilitate a detailed complaint review process.

That the committee shall have the authority to conduct province-wide hearings and undertake research, and generally shall have such powers and duties as are required to investigate the issue.

That the committee shall present an interim report to the House no later than March 1, 2016, and a final report no later than June 2, 2016.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Mr. Balkissoon has moved private member's notice of motion number 54.

Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

I recognize the member from Scarborough-Rouge River.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My motion is requesting that the Legislature establish a select committee to review our electoral system administrative process. I will speak to the five major issues stated in my motion.

In 2012, my private member's bill, Bill 106, Prevention of Electoral Fraud Act, 2012, died on the order paper. With another election in 2014, it is now crucial that the integrity of the whole voting process be examined thoroughly to protect the integrity of our democratic rights and citizenship requirements, the foundation of our voting system. Today I aim to bring to your attention weaknesses in our electoral processes that have allowed this important legal requirement to be secondary.

The quality and integrity of the permanent electors list: An accurate voters' list makes for a good election and a fair and even field for all candidates. Since the adoption of a permanent voters' list, we have experienced degradation in the integrity and accuracy of this list. I want to highlight some immediate concerns that were identified during the last two provincial elections as a result of the permanent electors list system.

Persons are added to the permanent voter list without valid proof of citizenship, which then becomes a permanent record. Mr. Speaker, I have those forms that Elections Ontario uses, and you will see that the forms do not require you to prove citizenship. I have copies. If other members have never seen these, I'll pass them around.

Once persons are added, they are assumed to be citizens in future elections and cannot be effectively challenged, investigated or audited because only acceptable ID is required to vote thereafter. Acceptable forms of ID are questionable because they do not provide proof of citizenship.

In many instances, the same individual appears twice on the voters' list with their first and last names reversed, causing two different voter cards to be issued and allowing for the possibility of two ballots being cast.

Mr. Jeya Kulasingham, a resident in my riding who is here in the east gallery, is a victim of receiving two cards with this problem. As an honest individual, he told me about it, expressing his concern with the system. The opportunity was there for him to vote twice—possibly once at the advance polls, and then again on election day—without any difficulty and using the very same ID because of the two separate entries on the voters' list.

People who are citizens who have been on the list previously for many, many elections were removed for some unknown reason and must be processed by a declaration, frustrating these voters, and in some cases they refuse to vote.

Many individuals who appear on the voters' list, when canvassed, would question how their name got on the valid voters' list when they are not citizens and have never voted in the past. Many names on the list don't live or exist at the particular address. Speaker, this is a significant problem.

The quality and integrity of voter identification documents and verification of Canadian citizenship and residency required: two known processes for adding a voter to the permanent list by Elections Ontario. One is that before election day you can fill out a form and you mail it in with a copy of your identification that they keep on file and you're added to the list. I can show you this form. It does not require you to prove you're a citizen.

On election day: A 2011 copy of the identification provided is not kept and it is not even recorded properly on the statutory declaration form for future review or even available for investigation. Elections Ontario did make a change. In 2014, they allowed a check box to say "Identification provided," but no proof, no copies, no verification later on.

On election day, a person may vouch for someone's identity with no valid verification of citizenship, valid address or other details.

Speaker, this is a major issue today, this one that's coming up: Many household bills are accepted as proof of address. In today's technological environment, it is very easy for a voter to download an electronic bill and make changes to suit their needs to provide acceptable proof of address. We have that happening significantly, and our elections officials are denying it. In many instances, false tenancy leases have been provided as acceptable proof of address.

Improving the roles and rights of candidates or their representatives in their ability to verify proper identification and citizenship requirements have been met for all voters, including those being added to the list: On advance polling and election day, scrutineers are not allowed to oversee the process at the revision table where a person takes an oath to get added to the permanent list and is provided an opportunity to receive a ballot and vote. This process must change to allow candidates full access to possibly challenge equitably all persons receiving a ballot.

The establishment of a third-party review and complaints system to provide impartial investigation and resolution on conflicts that may arise as a result of irregularities identified by candidates, a candidate's representative, electors, and individuals of the public, including issues identified by the operations of Elections Ontario: In 2011, my campaign identified a person who voted twice and 15 other administrative complaints to Elections Ontario. After two and a half years and another election in between, we were advised there was insufficient data to reach a conclusion and no evidence to take proper action against this person. Elections Ontario has advised that the matter is closed.

1540

Elections Ontario is currently allowed to conduct its own investigations of its own processes. That is, they are judge and jury of all complaints. A very expensive court process is the only avenue available to a candidate with a complaint for a fair and unbiased investigation or review. Speaker, that's not acceptable.

"(5) Improving the record keeping process for all challenged ballots/voters to facilitate a detailed complaint

review process" and/or independent audit: I requested and paid a very large fee for the election day statutory declaration forms in part of my riding from the 2011 election, to review the process and to verify completeness and accuracy. Upon review, in many cases the forms were incomplete, where the type of identification provided was not recorded on the form, or non-existent street addresses in my riding were given as the voter's live-in residence address. Along with paying for these forms, we were served with a legal warning by Elections Ontario that should I use the information on these forms to validate the person's residency in my riding by making a visit or contacting this person in any way, shape or form, I could not do it. I don't understand why Elections Ontario would send me this legal letter. Maybe Elections Ontario is ashamed of their process, or maybe they have a lot to hide.

As you can see, there are many weaknesses in the process. One may feel that one or two votes don't really make a difference. I tell you that one or two votes can make a difference in the world. You may not be able to assess the severity of these problems without having experienced them and may believe that these are minor in nature and easily corrected without considering the consequences.

Mr. Speaker, a real experience: In 1988, my colleague across the way, MPP Lorenzo Berardinetti, won his municipal election by one vote. So you can see that every vote counts. We need to ensure that every ballot cast is a valid, eligible voter.

