



No. 165

N° 165

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

First Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Première session, 41^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Thursday 21 April 2016

Jeudi 21 avril 2016

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

Hansard on the Internet

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

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

Index inquiries

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

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

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

Renseignements sur l'index

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

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



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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Thursday 21 April 2016

Jeudi 21 avril 2016

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION
PLAN ACT (STRENGTHENING
RETIREMENT SECURITY
FOR ONTARIANS), 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR LE RÉGIME
DE RETRAITE DE LA PROVINCE
DE L'ONTARIO (SÉCURISER LA RETRAITE
EN ONTARIO)

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 20, 2016, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 186, An Act to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan / Projet de loi 186, Loi établissant le Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): When we last debated this issue, the member from York–Simcoe had the floor.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'm pleased to be able to continue on yesterday's theme.

Just to bring people together and understand where we were, the critical issues in this pension plan are the unintended consequences: the impact it will have on various members of society, not all of which are really in their best interests. There are a few key words that I think people need to be aware of as they try to understand what, in fact, is being recommended by the government—what is being pushed forward by the government.

First is the fact that this was designed for a very special group of people: those without workplace pensions. When that idea was floated, there were some studies that were done to determine who we were talking about and how long that was. But people recognize that there were a lot of part-time jobs where they had very little number of hours to work. So there was general sympathy, looking at how to respond to the problem of there being no workplace pensions.

But the signal light went on when that got floated among businesses through organizations such as the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, who all then looked at their membership, who were able to point out that they're

stretched very thinly. There are so many people, frankly, who own businesses so they have a job, and there isn't much left over. In today's macro system, there is not much left over either, when you have the most debt of any subnational state in the world, with almost \$300 billion in debt, and it costs about \$11 billion for the servicing of that \$300 billion. That's the backdrop to this piece of legislation. It's the elephant in the room, so to speak. There's always a problem that that's there.

People in the private sector have recognized increases in the hydro rates, for instance, both at home and at work. They have recognized that in the last budget there has been a whole list of licences and fees and things that will be charged to the individual. The threat, I would argue, of a cap-and-trade carbon tax is looming on the horizon. The notion that an employer and employee would have to put forward 1.9% towards a pension fund—there are many businesses for which that is actually going to lead to a decrease in hours or to actual layoffs. That there is actually a number attached to the number of layoffs that this will trigger gives you a sense of the cruel irony that, without a job, you certainly can't be collecting a pension. For the people who might lose their jobs as a result of this initiative, this is a very real-life threat.

That was the initial area of concern. Then the government decided, as well, to introduce the notion of what's comparable. It took them several months to establish some parameters so that now this brings in a huge segment of the population that had no idea that they would be part of this pension for people who didn't have a workplace pension. I'm talking here about people who are employed in the private sector, who have pensions and who are relatively satisfied with that system as it is. It's an important economic driver in this province, the fact that private sector pensions are administered and held by banks and insurance companies and various other investment opportunities.

They now suddenly get sucked into this whole equation because they find themselves, the private sector businesses, now having to look and see whether or not they measure up to something called "comparable." "Comparable" in this context means that your pension is good enough; it's good enough for the government's definition. Without going into all of those details of the definition, the simplest one is to look at a defined contribution pension plan that is supported with less than 4% from each side. In other words, many pensions are "three and three": 3% by the employer and 3% by the employee. Now, all of a sudden, these people aren't deemed comparable and they would have to make alterations.

0910

The private sector is looking at itself in terms of what kind of changes that makes, and that's really, Madam Speaker, where we are today in terms of the ripple effect, if you like, of this bill. Suddenly people who had no idea that they would be drawn in—they understood it to be a bill that was for people who actually don't have a workplace pension, and I am sure they never imagined that they would be drawn into a very complicated exercise with the government, spread out over years. Businesses, then, are going to have to choose whether they join the ORPP, or can they can measure up to the rigours of being comparable?

Those are issues that still stand out in the discussion on this bill; there are many others. But I think you have to come back to the timing and the notion that we're going to have a payroll tax included in this province, just at a point when S&P dropped its credit grade—the lowest level ever. These are the kinds of things—I mentioned hydro rates, and certainly the spending scandals and the ever-rising debt. Into those situations now comes, for individuals who never imagined they were part of this, the need to look at this notion of “comparable.”

The other aspect of that, of course, is the impact of making it more costly to do business in this province, because any kind of payroll tax that is a job-killing one, which we know this to be, hinders the ability of the private sector to do what it does best: actually provide job opportunities for people and strengthen our economy to attract investment. I recently mentioned that Canada's economy is growing, but we must remain prudent and fiscally sound. To conjure up a further tax on Ontarians now will run the real risk of adverse effects. Outside of recession, this is the worst possible time to enact a \$3.5-billion payroll tax.

As I mentioned earlier, Ontario is the largest sub-national debtor in the entire world—just over \$21,000 for every single person in Ontario. Net debt to GDP has gone up nearly 50% under the Liberal government. Last year, due to poor policies like this, interest totalled \$11.4 billion. After major funding allocations like health care and education, that is the government's largest expenditure. I'm sure it would surprise many Ontarians if they really found out how much they are paying just in interest on the provincial debt. It averages \$840 per person—that could be a rent payment for many working Ontarians—yet this cost just keeps on rising each year.

Ontario businesses already feel immense pressure, especially with out-of-province competition. With more regulations, hydro rate increases and the newly proposed mutual payroll tax, businesses are being forced to reconsider investing in Ontario. I know, in conversations with my own constituents who have businesses that may employ 25 people—those are deemed small business, and certainly in the grand scheme of things, they are. But there comes a point when the regulatory burden and the tax burden just make it so that there's not much incentive to continue. So Ontario's businesses face serious trouble as the province has no will to levy any taxation support.

Businesses just won't have the capital to handle the financial blow and will be forced to close their doors.

We see a government that would rather squeeze more money from a small business by any means necessary, including a new mandatory pension tax. But I must repeat: Businesses can only pay these when they make a profit. Businesses can only hire more employees and grow if the government allows them to do so. It is no longer a secret that each and every day, companies choose to pass Ontario by and find jurisdictions where growth is possible.

This brings us back to this ill-conceived plan that can further risk the state of the economy. The ORPP has continually evolved as potential revenue, continually growing as it looks to pool as much revenue as possible, even if it means giving up a better plan.

We all know that it's impossible to save for retirement if you have no job. As I explained yesterday, the government has no true need to squeeze Ontarians any further. The mandatory nature of this plan will jeopardize some of the most vulnerable by taking away what they spend each and every day on food, clothes and ever-increasing bills, for the benefits to be clawed back from them 40 years from now.

There are many other successful forms of savings plans, such as the pooled registered pension plan. In 2013, before this government decided to pay attention to the issue of retirement security, our PC caucus was hard at work. It was three years ago when I brought forth Bill 50, An Act to require the introduction of legislation to allow for pooled registered pension plans. This plan, contrary to the mandatory Ontario plan, is a retirement savings option for individuals, including self-employed individuals. Another example of how the pooled registered pension is superior is that it enables its members to benefit from lower administration costs that result from participating in a large, pooled pension plan. It's also portable, which is something that the Ontario one is not, which raises unanswered questions with regard to moving out of the province, having an employer that is a national employer, not a provincial one; whereas the pooled pension goes with the individual from job to job. You're also able to go to participating provinces, like British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Quebec. Since the investment options within a pooled registered plan are similar to those for other registered pension plans, its members can benefit from greater flexibility in managing their savings and meeting their retirement objectives.

As a result of the repeated mismanagement and the growing infrastructure deficit, the Ontario Liberals are running out of ways to fund projects and political promises. By looking at the numbers, one can easily see the alarming pattern. For anyone counting, the new cap-and-trade scheme is estimated to take up \$2 billion a year, not to mention another \$4 billion from the sale of Hydro One.

Keeping with this theme, the expected billions a year in revenue they plan to create through the Ontario pension plan by imposing the method of a payroll tax on

employers and employees who don't have private plans deemed adequate for their retirement—the real reason is the need for capital. When you look at the management of money since coming to power in 2003, the government has increased Ontario's debt by 115%, from \$138.8 billion to \$298.9 billion, and Ontario's debt-to-GDP ratio from a healthy 27% to an alarming 39%. More money is spent on interest on debt than on any other government function except for health and education. Ontario's credit rating has been downgraded, which makes it more expensive to borrow money.

0920

Finally, as a recent Fraser Institute report noted, since the 2008 recession, 66% of the debt the government has piled up has gone to meet government operating expenses as opposed to being invested in capital projects. The real reason that this is a cash grab is because of the need to find capital money.

I mentioned how the program has evolved, from people who weren't employed, then to help seniors. But seniors who are retired are obviously not eligible, and low-income retirees are already supplemented through OAS and GIS. Actually, they stand to hit the ceiling on their ability to collect OAS and GIS, so they actually would be clawed back.

It's also important to know who is in and who is out. As a result of federal jurisdiction and federal income tax pension rules, individuals such as the self-employed and First Nations will be exempted. The big development in the government's latest announcement was that those employees who are not crown federally regulated workers or individuals who work in industries like marine, airlines and airports, telecommunications, railways, and anyone who works with a crown corporation will be exempt as well.

This leaves about four million working in Ontario, who will be split into two distinct groups: those who have some type of pension benefit that will be put to the government test of an annual contribution rate at 4% for each employee and employer, respectively, totalling a yearly contribution of 8%; and those who have no pension with their employer, to which individual employees and employers will be forced to contribute at an annual rate of 1.9%.

In the time I have left, I think it's really important that people understand how much more complex this has evolved from looking after those people without a workplace pension. While there's a great deal more I could say, I just want to indicate how difficult it is for the average Ontarian who looks for his government to provide stability in his community and now is looking at the increased cost of living beyond being able to remain optimistic and hopeful.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments?

M^{me} France Gélinas: On the NDP side of the House, we want every worker in this province to have a good pension plan: a pension plan that allows them to retire with dignity, a pension plan that allows them to retire

free of the stress of, "How will I pay the ever-increasing hydro bill? How will I pay the ever-increasing gas prices at the pump?"

When the Liberals started talking about the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, it looked like they were going in that direction: It was going to be for all workers, very similar to the CPP. Don't get me wrong: If we could have an add-on to the CPP, that would be very much preferable than starting a new pension plan. I would add to this that any deviations from the CPP that we do with the ORPP, positive or negative, will make it harder later on to make sure we merge the two.

The CPP covers every single worker in Canada; the ORPP won't. When we look at the list of who is included versus the list of who is excluded, let's just say that the exclusions are way, way more than who is in. That's not what we bargained for. What we bargained for is to make sure that every worker could retire with dignity and would have a stable amount of revenue coming to them in their old age, so that they can live their lives without worrying about not being able to make an income anymore, because they would have a pension coming in. We are going further and further away from the stated goal.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments?

Hon. David Zimmer: Speaker, I want to make it clear that our government has made this plan one of the pillars of our economic plan going forward because we believe that every worker deserves to have a secure retirement. That's why we've done it.

The plan is going to close the retirement savings gap for those two thirds of Ontario employees who do not have a workplace pension. The gap is even worse for younger people, because three quarters of Ontario workers between the ages of 25 and 34 do not have a workplace pension, and they will never have one, practically speaking.

What the bill does, to address this gap, is provide employers and employees with a period of time and clarity that they're going to need to prepare for the launch of the plan. The enrolment is going to start in January 2017, and the collection of contributions will begin the following January, in 2018.

Another feature of the plan, and a necessary feature of the plan, is accountability. The plan is designed to be sustainable for the long term. The act will establish a formal funding policy guide to guide the actions of the plan and to ensure that the government, in the event of a funding shortfall or excess, can take actions to adjust the plan.

We want to support that transparency and accountability regarding the sustainability of the plan, and in doing so, we are committed this fall to introduce legislation that will introduce the office of the chief actuary. That's a very, very important feature of the plan, because the criticism has been, from some quarters, that somehow the money is going to flow into general revenues and so forth and so on. The office of the chief actuary will make sure that plan operates independently.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments?

Mrs. Gila Martow: I always appreciate hearing from the member from York–Simcoe about the pension plan, because she is very knowledgeable in the pros and cons of an Ontario Registered Pension Plan.

A few things weren't really touched on today. Many people have fantastic pension plans with their companies, and this government is not making the assurances that are needed to ensure that those plans will be in place and they won't lose their excellent pension plans for a lesser plan provided by the government. Those plans are very well invested. Companies are not going to be able to hold onto private pension plans as well as a public pension plan, so they're going to ditch the private pension plans, which in many cases are better plans and working very well. The old adage is, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." We are concerned that there are a lot of people who will be worse off with this Ontario Registered Pension Plan.

The other factor is about investments. We all know that the Canada Pension Plan is very well invested all over the world. In fact, they invest in York region, in many projects right in the region. We are very concerned because it was very clear in previous budgets that this government plans to invest in their infrastructure projects with this pension plan. That has raised a lot of red flags and a lot of concern in many areas.

Yes, people need help saving for their retirement—we all realize that—but too many Ontarians are retiring with debt, and not just the burden of the provincial debt, which will cost them in many different ways, but the burden of their own debt. That's something that this plan doesn't address. I am concerned that many people will see this as another excuse to take on more debt. That's certainly not what we want to see.

The concerns are there, and I think that we need a lot more discussion.

0930

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments?

Ms. Cindy Forster: It's good to have a couple of minutes to talk about this issue again. New Democrats believe that every worker in this province should have a good pension, preferably defined benefit protection, so that when they do retire they can be sure that they're going to have a stable income for those 30- to 40-plus years that people are living today.

Michael Prue, the former member from Beaches–East York, was here yesterday, and I got to spend a little bit of time with him. He's in that retirement mode now. Here at the Legislative Assembly we have an RPP, somewhat similar to what is being proposed in an ORPP, but it's market dependent and it's not a defined benefit plan, so if the stock market is doing well, you might do well.

Michael tells me that after 13 years of serving here, following time as the mayor of East York and on Toronto city council—at a time when you couldn't participate in the OMERS plan so there was nothing coming out of there—the money that was in his fund here at the Legis-

lative Assembly is just what was put in. There isn't very much more money there because of the ups and downs in the market. In his retirement, he's going to have to be very careful with whatever money he has coming out of that, while with a defined-benefit plan he could have counted on whatever that looked like—\$1,000 a month or \$1,200 a month.

While this is a good step to get something in place, I don't think it is the best result for Ontarians.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to return to the member from York–Simcoe to wrap up.

Mrs. Julia Munro: Thank you very much. I appreciate the comments of the member from Nickel Belt, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the members from Thornhill and Welland. I'm very pleased with the comments that were made, generally, in the sense that they recognize the complexity of this issue and the fact that this was begun as a response for those people with no workplace pension.

It has now morphed into—actually, the budget itself talked about a flow of money coming from the pension to help with roads and bridges and things like that. The government made the comment itself. But it also has created an uncertainty in the area around a comparable pension and the kinds of decisions, as some of the observers commented on—that people are going to find themselves downgraded in their pension simply because the private sector isn't going to be able to make the kind of steps necessary to meet that comparable goal.

There are many issues that have to be addressed by the government as this bill proceeds and as more and more people understand that it's a mandatory process and there's an issue around comparability.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Here we are again debating the ORPP. This is the third bill of four on the proposed Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. Bill 186, An Act to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, outlines the broad details and fleshes out the plan but, really, if you have been following along with the announcements, as I am sure you have, there isn't too much that is new.

Interestingly, some of the information that we learned through the big and enthusiastic announcements along the way are not in this bill. Those details will be left to regulation. Frankly, Speaker, there is a lot that will be left to regulation.

Just to recap, the first bill, of three so far, was to allow for the ORPP to exist. It was a piece of enabling legislation. The second bill established the ORPP Administration Corp. and laid out its role. This third piece now presents more of the details of the plan.

Everyone in the province of Ontario deserves to retire with dignity and deserves to share in the benefits of an Ontario public pension plan. We wish that this plan included everyone, but instead of being a strong, public, universal plan to benefit all Ontarians, this government has continued to exclude more and more people.

This bill lays out which plans will be considered comparable and therefore left out of this plan. In the beginning, the government, in their discussion paper, had said that comparable, and therefore exempt, might mean solid, defined benefit plans. However, as we see here, it is now DB, DC, MEPP and—wait for it—PRPPs. Speaker, I would like to point out that PRPPs don't even exist yet. But as you know, we've debated these bank products in this House, and they are on the horizon. But this government says some of them will be considered comparable and therefore exempt.

You know, Speaker, this has really been quite a session for the big banks, if we stop to take stock—no pun intended. Between PRPP legislation and the sell-off of Hydro One, banks have really made out like bandits with this very generous Liberal government. If only this Liberal government were as motivated to ensure the financial well-being of all everyday, hard-working Ontarians.

We want retirement security for everyone. We want people to be able to count on predictable and fair benefits after a lifetime of working. This government talks a good game about retirement security. They want Ontarians to be covered in their retirement. However, we have only been hearing this messaging when it comes to the proposed shiny and new ORPP.

We need to think about the future, of course, but why is this government silent on the issue of pension security when it comes to existing pensions? Pensioners across the province—across the country—are worried about the security of their pensions and their benefits. All that we have to do is look at what has been happening to benefit plans and pensioners in Hamilton. Their benefits have been attacked, their pensions are targeted and their future and security is in jeopardy. What does the government think about that? What do they think about the amount that would be covered by the Pension Benefits Guarantee Fund? What are their thoughts on the fact that pensioners hang from the bottom rung when it comes to bankruptcy? Speaker, bankruptcy might be a federal issue, but our provincial industries and provincial workers, friends, neighbours and constituents are affected.

This government doesn't seem to have an opinion when it comes to protecting existing pensioners. We can't only talk about the shiny, new plan we can cut the ribbon for; we must pay attention to existing plans and pensioners. Speaker, I challenge this government to do just that.

This government wanted to create a plan modelled after the CPP, and assured us that it could be integrated or rolled into the CPP. I spent time in committee, and I asked about that. I asked why they put their opinion on the design of CPP enhancement into their provincial budget. It is in this provincial government's opinion that a future CPP enhancement should be a targeted enhancement made in the image of their own ORPP.

"Targeted," incidentally, does not mean universal, Madam Speaker. We should be working to strengthen our universal programs that support everyone, not outlining ways to undermine and undercut them.

So, as always, it is my pleasure to rise in this Legislature and speak about my constituents in Oshawa, but

because we're discussing pension issues again today, I appreciate my role as pension critic for our caucus and to be able to speak to these issues that affect all Ontarians. I think it's important that we always come back to the importance of ensuring Ontarians are afforded the opportunity to retire with dignity. It has actually become one of my favourite topics of discussion, so I appreciate the opportunity to speak at length to this this morning.

Speaker, as I noted earlier, this is the third piece of legislation pertaining to the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. It's also the third bill that I've had the opportunity to speak to at length in this chamber. I do one-hour leads, as you know, as critic, so to have three pieces is six hours, and if you factor in the PRPP legislation, that's eight. And then I found out that there's going to be a fourth bill on the ORPP.

Mr. Wayne Gates: No way. No.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Really. Wait for it; there will be. So, lots of talk about pensions, which is wonderful. It's wonderful that Ontarians are learning so much about the importance of having a pension.

0940

Ms. Cindy Forster: Lots of talk; no action.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: But to my colleague's point, we have lots of opportunities to talk, and while that's always important, the most important part is the action piece.

We've spoken about the details, from broad strokes right down to the minutia, and as we're getting closer to the launch date, the more important these details become. Seeing as this is the final piece of legislation before the government hammers out all of the remaining significant design details and regulations all by their lonesome behind closed doors; maybe at the kitchen table with a napkin, I don't know—

Mr. Wayne Gates: A big napkin.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: A big napkin—a place mat. I'd like to take the opportunity today to look back at where we started on some of the finer points, to look at where we've landed on them and to look at what remains to be decided.

As I have said many times before in this Legislature, when it comes to this government, the devil is in the details, so it is important as opposition members and critics that we take a good hard look at where this plan is headed.

When we first started this discussion about our concerns regarding the ORPP, we spoke a lot about the consultation process, or the lack thereof; the fact this is a non-universal plan that will leave millions of Ontarians excluded; our concern that by excluding Ontarians and complicating the plan, this government is seriously jeopardizing the potential for future CPP expansion; and what this will mean for all Canadians.

We have spoken about the definition surrounding comparability and what would and should be considered comparable about portability; the minimum income or earnings threshold; whether the investment body would be at arm's length or in the kitchen; or if the government

was looking to privatize the delivery model, like they have privatized so many other important public assets and programs.

We asked whether experts and stakeholders were being included in every step of the conversation or if you were compromising the plan by caving to external pressures. We asked about PRPPs, DBs, DCs and the PBGF. The pension community seems to have a good solid love of a good solid acronym. I've learned to love them too, Madam Speaker.

Finally, we asked about where the security, strength and reliability of existing pension plans fit into the government agenda, or if we should all just get distracted by the shiny and the new.

These are all important conversations, and while I start to think that they're all talked out, at some point the government continues to fail us on so many of these issues. They continue to delay and diminish, water down, and walk away.

Let's not forget that these decisions have real consequences on real Ontarians' real lives. It's easy to get lost in the bubble of this very impressive and important building some days. But the decisions that the government makes are what are really important. They affect how people will live in retirement or how they will plan for their futures, and they will continue to affect them for generations to come.

That's why we need to make sure we get it right, now. That's why the government should be listening to the experts around them. I'm certainly not one of them myself, but I've met with as many of them as I can find and let me tell you, there are some smart people in the pension community and they are smart people with their hearts in the right place, too. People with expertise and the best of intentions and hearts in the right places are not people who are easy to find. But I hope that the government, now that they have them in their circles, are taking their advice more diligently than we saw during the ORPP consultation process.

We are getting down to the nitty-gritty now, and the clock is ticking. Of course, the government has—I can't read this morning. Just a second. Regroup. An hour is a long time even though this is like hour number 7. Are you waiting with bated breath? How many of you know what I might say?

Where was I? I'm just giving the government a hard time. We need to have pension security. Okay. Nitty-gritty; right. Clock is ticking.

Of course the government also has the ability to simply turn back time, as they did just recently by delaying the phase-in by a full year. It's important to note that this delay was only for the first phase of the employers, which is compromised of the largest corporations in the country. The government seems pretty content reassuring Ontarians that enhanced retirement security cannot wait when they are glossing over the consultation process, but they were quick to hit the brakes when their friends on Bay Street interjected. Stop me when you've heard this before. They say "Jump" and you say "How high?" Oh,

and smaller businesses are apparently more equipped to adjust to the plan and make adjustments for the plan, so the delay only pertains to the largest employers.

Delays and adjustment are okay. We do want governments to adjust their plans as they gather new information or as needed. It just seems convenient the new information seems to always come from the same place and consistently benefit the same people, while Ontarians wait to hear what compromise is next to come.

Let me remind you, Madam Speaker, that New Democrats are supportive of a strong public pension plan. We recognize that Ontarians need the kind of fundamental change that will address a fundamentally changing workplace. Part of that involves ensuring that all workers in the province have a pension plan. No one should be left behind. But we want to make sure that it is done right, that it is the best plan.

Everybody in the province deserves to retire with dignity and to share in the benefits of an Ontario public pension plan. We are, however, concerned that the legislation doesn't align with previous Liberal promises, in all of the ways that I have already discussed and more.

We hope that the Premier will continue to push the federal Liberal government to expand the Canada Pension Plan. Like everyone else, we are waiting to see if the Prime Minister delivers on this campaign promise and to see exactly what an enhanced CPP will look like.

As you all know, the CPP is a universal plan that covers all Canadians, including those working for the federal government and the self-employed, while the ORPP is targeted towards those workers who don't have a comparable workplace pension plan.

It is important that we remember that any departure of the ORPP from the CPP will make it difficult to integrate the ORPP into a future and potential CPP enhancement. If the government truly prioritizes strengthening retirement income security for all Ontarians, then in addition to the ORPP it should be making sure that Ontario pensioners and pensioners across Canada are put first. That means working towards a CPP enhancement, and it means protecting the security of existing plans as they continue to fall under siege.

These are troubling facts, Madam Speaker, and ones that should not be taken lightly. All Ontarians deserve to retire with dignity, and we are heard to remind the government that "all Ontarians" is not a definition that the government can rework as they see fit. "All Ontarians" means all Ontarians.

Mr. Wayne Gates: All is all.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Right.

Let's start with details of the legislation that we have in front of us and then we can get back into the larger discussion of our concerns and what improvements the government needs to make.

First, as I mentioned earlier, we are concerned that the legislation doesn't align with previous Liberal promises. Now, I know that you and many people outside of this chamber are shocked to hear that the government's promises are not always reflected in legislation, but there it is.

Finding a way to duck out of their promises within legislation is actually kind of their specialty, and it doesn't go unnoticed.

In August of 2015, the government put out a release that said, "Our goal is for every employee in Ontario to be part of the ORPP or a comparable workplace pension plan by 2020." In January of 2016, however, the government's press release read, "Today's announcement brings the government closer to achieving its goal of ensuring that every eligible Ontario employee is part of the ORPP or a comparable workplace pension plan by 2020." Hmm.

The legislation now confirms that a number of groups will neither have a workplace pension nor be a part of the ORPP. Given the close relationship between the federal and provincial governments, it's unclear why a consensus has not been reached or cannot be reached.

In January 2016, Minister Sousa said, "We have a mandate from Ontarians, and they can't wait any longer" for increased retirement security. In February of 2016, and now in legislation, it was announced that the first phase of contributions will begin in January 2018, not in 2017, as previously promised—a win for the business community.

0950

In August 2015, the calculation of pension benefits was said to be based on a maximum of \$90,000 in 2014 dollars. I'm going to say that again: \$90,000 in 2014 dollars. Legislation shows that this is now \$90,000 in 2017 dollars. Under the Liberals' previous promise, in 2014 dollars, the maximum pensionable earnings would have been nearly \$93,000 by 2017. We know that the greater the amount of money used in the calculation of pension benefits, the greater the future payout for Ontarians. So right out of the gate, we're starting at \$90,000, we're keeping it at \$90,000, but now we've changed from 2014 dollars to 2017 dollars, and we're just shaving some of that benefit right off the top.

Budget 2016 states, "The province's extensive consultations in developing the ORPP have helped to inform Ontario's view that a CPP enhancement must be timely and provide a level of adequacy and targeted coverage that is consistent with the ORPP." You'll find that on page 151 of the budget, if you're interested. It appears that the targeted approach of the ORPP will inform any potential enhancement of the CPP, when it should be the other way around. It should be, as they had said initially, that the ORPP would be modelled after the CPP, but now we see in the budget that it's the CPP enhancement that they want to see modelled after the ORPP. What remains unclear is whether the ORPP will in fact jeopardize the universality inherent in the CPP. That's a pretty significant concern to leave up to the whims of the government on any given day at any given kitchen table.

Madam Speaker, as I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks, I appreciate the opportunity, and I'm always humbled to stand in this chamber and speak at length about an issue that is so significant to all Ontarians and to our province as a whole. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the New Democrats and the rich history of sup-

port our party has shown to the pension movement in Ontario and across the country.

In 2009, New Democrats reached out to constituents all over the province to learn directly from Ontarians about what changes were needed in Ontario's retirement system. While those consultations were more than just window dressing, unlike the government's recent round of consultations, we ultimately came to the same conclusion. Despite the fact that the government opted not to support the Ontario retirement plan as proposed by the New Democratic Party in early 2010, we are pleased to see that they've come around and found the value in this concept and the need for proactive action. Our work on fairness issues such as retirement security is what first attracted me to this party, and it's because of the core principle of collective good that I am a New Democrat.

As a teacher, I was fortunate enough to find myself in an occupation that provided a good and reliable pension, and as a New Democrat, I believe that that opportunity should be extended to all people.

As New Democrats, we have always believed and will always believe that all Ontarians should have access to a strong defined benefit pension plan, and for those that don't have one, it is our duty as representatives of this province to provide it.

Back to the legislation at hand: This bill follows a number of announcements made by the government over the course of the last year, as previously mentioned, and contains design elements related to contributions, benefits, plan sustainability and protection of funds, as well as administrative compliance and enforcement matters—lots of stuff. Additional plan design details, however, including those that have been previously announced, will be contained in regulations to come.

Let's start with contributions, or who's included, or, more significantly, who is excluded. Starting with inclusions—and if you're not familiar with the plan, here's a chance to learn: Ontarians aged 18 to 70 are eligible to participate in the ORPP. Therefore, the maximum period during which a plan member may contribute to the ORPP will be 52 years. Because you must have a job to be in the plan, which is another problem the government should pay more attention to—a person is considered employed in Ontario whether they work full-time or part-time, as long as they meet the minimum earning threshold of \$3,500, if they are paid from an Ontario-based employer and meet all other definitions to qualify.

For the exclusions: Ontarians working for the federal government. It is important to note that government jobs don't always offer workplace pensions, particularly for—I need water. Just a second. I know I can talk for an hour, but normally I breathe.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Take your time.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I appreciate the notes as to how much time is left. Thank you. Are you not enjoying learning about pensions?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, it's great. It's the fifth time I've learned.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: The seventh.

Interjections.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm being heckled from the other side. Pensions are among my favourite topics.

Interjections.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Yes, yes. In the New Democratic Party, we wear many hats and we care about all issues that are important to Ontarians.

Back to the exclusions: Who is left out of this plan? Ontarians working for the federal government are left out of this plan. It's important to note that government jobs don't always offer workplace pensions, particularly for those who are hired on a temporary or seasonal basis. For example, the Toronto Star recently found that 44% of the 10,682 jobs posted and filled in Ontario ministries in 2013-14 were temporary or seasonal, not including student summer jobs. That is a significant number, Madam Speaker, and it represents a large group of Ontarians that will be left to fend for themselves outside of this plan.

Another group excluded: employees already receiving an ORPP pension. Sounds a bit confusing: employees who are already receiving the ORPP pension benefit. As I mentioned earlier, Ontarians aged 18 to 70 are eligible to participate. For example, if someone is 70 but decided not to retire and to continue working—after 70, they will be collecting a pension. They are being excluded going forward.

This provision is unlike the recent changes introduced to the CPP. For individuals under 65 who are working while receiving their CPP retirement benefit, both the employee and employer will have to make CPP contributions. These contributions will increase the employee's CPP retirement benefits. For individuals aged 65 to 70 who are working while receiving their CPP retirement pension, employees can choose to make CPP contributions. These contributions will increase the employee's CPP retirement benefits. Under the ORPP, however, as I mentioned, these individuals will be unable to continue to contribute to the plan even should they continue to work past the age of 70.

Employees with earnings exempt under a tax treaty—for example, temporary foreign workers—are excluded. Also excluded: on-reserve First Nations workers, unless both the employer and employee elect otherwise. Also excluded: individuals who object to participation in the ORPP on religious grounds, which does mirror the CPP. Also excluded: an employee who takes a leave—for example, pregnancy, parental, personal emergency, family caregiver or family medical—under the Employment Standards Act, unless employees elect otherwise.

Most importantly, other groups to be determined under regulations will be excluded: those who are self-employed and those employed in areas under federal jurisdiction; for example, airlines, banks, post offices, radio and television stations, and interprovincial railways.

That was technical. But Speaker, this barely skims the surface of who will be excluded from the plan. Those are the technical exclusions. Now let's talk about everybody else.

As the government continues to expand the definition of what constitutes a comparable workplace pension

plan, we're going to see more and more people left out and excluded. While it might seem alarmist to assume that they are going to continue to expand that definition—far be it from me to be an alarmist—we've watched them do it again and again with the announcements over the past year, so I think it's a pretty fair assumption. But more on that later.

This bill also sets up some of the details surrounding contributions. However, much is left to regulation—so again with the technical. Contributory pensionable earnings are to be determined under regulations, with the following specifications: above the minimum earnings threshold of \$3,500; below the maximum earnings threshold of \$90,000 in 2017 dollars, as I mentioned—no longer, as previously announced, in 2014 dollars. This amount will be adjusted for inflation.

1000

At this time, it is unclear if pensionable earnings will include both cash and non-cash earnings, including amounts beyond base salaries such as bonuses and commissions. We know that that will be left to regulations as well. In fairness, I asked about this in committee, but until we've seen it in writing—we'll wait for it in regulations.

As we know, an equal contribution rate of 1.9% will be phased in for both employers and employees based on firm size. This amount may be adjusted to ensure plan sustainability. Madam Speaker, as I noted earlier, the timeline of the phase-in period has been adjusted once already, so we hope that the government is not going to feel inspired to further delay and further diminish.

This bill also stipulates a number of the duties of contributing employers, which include paying contributions on behalf of their eligible workers to the ORPP Administration Corp., collecting and remitting contributions from those workers, and keeping prescribed records.

This bill elaborates on the benefits under the plan, including: A member is entitled to be paid a lifetime pension from the ORPP. It will be paid in equal monthly instalments upon retirement. The annual amount of a member's pension, once it starts being paid out, will be equal to the total of the pension benefits the member has accrued. This is calculated by multiplying a benefit accrual rate of 0.375% by the member's pensionable earnings for the year.

Are you learning your technical details now? Okay.

Interjection.

Mr. Wayne Gates: The other side is happy.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm saying what's in the plan, so yes—without political commentary.

The 0.375% has been determined based on a targeted income replacement rate of 15%.

If it's a joint and survivor pension, the amount of the pension will be actuarially equivalent—that's actuarially a hard word to say—to the value of a non-joint and survivor pension.

Upon the death of the member, the pension payable to the member's surviving spouse will be 60% of the pension paid to the member during their joint lives. As a

further definition included within the act, a spouse is defined as either of two persons who are married to each other or in a common-law relationship.

Pension benefits can be received when the member turns 60 at the earliest; at the latest, the pension benefits will be paid at 70, and the ORPP will begin paying benefits in 2022. Under special circumstances, the pension can be paid out earlier.

In order to make further contributions to the ORPP as an employee, a member who is being paid the pension may elect to suspend the payment of the pension. As you may expect, the amount of the resumed pension is to be determined under regulations. Everything seems to be going to be determined under regulations. I actually feel like “to be determined under regulations” could be this government’s catchphrase. It seems to give them the wiggle room that they so desperately need and it lets them punt the ball just a little further down the field so they can deal with it later. Unfortunately, it means that we are forced to wait and trust the government, which I’ve learned in my time here is not an advisable idea. That’s not a good idea.

When we trust the government, they tell us things like, “We have no intention of selling Ontario’s assets,” and then we find Hydro One on the chopping block just a few months later. Perhaps “Ontario for sale” could also be another applicable catchphrase for this government. But once again, I digress.

Speaker, I have laid out a number of details, and there are more. But do you know what? I’m going to stop because I’m tired of reading the specifics here.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Aw.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I know the minister was enjoying that, and that’s also really why I’m stopping.

As you can see and as you have heard, we’ve received some further details but we await the mountain of regulations to come and hope that the government doesn’t look for new ways to water down the plan and exclude more Ontarians while we wait.

Madam Speaker, as I said earlier, it is my privilege and responsibility to speak, as the NDP critic for pensions, on behalf of the two thirds of Ontarians who do not have a workplace pension, and to speak for those who deserve to feel secure in their retirement.

I also speak for the yet-to-be-determined number of Ontarians who are going to be left out of this plan and who are being excluded from this opportunity—Ontarians who could benefit from this plan, just as the plan could benefit from their enrolment; but alas, it will not.

Pensions have always been a vital piece of our economic stability and cornerstone of financial security in retirement. Ontarians deserve the right to retire with dignity, and the next generation is not going to be taken care of. That’s why something does have to be done. That’s why New Democrats advocated for an enhanced public pension system for years. Two thirds of Ontarians don’t have a workplace pension. Some Ontarians with insufficient workplace pensions still will struggle into retirement.

It’s difficult to imagine that the majority of our aging population will not have the resources to pay their own way, to afford housing, to buy necessities, to contribute to the economy or to live with dignity. That’s a pretty grim reality that we’re facing. Just the other day I had the opportunity to speak about predatory lending; when we are reminded of the financial opportunities or financial options for individuals living in communities that struggle or are in significant need—when those are their financial options, we wonder why retirement is not something that they can plan for—or rather we don’t wonder. When we see that those are their avenues, we realize we need to be building ways forward.