My motion, if passed, would see the formation of a select committee that would "investigate the electoral administrative process, voting procedures and complaints, [and] make recommendations to amend the Elections Act to improve said processes." While conducting the review, the committee would engage all sectors involved in the electoral process to hear their concerns and make recommendations for improvements for a fair, transparent and accountable system that could withstand the test of an investigation or audit of the process, with the records that can facilitate these activities.

Currently, Elections Ontario's mindset is to increase the number of voters, with a lesser value on integrity and quality; their processes reflect this mindset. But in doing so, they have allowed weaknesses in the processes to dilute the integrity of our election process.

I ask everyone in this House to support my motion, to defend and restore the very foundation of our democracy which we so cherish here in Canada and in Ontario. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, but in closing, I say to many of you, I'm a winner and I'm identifying a problem. If I was a loser, the general world would have called me a sore loser. I take this matter very seriously.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I kind of get chills hearing this topic because I think many of you know that I had a very close race in the general election in June. It's certainly true that every vote counts.

I remember my first campaign meeting, the first time I worked on a campaign, for Peter Kent, who is the MP in my riding, and Tony Clement. We had sort of a conference call with Tony Clement in the campaign office. Basically, that's all Tony Clement spoke about: that every single vote counts. He only won by 40 votes, I believe he said, in his first time running. When you're dealing with thousands of votes—I think in June it was a total of 51,000-plus votes in Thornhill. The unofficial number was 86 for my opponent. Then it was flipped: 86 in my favour. Then, after the recount, it went up to 106 in my favour. All of those numbers—whether it's 86 or 106, it works out to basically a statistical tie.

In terms of Elections Ontario, I can't speak on whether or not people were voting who shouldn't have voted, but that's always a concern. It certainly is a concern when people call and they say, "I saw my neighbour voting, and I know they're not a Canadian citizen. They're a US citizen," or, "They've emigrated from another country." They were told by whatever campaign they were supporting, "Go ahead. Nobody asks. You can vote." People ask me, "What should I do? Should I call the police?" While I have never recommended that anybody contact the police on their neighbour, I'm often left wondering: What is the correct protocol? What would Elections Ontario want people to do? All I have done is direct people to Elections Ontario and hope that these concerns are taken seriously.

I am very concerned not just about who is voting, but also who is working at elections, even though Elections Ontario did do their job. They audited the day after election day, and they found mistakes—several mistakes, in fact—where the numbers on the ballot envelopes were reversed so that my higher number was given to my opponent, and her lower number was given to me. It happened several times, always in my opponent's favour, that the numbers were reversed on the tally sheets. Elections Ontario did their job because they did five audits, and each time they caught every single one of those mistakes and reversed it. So I cannot criticize Elections Ontario for the audit.

I can question who's working at those desks. Are they keeping track of where those mistakes were? Either the people working at those desks or those stations were committing some kind of fraud, in which case they shouldn't be rehired next election; or they were making mistakes, in which case they shouldn't be rehired the next election. Even if the other people at that station weren't involved in any of these "mistakes," they were supposed to be supervising each other, to the best of my knowledge, so maybe they dropped the ball in terms of supervising.

I would ask Elections Ontario to focus on ensuring that the people working at elections are up to the calibre that we need, and also to look at the concerns brought forward by this motion to ensure that the people who are voting in our elections and are registered to vote are the ones who should indeed be voting.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I rise today to speak to the motion put forward by the member from Scarborough—Rouge River on the establishment of a select committee of the Legislative Assembly with an eye to investigating the electoral process, voting procedures and complaints.

The member also asked the select committee to focus their research and investigation on the quality of the permanent electors list. I applaud any efforts to increase our democratic right to vote and to ensure the integrity of our elections.

The behaviour of our federal counterparts necessitates that we take action to restore the public's faith in our electoral system. For those of us who have stood for a few elections, I think we can all agree that the permanent electors list is rife with duplicates, deceased persons not removed and many other errors. In that way, I am eager to support this motion.

The member further asks the committee to investigate the quality and integrity of voter identification documents and verification of citizenship and residency. I would absolutely like to see changes to the current voting identification requirements and their enforcement.

There are two key voter groups that I want to see included in the work of the committee: seniors and immigrants. Anecdotal evidence obtained by Elections Canada suggests that ID requirements may present significant barriers to seniors. In particular, those residing in long-term-care facilities may not hold original copies of their identification, or addresses on the documents may be inconsistent.

1550

In the case of immigrants, there are hundreds of thousands of Ontario residents who pay taxes and use services but have no say in who represents them because they are permanent residents and not Canadian citizens. Permanent residents must live in Canada for a minimum of three years before they can apply to become a Canadian citizen. While this may not sound like a long time, recent reports have indicated that the processing time for citizenship applications is growing, so it is taking years longer for immigrants to become citizens and therefore exercise their democratic right to vote. In addition, because elections only take place every few years, someone might have the opportunity to vote only after they have lived in Canada for eight or nine years.

Most importantly, I want a commitment from this government that the committee will conduct open and accessible meetings while pursuing their work. An open and transparent process is the only way to put forward true democratic reform. The last time this government made changes, they did so exclusively, by invitation only. That is not the way I would hope this committee operates. My party understands the keen link between voting and the health of the democratic process, and I hope for that to be shown throughout the work of the committee.

We also have concerns about the appointment of a new third-party review system. This task currently falls to the Chief Electoral Officer, and I am wondering why

the government feels that the CEO is unable to carry out that portion of his job. While it certainly took him some time to respond to the allegations of bribery in the Sudbury by-election, he did return a verdict that stated that the actions of Gerry Lougheed Jr. and Patricia Sorbara constituted an apparent contravention of the Election Act.

This brings me to my final concern. I absolutely want to see electoral reform in Ontario, but I don't want the focus of that reform to be narrowed by a government that balks at the opportunity to listen to Ontarians, as they are doing with the wrong-headed plan of selling off Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Scarborough–Agincourt.

Ms. Soo Wong: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be sharing my time with the member for York South–Weston and the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Let me begin my remarks by thanking the member from Scarborough–Rouge River for bringing this motion forward to the House today. He has been very passionate about the issue of the integrity and the quality of the electoral process. He has been talking to all the members of the House for years about this issue. It's very important that we have a clean, transparent, but most importantly, integral process of election.