We have a retirement savings crisis in Ontario. We know that. Whether we’re talking about retiring seniors, those in the prime of their working lives, or the next crop of workers to come, we really do need to do more. In 2012, the median income for Ontarians over 65 was \$26,720, or \$2,227 per month. Putting that in perspective, the average monthly cost for seniors’ housing in Ontario last year was over \$2,750. That’s more than \$500 short every month. That’s only taking housing into account, and that’s using average numbers; that’s not using real people and real specifics. People are struggling, and we cannot allow this to be the future for our seniors.

And that’s our seniors. What about our youth? The government simply isn’t doing enough to address youth employment in this province, and that is immensely worrying. Talk is cheap. We talked earlier about—we talk and talk and talk. We’ve been talking about pension security; we’ve been talking about retirement security. The number of hours that we have spent in this Legislature focusing on the ORPP—if we could spend a fraction of that time speaking about the strategy to address youth unemployment, imagine what we could talk about. Then we’d have to put that into action.

As I said, talk is cheap. Not only do we need to take action now, but we have to plan for the future. How on earth can our youth, without stable employment—or sometimes without any employment—start to save for retirement when they can’t even pay their tuition bills today, when they can’t pay for child care and when they can’t find affordable housing? Debt continues to balloon, jobs just don’t appear, and future stability is not on the horizon. If their own government doesn’t have a strong plan for the future, how on earth can the youth of today be expected to plan for themselves?

I’m pleased to serve Ontario, as I said, as the NDP pension critic. I fully appreciated and enjoyed attempting to hold this Liberal government to account when it comes to the future financial stability of workers, whether they’re General Motors pensioners in my riding of Oshawa or Ontarians across all of our constituencies.

How am I for time?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Five minutes.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Okay. It’s a lot easier just to relax into an hour and know you’ve got the full time, and not be sort of waiting. But I will continue.

We implore this government to design and implement a progressive public pension plan for hard-working people

across Ontario who deserve one, and stop focusing on exceptions and exemptions, and focusing on helping more Ontarians. Since the beginning of these conversations, we've been essentially begging them to bring more people in who they wouldn't consider universal. They wanted to leave others out and try and make everyone happy, and the thing is that when you try and make everyone happy, nobody's really happy at all. We could have had an opportunity here to bring everyone in to really create something strong, universal and public, but anyway, that wasn't their choice.

As we said before, all Ontarians—and that isn't a changeable definition: "All" means "all"—deserve the right to retire with dignity. I am here today to remind the government to keep this principle at the forefront as we continue to debate the details of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

As I said, Madam Speaker, New Democrats are supportive of a public pension plan. We recognize that Ontarians need the kind of fundamental change that will address a fundamentally changing workplace, that will keep up with the fundamentally increasing cost of living. Part of that involves ensuring that all workers in the province have a pension plan and that no one should be left behind. Everybody in the province deserves to retire with dignity and to share in the benefits of an Ontario public pension plan.

As I've said before, we are concerned that the legislation doesn't align with what the Liberals had previously promised in terms of eligibility and in terms of implementation timelines and benefit payments.

We hope that the Premier, as I've said, will continue to push their federal counterparts—their federal cousins—to expand the Canada Pension Plan. Like everyone else, we are waiting to see if the Prime Minister does actually follow through. We're waiting to see what the CPP enhancement might look like.

The CPP is a universal plan. I keep coming back to that because the ORPP is not. The CPP is a universal plan that covers all Canadians, including those working for the federal government and the self-employed. The ORPP is targeted towards those workers who don't have a comparable workplace pension plan.

It is important to recognize, though, that all of the deviations, all of the ways that the ORPP differs from the CPP, whether it's tiny little design detail or a broader piece, are going to make it more difficult to integrate—seamlessly or otherwise, but even potentially to integrate at all—into a future CPP enhancement. I keep coming back to it: If this government truly prioritized strengthening retirement income security for all Ontarians, then in addition to the ORPP, it really should be making sure that Ontario pensioners are put first. If they really do want to strengthen security in retirement for Ontarians and Canadians, they should bear that in mind: that as they're putting forward these details, that's going to have an impact on that future CPP enhancement.

Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to stand to talk about pensions. I thank the minister for putting forward yet

another bill for us to debate at length and for the opportunity to speak today. Coming out of the public sector—specifically, education—I do know the value of a pension. Pensioners know the value of a pension. Those who work and wonder how they will survive or thrive after their working years know the value of a pension.

I appreciate that I have come to the end of my time for today, and I look forward to continuing my remarks about the importance of pensions in Ontario. As I've said, this is such an important conversation—one of my favourites to have. Thank you for the time today, Madam Speaker.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Seeing as it's almost 10:15, we're going to recess the House until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Cindy Forster: I'd like to introduce Lori Synes Taraba, a volunteer with the Niagara cancer society. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, to my pleasant surprise, some of our friends from the Turkish community are present in the members' east gallery, led by the new Turkish consul general, Erdeniz Şen. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'd like to welcome from my riding Carole Watson and Nancy Irving, with the Canadian Cancer Society, hiding way at the back. Welcome.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'd like to introduce two young students from the University of Windsor who are here today with the Canadian Cancer Society: Kamal Mann and Lindsey Bakos. Thank you for being here. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I want to acknowledge our page captain, Christina Vadivelu, this morning. Her mother, Ramya, and father, Clement, are here in the gallery to see their daughter in action. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Patrick Brown: It's a pleasure to introduce Senator Thanh Ngo, who has been an inspiration to Vietnamese Canadians. He's here with us today.

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

Hon. Jeff Leal: It's a great pleasure for me to introduce Mark Donahue, Alison Payne and Kendra Willis from the cancer society of Peterborough. They're in the east public gallery today.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'm very pleased to be able to recognize representatives of the following organizations who are here today to celebrate Journey to Freedom Day: The Republic of Vietnam Veterans Association of Ontario; the Vietnamese Association Toronto; the Vietnamese Canadian Federation; the Vietnamese Association of Kitchener-Waterloo-Guelph-Cambridge; the Vietnamese Women's Association of Toronto; Golden Age Village for the Elderly; the Elderly Vietnamese Association of Mississauga; the Vietnamese Canadian Voting and Advocacy Association; VOICE Canada; Free Vietnamese Canadian Community Association of Ottawa; the Com-

mittee to Support Vietnam's Human Rights and Democracy; Alliance for Democracy in Vietnam, Canada chapter; Phan Boi Chau youth organization; the Vietnamese Canadian Pharmacists' Association of Toronto; Phap Van Vietnamese Buddhist Cultural Centre of Ontario; Vietnamese Hoa Hao Buddhism in Greater Toronto Area; Hoa Tinh Thuong Toronto; and Quang Ngai Friendship Association of Ontario.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They are all here to represent—

Interjection: Everyone's here today, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's the first time I've ever heard of a filibuster during introductions.

The leader of the third party.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm pleased to welcome a couple of people from the Canadian Cancer Society who are from my riding: Kalasian Kalaichelvan and Linda Wu. Welcome to Queen's Park. I hope you enjoy your day here.

Hon. Reza Moridi: It's a great pleasure to welcome Mr. Erdeniz Şen, consul general of Turkey. He is visiting us with members from the community: Dr. Mehmet Bor, president of the Federation of Canadian Turkish Associations; Mr. Celal Uçar, president of the Turkish Culture and Folklore Society of Canada; Mrs. Yildiz Ünsal, treasurer of the Turkish Federation Community Foundation; Mr. Ismail Vataner, past president of the Turkic Assembly of Canada; Mr. Nazif Kurt, vice-president of the Turkish Culture and Folklore Society of Canada; and Mrs. Nuriye Aсталos, the director of the Federation of Canadian Turkish Associations. They are in the House today on the occasion of the multicultural children's day festival proclamation. There's a reception at Queen's Park today.

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

The member from Simcoe–Grey.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today Councillor Doug Measures, Councillor Kevin Elwood and Mr. Chuck Magwood. They're all here for the wind turbine debate this afternoon. I also welcome Ian Adams from Metroland Media Group, located in my riding.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's my pleasure to welcome to the Legislature Mr. Paul Elliott, president of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation. Welcome, Paul.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Page Harry Blackwell has some people here for us to meet today: his dad, Geoff Blackwell; his brother, Jack Blackwell; and his grandmother, Joan Blackwell. Please give them a warm Queen's Park welcome.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: We have three North Bay guests from the Canadian Cancer Society: Mr. Gil Pharand, Katelyn Haddow and "The Debster."

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'm delighted to introduce four people today. Bonnie Kraft is the president of the Aurora Cultural Centre, Laura Schembri is the executive director of the Aurora Cultural Centre, and David Schembri is Laura's partner. Also in the House, Mr. Speaker, is

Janice Hodgson. Janice is the regional representative for south-central Ontario and represents the region as a member of the Canadian Cancer Society's Ontario board of directors.

Mr. Todd Smith: I'd like to welcome three members from the Canadian Cancer Society, Hastings-Prince Edward and Brighton branch: Karen White, Amy Doyle and Jeff Brace.

Also, I had the pleasure of having breakfast with Jan Hopkins from Carleton Place, who is with us this morning, and Lucas Rodrigues, one of the youth advocates from Ajax. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to introduce five people from the Canadian Cancer Society in eastern Ontario who are here with us today: Laura Lafantaisie, Terri McNamara, Byron James, Roger Martin and Theresa Crossan.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I would like to extend a warm welcome to Doug Kane, the manager of the Canadian Cancer Society Frontenac Lennox and Addington and the Waterways community office.

I would also like to wish a big hoş geldiniz to our friends from the Turkish community: Mr. Erdeniz Şen, Dr. Mehmet Bor, Mrs. Yildiz Ünsal, Mr. Ismail Vataner and Mrs. Nuriye Aсталos. Hoş geldiniz.

Hon. David Zimmer: On behalf of Brad Duguid, Scarborough Centre, I would like to acknowledge the page captain from his riding, Diluk Ramachandra; his mother, Ruwani Ramachandra; and his father, Tiddy Ramachandra.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I'm very happy to see two very good friends from Ottawa visiting the chamber today: Senator and Mrs. Ngo. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I am delighted to welcome to Queen's Park today four representatives from Kitchener Centre and surrounding areas who are here with the Canadian Cancer Society. They are Diane Hawrylenko, Karen Griffiths, Nicole Amorim and Sara Orrell. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I would also like to welcome Karen White and Jeff Brace, from the wonderful riding of Northumberland–Quinte West, here on behalf of cancer.

Ms. Soo Wong: I want to welcome grade 10 students from Dr. Norman Bethune, along with their teacher, Alison Rimell. Welcome to Queen's Park.

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

Seeing none, the member from Ottawa South on a point of order.

WEARING OF PINS

Mr. John Fraser: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe that you will find we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear daffodils in recognition of cancer awareness month.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Ottawa South is seeking unanimous consent to wear daf-

fodils for this month. Do we agree? Agreed. To the people who are wearing them, it's now legitimate.

The Minister of Labour on a point of order.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Speaker, I think you will find we have unanimous consent that all members of the House be permitted to wear pins in recognition of the National Day of Mourning.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Labour is seeking unanimous consent to wear pins for the National Day of Mourning. Do we agree? Agreed.

The member from York-Simcoe on a point of order.

WEARING OF SCARVES

Mrs. Julia Munro: Mr. Speaker, I would like to request unanimous consent to wear the red-and-yellow freedom scarves in the House today. It is to mark the Journey to Freedom Day next Saturday, April 30, to celebrate the journey to freedom of Vietnamese Ontarians, as well as to reflect on the many contributions that they continue to make to Ontario.

1040

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from York-Simcoe is seeking unanimous consent to wear the scarves. Do we agree? Agreed.

Just before we do that, I'm going to ask that the front benches not hang them over, because it is not considered to be appropriate, and a reminder that you should get unanimous consent to wear anything other than what you're normally allowed to. It's a reminder for some people who have been putting these things on beforehand. I appreciate your co-operation in that.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Patrick Brown: My question is for the Premier. On May 1, hydro rates will rise again and life will get even harder under the Liberals, despite the Minister of Finance trying to convince everyone that hydro prices are going down. I'm still shaking my head about that. Why would everyone pay more for their hydro bills because Ontario families use less energy? Only in the Liberal government's Ontario. I actually thought it was a joke the first time I heard it.

Does the Premier think it's okay for families and seniors to pay more when they are using less?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Individually, those people would pay less who use less. The Leader of the Opposition knows that the Ontario Energy Board is an independent regulator with a mandate to protect the interests of Ontario ratepayers—

Interjections.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Kick them all out.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's not helpful, Minister. But I am going to say that I will not tolerate outbursts like yesterday.

Carry on, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Energy conservation is proven to be successful and provides savings for consumers on every bill. The time-of-use pricing offers opportunities for savings. I would also say to the member opposite that the programs that we have put in place to help low-income seniors and other residents of the province are designed exactly to help those people that I hope the Leader of the Opposition is talking about.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Patrick Brown: Back to the Premier: A letter to the editor in the North Bay Nugget hit the nail on the head. There are some smart folks in North Bay. Murray Byers wrote to the paper and he said that he thought the goal was to reduce electricity use. Yet, he continued—and this is his letter to editor—"when electricity consumption actually declines, the knee-jerk reaction ... is to increase rates."

Just yesterday, the Premier announced \$43 million in funding for energy retrofits to improve energy efficiency. Yet under the Liberal government, that means higher energy prices for everyone.

Can the Premier explain? Are the people of Ontario supposed to conserve energy or are they supposed to use more energy so their hydro rates don't go up? You've created an impossible situation.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As I said before, individual consumers who conserve pay less on their energy bills.

The investments that have been made in the electricity system to make sure that we have a reliable electricity system—a clean grid—are investments that were needed because of years of neglect in the electricity system. We've been rebuilding this system. When we came into office in 2003, there were brownouts and—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Next time I stand, I may have to move immediately into warnings, and if that's what's requested, it will happen.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I would like the member from Simcoe-Grey to come to order, at least when I'm standing.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The member who was muttering under his breath might want to explain why there had not been investment in transmission lines and why there had not been an upgrading of the grid for the whole time that he was in office.

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

Mr. Patrick Brown: Back to the Premier. Hydro bills can be summed up like this in Ontario: You use too much energy, you pay more; you conserve energy, you pay more. No matter what, under this Liberal government, you pay more. They try to muddy the waters; they try to confuse the issue. The reality is, they have messed up hydro prices in Ontario, they have messed up the energy sector, and they are responsible for it.

No matter what, because of this Liberal government, you pay more for electricity and life gets harder. They've already overcharged Ontario, according to the AG, by \$37 billion, and we lost almost \$3.5 billion in energy over the last two years because of overproduction. If Ontarians unplug their TVs, turn off their lights and keep the AC off, they still pay more.

How much longer does the Premier expect the people of Ontario to subsidize power for other provinces and other states? It's ridiculous.

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We've taken strong action to mitigate the costs of energy for families and businesses and to introduce new programs to lower costs. The Ontario Electricity Support Program, which supports low-income families, has benefited almost 80,000 households in Ontario.

We shut down the coal plants. We've invested in the electricity system in this province. We don't have smog days. It's a clean grid. This party opposite is filibustering the climate change bill in committee, because, actually, they don't believe in clean energy. They don't believe in reducing greenhouse gas emissions—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. It's coming from both sides.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: They actually have no commitment to making sure that we maintain a clean electricity grid. We don't know if they would reopen coal plants, but what we do know is that they're not interested in climate change action. They're not interested in it today, and they weren't interested in it when they were in office.

Interjections.

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

New question.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Patrick Brown: Back to the Premier: The only strong action this government is taking is subsidizing hydro rates in Manitoba, Quebec, New York and Michigan. The only filibuster that is happening is by the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Climate Change, who had to amend his own bill 70 times because he bungled the drafting of his own bill.

Let me read to you another note, this one from Matt Barbeau from Sault Ste. Marie. He wrote on our Facebook page. He has a cottage that is unoccupied in winter months and uses no power, but it costs him more than his home in town that he lives in year-round.

I know the government wants to laugh about this. They're insensitive to the bills that people are struggling to pay. But the reality is, this is happening everywhere.

So my question is, why are you putting hard-working Ontarians in this position? Why can't you get the hydro sector right?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I am extremely sensitive to the needs of the people in this province for a clean, predictable electricity system—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: And reliable.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —that is reliable, that allows people and businesses to count on that electricity grid.

I'm also very sensitive to the fact that there are low-income and low-middle-income families in this province who need support, which is exactly why the Ontario Energy Support Program has been put in place, which is exactly why the northern industrial energy rate is put in place and which is exactly why there are electricity and property tax credits put in place for seniors. Those programs are all designed to help people to be able to deal with energy costs.

But I'm also sympathetic to kids with asthma who need clean air. That's why we shut down the coal plants, that's why we've made the investments, and that's why we have a clean grid in this province.

Interjections.

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

Mr. Patrick Brown: Back to the Premier: The Premier said that they're delivering predictable—"predictable" is the word she used—hydro prices. When you give away \$3.5 billion of power in two years, the only predictable prices you're getting are in Manitoba, Quebec, New York and Michigan, because of your government.

How about Ontario? How about we start helping individuals in Ontario?

1050

Joanne MacDonald Schroeder wrote us a note, and she said she has two properties up north, one on a vacant lot that has no power at all. The one lot did, however, have a hydro pole. They got a bill—no hydro, but they got a bill for a \$179 delivery fee.

My question for the Premier is: Are these bills that you're sending out, these charges to hard-working Ontarians—is that to pay for the \$4-million salary you just gave Ontario's hydro CEO, the highest salary in Canada for a hydro CEO?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I will just say to the member opposite that we have worked very, very hard to upgrade the electricity system in this province that needed to be upgraded, that was not reliable. It certainly wasn't a clean grid, and it had been neglected. Over 10,000 kilometres of line have been built because that had not been done under the previous government.

There was a cost associated with moving off of coal. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to move back to coal, he'd better be clear about that with the people of the

province. This afternoon, one of his members is going to be talking about the evils of wind power. One of his members is going to talk about how she doesn't believe—

Mr. Todd Smith: On a runway.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And if the member chooses to speak again as soon as I ask him to stop, then I'll give him a warning.

A wrap-up sentence, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: She's going to talk about how she doesn't believe in clean renewable power, and her colleagues are filibustering at committee on a climate change bill because they don't believe in that either.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Sarnia–Lambton will come to order.

Final supplementary.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, the drive-by smears in Whitby–Oshawa on coal didn't work, and they're not going to work right now. We need to address the facts. The fact is, hydro bills are going up beyond belief.

Abe Eberly wrote me a note to say that his hydro bill was \$98 a month in the summer, two years ago, and now they are paying \$220 a month. This is in less than three years. He can't afford it. It's not right.

Although the Minister of Finance says hydro bills are going down, I want to ask the Premier directly: Do you believe in the Minister of Finance's fantasy world where hydro bills are going down across Ontario, or do you recognize the fact that bills are going up, through the roof, because of your government's incompetence?

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It doesn't really matter where you sit in the House.

Just a reminder: To the Chair, please.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, this Leader of the Opposition, who is out of step with the 150 countries that are in New York today reaffirming their commitment to climate change reduction—this leader, whose members are going to fight renewable energy tooth and nail, can stay on that path if that is his choice.

What the Minister of Finance said is that we have a long-term energy plan and that the rates are not increasing at the speed that we had laid out because we are applying downward pressure to those electricity rates. We have competitive rates, if you look at our neighbouring jurisdictions.

We are going to continue to make the investments in our electricity system—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:—that will keep it clean, that will keep it renewable. We are going to continue to fight climate change—

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Just not affordable.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I don't mind the exercise, but if you make me get up right after I sit down, then I'll do it. The member from Nipissing, come to order.

You have one sentence, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We are going to fight climate change.

As the Deputy Premier said, what price does the Leader of the Opposition put on asthma?

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, may I start by asking MPPs in the chamber, and others, to thank and congratulate the legislative library staff on 30 years of fantastic service with our press clippings, Toronto Press Today?

ELECTORAL REFORM

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, my question is for the Premier. The leaders of three of Ontario's largest political parties, together with Democracy Watch and newspaper editorial boards, are all calling for an inclusive, non-partisan process for reforming party and election financing laws in our province. Does this Premier believe that the Green Party, Democracy Watch and the editorial boards are all trying to stall meaningful reform?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We have put forward a process that is the definition of democratic because it is the way this Legislature operates. This is a democratically elected Legislature. There is a process in place whereby legislation is introduced, is consulted upon. We've expanded that process by proposing that we send the legislation after it's introduced to consultation after first reading.

My hope was that the House leaders were going to be able to agree on how there might be input from the opposition parties before the legislation was drafted. I still hope that may happen. I look forward to the consultation, where we will get commentary on many of the things where there is consensus, in terms of the banning of union and corporate donations. But we'll get refinement on those because I know that there are opinions around the province, and we look forward to hearing those.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier wants to have new election rules in place by January 2017, and I don't disagree. In fact, I told her that directly. Ontario can have, however, a non-partisan panel that includes political parties and civil society recommend those new rules, and we can have legislation based on those recommendations, drafted and passed, well in advance of January 2017's deadline. It is a timely process, but more importantly—most importantly—it is a process that is credible and will be respected by Ontarians.

Will this Premier abandon her efforts to control this process in favour of the Liberal Party of Ontario and agree to start the ball rolling today on a non-partisan, open and transparent process that the people of Ontario are now demanding?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the leader of the third party wants to continue to talk about process. I understand that. She wants to go through a process and then, after that, introduce legislation and then, after that, have another consultation, which will drag out the process. I understand that for her own political reasons, she wants to continue to have that conversation.

What we want to do is get going. We want to get the legislation drafted. I would love to have input from the opposition leaders. I would love to have input before the legislation is drafted, and then we can send the legislation out for consultation—because there are a lot of questions associated with what should be in that legislation. I would love to hear from the leader of the third party, for example, whether she thinks, as I've proposed, that we should introduce leadership and nomination campaign spending limits and donation rules. I'd love to know if she thinks we should reform by-election rules and what we should do in terms of by-elections that may be coming up sooner rather than later. I haven't heard from her on those things.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I would love to know if this Premier actually believes in the tenets of an open democracy. That's what I would love to know, because it certainly doesn't look that way.

It is disappointing in the extreme that this Premier continues to hold this untenable position around election finance reform. The Liberal Party actually used to believe that it was anti-democratic for one party and one Premier to unilaterally change election laws. A lot changes after 12 years in power, apparently, because now this Premier is doing her best to discredit anyone who questions her unilateral plan to change Ontario's election rules to favour the Liberal—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please, leader?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: —to favour the Liberal Party of Ontario.

As one newspaper editorial wrote, changes will be “best delivered through consultation and co-operation, not bulldozing.” That's exactly what I'm calling for, what the Conservatives are calling for, what the Green Party is calling for, what Democracy Watch is calling for.

When will the Premier stop trying to—

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

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Deputy Premier.

1100

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What is kind of interesting in here is that the third party seems to think that they are immune to the issue of fundraising. I strongly disagree with that. In fact, let's just review some of the very

special events that have been hosted by the leader of the third party.

There was one at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts—I bet it was wonderful—limited to 10 guests, \$9,975 per person. But you know what? If you couldn't make it to that one, there was a private stakeholder social at the Gardiner Museum—

Hon. Jeff Leal: Tonight.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: No, it was actually a year ago. It was—

Mr. Paul Miller: There's one time it was—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek can do a walk-by heckling all he wants; I'm still going to call him on it.

Answer, please.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Ten lucky guests paid a bargain basement \$9,975 to attend. I'm sure it was lovely—

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

New question.

TEACHERS' COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. Courts have ruled that the Liberal government violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms with Bill 115. Will this Premier take this opportunity to apologize to parents, students and education workers for trampling on collective bargaining rights and throwing our schools into chaos?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The decision is being reviewed, obviously. It has just come down.

When I ran for leadership in 2012-13, I was very clear that I had problems with Bill 115. Bill 115 has been repealed. We have established a new bargaining process. We are working with the education sector. I believe that the move away from Bill 115 was exactly the right thing to do.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: When the Liberal government introduced Bill 115, this Premier said that “everyone did what they thought they needed to do.” Actually, everyone, from teachers to the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, including New Democrats, knew that Bill 115 was unconstitutional.

Now can this Premier explain to families thrown into chaos in 2012 why she was part of a cabinet that chose to put political grandstanding and the political interests of her political party ahead of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the rights of people to free collective bargaining in the province of Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, I will say again that I was very clear when I ran to be the leader of this party—I was very clear—that I was not happy with Bill 115. I was not happy with the relationship with the education sector. My career has been built on partnerships within the education sector, on the management and the employee side. I will stand up any day for the education sector, and that is how I got to this place. That's how I will continue.

Interjections.

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

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Some things never change when it comes to Liberal self-interest, particularly in terms of their timing. Yesterday, the court ordered the province to discuss the remedies for violating the charter with Bill 115. The Liberals were warned in 2012 that Bill 115 would end up costing our province, and it has in many ways. The only reason that Ontarians will be on the hook for paying remedies is because the Liberal government thought that trampling on teachers' bargaining rights would help them win a by-election in Kitchener-Waterloo.

How much is this Liberal government's self-serving decision going to cost the people of Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As I said, the decision is being reviewed.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Did you vote for Bill 115?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The heckling from the other side is, "Did I vote for Bill 115?" I was a member of a cabinet and I was working to the very best of my ability to do what—

Mr. John Yakabuski: So you sold out your principles to stay in cabinet? Wow.

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

Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, the reality—
Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Wrap up, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The point I'm making is that at the first opportunity, when I ran in the leadership, I made it very clear that we were going to make changes if I was elected leader. We've made those changes, and I will continue to work with the education sector to the very best of my ability.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mrs. Gila Martow: To the Premier: Last Friday, the Premier met Cliff McIntosh from my riding of Thornhill at the autism rally held at her constituency office. I'm sure the Premier will agree that Cliff very clearly and ably communicated the progress he made as a result of starting IBI therapy over the age of five.

Does the Premier agree Cliff clearly communicated the benefits of IBI beyond the age of five?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I was very happy to meet Cliff. There were a couple of other people at my office, and I was happy to have an opportunity to talk with them and to make it clear that I'd be happy to talk with them again. I think Laura was one of them. I'm happy to have a further conversation with her.

I also made it clear that what we are doing is making sure that as children come off of wait-lists, where they are not getting service, we will move them into service that has the intensity that is right for them, to a program

that is tailor-made for them, and that there is a transition plan as they come off the waiting list.

I think some of the fear-mongering that has gone on is that somehow, they're coming off a waiting list and there is nothing that will happen. That's not the reality. The reality is that as these children who are not getting service come off the waiting list into a transition, they are getting service as part of that transition. To my mind, that is much more important than languishing on a waiting list and getting no service whatsoever.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Back to the Premier: Cliff is still waiting for your call. You promised that you would have a further conversation and that hasn't happened.

The Premier spoke to Cliff. She saw how well Cliff articulated the benefits he received from IBI therapy after the age of five.

According to your own ministry documents, 85% of the kids currently receiving IBI therapy are over the age of five—85% of children who will now be removed from this critical therapy simply because they've had a birthday. Families are being told their children are being removed from IBI therapy May 1—removal; no transition plan. Your transition plan is to transition kids onto another waiting list.

Premier, it's never too late to do the right thing. Announce today you are reversing your decision and allow kids over five, kids like Cliff, to access IBI therapy.

Interjections.

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

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I think it's important to recognize that children who are receiving IBI services today are not being removed from service. They are being assessed by clinical experts at their next—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. Take a look at the Speaker.

Minister?

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Thank you, Speaker. This is a very important point: that children who are getting IBI will be assessed at their next scheduled clinical assessment. A transition plan will be developed. If they need more intensive services, they're going to get that service. We will make sure that the plans are very flexible and individual, based on that child's needs. That's the intention of the new program—

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

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Good morning, Speaker. My question this morning is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Good morning, Minister.

Last week, the government quietly sent around a proposal that stripped tenants of some of their rights. The proposal was sent to just four stakeholder groups and not released to the public. The groups were given just one week to provide feedback. The document basically blamed tenants for the lack of affordable housing in Ontario. The solution, according to the government, is to give landlords more powers to evict people.

1110

Speaker, can the government provide one shred of evidence or any peer-reviewed study, other than the anecdotes of a few landlords, showing that more evictions could create new affordable housing units in Ontario?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Well, Minister—good morning, member from Windsor–Tecumseh—

Hon. Liz Sandals: Member.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Member. I always appreciate the member's questions, because they're usually substantive and thoughtfully put, and I appreciate that.

In a perfect world, we'd have—

Mr. Randy Hillier: You'd have no Liberals.

Laughter.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): As sharp as that is, the member from Lanark will come to order.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: I remind the member that we're still on this side of the House.

In a perfect world, we'd have perfect landlords and we'd have perfect tenants, and we'd have no need at all for a Landlord and Tenant Board, because everything would be fine. But until we live in that perfect world, we need the Landlord and Tenant Board and the protections that it affords. We're proud of the protections we've provided for both landlords and tenants in the province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: There could be many reasons why people aren't creating more affordable secondary suites to rent to tenants. Restrictive zoning bylaws and high property taxes come to mind. But the government says, "No, the real problem is tenants. The solution is more evictions."

By the way, Speaker, it just so happens that the third-biggest campaign donor in Ontario is a lobby group representing—wait for it, wait for it—landlords. Why is the minister basing his affordable housing policy on the anecdotes of Liberal campaign donors and not on facts and objective analysis?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: There are a number of potential remedies that can help us to increase and enhance the availability of social and affordable housing. There have been some advocates on the other side, and we've embraced their advocacy around inclusive zoning, secondary units and what have you.

The comments and reflections in the consultation paper are not our proposals. They're things we've heard from the sectors. The fact that we sent it out to four groups: It was a pre-consultation release sent to four groups that we knew would have an interest who might

help us to shape the consultation papers. That's a standard process when you're doing government policy.

We're going to be moving ahead. We're going to be looking at potential changes to the Landlord and Tenant Board and better remedies that will make processes more fair, introduce new protections for both tenants and landlords, and make it easier for small landlords to stay in the game.

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: My question this morning is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Our government is continuously working to support the mining industry in northern Ontario. I understand that our government recently announced a renewed Mineral Development Strategy that will provide a blueprint for how we will build on our industry's well-earned global reputation.

As the minister knows, the mining landscape is constantly evolving, and you can just look in my riding of Sudbury, with great mining companies that are continuing to evolve. Recognizing this changing landscape and the importance of the mineral sector to Ontario's future is a key part of the Mineral Development Strategy.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please update this House on what this government is doing to enhance our ongoing support for the mining industry in Ontario?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I want to thank the member from Sudbury for the question.

He's absolutely right: The mineral industry is so critical for Ontario, particularly for communities in northern Ontario. Ontario accounts for over 25% of mining jobs in Canada—26,000 directly; 50,000 indirectly—and the mineral sector is also the largest private sector employer of aboriginal peoples in Canada. In addition, Ontario is also the leading jurisdiction for the exploration and the production of minerals in Canada and remains a major player around the world.

We are committed to attracting new investment and supporting innovation in the mineral exploration and development sector. In fact, Mr. Speaker, just recently we announced that the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp. will be investing \$5 million in the Junior Exploration Assistance Program, which will help exploration and certainly will be part of our renewed mineral development strategy.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: Thank you to the minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, it is clear that this government is committed to developing the mineral exploration industry in Ontario. The mining industry is critical to communities like my own, as it helps support more than 26,000 direct and 50,000 indirect jobs.

Funding a program to assist junior exploration will provide financial assistance to qualified individuals carrying out exploration activities. Minister, I understand that recently the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp. awarded the Ontario Prospectors Association \$5 million

in funding to create an incentive program called the Junior Exploration Assistance Program, or JEAP. Mr. Speaker, can the minister please tell us more about the Junior Exploration Assistance Program and the significance of this very important investment?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: This is really a great program. We recognize the challenges in this sector, particularly the junior exploration sector, and we want to be able to provide much-needed financial support to see more of those projects come forward.

Building on the core expertise of the Ontario Prospectors Association, the Junior Exploration Assistance Program, or JEAP, and the funds associated with it will be administered directly by the OPA, the prospectors' association, to junior exploration companies across the north. The \$5-million investment to this program, we believe, can support more than 45 exploration projects. This will clearly help promote long-term competitiveness and continue to attract jobs and investment. We are excited about this program, Mr. Speaker. It will help support a healthy, competitive and sustainable mineral sector, another part of our plan to build Ontario up.

POLICE OVERSIGHT

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is to the Attorney General. It was disturbing to hear that, for over a month, a significant SIU report sat gathering dust in your office. The report was an investigation into the fatal shooting of an individual here in Toronto. The SIU investigators did their job, the SIU director did his job, yet the Attorney General could not be bothered to do hers.

To have the chief law officer of this province ignore this report for so long is tantamount to wilfully frustrating justice. It clearly demonstrates confused priorities, a lack of compassion and an absence of sympathy, and erodes the public's confidence in her office.

Speaker, why did the Attorney General not read the report herself the moment she received it and demonstrate the utmost respect not only of her office, but, more importantly, to a grieving family?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I want to assure the House that I was very well briefed—twice—on this report and that I've read the report.

Mr. Speaker, public confidence in the transparency of police oversight is a priority for our government. We recognize that there are concerns about the current process. We have a responsibility to ensure—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: —that the public interest is being served. That's why we have committed to a public consultation. It is our objective that the review and public consultation would guide, among other things, when and how best to release the report. We will be appointing a reviewer as soon as possible; we have announced that. My ministry will begin consultations on police oversight in the coming weeks.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Again to the Attorney General: My question was about why she didn't do it. This is not just another government report full of numbers and figures. It's an investigation into why someone died. A father, a husband, a son, a person was killed. It is deserving of immediacy, not briefs.

1120

The Attorney General's lack of action and compassion has brought clouds of doubt over her office, embarrassed her colleagues in law enforcement and exposed her inability to fulfill her duties.

Were there just too many ribbons to cut, fundraisers to attend or cheques to cash? Can the Attorney General explain to this House what was so important that it took priority over this investigation and justified her turning her back not just on the family of Mr. Loku but on all of Ontario?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I have heard the concerns in the community. I have heard the concerns from everyone, from all our stakeholders, that the process needs to be reviewed. I heard it from the SIU. I heard it from the police officers. I heard it from the community, from Black Lives Matter—I've heard it.

That's why we will initiate this consultation to find when and how best to release the report. It's important that people feel good and are reassured about what is in the report that they cannot see. That's the question that is being asked. We wanted to answer the concerns of the public. The consultation will help us to find when and how best to release the report.

CANCER TREATMENT

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la première ministre. Today, members of the Canadian Cancer Society, cancer survivors and their families are with us at Queen's Park. They can tell you that no one fighting cancer should have to fight for drug coverage as well.

Yet in Ontario today, the costs of cancer drugs taken in hospitals are publicly covered; the costs of cancer drugs taken at home are not. Patients are forced to pay out of pocket for their life-saving medication or fight for reimbursement through personal insurance or Trillium. The problem has gotten so bad, Speaker, that one in six cancer patients in this province say that their out-of-pocket drug costs are significant or even unmanageable.

Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia all do the right thing: They cover the cost of cancer drugs taken at home. Ontario should do the same. Will the Premier do the right thing and extend full public coverage for cancer drugs taken at home?

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

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the question and welcome the many members from the Canadian Cancer Society who are joining us here today. They know and we all, I think, recognize that Ontario is a leader in

cancer care, not just in Canada but around the world. We have one of the best chances of survival of anywhere in the world, Mr. Speaker, and we cover more than 3,800 drugs to fight cancer.

We have added to that new drug funding amounting to more than \$1.5 billion in the last decade. We have in fact tripled the amount of money that we invest in cancer-fighting drugs. We have added 57 new cancer drugs to our formulary in the last decade, and 33 oral treatments as well, in reference to the question of the member opposite.