As a member of the Legislature elected for the first time in 2011, I can tell you about a number of concerns that I have raised about the whole election process. Just to give you an example, Mr. Speaker, last year in my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt, we had a provincial election and also a federal by-election. In the federal by-election, one polling station—I know because I was there—didn't open until 10:30, when every advertisement for the federal election said 8 o'clock. For over an hour, the residents, frail seniors, had been standing there with their identification. Nobody was present until I started tweeting and asking, "Who is the DRO? Who is the official responsible for this polling station?" Nobody showed up until almost 10:30, when the polling station opened at 8. That's a federal by-election; that could easily happen in Ontario.

In the last provincial election, I raised concerns about numerous developments across the city of Toronto, particularly in my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt. There's a huge development at Kennedy and the 401; there are four condominium towers as well as townhouses. They did not have a polling station, and when I filed a complaint, the response from the electoral office to my staff was that there weren't too many Canadians in this polling station. My God—four towers with over 20 floors and about 30 townhouses. It's very clear that not only did those residents not have a polling station at this new development, they had to travel to an elementary school to have 10 polling stations. If there were no voters out there, why would Elections Ontario put 10 polling stations in one little elementary school? Clearly, there must be voters out there. When I filed a complaint, there was no follow-up. So it's very clear that the motion put

forth by the member from Scarborough–Rouge River clearly asks us to establish some kind of review and deal with the complaints process and issues identified by members as well as by Joe Public.

The other piece—I know there has been ongoing concern in Scarborough—is the integrity of identification. Not only did the member speak about fraudulent identification cards; I know that people bring all kinds of identification cards that are not considered legitimate by Elections Ontario. It's very, very clear that we need a review, and the motion that the member has brought forward today is very timely.

Just today, both the Premier and the Attorney General are bringing in legislation about electoral reform in Ontario. I believe that the motion put forward today is very timely and very appropriate for us to consider. I would definitely encourage every member of the House to consider voting in support of the motion by the member from Scarborough–Rouge River.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Before I ask for further debate, I'm pleased to recognize a good friend, Norm Sterling, who served as the member for Carleton–Grenville in the 31st to 33rd Parliaments, the member for Carleton in the 34th to 36th Parliaments, the member for Lanark–Carleton in the 37th and 38th Parliaments and the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills in the 39th Parliament. Welcome, Norm. It's great to have you here again.

Further debate?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to participate in this debate. I know this is an issue that the member from Scarborough–Rouge River feels strongly about and has some very personal examples that he believes we can study further in a select committee.

I have to say, as a member who has now served on two separate select committees—one with the member from Scarborough–Rouge River—that they have a lot of value, because we, as members, don't go in with the preconceived notion of knowing all the answers.

It's interesting to note that Norm Sterling is here today, because in 2009, there was actually a select committee on election financing and elections. Norm Sterling, Peter Kormos and Greg Sorbara all served on that select committee. I would suggest to you that those were pretty strong parliamentarians to look at an issue in a way that was about finding solutions. They didn't come with their partisan hats on. They came with, "This is what we are seeing out in our communities." Peter Kormos, of course, served primarily a smaller, less-urban riding; Greg Sorbara, very urban; and Norm, up in Ottawa, a little bit of both. That we had those three very experienced, very seasoned parliamentarians willing to serve on that select committee in 2009 speaks to the fact that we have an opportunity, when we have these select committees, to delve much deeper into issues.

The NDP member for London–Fanshawe who spoke—I'm sorry; she left the chamber—raised concerns about: Does this not actually impede or raise issues that we think the Chief Electoral Officer is not doing his job?

I would respectfully disagree. I think what this is about is that the CEO, the Chief Electoral Officer, must follow the rules as they are set out by us as legislators. If we can make those rules better, if we can clarify them, if we can, quite frankly, through the suggestion of a select committee, find out where the real problems exist, I'm all for it.

A very quick example: In the rural part of my riding of Dufferin–Caledon, Canada Post changed the postal codes a number of years ago. You'd think that would be fairly benign. Three years later, when you went into that lovely little website that said, "Enter your postal code, and we'll tell you what riding you live in and where you are to vote," they weren't even sending them to the wrong voting location; they were sending them to the wrong riding. In Dufferin–Caledon, it's not unusual that it takes a number of hours to go from one end of the riding to the other. When you're suggesting to someone that they are told to go to an entirely different riding, we are clearly doing something wrong. I'm happy to support the recommendation to form a select committee. I would lobby strongly to have some additions included in it.

1600

As we all know, Greg Essensa, as the current Chief Electoral Officer, does a report post every general election—and by-election, actually—and he has many, many recommendations. Some are touched on in the points raised by the member from Scarborough–Rouge River, but others I'd like to see included.

Let's look at some other jurisdictions that seem to be increasing their voter turnout, not seeing it shrink. Let's look at some other jurisdictions that seem to have gotten a handle on third-party advertising and the controls that they have been able to impose, so that outside influence is not unduly impacting the outcome of elections. I would love to have those types of things discussed and hopefully come up with some recommendations through the formation of a select committee.

We all have our own personal examples. I have now run as a candidate in three general elections, and I don't even want to tell you how many elections I participated in as a volunteer. We need a better process. We need a process that absolutely ensures that everyone who wants to vote has the right and ability to vote, but we also need to ensure the integrity of the process.

It is very special and something that we should hold very dear that we have the ability here in Ontario and in Canada to participate in democratic processes like elections. But the converse is that we don't give it to everybody. You have to earn it. You have to earn it through your Canadian citizenship, and if we have those parameters in place, then quite frankly we also need a process in place to ensure that only the individuals who have the right to vote in a particular riding are given that vote. It shouldn't be taken lightly. I think that we can do a better job, and I think that a select committee would be a very good place to start to ensure that we cover off some of these.