We know that there's more work to be done. CCO, Cancer Care Ontario, is working on this together with my ministry.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Well, it has been a year and a half since Cancer Care Ontario released a report that called for equitable access to cancer drugs, regardless of whether they were administered in the hospital or at home. The ministers have had this report for a year and a half. This report says, "Public drug coverage for take-home cancer medications should align with the funding model for hospital-administered drugs..." It's simple as that, Speaker.

Cancer patients have been waiting for a year and a half for this Liberal government to act. They are tired of waiting. They are frustrated. They cannot afford to keep paying out of pocket for drugs they need to literally save their lives. Will the Premier and the minister stop stalling, stop delaying and provide full public coverage for at-home cancer drugs?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: As a government and as a ministry, we do everything we can to provide the highest quality of care, including for cancer patients around this province. I know that there's more work to be done. We're well aware of the Cancer Care Ontario work that they have done and that is ongoing. My ministry is working with them as well. We've made available, either through the Ontario drug program or through Trillium, for example, opportunities for individuals who are challenged.

I know the member opposite knows that we have a great cancer system. She herself said just a couple of years ago that she marvelled as to where we are at in Ontario with cancer services. We're one of the best in the world, and I think that part of this is because of the fantastic work that CCO does every day. I agree with her on that. I think Cancer Care Ontario does an exceptional job. They've provided us with important advice.

As I mentioned, almost 4,000 drugs are being provided, including for cancer patients. There is more work to be done, and we're prepared to do that work.

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. My constituents in Barrie are very excited to see our government reinstating the Connecting Links program as part of budget 2015. For some time,

municipalities told us that making Connecting Links projects eligible under other infrastructure projects was not sufficient. That is why we now provide small, rural and northern municipalities with expanded access to predictable, stable and annual funding. While the opposition refused to support the reinstatement of this fund in 2015, Ontario municipalities, including Barrie, have continued to praise our government for delivering on this file.

Can the minister please tell the members of this House more about the new and improved Connecting Links program?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to begin by thanking the outstanding member for Barrie for being an extraordinary representative for that important community.

Last year, this government was extremely excited to announce the reinstatement of a stand-alone Connecting Links program as part of our budget 2015. I was very pleased recently to be in Barrie, alongside the local member and Premier Kathleen Wynne, to highlight some enhancements that are being made to this important program. This government is now committing \$20 million to municipalities through this program in 2016-17 with funding increasing to \$30 million per year by 2018-19.

This is just one more important way that we are showing our long-term commitment to Ontario's rural and northern communities and the families who live there, something that the opposition clearly does not support as they voted against this funding in budget 2016. While the opposition has chosen to vote against providing municipalities with more infrastructure funding, we'll continue to take decisive action to build Ontario up.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I want to thank the minister for his response. I, like many people living in my riding, was thrilled to hear that our community will be receiving funding through this new program. There are 352 Connecting Links in 77 municipalities across the province. Many members of this House have Connecting Links in their ridings.

Because demand for the program was so high this year, I understand there have been some concerns expressed by municipalities that did not receive funding in the first intake. These municipalities have questions about the process that was used to select this year's recipients. Can the minister please tell members of the House more about the application process used for the new Connecting Links program?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I appreciate the member's follow-up question. Applications officially opened in November, and we were pleased to receive a total of 60 applications from right across the province of Ontario. Ministry staff evaluated funding applications based on technical need and safety issues. In our first intake, we were able to fund 23 projects. These projects included those coming from across the province, whether in Barrie, Smith's Falls or in the riding of Peterborough and Havelock.

In many regions, the highest priority projects typically involved bridges or pavement in very poor condition.

MTO staff will continue to be available to municipalities in order to provide advice as needed.

We would encourage all municipalities that can qualify for funding from Connecting Links to apply for the next intake of this program, expected to be announced later this year.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Whenever I tell the minister his government is putting pilot safety at risk by allowing the wind turbine project near the Collingwood Regional Airport, I get the answer that Transport Canada and Nav Canada aren't concerned, so all is well.

1130

However, Collingwood airport is a registered aerodrome and not a Transport Canada-certified airport. Therefore, its operational airspace is not protected by Transport Canada. That means Transport Canada will not interfere with the province's decision to approve the placement of wind turbines within the operational airspace of the airport. Hence, flight risks—namely the 500-foot-tall wind turbines the Liberals want to put next to the airport—have not been reviewed or assessed by Transport Canada or Nav Canada, as they have no authority to act.

Will the minister finally admit this government is putting pilot safety at risk by allowing this wind turbine project to proceed?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: First of all, the member opposite—and I appreciate his concern—is a former Minister of the Environment, so I know he's very familiar with how these decisions are made. The first is, these are not decisions made by the minister. I do not have any say at all. My job is to protect these decisions by the director from becoming political. This is a director's decision made on technical evidence.

The director consulted several times with Nav Canada and Transport Canada. I have in front of me her notes, three pages from about half a dozen meetings. At each and every time, Nav Canada and Transport Canada—who are the experts, unlike myself and the member opposite—said there were not safety issues here that were at all material. Surely, he doesn't want—

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: I think the minister should be ashamed of how dismissive he is of not only the concerns of the people in my riding of Simcoe-Grey, but pilots across Canada and North America. This is a very busy regional airport, with 11,000 takeoffs and landings a year.

The fact that, up until this point, you have been hiding behind Nav Canada and Transport Canada—I'm glad to see you didn't do it today, because you know you've been wrong all the way along. It's a regional airport, not a certified airport.

I have no doubt that your director is following the law, but it's you guys who changed the law and took away the

planning authority from local municipalities so that they could direct where these projects should go. No local municipality would ever put 500-foot-tall—50-storeys-tall—wind turbines within 2.1 nautical miles of the end of a runway. That's about four seconds after you take off.

Government planes go in there. When you're in a government plane and you have to go into that airport, especially when it's snowy or foggy or rainy—we're just off Georgian Bay.

Change the law. Cancel this project. Will you do that—

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

Interjections.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: This is kind of passing strange. I didn't know the member opposite was an expert in aviation or in environmental law. The difference—

Hon. Jeff Leal: Norm, what do you have to say? You're a pilot.

Mr. Norm Miller: He's going to kill people. That's what I have to say.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Mr. Speaker, I actually asked the ministry. They reviewed this, as did the director, and found several cases where there are many aerodromes and airports in which there are similar structures in similar proximity to the airport. I have an airport in my constituency where the planes fly past very tall buildings and smokestacks that are much closer than anything in this case.

The proposition of the member opposite is that we should not follow due process. The director's decision can be appealed to the ERT, of which six people are. Another expert body—

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

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. High-pressure door-to-door sales of hot water heaters and air conditioners is a problem in many communities across the province, including my community in Hamilton. Often, it is the most vulnerable, elderly and infirm residents who are the victims of these tactics. They're pressured to sign on to high-interest leases that end up costing them tens of thousands of dollars in interest that they have no hope to ever repay. There are countless stories of these tactics being used by companies like the Ontario Energy Group.

The Ministry of Government and Consumer Services has known about these tactics of this company for years now—since 2009—but only last week was it announced that the company is facing charges, and only in Newmarket.

My question is: What took so long to lay these charges and why is the scope of the investigation limited to just one area of the province?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. David Oraziatti: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. We take these issues very seriously with respect to consumer door-to-door sales. It's one of the reasons why we passed Bill 55, the Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, which in fact expanded the length of time in which a consumer has the right to get out of a contract. In Ontario, for any contract, there's a 10-day standing rule where an individual can, for any reason whatsoever, decide that they don't want to be in that contract. They have that ability.

We also have an enforcement division in the ministry. They have been investigating on an ongoing basis. There were 142 charges laid with respect to a particular company. That matter is, obviously, going before the court.

We take action where it is appropriate to do so, and we're standing up for consumers on a daily basis in our ministry.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, one of my constituents, a widow on a fixed income, received a notice that her home has a lien on it from this particular company. Her option? Pay high monthly payments for a hot water heater that she didn't need, or pay up to thousands of dollars to break a contract she never signed.

What does the Premier have to say to this widow in my community who has a pay-up-or-lose-your-house notice from this company and doesn't have time to wait for the government to get around to looking at this company's actions in Hamilton?

Hon. David Oraziatti: Speaker, very clearly we are very concerned about any individual who may be misled at the door about their particular contract. They have the ability to get out of their contract.

We know, in section 14 of the legislation, that if an individual has a disability, if they don't understand the contract or if there's a language barrier, they in fact have up to a year to get out of that contract.

If there's a particular individual who has not contacted our ministry, I'd be happy to take that information and I'd be happy to be aware of that information.

The ministry will act; absolutely, Speaker. We are concerned about these issues. We continue to strengthen this legislation to protect consumers in Ontario, and I encourage those individuals to bring those concerns to our ministry.

RETIREMENT HOMES

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: Ma question est pour le ministre responsable des affaires des aînés, Signor il Ministro Mario Sergio. Speaker, as you'll know, seniors are living longer and the number of seniors is growing rapidly. This is particularly true in my own riding of Etobicoke North. As you may appreciate, in the last century one of the triumphs of medical science and public health is that life expectancy has almost doubled, from 40 to 85.

But of course, seniors' years can be a time of a second childhood, of frailty and compromise of activities of

daily living. So seniors are often confronted with a decision tree where they have to think about downsizing and giving up the comfort of their own home where they may have lived for many years and even raised their family.

Seniors have many decisions to make. For example, they may ask: What should they do? Where should they go? What type of housing may suffice and how much will this cost?

Speaker, can the minister please inform this House about the benefits of a retirement home and what these have to offer our seniors?

Hon. Mario Sergio: Merci à mon collègue pour la question, the very dynamic member from Etobicoke North.

Retirement homes are communities designed for seniors who want to live a somewhat independent lifestyle and have the choice of support for their daily living.

Residents should feel safe and comfortable in an environment that reflects their own home and not a facility.

They may provide services such as meal preparation, bathing assistance, administering medicine, the service of a health care professional and much more.

Seniors choose retirement homes for freedom from maintaining a home, enjoying privacy while knowing someone is aware of their well-being, belonging to a community of peers and participating in social activities and having peace of mind, knowing that they are living in a safe and secure environment.

Seniors expect safety and the comfort of a home without the worry or work.

1140

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: Mille grazie, Ministro Sergio, per la risposta.

One of the major apprehensions seniors have when they consider moving into retirement homes is the quality, the standards of living, its upkeep and facilities. Seniors often raise questions in my own riding of Etobicoke North about the level of services, care and safety; for example, what resources do they have when they face problems while living in a retirement home? Who's responsible for monitoring the units to ensure they are in good condition? And who's responsible for upkeep and maintenance? Finally, when a problem arises in a retirement home, what resources are available?

Can the minister please inform this chamber how Ontario seniors in a regulated retirement home can seek redress when problems arise?

Hon. Mario Sergio: Speaker, again, merci to the remarkable member from Etobicoke North.

We have, in Ontario, some 750 retirement homes with about 50,000 residents. Seniors living in retirement homes have very strong protection under the Retirement Homes Act, legislation first introduced by this House back in 2010. The act also created the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority, which educates and inspects retirement homes to ensure they meet the standards that are required.

As of July 2012, a retirement home that wants to operate has to obtain a licence and comply with the requirements of the act, including protecting seniors from abuse and neglect; mandatory standards of care; mandatory safety plans, including emergency and fire plans; mandatory staff training; and posting very prominently the seniors' bill of rights.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Jim McDonell: To the Minister of Government and Consumer Services: You gave direction to public servants to appoint a practising real estate professional from Sault Ste. Marie to the Real Estate Council of Ontario. You did so despite knowing that your three appointees to the board must come from outside the profession to ensure consumer voices and interests are fairly represented. By doing so, you overruled the Public Employments Secretariat and your own mandate.

It's disturbing and sad that your reaction to getting caught in another patronage appointment was to throw your ministry staff under the bus. The memo was approved by no less than three senior ministry staff, but the email and the memo clearly expresses the opinion that you are breaking the established rules of public appointments.

Minister, you got caught and, rather than admitting responsibility, you're blaming senior officials who are just doing their job. Will you step aside until the Integrity Commissioner completes his investigation?

Hon. David Oraziatti: Mr. Speaker, this question is completely reprehensible. The member is being critical of me for making an appointment that I never made and for not following advice that I never received. My deputy did not have that information. The deputy did not receive that information. That is disgusting.

We have an open and transparent public appointments process that applies to all Ontarians, and we follow that in our ministry. I cannot believe this individual—a junior-level staff person in our ministry, who was helping his office with another matter related to our ministry, inadvertently sent his constituency staff an email and attempted to recall it. It had confidential advice to me that I had never yet seen nor the deputy had seen.

Instead of recognizing that, he chose to politicize it and make a media circus out of it. It's disgusting—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Order, please. Thank you. It's never too late to ask somebody to leave.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Oh, I would.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please join me in welcoming, in the east members' gallery, the former member from Ottawa Centre in the 34th, 36th, 37th and 38th Parliaments, Mr. Richard Patten.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Also, I have some extremely sorry and sad news. This is—

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Don't say it, Speaker. No, don't say it, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm bound by duty to announce it: This is the last day for our pages. We want to thank them for their service to Ontario.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I've also been told that they're volunteering to come back next week.

VISITOR

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

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to introduce a good friend who is visiting from Ottawa, Mr. Art Ivantchouk. Welcome to Queen's Park.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We have a deferred vote on government notice of motion number 64 relating to the allocation of time on Bill 172, An Act respecting greenhouse gas.

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 Wednesday, April 20, 2016, Ms. Jaczek moved government notice of motion number 64. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anderson, Granville	Hoggarth, Ann	Moridi, Reza
Baker, Yvan	Hoskins, Eric	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Hunter, Mitzie	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Naqvi, Yasir
Bradley, James J.	Kiwala, Sophie	Oraziatti, David
Chan, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Potts, Arthur
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Qaadri, Shafiq
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Rinaldi, Lou
Crack, Grant	MacCharles, Tracy	Sandals, Liz
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Sergio, Mario
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Sousa, Charles
Delaney, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Takhar, Harinder S.
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Thibeault, Glenn
Dickson, Joe	McGarry, Kathryn	Vernile, Daiene
Dong, Han	McMahon, Eleanor	Wong, Soo
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMeekin, Ted	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fraser, John	Meilleur, Madeleine	Zimmer, David
Gravelle, Michael	Milczyn, Peter Z.	

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

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Gélinas, France	Miller, Paul
Bailey, Robert	Gretzky, Lisa	Munro, Julia
Barrett, Toby	Hardeman, Ernie	Natyshak, Taras

Bisson, Gilles	Harris, Michael	Nicholls, Rick
Brown, Patrick	Hatfield, Percy	Scott, Laurie
Campbell, Sarah	Hillier, Randy	Singh, Jagmeet
Coe, Lorne	Horwath, Andrea	Smith, Todd
DiNovo, Cheri	Jones, Sylvia	Tabuns, Peter
Fedeli, Victor	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fife, Catherine	Martow, Gila	Vanthof, John
Forster, Cindy	McDonell, Jim	Wilson, Jim
French, Jennifer K.	McNaughton, Monte	Yakabuski, John
Gates, Wayne	Miller, Norm	

Vietnamese heritage and freedom flag, the scarf's design symbolizes the enduring strength of the Vietnamese community.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues from all parties will join me in celebrating Journey to Freedom Day, and in recognizing both the hardships the Vietnamese refugees had to endure and their many contributions to Canadian society and public life.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 53; the nays are 38.

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

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): As there are no further deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1155 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mrs. Julia Munro: I would just say what a pleasure it is to be joined here today by many leaders of Canada's Vietnamese community in the gallery.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I would like to welcome to the gallery this afternoon Dr. Mehmet Bor, the co-president of the Federation of Canadian Turkish Associations; Mrs. Yildiz Ünsal, treasurer of the Turkish Federation Community Foundation; Mr. Ismail Vataner, past president, Turkic Assembly of Canada; and—oh, she's not here—Mrs. Nuriye Astalos. She's coming back from—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): She's on her way in.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: She's on her way in.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

JOURNEY TO FREEDOM DAY

Mrs. Julia Munro: Today I rise to speak about Journey to Freedom Day, a particularly important day for Canadians of Vietnamese heritage. Originally introduced in Canada's Senate by Senator Ngo, who is here today, Journey to Freedom Day commemorates the exodus of Vietnamese refugees and celebrates their acceptance in Canada. Many of the refugees escaped by boat, earning the name "the boat people." Following the end of the war, Canada accepted thousands of refugees—new citizens who are making a wonderful contribution to our society here in Ontario.

Journey to Freedom Day is a very symbolic day. It is about more than recognizing the challenges of the past. It also celebrates the contributions of the Vietnamese community towards building our great country.

Today, we are lucky to be joined by many Ontarians of Vietnamese heritage. It is especially an honour to have, for the first time, all MPPs wearing scarves representing Vietnamese freedom and heritage. Based on the

GIRLS' GOVERNMENT

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: I didn't have a member statement that day, but April 12 was the day, in 1917, that women achieved the vote in Ontario. Something did happen that day here in the House that was momentous: It was Girls' Government Day, and I tabled a bill to make April 12 Girls' Government Day every year on behalf of Equal Voice. There were over 50 girls here from I think over six ridings who gathered to talk about politics, to meet with cabinet ministers and to see how this place works.

Certainly, we do this for a reason, because Canada has not a great record, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the number of women elected to public office. In fact, we're 46th in the world—46th—well behind most of Europe and behind Australia. We should be ashamed. We have a lot of catching up to do.

What I would suggest to my fellow MPPs is that if you have not hosted a Girls' Government session in your riding, please do so. The template is there; Equal Voice has it and my office has it. It's easy to do. Your constituency staff for the most part can run it. It's win-win because you get to meet the principals, you get to meet the teachers, you get to meet the girls, and they get to see this awesome place. My girls are also going to Ottawa; that's coming up and they're looking forward to it. So please, if you haven't had a Girls' Government group, do initiate one in your riding. We will help and Equal Voice will help.

Here's to women getting the vote.

JOURNEY TO FREEDOM DAY

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: Mr. Speaker, before I make a statement, I would also like to welcome Vietnamese Canadian leaders to Queen's Park.

On April 30, Vietnamese Canadians in my great riding of Mississauga–Brampton South, and across Ontario and Canada, will observe Journey to Freedom Day. This day recalls Canada's acceptance of more than 60,000 Vietnamese refugees who fled their homeland at the end of the Vietnam War.