I'm happy to support this resolution, and I hope that we can get past the small concerns that you may have about treading on the Chief Electoral Officer's mandate. Quite frankly, while I've not spoken to him directly on this resolution, I know that he is looking for action on some of these problems, and he would like to see improvements. So let's just get 'er done.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: It is a great pleasure for me to rise as MPP for London West to speak to this motion from the member for Scarborough–Rouge River. I'd like to congratulate him on this motion. Certainly I think we all agree and we all recognize that a healthy democracy depends absolutely on having a fair and impartial and transparent electoral process, with safeguards in place to make sure that the integrity of the ballot box is protected.

As my colleague the member for London–Fanshawe said, New Democrats certainly support the intent of this motion. But at the same time, we are concerned about the fact that whenever the spectre of voter fraud is raised, it can be used—and has been used in a number of US states and also at the federal level—to really introduce new restrictive measures that can lead to voter suppression. So we raise that caution as we look at this motion.

The other requirement of a healthy democracy is that we do everything possible, everything we can, to remove barriers to participation, to make sure that everyone in this province who is eligible to cast a ballot is able to do so. When we look at voting turnout in both provincial and federal elections, we see that we're at about 60%, so we have a long way to go to make sure that everyone is able to get out to vote.

Within that 60%, there are certain groups who are less likely to vote. Voter turnout is much lower among 18-to-24-year-olds. It's much lower among single parents who have young children, who, as we know, are overwhelmingly women. It's much lower among renters compared to homeowners; renters tend to be low-income. It's much lower among those who are unemployed or not in the labour force. In addition to ensuring the integrity of the electoral process, we also need to take action to reduce the barriers that these groups face when they go to cast their ballot.

When we look at voter ID requirements in particular, we know that they can present some significant barriers to voting participation. As the member for London–Fanshawe said, this is particularly the case for seniors and immigrants. It's also the case for students. Students often have difficulty obtaining the necessary documentation to establish their eligibility to vote, and we would definitely want to ensure, when this committee is proposing changes to voter ID requirements, that there is no disenfranchisement of people who are actually eligible to vote.

One of the recommendations that I would bring forward is that this select committee look at ensuring the right to vote for all eligible voters. The research that is referenced in this motion could look at some of the

strategies that have been used in other jurisdictions to increase voter turnout to make it easier for people to participate in the electoral process. We know some jurisdictions have looked at electronic voting machines, photograph ballots and some other modifications to polling places, in addition to increased accessibility and transportation to polling places. These are all strategies that I would encourage the select committee to look at.

In closing, I want to say that we support the motion and look forward to participating in this select committee.

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

Mrs. Laura Albanese: It is a pleasure to stand here in support of this motion that has been brought forward by my colleague from Scarborough–Rouge River. As has been mentioned, he’s very passionate about this issue, but I think it is obviously an issue that we’re all passionate about. We in this chamber have all gone through elections and therefore go through the electoral process, and we have our own comments.

He is bringing forward five key points to be examined by the select committee. One of the points that he is bringing forward is the quality and integrity of the permanent voters’ list. That’s the first thing I would like to talk about, because I think that identification documents and verification of Canadian citizenship and residency are very important. In Canada, in Ontario, you have to be a Canadian citizen to be able to vote.

However, that’s not always required. I want to share one example that personally involved me in one of my elections. During a campaign, I knocked at a door and the constituent showed me a voter’s card. He was very honest with me. He said, “I’m not a citizen, but I received a card. Can I vote?” I said, “Well, if you’re not a citizen, you can’t.”

A few days later, I ran into the same constituent, and he was quite upset. He said, “Another candidate came to my door and told me that if I have a card, I can vote. Did you think I wasn’t going to vote for you, and that’s why you said that I shouldn’t go and vote?” That obviously wasn’t the case, but now I had lost his confidence because I had given him not a positive answer. In any case, I think we need to strengthen the process.

To what the members from London–Fanshawe and London West were saying: Yes, it is difficult for immigrants to get Canadian citizenship, but we have to encourage that, because if more people have citizenship, they will teach their kids. They see their parents going to vote, they see their grandparents going to vote and that will encourage even young voters to vote at election time. I think that’s very important.

1610

Another point that I wanted to make is that Elections Ontario—and I do have the report here, the Elections Ontario 2013-14 annual report: Ready Now, Ready Next. On page 5, for example, it says, “Ensuring the highest possible degree of accuracy with PREO”—the permanent

register of electors for Ontario—“is key to meeting our legislated obligations”—“our legislated obligations.”

So we can help—through better legislation—Elections Ontario do a better job. That is our duty here in the chamber. So if we improve the electoral process through legislation, we can also assist the Chief Electoral Officer to do his job and Elections Ontario to do their job.

I want to end by commending my colleague from Scarborough–Rouge River for putting forward this motion. As he had mentioned, if he was a candidate who had lost, everyone would have thought that these were just sour grapes, but he has consistently won his elections. He’s really passionate about this. We can all make a difference. I think a select committee is a great way to bring good ideas from all sides of this House forward.

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

Hon. Helena Jaczek: It’s a pleasure to rise in support of motion number 54, brought in by our colleague the member for Scarborough–Rouge River, one of my 10 neighbours.

As we’ve heard, he’s certainly been talking about this issue for a number of years and has some extremely valid concerns. The concept of striking a select committee is one that I’m very much in favour of. There are many individuals here in the House who have served on select committees, and I think we have all found them a great opportunity to put any partisan ideas aside and come together to solve a problem.

And this is a problem for all of us. We all know that, essentially, the legitimacy of our electoral process is the bedrock of our democratic system. So many new Canadians do come to Canada and Ontario as a refuge, in many cases, from oppressive regimes. Some of those claim to be democracies, but they’re democracies in name only. Many of my constituents tell me that they view Canada as a place that has fair rules that apply to everyone, and when they discover—and we’ve heard many examples today—about individuals receiving two cards and so on, they’re really very, very shocked that this could happen. There are too many loopholes.

I’m going to focus a little bit on the case of individuals being added to the list of eligible voters on election day. The type of statutory declaration at the poll without any appropriate verification is completely insufficient. Many members will remember the case of the federal member of Parliament for Etobicoke Centre who, a few years ago, lost his seat by some 26 votes. One of the many pieces of evidence that was presented to demonstrate the procedural errors on election day was that two individuals had listed their address as 20 Blue Jays Way, and they were allowed to vote in the riding of Etobicoke Centre. You would have thought that any one of the polling clerks would have picked this up immediately as clearly being an error.

I had a recent example of people claiming to live in my riding who clearly don’t. We all know there’s been considerable controversy over the health and physical

education curriculum. My office in my great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham, with the highest number of people in it—some 250,000—has been inundated with concerns over that curriculum. My staff follows up on emails asking for addresses to ensure they are my constituents. We've had the astonishing finding of, apparently, more than 20 people are living in the same household, and even in my very populous riding, this is not actually happening.

So we know that these sorts of loopholes do exist. They need to be removed. We need the select committee.

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

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I'm pleased to join in the debate. I think it's an important issue to address. We need to look at electoral reform, so I applaud the member for bringing forward the issue, but I think we need to focus on what the major concern is when we look at electoral reform.

What we've seen in Ontario in particular over the past 24 years, more than two decades, has been a decline in voter turnout year after year. Only this past election did we see an increase which bucked the trend of more than two decades. We actually saw a bit of an increase, which was a positive sign, but to put that into numbers: In 1990, we saw 64.4% voter turnout. Contrast that with 2011, which was the lowest in the history of Ontario: We saw that a dismal less than half of the people who were eligible to vote voted—48.2% of people voted in Ontario.

This is a serious problem. It's a serious erosion of our democracy. When people don't vote in a democracy, it raises some serious concerns. So some of the things that I submit we should be doing in the select committee is looking at ways to encourage people to vote, to make it easier to vote, to make it more accessible to vote, and looking at strategies—like the member from London West mentioned, looking at other jurisdictions for best practices. Where are jurisdictions that people vote more often, and how are they able to encourage them to vote? What are the strategies? And to look at those and see if we can implement some of those strategies here in Ontario.

It's truly troubling. If we look at it and just think for a moment that the people who are making the decisions in this province—whether it's municipally, whether it's federally, if we look at the voter turnout, we are only representing a small number of people who actually care enough or who are actually able to have their voices heard. It's incumbent on us as legislators to reverse this trend.

We look at some of the problems people face. Some of the issues have been raised. One of the issues is the system of voting that requires people to go to polling stations. One of the members mentioned that a polling station wasn't even open. That is an extreme travesty, that such an important thing like voting would be impeded because a polling station wasn't open on time, at the right time.

Other issues we see far too often: Polling stations are not accessible. They're located in areas of our com-

munity that are hard to get to and it's not convenient for people to go out and vote. We need to make sure it's convenient. We need to make sure it's accessible.

The other area that we've seen serious concerns with is the timing of voting. The majority of folks who go to work aren't able to vote until after the working day, which, for a lot of folks, is after 5 o'clock. We see a rush at 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. to closing time, which is at 9. It's really that three-hour window that's the most popular time to vote. We need to make sure we do more to make sure that at that time period there aren't lineups and it isn't difficult. If people walk up to a voting station or a polling station and see that there's a huge lineup and it will take hours to vote, and that discourages them from voting, we've done a disservice.

I think our focus with this select committee needs to be on how to encourage voting, how to encourage democracy. It should be a key issue in the minds of any legislator. We're here because we represent the voices of the people in our ridings, and if we are not encouraging those people to actually have their voices heard on voting day, if we're not encouraging them to come out and actually exercise their right, then we've done a disservice.

With respect to the issue of voter fraud or the idea that there might be people who have received two voter cards—and I applaud the member for bringing an example here today, to bring a face to that issue. Certainly we need to make sure that the voting system has integrity, that the election process has integrity and that there are legitimate people who are voting. That's, of course, an important issue, so we support that as well.

Really, the focus needs to be on how we can encourage more people to vote and exercise that right.

1620

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

I recognize the member for Scarborough–Rouge River, who has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I just want to thank my colleagues on all sides of this Legislature who spoke on my motion, and those who were listening very carefully.

Candidates have a vested investment—and I say “investment” because it's monetary—in ensuring a fair, transparent, accurate system with a high degree of integrity. That is the responsibility for us as lawmakers, who must protect our election process to ensure our citizens' right to elect their representatives and the future of our province's democratic foundation.

We can no longer plead ignorance of this issue and plant our heads in the sand. The degradation of our voting processes and the accuracy of the permanent list of electors is a major problem that will ultimately impact all of us in time and presents an immediate and growing threat to the integrity of the democracy we have spent our careers serving, defending and building up for the next generation.

I say to all of you: Look around the world and learn about electoral corruption and fraud. We don't need that

blight to take control of our system. Canada proudly oversees other democracies' election processes because we are proud of our past accomplishments as a democracy. We must not let our pride prevent us from being alert to a degradation in our process and the long-standing principles and values that may not withstand the test of the current environment.

The findings of the very expensive—in the hundreds of thousands of dollars—court challenge regarding a 2011 federal election outcome in Etobicoke Centre should serve as a wake-up call to all of us to review the integrity of our provincial lists and ensure that we're delivering uniform and equitable participatory channels for citizens to cast their ballots and duly elect representatives who reflect the votes of those qualified citizens with accuracy and consistency.

Mr. Speaker, I also bring to our attention the most recent Canadian election process review, conducted by Harry Neufeld.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

ENDING PREDATORY ELECTRICITY
RETAILING ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ÉLIMINATION
DES PRIX ABUSIFS DANS LA VENTE
AU DÉTAIL D'ÉLECTRICITÉ

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): We will deal with the first ballot item, number 58, standing in the name of Ms. Campbell.