We remember this incredible victory over adversity: the perilous high seas journey undertaken by the refugees to finally arrive in Canada.

We know Canadians' generosity and hospitality have no bounds. We witnessed this again when our country welcomed 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada.

In 1986, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees awarded the Nansen Refugee Award to the

people of Canada, making us the first and only people to have been honoured collectively with this award.

Today, Ontario is home to over 100,000 people of Vietnamese origin. Mr. Speaker, I stand with the Vietnamese community to say thank you for the significant contributions it has made, and continues to make, to Ontario and Canada, and to honour Journey to Freedom Day.

JOHNNY WHITTEKER

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'm proud to rise today on behalf of my residents of Stormont, Dundas and South Glengarry to remember Johnny Whitteker and his contributions to the township of Williamsburg, South Dundas and the counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

Johnny was first elected to the Williamsburg township in 1954 by a mere 13 votes and went on to serve for 52 consecutive years on the township council, including as the first mayor of the new amalgamated township of South Dundas in 1997. He also served on the SD&G county council for 47 years, where both my dad and I had the privilege of working with him. He was county warden in 1975. He was a member of South Nation Conservation Authority for 41 years and the Eastern Ontario Health Unit for 26. In addition, Johnny was a successful farmer with a herd of over 600 cows, split evenly between beef and dairy, and a long-time member of the choir at St. Peter's Lutheran Church.

To say Johnny was not afraid of hard work would be an understatement. His former road superintendent quickly learned that you didn't take a problem to Johnny on a sunny workday because you would have to return that night after chores and drive him out to resolve the problem, making for an extra-late night.

In his 47 years on county council, he only missed one meeting, and that was because he broke his leg the night before, playing hockey at the age of 70. Johnny was a smart hockey man, an avid Gordie Howe and Detroit Red Wings fan.

If he had one fault, it would have been his red political leaning.

Perhaps the best comment I heard about Johnny was from a fellow council member of 30 years, Robert "Rowdy" Gillard, who said, "His life was well-lived. Anyone who didn't know Johnny Whitteker, should have."

On behalf of the residents of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, I want to offer my sympathy to his wife, Audrey, and his family. Thanks for lending Johnny to us.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms. Catherine Fife: Since the government announced funding changes three weeks ago, parents of children with autism have voiced their concerns loudly about the irresponsible decision to kick children over the age of five off the waiting list for IBI therapy. The government responds with its numbers: \$333 million invested; 16,000

new spaces; only \$8,000 given to families kicked off the wait-list.

To the Ontarians affected by autism, this is about so much more than numbers. It's about families and children and, indeed, the future of this province. But if the Liberal government only wants to refer to numbers, then let's look at some: 85% of Ontario children currently undergoing IBI are over the age of five; in 2012, more than 14,000 Ontario public school children were identified as autistic; one in 88 children in the TDSB were on the autism spectrum.

Last year, the TDSB faced a \$22-million shortfall in special education funding; the Toronto Catholic board, \$43 million. Supports for children with complex needs are underfunded across the province. This decision will cost school boards, teachers and school communities across this province. We can't afford not to support these families. These children can have so much to contribute to the province if we help them unlock their potential. It's not too late to fix this damaging policy.

1310

MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: It's an enormous pleasure to welcome my friends—benim arkadaşlar—from the Canadian Turkish community today to join us as we celebrate Multicultural Children's Day. Hoşgeldiniz. This day was first dedicated to the world's children by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, on April 23 1920, and adapted by UNICEF in 1979. April 23 promotes love, friendship and peace, bringing together children from nations around the world to share their culture, sing songs in their national languages and perform folk dances in their cultural costumes.

As our Turkish community shares this wonderful tradition here in Ontario, it brings many children of diverse origin together and encourages them to explore the richness of cultural differences and establish new, long-lasting relationships. The goal, of course, is to shape a better, stronger Canada, find the strength and beauty in our diversity and coexist in peace and harmony.

On behalf of my colleagues in the House, I wish all children in Canada of all ethnic origins a very happy multicultural day.

ORDRE DE LA PLÉIADE

M^{me} Gila Martow: Je veux souhaiter mes félicitations aux récipiendaires de l'Ordre de la Pléiade de cette année. Les honneurs ont été remis lors d'une merveilleuse cérémonie cette semaine ici à Queen's Park. Nous avons reconnu et célébré six francophones de partout dans la province qui ont reçu la prestigieuse médaille de l'Ordre de la Pléiade, qui est l'Ordre de la Francophonie et du dialogue des cultures de l'Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, l'APF. Cette décoration est destinée à reconnaître le mérite des personnalités qui se sont distinguées en servant les idéaux de l'APF et la francophonie.

Je veux parler un petit peu d'un des récipiendaires. Il y en a six. Je les nomme : M. Alain Beaudoin, M^{me} Diane Dubois, M. Pierre Foucher, M^{me} Lorraine Hamilton, M. Louis Patry et M^{me} Carmen Portelance.

Alain Beaudoin est le président de l'AFRY, l'Association des francophones de la région de York. Je travaille très souvent avec eux. Ils ont plusieurs événements et même un camp d'été dans la région de York.

Au nom du Parti PC de l'Ontario et au nom de notre chef, Patrick Brown, profitez, tous les récipiendaires, de la célébration avec vos familles et vos amis, car votre dévouement à la francophonie est grandement apprécié.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Ms. Daiene Vernile: It is with great pleasure that I share with you and members of this House a recent experience at Kitchener's Sunnyside Public School's diversity day. Now more than ever, it's important to understand and celebrate different cultures around the world, especially for our future generations.

Last Friday, Sunnyside hosted its third annual celebration of diversity. Students, parents and teachers had the opportunity to storytell, watch and dance through the world's continents. With over 50 different nations represented and many different languages spoken, it felt like the entire world was brought together at this school in Kitchener.

One of the guests had an incredible story to share. Charles Mulli and wife, Esther, along with 20 of the children from Mully Children's Family, were visiting the school from Nairobi and performed traditional Kenyan songs and dances. They're currently on a tour of Canada. This foundation helps children around the world living on the streets who face abandonment, abuse, addictions and HIV/AIDS. The foundation ensures that they have a home and access to health care, and a sense of belonging.

Sunnyside Public School's diversity day is an important and delightful tradition. In fact, at one point they were having a fashion show and these Kenyan kids decided to jump on the stage and do their own fashion show. They strutted around, showing us what they were wearing. It was quite funny.

I hope that this tradition continues in the years to come.

CARNATION REVOLUTION

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I rise to celebrate the 42nd anniversary of the Carnation Revolution in Portugal, which ushered an era of democracy into Europe and Latin America.

The Carnation Revolution was the single-day culmination of a long struggle but was notable in that, in its last stages, the revolutionary soldiers and people did not use direct violence but came together peacefully to overthrow and transform the Portuguese government from a 40-year dictatorship to a successful democracy. It has been said that the population, holding red carnations, convinced the

regime's soldiers not to resist. The soldiers readily swapped their bullets for flowers.

Replacing the longest-serving dictatorship in Europe, creating democratic institutions and finding new sources of prosperity were urgent priorities for the new Portuguese regime. Nicknamed the Carnation Revolution after how flower vendors handed out seasonal blooms to the soldiers, the almost bloodless uprising remains a source of immense pride for many Portuguese and Portuguese Canadians.

The 25th of April association of Toronto has been promoting the history of the revolution for over a few decades. Earlier this week, I welcomed representatives from this organization from my riding of Davenport, along with Colonel Rui Guimarães who was visiting from Portugal. I had a chance to personally thank them for their commitment and wish them a happy anniversary.

It is with great pride that I stand here today as a beneficiary of the courage and compassion of so many hundreds of thousands of Portuguese men and women that helped transform Portugal into the country that is today.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Durham on a point of order, I believe.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Yes, a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I would I like to take the opportunity to welcome Alexandra Rostetter, from the lovely riding of Durham. She lives in Bowmanville and she's here visiting the Legislature today. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

A point of order from the Minister of Labour.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I rise today on a point of order: This is Harry Blackwell's last day as a page, but he's joined by Jack, Geoff and Joan from his family, his brother, his father and his grandmother. Please welcome them to Queen's Park.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (NUMBER PLATES

AND CARRYING RACKS), 2016

LOI DE 2016 MODIFIANT LE CODE DE LA ROUTE (PLAQUES

D'IMMATRICULATION ET SUPPORTS DE TRANSPORT)

Mr. Norm Miller, Ms. McMahon moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 191, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to Number Plates and Carrying Racks / Projet de loi 191, Loi modifiant le Code de la route en ce qui a trait aux plaques d'immatriculation et aux supports de transport.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Norm Miller: I'd like to thank the member from Burlington for co-sponsoring this bill with me.

The bill amends the Highway Traffic Act. If a carrying rack, such as a bicycle rack, is mounted on the rear of a motor vehicle in accordance with the regulations made under the act, a person may drive the vehicle on a highway even if the rack obscures the number plate for the vehicle that is required to be attached to the rear of the vehicle.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introduction of bills? The member from Brampton-Erindale.

Mr. Harinder S. Takhar: Mississauga-Erindale.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mississauga-Erindale. I'll get it right one of these days.

Mr. Harinder S. Takhar: I hope so.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That sounded like a challenge to the Chair.

Mr. Harinder S. Takhar: A gentle challenge, Mr. Speaker.

HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT
(KEEP OUR ROADS SAFER
THROUGH THE USE OF INTELLIGENT
DRIVE TECHNOLOGIES), 2016
LOI DE 2016 MODIFIANT LE CODE
DE LA ROUTE (SÉCURITÉ ROUTIÈRE
ACCRUE GRÂCE À L'EMPLOI
DE TECHNOLOGIES DE CONDUITE
INTELLIGENTE)

Mr. Takhar moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 192, An Act to Amend the Highway Traffic Act with respect to lifesaving technologies / Projet de loi 192, Loi modifiant le Code de la route en ce qui concerne les technologies permettant de sauver des vies.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm not sure if I'm going to give the member a moment to have a short statement. Yes I will. The member for a short statement.

Mr. Harinder S. Takhar: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This bill amends the Highway Traffic Act to provide the Lieutenant Governor in Council with the authority to make regulations relating to life-saving technology requirements for vehicles.

1320

MOTIONS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Motions. Motions. Last call for motions.

Oh, just in time. The deputy House leader.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon. James J. Bradley: This is a unanimous consent, Mr. Speaker; I was looking at the unanimous consent section in the standing orders.

I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the membership of a standing committee.

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

Deputy House leader.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I move that the following changes be made to the membership of the following committee:

That on the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, Mr. MacLaren be replaced by Mr. Bailey.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Bradley moves that the following changes be made to the membership of the following committee:

That on the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, Mr. MacLaren be replaced by Mr. Bailey.

Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES

NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Today in this House, we mark a very solemn day, and that is the Day of Mourning. It's a day when we pause to honour and remember all the people who have been killed or have been injured on the job.

The Day of Mourning is a day established to mark a very important event for people who work. It was on April 28, 1914, that the Ontario Legislature of the time passed the first workers' compensation act, and 102 years later, we use it as a day to remember, to reflect and to commit to a safe future.

We remember those lives that were lost or are forever changed by the simple act of just going to work. We reflect upon the past, and we know the great strides that we've made in this country and this province in health and safety over the years. We owe that to the commitment and the dedication of those who fight for workplace health and safety on a daily basis. We commit to making workplace health and safety a personal priority and to take action to prevent future workplace tragedies.

The human toll caused by workplace deaths, injuries and illnesses is immense. That's why we must constantly strive to improve our record when it comes to workplace health and safety.

As a province, together we've come a long way. I can stand in this House, Speaker, and I'm proud to tell you that since 2003, our province's annual rate of workplace injuries has dropped significantly. It has dropped by more

than 40%. That makes Ontario workplaces among the safest in the world. While I'm proud of that, I'm not satisfied with that.

Despite this progress, too many people continue to lose their lives or suffer an injury or illness simply because they showed up to work to try to make a living for themselves or their family. There is no job on this planet that's worth a life. There is no job that's worth an injury. We know we simply cannot rest as long as one person continues to be injured on the job.

We also know that regulation and enforcement, as important as they are, simply alone are not enough. We have to change the attitude in our society. Workplace injuries cannot be seen or tolerated as just the cost of doing business. Safety in the workplace should be as routine as buckling up the seat belt in your car.

We challenge employers, we challenge labour groups and we challenge the people who go to work to do their part in building a culture of safety in the workplace. I want to stress that this also includes mental health and psychological safety in the workplace. Mental health, for some, remains a new frontier in workplace health and safety, but we're working hard with our partners to change that attitude. One day, I'd like to see concerns about workplace mental health on the same footing as physical health.

Speaker, as we honour the dead and the injured today, we must all remember in this House that we have a duty ourselves to advance workplace health and safety. Today I rise with the privilege of being the Minister of Labour, but I know I echo the sentiments of all members of this House and past Ministers of Labour across all party lines when I say that workplace deaths and injuries are tragic, unacceptable, preventable and not to be tolerated. I also speak to you today as parents and as members of our community. We must dedicate ourselves to doing what we can so that young people who are just going into the workforce understand health and safety, and also return home every day safe and sound. I'd urge each member in the House today to use the influence and the respect they're accorded in their own communities to make workplace health and safety a personal priority, not only for the people of Ontario who you represent, but for your friends, your families and your communities.

Speaker, very shortly, I understand, we'll observe a moment of silence. We're going to remember those who have died, been injured or become ill just as a result of going to work. We will honour their memories much more strongly if every one of us takes action to ensure that no further tragedies occur. We simply owe it to all Ontarians.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Responses?

Mr. Ted Arnott: I am honoured to rise in this House this afternoon, on behalf of the people of Wellington-Halton Hills, the leader of the official opposition and the Ontario PC caucus, in solemn observance of the Day of Mourning. The Day of Mourning is the day when we join together with all Canadians to remember those who have died on the job. It's a day to remember the terrible human

cost of these workplace accidents and the impact they have on the families who are left behind. The Day of Mourning is a day to remember the people who left for work in the morning, just like each one of us, but never came home. We also think of those who left for work in the morning and then suffered serious injuries or contracted occupational diseases that would change their lives forever.

We pause to remember. We pause to remember Sean Kells. Sean was only 19 years old when he died in a preventable workplace accident in Brampton. In November 1994, on just his third day on the job, he was pouring a highly flammable chemical from one underground drum to another when it ignited and exploded. He died the next day from third-degree burns. With the most tragic consequences possible, Sean was never told that what he was doing was dangerous or that he should be taking precautions. After Sean's death, his father, Paul Kells, made it his life's mission to prevent these kinds of workplace accidents from happening. In 1996, he launched the Safe Communities Foundation, which became the largest nationally recognized injury prevention organization in Canada.

I also want to remember Aleksey Blumberg, Alexander Bondorev, Fayzullo Fazilov and Vladimir Korostin, who died on the job in a Christmas Eve scaffolding accident that we all know about, in Toronto, in 2009. Horrifically, they fell 13 storeys to their deaths when the scaffold that they were working on snapped. Their colleague Dilshod Marupov was also seriously injured and suffered a fractured spine and ribs. The construction company they were working for and its owner were fined \$342,500 in connection with the deaths. The court found that the project manager was also aware that five of his workers were not wearing safety harnesses, and he was eventually sentenced to three and a half years in prison. Like many other similar cases, these deaths could have been prevented. I repeat: They did not need to happen. Those workers could have spent Christmas with their families and could still be with us today.

According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, in 2014 there were 919 workplace deaths recorded in Canada, and that's up from 902 in 2013. This represents an average of more than two deaths on the job each and every day across our country. From 1995 to 2014, over 18,000 people lost their lives due to work-related causes across Canada, an average of 918 deaths per year.

1330

What is even more tragic is that it's estimated that 90% of these workplace deaths are entirely preventable. It follows that the deaths of Sean Kells, Aleksey Blumberg, Alexander Bondorev, Fayzullo Fazilov and Vladimir Korostin were entirely preventable. They are tragic examples of what can happen when safety is not a priority and when property safety measures are not put in place.

Each and every employer across Ontario has a responsibility to put the safety of their workers as one of

their highest priorities. Most employers, and certainly the employers that I know and talk to, take this responsibility seriously. They care about their employees and they want to do the right thing. They would be horrified if one of their employees were killed or injured while on the job, and they put the appropriate measures in place to prevent a tragedy like this from happening.

Ontario's businesses want workplaces to be safe, but we all have a role to play. Employees can take steps on their own to avoid dangerous situations. We know that under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, workers have the right to refuse to do work that they believe is unsafe and can put them in harm's way.

The Day of Mourning is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to ensure that all our workplaces are safe. As MPPs, we must work together to improve workplace safety, with the goal of preventing any death or injury in the workplace. We have a responsibility to ensure that workplace safety is a priority and that our workplaces become safer, not more hazardous.

Each and every Ontarian has the right to a safe workplace environment. Each and every Ontarian has the right to expect that when they leave for work in the morning, they will be able to come home to their families at the end of the day, for we know that even one death or injury in the workplace is one too many.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm honoured to stand in this House today and speak on behalf of the Ontario NDP caucus, as New Democrats join with workers across Ontario to mark the National Day of Mourning. Today we stand with friends and families to remember those who have been injured, maimed or killed on the job.

We all have a responsibility to make sure that when the workday ends, every worker makes it home safely.

In Ontario every year, hundreds of people are killed on the job, thousands are injured, and countless more people have to deal with complications due to work-related environmental illnesses and trauma that they experience on the job. There is an epidemic of injuries and death in the workplaces of this province, particularly facing young workers who are just starting out in their lives and begin their time in the workforce with a tragedy that ends in either loss of life or significant problems that will haunt them for the rest of their lives.

Speaker, what this reflects is an abysmal failure of public policy and a culture of workplace acceptance of the expendability of workers, and we continue to allow that to persist here in this province. It is absolutely unacceptable, and it is what causes a trend of unacceptably high numbers of deaths that continue to this day, notwithstanding the fact that year in and year out we all get up in this chamber and rue the reality that we have here in Ontario. It's far too many people. In 2014, 233 Ontarians lost their lives at work.