Ms. Campbell has moved second reading of Bill 111, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 to eliminate fixed rate electricity contracts between retailers and consumers. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

LISTENING TO ONTARIANS ACT
(HYDRO ONE AND OTHER
ELECTRICITY ASSETS), 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA NÉCESSITÉ D'ÊTRE
À L'ÉCOUTE DES ONTARIENS (HYDRO
ONE ET AUTRES ÉLÉMENTS D'ACTIF LIÉS
À L'ÉLECTRICITÉ)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Ms. Horwath has moved second reading of Bill 107, An Act to require a referendum before the disposition of the Crown's electricity assets. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

ELECTORAL REFORM

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Mr. Balkissoon has moved private member's notice of motion number 54. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

ENDING PREDATORY ELECTRICITY
RETAILING ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ÉLIMINATION
DES PRIX ABUSIFS DANS LA VENTE
AU DÉTAIL D'ÉLECTRICITÉ

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1625 to 1630.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I would ask that the members please take their seats.

Ms. Campbell has moved second reading of Bill 111, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 to eliminate fixed rate electricity contracts between retailers and consumers.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing while they are counted by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gates, Wayne	McNaughton, Monte
Anderson, Granville	Gélinas, France	Meilleur, Madeleine
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gravelle, Michael	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Bailey, Robert	Gretzky, Lisa	Miller, Paul
Baker, Yvan	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Balkissoon, Bas	Harris, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Hatfield, Percy	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Barrett, Toby	Hoggarth, Ann	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziotti, David
Bisson, Gilles	Hoskins, Eric	Potts, Arthur
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzi	Qaadri, Shafiq
Campbell, Sarah	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Chan, Michael	Jones, Sylvia	Sandals, Liz
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwala, Sophie	Sattler, Peggy
Colle, Mike	Kwinter, Monte	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Singh, Jagmeet
Crack, Grant	MacLaren, Jack	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Dei Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Taylor, Monique
Dhillon, Vic	Mantha, Michael	Thibeault, Glenn
Dickson, Joe	Martins, Cristina	Vanhof, John
DiNovo, Cheri	Martow, Gila	Vernile, Daiene
Dong, Han	Matthews, Deborah	Wong, Soo
Duguid, Brad	Mauro, Bill	Yakabuski, John
Fife, Catherine	McGarry, Kathryn	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMahon, Eleanor	
Forster, Cindy	McMeekin, Ted	

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing while they are counted by the Clerk.

Nays

Moridi, Reza

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):

The ayes are 79; the nays are 1.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is referred to the Committee of the Whole House unless the member specifies otherwise.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: General Government, please.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is the majority in favour of this bill being referred to the Standing Committee on General Government. Agreed? Agreed.

The doors will now be opened for 30 seconds.

LISTENING TO ONTARIANS ACT
(HYDRO ONE AND OTHER
ELECTRICITY ASSETS), 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA NÉCESSITÉ D'ÊTRE
À L'ÉCOUTE DES ONTARIENS (HYDRO
ONE ET AUTRES ÉLÉMENTS D'ACTIF LIÉS
À L'ÉLECTRICITÉ)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Ms. Horwath has moved second reading of Bill 107, An Act to require a referendum before the disposition of the Crown's electricity assets.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gretzky, Lisa
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie
Barrett, Toby	Harris, Michael
Bisson, Gilles	Hatfield, Percy
Campbell, Sarah	Horwath, Andrea
DiNovo, Cheri	Jones, Sylvia
Fife, Catherine	MacLaren, Jack
Forster, Cindy	Mantha, Michael
Gates, Wayne	Martow, Gila
Gélinas, France	McNaughton, Monte

Miller, Paul
Munro, Julia
Sattler, Peggy
Singh, Jagmeet
Tabuns, Peter
Taylor, Monique
Vanthof, John
Yakabuski, John

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until they are recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Albanese, Laura	Duguid, Brad	Meilleur, Madeleine
Anderson, Granville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	Moridi, Reza
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoggarth, Ann	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Hoskins, Eric	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Mitzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Oraziotti, David
Chan, Michael	Kiwala, Sophie	Potts, Arthur
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Coteau, Michael	Malhi, Harinder	Sandals, Liz
Crack, Grant	Mangat, Amrit	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	Martins, Cristina	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Matthews, Deborah	Thibeault, Glenn

Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han

Mauro, Bill
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McMeekin, Ted

Vernile, Daiene
Wong, Soo
Zimmer, David

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 28; the nays are 53.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negated.

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 81

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe we have—
Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I would ask the House to come to order. I need to hear the government House leader. We have other business.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Speaker. I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 81, An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Do we have consent to put forward with a motion without notice regarding An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada? Agreed? Agreed.

I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I move that the orders for second and third reading of Bill 81 be immediately called and the question put on the motions for second and third reading without debate or amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I'm pleased to recognize the member for Toronto–Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 81, An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): My mistake.

Mr. Naqvi moved that the orders for second and third reading of Bill 81 be immediately called and the question put on the motions for second and third reading without debate or amendment. Agreed? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

1640

INTERGENERATIONAL DAY
CANADA ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA JOURNÉE
INTERGÉNÉRATIONNELLE AU CANADA

Mr. Tabuns moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 81, An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada / Projet de loi 81, Loi proclamant la Journée intergénérationnelle au Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

INTERGENERATIONAL DAY
CANADA ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA JOURNÉE
INTERGÉNÉRATIONNELLE AU CANADA

Mr. Tabuns moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill 81, An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day
Canada / Projet de loi 81, Loi proclamant la Journée
intergénérationnelle au Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is it the
pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled
as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Orders of the
day? Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Mr. Speaker, Her Honour awaits.

*Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario
entered the chamber of the Legislative Assembly and took
her seat upon the throne.*

ROYAL ASSENT
SANCTION ROYALE

**Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell (Lieutenant Govern-
or):** Pray be seated.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): May it
please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly of the
province has, at its present meetings thereof, passed
certain bills to which, in the name of and on behalf of the
said Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your
Honour's assent.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): The follow-
ing are the titles of the bills to which Your Honour's
assent is prayed:

An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and
Prosperity Act, 2015 / Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur
l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité.