As a province, we have a duty to honour our obligations to these workers and to all workers, and we do this by actually ensuring that workplace safety standards reflect the changing nature of our workplaces, in traditionally hazardous fields—for example, construc-

tion, which continues to be a killer, manufacturing, mining, forestry, and other hazardous workplaces—and in occupations such as nursing and corrections.

Conditions are so bad in corrections—and we've seen it play out here in this province recently—that the workers in those institutions actually have T-shirts made that say "Job #1: Everyone goes home." That's how dangerous a workplace this government has allowed those corrections facilities to become. That's where action needs to happen. That's where the obligation of government needs to start: in the government's own workplaces here.

It's the same thing in hospitals. I was shocked to visit with nurses in southwestern Ontario and receive a chart that shows the number of injuries that occur in nursing, that I'm sure people aren't even aware of, the number of injuries around workplace violence, around exposures, around falls. It is a violent workplace that our health care professionals work in, and it's something that government needs to do something about, not just talk about it once a year when it comes to the National Day of Mourning.

But we also have to have safety standards that reflect the rise of part-time and precarious work that has occurred under this Liberal government, which is leaving far too many workers vulnerable to greater workplace risks and leaves them less able to speak up about workplace safety for fear of losing their jobs—another whole sector of workers who are vulnerable because of this government's lack of action.

I'm proud to stand with a caucus that has been working to implement greater workplace protections: helping to protect the rights of interns in the workplace and many others; helping to protect child performers at work; helping first responders and front-line health care and corrections workers get recognition and treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder, because not all workplace injuries are physical, but these psychological injuries, as we know, are no less dangerous and no less impactful to not only the worker but also to their families.

This government has all too often dragged its feet on important health and safety measures and in acknowledging when some workers in this province are ringing the alarm bells about conditions in their workplaces. Every injury and every death in the workplace is one too many, but every year we see these tragic events on construction sites, on the factory floor, in fields, underground, at hospitals, in corrections facilities and in communities from one end of the province to the other as first responders go about their work.

When this happens, families in the north, across the industrial heartland, in rural areas and in our cities are left to pick up the pieces of their lives when their loved ones are suddenly taken from them at work. Every working person in Ontario and their families has the right to peace of mind, Speaker. No Ontarian should ever have to worry if a loved one will go to work and never come home.

New Democrats are committed to strong safety regulations and enforcement. We're committed to working with

employers, unions, safety specialists and the WSIB to make workplaces safer for every Ontarian. We can't stop until workplace injuries and deaths stop. Until then, we mourn the dead and fight for the living.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Kingston and the Islands on a point of order.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I would belatedly like to acknowledge Nazif Kurt, vice-president of the Turkish Culture and Folklore Society of Canada, who I believe has just stepped out for a minute but who has been with us today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their comments. It is now time for petitions.

PETITIONS

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Michael Harris: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the government recently announced plans to reform the way autism services are delivered in the province, which leaves children over the age of five with no access to intensive behavioural intervention (IBI); and

“Whereas in 2003, former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty removed the previous age cap on IBI therapy, stating that Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six; and

“Whereas applied behaviour analysis (ABA) and intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) are the only recognized evidence-based practices known to treat autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and

“Whereas the combined number of children waiting for ABA and IBI therapies in Ontario is approximately 16,158; and

“Whereas wait-lists for services have become overwhelmingly long due to the chronic underfunding by this Liberal government;

“Whereas some families are being forced to re-mortgage houses or move to other provinces while other families have no option but to go without essential therapy; and

“Whereas the Premier and her government should not be balancing the budget on the backs of kids with ASD and their families;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to immediately ensure that all children currently on the waiting list for IBI therapy are grandfathered into the new program so they do not become a lost generation.”

I'll sign it and send it down with Mac from Kitchener-Conestoga.

PRIVATISATION DES BIENS PUBLICS

M. Taras Natyshak: J'ai une pétition ici à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario qui dit :

« Attendu que la privatisation d'Hydro One est un aller sans retour; et

« Attendu que nous allons perdre des centaines de millions de revenus fiables d'Hydro One pour nos écoles et nos hôpitaux; et

« Attendu que nous allons perdre le plus gros atout économique provincial et le contrôle de notre avenir dans le secteur de l'énergie; et

1340

« Attendu que nous allons payer de plus en plus pour l'électricité, tout comme ce qui est arrivé ailleurs;

« Nous, soussignés, pétitionnons l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario comme suit :

« D'arrêter la vente d'Hydro One et de faire en sorte que les familles de l'Ontario, comme propriétaires d'Hydro One, en bénéficient, maintenant et pour les générations à venir. »

J'appuie cette pétition. Je vais la signer et l'envoyer avec Maya.

HOME INSPECTION INDUSTRY

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member from Davenport.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Before I proceed to read the petition, this is the first time I've had the opportunity to stand in this House with you in the chair as Speaker. Congratulations. You look fabulous there and you're doing a fabulous job.

This petition I have here is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the home inspector industry remains largely unregulated; and

“Whereas homeowners are increasingly reliant on home inspectors to make an educated home purchase; and

“Whereas the unregulated industry poses a risk to consumers;

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

“To protect consumers by regulating the home inspection industry and licensing home inspectors.”

I agree with this petition and will affix my name and send it to the table with page Jack.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mrs. Julia Munro: “Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

“Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician

services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

“Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients’ access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

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

“The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario’s doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario’s families deserve.”

I have affixed my signature, as I am in agreement, and I give it to page Amelia.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Wayne Gates: “Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

“Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

“Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients’ access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

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

“The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario’s doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario’s families deserve.”

I’ll sign my name to the petition as well.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Lorne Coe: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government recently announced plans to reform the way autism services are delivered in the province, which leaves children over the age of five with no access to intensive behavioural intervention (IBI); and

“Whereas in 2003, former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty removed the previous age cap on IBI therapy, stating that Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six; and

“Whereas applied behaviour analysis (ABA) and intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) are the only recognized evidence-based practices known to treat autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and

“Whereas the combined number of children waiting for ABA and IBI therapies in Ontario is approximately 16,158; and

“Whereas wait-lists for services have become overwhelmingly long due to the chronic underfunding by this Liberal government;

“Whereas some families are being forced to re-mortgage houses or move to other provinces while other families have no option but to go without essential therapy; and

“Whereas the Premier and her government should not be balancing the budget on the backs of kids with ASD and their families;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to immediately ensure that all children currently on the waiting list for IBI therapy are grandfathered into the new program so they do not become a lost generation.”

Speaker, I agree with the content of this particular petition. I’ll affix my signature and provide it to page Zachary.

QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I have a petition to read. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Queen Elizabeth II ascended to the throne on February 6, 1952; and

“Whereas her coronation was on June 2, 1953; and

“Whereas she has reigned over the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand since her ascension in 1952; and

“Whereas as of September 2015, she broke the record held by her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria by being on the throne for 63 years and seven months; and

“Whereas she’s the world’s oldest reigning monarch;

“We, the undersigned, congratulate the Queen on the occasion of her 90th birthday.”

I agree with this petition, I affix my signature and I give it to the page from Scarborough Southwest, Jack.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mrs. Julia Munro: “Whereas the government recently announced plans to reform the way autism services are delivered in the province, which leaves children over the age of five with no access to intensive behavioural intervention (IBI); and

“Whereas in 2003, former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty removed the previous age cap on IBI therapy, stating that Liberals support extending autism treatment beyond the age of six; and

“Whereas applied behaviour analysis (ABA) and intensive behavioural intervention (IBI) are the only recognized evidence-based practices known to treat autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and

“Whereas the combined number of children waiting for ABA and IBI therapies in Ontario is approximately 16,158; and

“Whereas wait-lists for services have become overwhelmingly long due to the chronic underfunding by this Liberal government;

“Whereas some families are being forced to re-mortgage houses or move to other provinces while other families have no option but to go without essential therapy; and

“Whereas the Premier and her government should not be balancing the budget on the backs of kids with ASD and their families;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to immediately ensure that all children currently on the waiting list for IBI therapy are grandfathered into the new program so they do not become a lost generation.”

As I am in agreement, I affix my signature to give it to page Christina.

DENTAL CARE

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

“That the Legislative Assembly do all in its power to stop the dental fund being diverted to support other programs; and

“That the Legislative Assembly fully utilize the commissioned funding to provide dental care to those in need.”

I totally agree. I'm signing it and giving it to Sabrina to be delivered to the table.

LUNG HEALTH

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to once again rise in this House and read a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas lung disease affects more than 2.4 million people in the province of Ontario, more than 570,000 of whom are children and youth living with asthma;

“Of the four chronic diseases responsible for 79% of deaths (cancers, cardiovascular diseases, lung disease and diabetes) lung disease is the only one without a dedicated province-wide strategy;

“In the Ontario Lung Association report, Your Lungs, Your Life, it is estimated that lung disease currently costs

the Ontario taxpayers more than \$4 billion a year in direct and indirect health care costs, and that this figure is estimated to rise to more than \$80 billion seven short years from now;

1350

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

“To allow for deputations on MPP Kathryn McGarry's private member's bill, Bill 41, Lung Health Act, 2014, which establishes a Lung Health Advisory Council to make recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on lung health issues and requires the minister to develop and implement an Ontario Lung Health Action Plan with respect to research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lung disease; and

“Once debated at committee, to expedite Bill 41, Lung Health Act, 2014, through the committee stage and back to the Legislature for third and final reading; and to immediately call for a vote on Bill 41 and to seek royal assent immediately upon its passage.”

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

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

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

“Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

“Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

“Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients' access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

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

“The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario's doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario's families deserve.”

I'm pleased to sign my signature and give to it page Lauren.

PRIX DE L'ESSENCE

M. John Vanthof: J'ai une pétition pour l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

« Alors que les automobilistes du nord de l'Ontario continuent d'être soumis à des fluctuations marquées dans le prix de l'essence; et

« Alors que la province pourrait éliminer les prix abusifs et opportunistes et offrir des prix justes, stables et prévisibles; et

« Alors que cinq provinces et de nombreux états américains ont déjà une réglementation des prix d'essence; et

« Considérant que les juridictions qui réglementent le prix de l'essence ont : moins de fluctuations des prix, moins d'écart de prix entre les communautés urbaines et rurales et des prix d'essence annualisés inférieurs;

« Nous, soussignés, demandons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« D'accorder à la Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario le mandat de surveiller le prix de l'essence partout en Ontario afin de réduire la volatilité des prix et les différences de prix régionales, tout en encourageant la concurrence. »

I agree wholeheartedly, affix my signature and give it to page Khushali.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the term "employment" within the Ontario Human Rights Code of workplace harassment also includes activities or events that happen outside of normal business hours or off business premises, but are linked to the workplace and employment, and recommends that all Ontario workplace harassment and sexual harassment policies recognize this definition.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mrs. McGarry has moved private member's notice of motion number 70. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: There is no place, anytime, anywhere, for sexual harassment or misogyny. It's sad that, in 2016, issues of sexual harassment in the workplace are still prevalent. It's incumbent upon all of us to stand up and simply say it's never okay.

We've heard the motion with regard to workplace harassment. This motion acknowledges that workplace harassment and sexual harassment policies should also apply in settings outside of business hours.

Increasingly, more and more people are working beyond the traditional 9-to-5 workday, and employment is increasingly taking work beyond the four walls of an office or place of work. We wouldn't want to think that employers didn't act immediately on complaints because there was a perceived loophole that didn't clearly define the workplace as including work-related activities outside the workplace.

I recognize that 28% of Canadians, or one in three people, have experienced sexual harassment in their place of work or at a work-related function. We need to keep showing leadership when it comes to incidents of workplace harassment. My job takes me around the province and to many different settings, and I want everyone to feel safe and be free from workplace harass-

ment while doing their work, even out of the workplace. This motion recognizes that.

I sat as a member of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, as did several members in the House this afternoon. I know we were all privileged to be able to add to the important debate on this around the province. In our travels around different communities, we heard from many folks who are survivors of sexual violence and harassment, including sexual harassment in the workplace. We had hundreds of submissions and phone calls to our committee, really underscoring the important work we were doing and the important conversation that we undertook. I know that many who were involved in the select committee and with the development of the sexual violence and harassment action plan wanted to be here today to show their support. However, they're actually attending the violence-against-women permanent round table meeting this afternoon, building on the work we did in the select committee and on what we are discussing in the House here today.

I am proud to be part of a government that has shown such leadership on this file, and I'm proud that these issues have now come into the forefront of the political debate not only in Ontario but across Canada as well. Sexual violence and harassment are widespread, deep-seated issues and are a reality in every community in this province. These are systemic and entrenched social issues. This problem crosses all social boundaries. It can occur anytime, anywhere, anyplace.

When the committee met to hear public consultations, the vice-president of student affairs from Wilfrid Laurier University, David McMurray, presented. He said that men should be part of the solution to sexual violence and harassment. And he said this: "Men are violent, silent, or actively engaged in meaningful change."

Our government has confronted these entrenched ideas head-on. In fact, the select committee's final report recognized the positive steps that our government has taken to do just that. Quoting the report:

"The select committee believes that the government's plan to increase awareness of sexual violence and harassment through public education campaigns is a positive step towards shifting social norms, challenging existing behaviour, encouraging bystander intervention, and supporting people who have experienced sexual violence and harassment in coming forward.

"Numerous witnesses who appeared before the committee expressed their support for the government's multimedia campaign #WhoWillYouHelp as a means of creating conversations and educating people about sexual violence and harassment. As noted by Colleges Ontario, 'it is ... a powerful wake-up call to the seriousness and pervasiveness of the problem, and the role of bystanders, which needs to be addressed.'

"Indeed, bystander intervention programs are a promising approach to sexual violence prevention, as they encourage the community as a whole to take ownership of sexual violence and harassment as a problem. These programs are effectively being delivered in a number of

environments, including schools, workplaces, public spaces and online.”

Over 83 million people across the world participated in the #WhoWillYouHelp campaign in just a few short weeks. Indeed, several of the recommendations from the final report made by the select committee speak to this.

1400

For example, in recommendation number 3, it recommends that: “The Ontario government expand its public education campaigns pertaining to sexual violence and harassment to reach and connect with diverse segments of Ontario’s population, and target a wider range of behaviours, such as street harassment.”

Recommendation 4: “The Ontario government provide greater support and resources to campaigns that engage men and boys in helping to prevent gender-based violence.”

Recommendation 24: “Greater support be provided to both community- and school-based education programs that work to challenge myths and misconceptions about sexuality and masculinity/femininity, and teach both youth and adults about healthy relationships, consent, and respect.”

Speaker, it is only by openly talking about and confronting these issues that we will achieve progress in eliminating sexual harassment.

In addition to the work by the select committee, I was particularly proud that our government introduced an action plan to stop sexual violence and harassment. If I can quote directly from that plan, under the “Safer Workplaces” section, in speaking to legislation that would strengthen the Occupational Health and Safety Act, it would “set out explicit requirements for employers to investigate and address workplace harassment, including sexual harassment complaints in the workplace, and include an obligation for employers to make every reasonable effort to protect workers from harassment, including sexual harassment, in the workplace.”

One of the more troubling stats that we heard on the select committee is that four out of five Canadians who said they had unwanted experiences did not report these behaviours to their employers.

Madam Speaker, as a newly minted nurse, in my first job at a hospital, I witnessed a doctor make an inappropriate comment while inappropriately touching another nurse, who had just complained to him of having a bad cough. He offered to do a brief examination. Instead of touching her chest with his stethoscope, as he looked like he was going to do, he instead touched her chest with his hand. He laughed, along with his male medical resident, who witnessed this incident. She was shocked, took a step back, and quickly left the nursing station.

I was too intimidated at that time to say anything, which I still feel badly about. When I spoke about it later with the nurse, who was in tears, she was not comfortable in reporting it, and instead took measures to avoid that physician from then on.

This was the misogynistic culture of the day, that issues of sexual harassment were not things to be brought

forward and confronted. Unfortunately, we still today, far too often, run into this culture, that issues of sexual harassment, even when publicly witnessed, are not dealt with by employers immediately.

Speaker, earlier this week, Alberta Conservative MP Michelle Rempel wrote about sexual harassment under the headline “Confront Your Sexism.” While I won’t read to you her entire article today, I wanted to share with you a few sections that were very timely, given the debate this afternoon and the issues that we’ve heard about in the media:

“Last week, I found myself, once again, telling one of the young women on my staff that, ‘It’s important to address sexism in the moment it happens.’”

She goes further, telling readers, “The responsibility for combatting everyday sexism doesn’t lie with those who live with it; it lies with you.”

The article ends by saying, “If you’ve ever held a woman back because you thought they were bossy, or aggressive, why is it her responsibility to tell you why that’s wrong?”

“If you’ve ever sung along to violent misogynistic lyrics, bought a girl a Barbie when they wanted the Meccano set, attributed a woman’s success to her sexual skills, catcalled a woman, assumed a pregnant woman wants her belly to be touched by you, stayed silent during a disgusting sexist joke, assumed your female partner was going to clean your house and make dinner because of traditional gender segregation of housework, stayed quiet while a friend is abusing a woman, or if you’ve abused a woman yourself, you’re the problem, not her.

“Bottom line, I shouldn’t have to mentor the young women on my staff with tips and tricks to combat sexism.

“If it’s truly 2016, sexism should be your problem to deal with, not simply ours.”

Speaker, there are still those in our society who continue to perpetuate the misogynistic culture today, continuing to harass others inside or outside of the workplace. Let me be clear: Those who see sexual harassment happening and allow it to go unchecked and unpunished carry the same responsibility for contributing to a culture that is misogynistic.

I have a message from 51% of the population who are made to feel vulnerable, threatened, belittled and dismissed by any boor that comes along: It’s open season. If people are tired of political correctness, then let’s set it aside for a minute and call a spade a spade. A boor is a boor, no matter where they are.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I know that my colleague from Thornhill is also rising in the debate today, and I want to commend my colleague across the floor, from Cambridge, for bringing forward this motion, which I’m happy to support here in the Legislature. “Happy” may not be the right word, but I think it’s about time that we had more clarity on definitions around sexual harassment in the workplace and what is defined as the workplace.