An Act to proclaim the month of June as Ontario Bike
Month / Loi proclamant le mois de juin Mois de la
bicyclette en Ontario.

An Act to proclaim Terry Fox Day / Loi proclamant le
Jour de Terry Fox.

An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the
Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts
to change sexual orientation or gender identity / Loi

modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-santé et la Loi de 1991
sur les professions de la santé réglementées à l'égard des
interventions visant à changer l'orientation sexuelle ou
l'identité sexuelle.

An Act to proclaim Intergenerational Day Canada /
Loi proclamant la Journée intergénérationnelle au
Canada.

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

An Act to proclaim Ontario Flag Day / Loi proclamant
le Jour du drapeau de l'Ontario.

An Act to revive Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc.

An Act to revive DSPT International (Canada) Inc.

An Act to revive 990046 Ontario Inc.

An Act to revive 731149 Ontario Limited.

An Act respecting The Centre for International
Governance Innovation.

An Act respecting the Supply Chain Management
Association Ontario.

An Act to amend The Welland-Port Colborne Airport
Act, 1976.

An Act to revive Weiche Estates Inc.

An Act to revive 1476263 Ontario Inc.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
In Her Majesty's name, Her Honour the Lieutenant
Governor doth assent to these bills.

Au nom de Sa Majesté, Son Honneur la lieutenant-
gouverneure sanctionne ces projets de loi.

Her Honour was then pleased to retire.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Orders of the
day? The government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I guess I'm mindful of the time;
thus, I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The
government House leader has moved adjournment of the
House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion
carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say
"aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. The motion is carried.

This House stands adjourned until September 14.
Have a good summer.

The House adjourned at 1648.

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)
		Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	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

Chair / Président: Vacant
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo
Han Dong, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott
Han Dong, Sylvia Jones
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 4 June 2015 / Jeudi 4 juin 2015

Annual report, French Language Services	
Commissioner	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4921
Members' expenditures	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4921

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Order of business

Hon. Jeff Leal	4921
Motion agreed to	4921

Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc. Act, 2014, Bill

Pr14, Mr. Fraser

Second reading agreed to	4921
Third reading agreed to	4921

DSPT International (Canada) Inc. Act, 2015, Bill

Pr15, Mr. Colle

Second reading agreed to	4921
Third reading agreed to	4922

990046 Ontario Inc. Act, 2015, Bill Pr16,

Mr. Natyshak

Second reading agreed to	4922
Third reading agreed to	4922

731149 Ontario Limited Act, 2015, Bill Pr17,

Mr. Bailey

Second reading agreed to	4922
Third reading agreed to	4922

Centre for International Governance Innovation Act (Tax Relief), 2015, Bill Pr18, Ms. Fife

Second reading agreed to	4922
Third reading agreed to	4922

Supply Chain Management Association Ontario Act, 2015, Bill Pr19, Mr. Rinaldi

Second reading agreed to	4922
Third reading agreed to	4922

Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport Act, 2015, Bill Pr20, Mr. Hudak

Second reading agreed to	4923
Third reading agreed to	4923

Weiche Estates Inc Act, 2015, Bill Pr21,

Mrs. McGarry

Second reading agreed to	4923
Third reading agreed to	4923

1476263 Ontario Inc. Act, 2015, Bill Pr22,

Mr. Hudak

Second reading agreed to	4923
Third reading agreed to	4923

Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015, Bill 66, Mr. Murray / Loi de 2015 sur la protection des Grands Lacs, projet de loi 66, M. Murray

Mr. John Vanthof	4923
Hon. Liz Sandals	4926
Mr. Jim McDonell	4926
Mme France Gélinas	4926
Ms. Sophie Kiwala	4927
Mr. John Vanthof	4927
Second reading vote deferred	4927

Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015, Bill 73, Mr. McMeekin / Loi de 2015 pour une croissance intelligente de nos collectivités, projet de loi 73, M. McMeekin

Mr. Michael Harris	4927
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	4930

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Mario Sergio, Mrs. Lisa Gretzky, Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn, Mr. Victor Fedeli, Mr. Paul Miller, Hon. Helena Jaczek, M. Gilles Bisson, Mr. Chris Ballard, Miss Monique Taylor, Hon. David Oraziotti

4930
Hon. Deborah Matthews, Mr. Granville Anderson, Ms. Jennifer K. French, Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde, Mr. Gilles Bisson, Mr. Norm Miller, Hon. Michael Gravelle, Mr. Arthur Potts, Mr. Chris Ballard, Hon. Bill Mauro, M. Grant Crack, M. Bob Delaney, The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....

4931

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Ontario budget

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	4931
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4931

Smart meters

Mr. John Yakabuski	4932
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4932

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath	4933
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4933
Hon. Charles Sousa	4933

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath	4933
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4934
Hon. Charles Sousa	4934

Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Garfield Dunlop.....	4934
Hon. Liz Sandals	4935

Continued on inside back cover

Continued from back cover

Ontario Energy Board

Mr. Peter Tabuns	4935
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4935

Agri-food industry

Ms. Daiene Vernile	4936
Hon. Jeff Leal	4936

Health care funding

Mr. Jack MacLaren	4936
Hon. Eric Hoskins	4936

Class size

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky	4937
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4937
Hon. Liz Sandals	4937

Post-secondary education

Mr. Chris Ballard	4938
Hon. Reza Moridi	4938

Aboriginal land dispute

Mr. Toby Barrett	4938
Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4938

Pan Am Games

Mr. Paul Miller	4939
Hon. Steven Del Duca	4939

Senior citizens

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry	4940
Hon. Mario Sergio	4940

Heritage conservation

Mr. Tim Hudak	4940
Hon. Michael Coteau	4940

Waste disposal

Mr. Peter Tabuns	4941
Hon. Glen R. Murray	4941

Anne Stokes

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4941
-------------------------------------	------

Legislative pages

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4941
-------------------------------------	------

Visitors

Hon. Michael Coteau	4942
---------------------------	------

DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

**Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015,
Bill 6, Mr. Duguid / Loi de 2015 sur
l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la
prospérité, projet de loi 6, M. Duguid**

Third reading agreed to	4942
-------------------------------	------

**Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015, Bill 66,
Mr. Murray / Loi de 2015 sur la protection des
Grands Lacs, projet de loi 66, M. Murray**

Second reading agreed to	4943
--------------------------------	------

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS /
PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mr. Jack MacLaren	4943
Ms. Cheri DiNovo	4943
Ms. Sylvia Jones	4943
Ms. Daiene Vernile	4943

**MEMBERS' STATEMENTS /
DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

Crimean Tatars

Mr. Jack MacLaren	4943
-------------------------	------

Pan Am Games

Mr. Paul Miller	4944
-----------------------	------

Cambridge Sports Hall of Fame

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry	4944
----------------------------	------

Member for Oxford

Ms. Sylvia Jones	4944
------------------------	------

Horse racing industry

Mme France Gélinas	4944
--------------------------	------

Italian Heritage Month

Ms. Daiene Vernile	4945
--------------------------	------

Dorothy Rungeling

Mr. Tim Hudak	4945
---------------------	------

Portugal Day

Mr. Han Dong	4945
--------------------	------

Seniors' Month

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris	4946
--------------------------------	------

**REPORTS BY COMMITTEES /
RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité
permanent de la justice**

M. Shafiq Qaadri	4946
Report adopted	4946

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS /
DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

**Electoral Boundaries Act, 2015, Bill 115,
Mme Meilleur / Loi de 2015 sur les limites des
circonscriptions électorales, projet de loi 115,
Mme Meilleur**

First reading agreed to	4946
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur	4946

**Correctional Services Staff Recognition Week Act,
2015, Bill 116, Ms. Naidoo-Harris / Loi de 2015 sur
la Semaine de la reconnaissance du personnel des
services correctionnels, projet de loi 116,
Mme Naidoo-Harris**

First reading agreed to	4947
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris	4947

MOTIONS

Consideration of Bill 77

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4947
Motion agreed to	4947

Affirming Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Act, 2015, Bill 77, Ms. DiNovo / Loi de 2015 sur l'affirmation de l'orientation sexuelle et de l'identité sexuelle, projet de loi 77, Mme DiNovo

Third reading agreed to	4947
-------------------------------	------

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Renewable energy

Mr. Jack MacLaren	4947
-------------------------	------

Mining industry

Ms. Sarah Campbell	4948
--------------------------	------

Credit unions

Mrs. Cristina Martins	4948
-----------------------------	------

Health care

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson	4948
----------------------------	------

Way-finding signs

Mr. Michael Mantha	4948
--------------------------	------

Water fluoridation

Mr. Bob Delaney	4949
-----------------------	------

Alzheimer's disease

Mr. Bill Walker	4949
-----------------------	------

Hospital funding

Ms. Cindy Forster	4949
-------------------------	------

French-language education

Ms. Sophie Kiwala	4950
-------------------------	------

Off-road vehicles

Mr. Bill Walker	4950
-----------------------	------

Privatization of public assets

Mme France Gélinas	4950
--------------------------	------

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS / AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS

Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act, 2015, Bill 111, Ms. Campbell / Loi de 2015 sur l'élimination des prix abusifs dans la vente au détail d'électricité, projet de loi 111, Mme Campbell

Ms. Sarah Campbell	4951
Mr. Bob Delaney	4952
Mr. John Yakabuski	4953
Mr. Gilles Bisson	4955
Ms. Eleanor McMahon	4956
Ms. Cindy Forster	4957
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry	4957
Ms. Sarah Campbell	4958

Listening to Ontarians Act (Hydro One and Other Electricity Assets), 2015, Bill 107, Ms. Horwath / Loi de 2015 sur la nécessité d'être à l'écoute des Ontariens (Hydro One et autres éléments d'actif liés à l'électricité), projet de loi 107, Mme Horwath

Ms. Andrea Horwath	4959
Hon. Charles Sousa	4960
Mr. John Yakabuski	4962
Mr. Peter Tabuns	4964
Mr. Bob Delaney	4964
Mr. Percy Hatfield	4965
Mr. Arthur Potts	4965
Mr. Gilles Bisson	4966
Ms. Andrea Horwath	4966

Electoral reform

Mr. Bas Balkissoon	4967
Mrs. Gila Martow	4968
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong	4969
Ms. Soo Wong	4970
Ms. Sylvia Jones	4970
Ms. Peggy Sattler	4971
Mrs. Laura Albanese	4972
Hon. Helena Jaczek	4972
Mr. Jagmeet Singh	4973
Mr. Bas Balkissoon	4973

Electoral reform

Motion agreed to	4974
------------------------	------

Ending Predatory Electricity Retailing Act, 2015, Bill 111, Ms. Campbell / Loi de 2015 sur l'élimination des prix abusifs dans la vente au détail d'électricité, projet de loi 111, Mme Campbell

Second reading agreed to	4975
--------------------------------	------

Listening to Ontarians Act (Hydro One and Other Electricity Assets), 2015, Bill 107, Ms. Horwath / Loi de 2015 sur la nécessité d'être à l'écoute des Ontariens (Hydro One et autres éléments d'actif liés à l'électricité), projet de loi 107, Mme Horwath

Second reading negated	4975
------------------------------	------

Consideration of Bill 81

Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4975
Motion agreed to	4975

Intergenerational Day Canada Act, 2015, Bill 81, Mr. Tabuns / Loi de 2015 sur la Journée intergénérationnelle au Canada, projet de loi 81, M. Tabuns

Second reading agreed to	4975
--------------------------------	------

Intergenerational Day Canada Act, 2015, Bill 81, Mr. Tabuns / Loi de 2015 sur la Journée intergénérationnelle au Canada, projet de loi 81, M. Tabuns

Third reading agreed to	4976
-------------------------------	------

Royal assent / Sanction royale

Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell (Lieutenant Governor)	4976
--	------