I think the member from Cambridge is pushing this needed debate in the right direction. Hopefully it will end

up in legislation. I know that I and members of my caucus would be very pleased to participate in that to make sure we match the realities of the 2016 workplace.

Let me say, as introductory comments, that certainly sexual harassment can be man on man, it can be woman on woman, it can be woman on man, but the vast preponderance is man-on-woman sexual harassment, something I have always been concerned about as an individual, as an employer—which we all are as well, and have that responsibility—and even more so as the father of two daughters who are still young. It's something I will think a lot more about as we set laws in this province for a better future for them to succeed based on their talents and skills, and not have to face this kind of harassment in the workplace.

The human rights commission has done a number of findings on this. They define employment broadly, including applying and interviewing for a job—the member from Cambridge would have laws cover that; I think that's appropriate—volunteer work, internships and out-of-office activities like Christmas parties and social activities after work. We can't forget that when the laws were written, nobody anticipated the degree to which we would communicate electronically, so text messages, social media—I think all of that is truly an extension of the workplace in many circumstances, and should be covered, as the member rightly captures in her resolution.

There's a human rights case that I'll talk about a little bit, Speaker: *S.S. v. Taylor* 2012, where the vice-chair of the human rights commission found in favour of the complainant—that's the plaintiff, if I'm using it correctly.

The human rights commission goes on: "As Dickson and C.J. explained in *Janzen v. Platy Enterprises* ... the leading decision on the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace ... 'may be broadly defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that detrimentally affects the work environment or leads to adverse job-related consequences for the victims of the harassment.'"

So if it involves colleagues and it's going to impact the workplace, extension of the definition of "workplace" is appropriate in those human rights rulings.

I also want to say something very directly at a top level. As I said, I'd be happy to lend my experience to advancing this if it becomes legislation. I'll be supporting the member's resolution here today. I think we should do so in an era of believing in each other's motives: that they're the right motives and not trying to score political points on this issue.

Let me tell you why this is on my mind. Recently, our leader appropriately disciplined the member from Carleton-Mississippi Mills, who sits to my right here in the Legislature. That's never easy within a caucus. If that had happened in another party and I had been the leader, I don't think I would have jumped in to try to score political points, as we saw from the Premier.

I'll tell you why that's important for this debate. I remember in the most recent campaign in Niagara West-Glanbrook, in 2014, the candidate who ran against me said some pretty nasty things, Speaker. His name is

David Mossey from Niagara West-Glanbrook. He was the candidate. He posted "Women: Take notice!" on a Facebook post. The post was said to show the difference between butts of women who do squats and those who don't: "I agree, do you?" I was shocked that a candidate would have this type of content for public display and to have this belief set.

1410

Similarly, the Liberal candidate who ran against my colleague Lisa MacLeod from Nepean-Carleton in 2014, Jack Uppal, said—you won't believe this, Speaker—"Womens brains designed to concentrate multiple tasks at a time.... Mens brains designed to concentrate on only one work at a time."

He said, "Mens brains has a lot of space for handling the analytical process. They can analyze and find the solution for a process and design a map of a building easily. But If a complex map is viewed by women, they can not understand it. Women can not understand the details of a map easily, For them it is just a dump of lines on a paper."

What garbage that this candidate had to say. He went on in many other ways—there was newspaper coverage—where he basically was extraordinarily dismissive of women and their capacity to solve problems.

The point I want to make is I think that it's important to be consistent in these matters. If the Premier of the province suggests that a member should be kicked out of caucus, she actually had three opportunities to get rid of a candidate and refused to do so. They continued to run through the election for the Liberal Party.

Look, if we want to advance this issue, let's do so in a manner of mutual respect, so that our motives are on the same side. Let's not try to score cheap political points by trying to throw gas on the fire. If the Premier had taken corrective action and dismissed the candidates, as I expected she would have, then she could say that about Mr. MacLaren. However, not once, not twice, but three times, there were extraordinarily sexist, anti-women comments by candidates who were allowed to stay in the race. So please be consistent in this debate.

The member for Etobicoke North, as well, has written a novel—I won't get into some of the headlines there—that was similarly disparaging and sexist in nature. I want to point out, Speaker, that he is the parliamentary assistant to the Premier at this point in time.

It's not my style to bring these things up. But I think, because I respect the member for Cambridge a lot—I like her on a personal level. I think she's going places and I hope to see her in cabinet. That would be my recommendation on the next round that comes about.

So I'm going to support her motion. She's on the right path. I think of the future for my daughters. But let's do so in a way that's not trying to play partisan games. I know you wouldn't do that, but the Premier did. Let's leave that behind and focus on doing the right thing for our daughters and our sons.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member from Kitchener-Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's interesting to follow those particular comments around the political nature of this motion, I have to tell you, because I had some prepared notes.

I just want to pivot back, perhaps, to the story that the member from Cambridge shared with us because that story resonated with me, both from the perspective of being a victim of sexual harassment and also as being a witness to sexual harassment, and also not having the avenues or the mechanisms to follow through and hold accountable the people for whom, quite honestly, for a very long time in the workplace, there has been a culture which has been permissive of sexual harassment.

Following on those comments, with what did happen with the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills, if any good can be extracted from that experience, it is the fact that we are actually having a debate about harassment in the workplace and, through this motion, the extension of harassment to events and activities that take place outside of a normal workday.

For us in this House, we have no normal workdays. But for a growing number of Ontarians, the workplace is extended through our personal computers that we have with us all the time. I'm glad that the member mentioned that, as well, because the prevalence of bullying and sexting, if you will, and inappropriate comments has actually been facilitated in many respects through the prevalence of social media. So I think this motion is quite timely.

I do also think, though, that it provides an opportunity for us to address the fact that all legislation that goes through this House should be perceived through that gender lens. How is a piece of legislation—or a regulation, or a directive from a government—affecting women in the province of Ontario? Because, quite honestly, this place is still not reflective of the women that we serve in the province of Ontario. There are only 37 MPPs in this place. Until we have full gender parity, putting that stopgap or that safety measure of having a gender lens may prevent pieces of legislation from moving forward that fail on protecting the rights of all workers in the province of Ontario.

This government did have a unique opportunity to address workplace harassment comprehensively through Bill 132, around amending the Occupational Health and Safety Act to specifically address workplace harassment, which includes workplace sexual harassment, and the seemingly simple change that indicates a small step in the right direction.

We are of the opinion, while we appreciate the motion, that these measures could have been embedded in legislation that has already come before us. Unfortunately, that bill did not include a blanket obligation for employers to protect workers from workplace sexual harassment, so it was another missed opportunity. It did not give the workers the right to refuse work if it will expose them to workplace harassment, which is a big, big issue in the province of Ontario. It did not address the fact that joint health and safety committees should be

consulted in development of sexual harassment policies and programs.

This place does not have a comprehensive strategy around sexual harassment.

It did not require that they notify the leadership of any institution of incidents or complaints. It also did not require employers to inform workers about customers, students, patients, clients or others who have a history of harassment, to allow the worker to take preventive action to protect themselves, to prevent the harassment from happening.

It also didn't include any kind of reprisal protections, which means that workers could be subject to discipline for making a complaint about harassment at work. That is always the threat. There is always risk, when you stand up and you speak out about a violation, that there is a power imbalance in that workplace. For someone who is marginalized in that work setting to have the courage to stand up, they need to know that they are protected. Legislation should be comprehensive in this manner, for all workers.

We know how desperately this kind of protection is needed in Ontario, as much as it may be ignored. Workplace sexual harassment is too common of an occurrence. Of course, we are going to be supporting this motion. But I do want to say that I had the pleasure of being on the committee around the sexual harassment and violence, and those stories that we heard that day in Kitchener—I heard a full day's worth—are still heartbreaking. It is frustrating to be in 2016 and to have this power imbalance continue in the province of Ontario when there are comprehensive mechanisms that could have been in place to protect women.

I will say that I like the campaign “Who Will You Help?” I think it prompts another conversation outside of this place, really out in the real world, if you will. Honestly, I used it as an opportunity to talk to my own daughter, who is 15, about the culture of harassment that she faces day in and day out. That campaign is wonderful, but that campaign needs to be supported comprehensively by a piece of legislation which ensures that the culture of harassment, the power imbalance that has been allowed to exist in our workplaces for too long, is challenged in a very real way. If anything good can come of the incident with the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills, it is that we're having this debate today. We should all stand in our place and challenge sexual harassment in the workplace day in and day out—ideally, though, through legislation.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the Minister of Children and Youth Services, and responsible for women's issues.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I'm very pleased to join in this debate. I'm sorry I missed the leadoff from the member who introduced the motion, but I caught the last parts of the couple of rounds just before I rose to speak.

1420

Of course, this is a very serious issue for me as the Ontario minister responsible for women's issues. It's

absolutely important that women feel safe in their workplaces, their homes and their communities.

The Legislature is a place of work. There's no doubt about it. This is where we work. As the member for Kitchener–Waterloo said, and I'm sure others have said before me, our work extends beyond this place, as it often does for employees. Meetings are held outside of workplaces—events, social activities and so on.

I also agree with the member from Kitchener–Waterloo that change is needed to keep evolving in this workplace.

When I was a backbencher, I experienced a very harassing comment from someone in our workplace. It was highly inappropriate. I dealt with it directly and strongly, and I was pleased that it didn't happen again—but it happened, and I think if we actually surveyed our workplace, the Ontario Legislature, I bet you'd find a lot of people have experienced that. It's just unacceptable.

I'm very pleased that the member from Cambridge has brought forward this motion. I know she was on the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, and I think the work that she and everyone did on that select committee was very, very important. There are other pieces of work going on now that relate to sexual violence and harassment, and we have things going on around human trafficking and so on.

It is important to go back to what our sexual violence and harassment action plan established, because it wasn't there before. It established a commitment, and now we have legislation, to deal with requirements for campuses to provide sexual violence and harassment policies. It amended the Occupational Health and Safety Act to make stronger provisions for employees who are experiencing sexual violence and harassment in the workplace. Of course, there are other provisions around support for survivors and removing barriers in the court system. There was also a very effective public education and awareness-building campaign to change attitudes and build awareness around sexual violence and harassment, because, unfortunately, as we all know, people either don't think it actually exists in their workplace, or they know it exists, but they're not quite sure what it is. They don't know exactly what it looks like sometimes, especially harassment. Harassment can be a particularly subtle form of discrimination. That's why in our public education campaign, the most recent ads focused on the role of bystanders, to help them identify what harassment is, what discrimination is, and what to do when they see a workplace colleague potentially being harassed or violated.

We're very proud of this work on the government side, Speaker. We just did a progress report on that work. Of course, we've also introduced an action plan to end violence against aboriginal women and girls.

I was a bit concerned when I came in the House this afternoon. I have a lot of respect for the member from Niagara West–Glanbrook, but I disagree; we shouldn't be talking about political tricks and things like that. This is a very important motion the member has brought forward,

and I'm glad he acknowledged her for doing that. We're here right now, and I think we can all get on the same page about this very important motion. I don't think anyone is here to politicize anything. Harassment is what it is. We've got to deal with it in our own workplace, in other workplaces. This motion is intended to go beyond our workplace here in the Legislature, to all workplaces, and to recognize that outside the bricks and mortar of a building is the extension of a workplace. We know what the Human Rights Code says, and we need to uphold that.

I am very proud of the member from Cambridge for bringing this forward. I sense a lot of support. I just hope we don't get into political barbs about what is a very, very important motion that I believe we all value and can get on the same page for.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm very pleased to rise today. Of course, we're all supportive of anything that can be done to promote awareness of sexual harassment and violence in the workplace. The discussion today is centring around how exactly we define that workplace.

We do have new legislation, and we're still hoping to see a lot of progress being made in that regard, in terms of employers really understanding and putting the policies in place. It already has definitions that the workplace includes meals outside the actual bricks and mortar of where people work, and conferences. Even Facebook is included in the policies, because potential harassment, even on Facebook, which is the cyber-world, can be brought in and tied in with the workplace. This new legislation really does tighten up the need for policies, reporting and investigations.

I spoke to somebody from Thornhill who is a lawyer, Stuart Rudner. The name of his firm is Rudner MacDonald LLP, if anybody is interested in getting information. He really is advocating for companies to be proactive and to put training and policies in place so that the workers are aware of what the policies are and to keep reminding people. I would almost suggest that public awareness campaigns sometimes have to be a little bit fun and maybe even a little delicious—have a cupcake saying, "Remember workplace" and maybe a code or something like that to remind people every month that these policies are in place and to be cautious and that the company is counting on them.

As a woman, I think there aren't too many women who can say that they have never experienced harassment where they worked or went to school. I have to say that I've been here at the Legislature for two years, and my colleagues have been more than respectful. Maybe they even err too much on the side of conscience, because I don't mind a joke every now and then. But it has been a great place to work and a real eye-opener in terms of how things get done.

I do want to say that, yes, it can be heartbreaking, as the member from Kitchener–Waterloo said, in terms of sexual harassment at the workplace, but also it can be

heartbreaking for women, sometimes, just getting that job, just getting to the workplace, because employers look at them and say, “Hmm, she just got married.” They look them up on Facebook, and they can see they just got married. It’s all out there. They’re thinking, “She’s going to want to start a family very soon.”

What I would encourage, in terms of equality for women, in fact, is for men to have equal parental leave for newborns to what women have. Then maybe employers won’t look at that young woman and think it’s going to be a future problem for them.

I think it’s heartbreaking when women try to leave professions—say, porn or prostitution—and their new employer or fellow employees find out about it and they are made to feel very uncomfortable at work. We can do a lot more here to promote awareness that people, against their will—maybe they were a victim of human trafficking. It’s not enough to rescue the women. We have to ensure that they can get the training they need, get the employment they need and then be treated with respect at that new place of employment.

Stories come up in the news about blackmail. We see TV shows where those lines are very blurred in terms of workplace harassment and violence. Maybe we can do more to—I always go back to the show *Glee*, because I think that they brought in an actor with Down syndrome, an actor in a wheelchair, and what a great PR campaign that was for so many people who stopped seeing a person in a wheelchair and just saw the person and their talents and personality, and good points and bad points.

We heard a few barbs going back and forth here about why this motion is being brought forward. I think the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook was saying that he hopes that the motion isn’t being brought forward to draw attention to anybody—a candidate, an elected official, a former elected official. I would add to his comments that there are even allegations against a previous Liberal Premier in the news, from the Pan Am—a sexual harassment suit that’s ongoing.

I think that we all want to raise the public awareness. We want to ensure that all women in the province of Ontario—and men, because, yes, men are victims of sexual harassment by women and other men—that everybody is made to feel safe. It’s really unfortunate when these negative stories come out, and we all feel that maybe there is more that we can do.

Now is a great opportunity to have that discussion and to ensure that everybody enjoys a safe workplace.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the member from Parkdale—High Park.

1430

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Actually, “Madam Speaker” has a lovely ring to it in the context of this discussion.

I want to commend the member from Cambridge. Really, what we’re talking about is what women experience because, let’s face it, it’s mainly what women experience. That experience doesn’t start in the workplace; it starts when we’re young. I would warrant that not a

woman in this place has gone through her entire life without being harassed either at work or on the street or in her home. That is what we experience as women. The hope here is that our daughters will experience a different world, and if not them, then our granddaughters. That’s pretty depressing, in and of itself, to say that.

I’m segueing from the member from Thornhill, the member from Kitchener–Waterloo and the minister in saying that at the basis of what we’re experiencing in the workplace is economic inequality. As long as women are unequal economically in the workplace, we will be possibly victimized in every other way as well.

What are we looking at when we’re looking at women in the workplace? We’re looking at one gender that makes 70 cents plus a bit to every dollar that a man makes. We just—“celebrated” is the wrong word; we just marked equity day on the 19th. What are we looking at when we’re looking at women in the workplace? We’re looking at someone who really does two jobs. If they’ve got children, somebody who goes to work and then goes home and does another job, looks after children, does the housework, etc.—that, 90% of the time, falls to women.

They’re working two jobs, they’re not being paid equally, and the options aren’t there for them. We know that women are not promoted, that women do not make the same amount of money as men because they get passed over for the promotions that men get. We also know that, and that’s of course because women, in part, take more time off to be with their families. It becomes a vicious cycle. We know that women are more precariously employed than men. We know that women are in more part-time jobs and contract jobs than men, and hence paid less.

One of the demands that we should be making is that part-time work be paid the same as full-time work, because economic security is what gives women security. If you talk to women in shelters, as I do, you will speak to women who fled into a shelter and stayed with an abuser as long as they did because they cannot afford to live on their own with their children, certainly nowhere near what they could afford living with a man. It’s economic insecurity. To that end, this government should be behind our \$15-an-hour minimum wage demand, because it’s mainly and mostly women who earn minimum wage, and that needs to stop as well.

A wonderful person who used to work in this place, Kendra Coulter—I’m giving her a shout-out—has written extensively on retail work. It’s mainly and mostly women in retail work. They’re the worst offenders—the most number of men in management; the most number of women on the front lines; the most number of women who are making minimum wage versus some man who’s getting paid a salary that you can actually live on.

When we put forward the PTSD bill over eight years and finally the government picked it up and passed it, guess who they left off? Talk about a gender lens: nurses. Nurses got left off. We tried to amend that bill to include nurses. Nurses experience violence in the workplace. We tried to include them in that bill; the government said no.

That is not seeing things through a gendered lens. That was a missed opportunity.

In terms of online harassment, we have seen some vicious trolling occur to women in this chamber and to women outside this chamber. I remember that many of us got very upset around a certain—I'm not going to grace him with a name—who came to Toronto who was talking about legalizing rape. That he was let into the country was a major slap in the face to all of our women, number one, but we tried to prevent him actually speaking at his self-styled conference. I can tell you that my involvement in that campaign, and other women all around this chamber who were involved in this campaign to keep him out, to not allow people to rent to him—we were viciously trolled online, on Twitter, on Instagram, on Facebook. We had a recent high-profile case where a judge said, "Just get off Twitter"—a male judge. That's not seeing anything through a gendered lens and that's not recognizing that the real workplace of women is online as well as in the workplace, bricks and mortar, wherever they work. Until women are safe online, women will not be safe. Our daughters are certainly not safe online, and we need to look at that as parents as well as legislators.

So, yes, I absolutely support what the member from Cambridge is doing. We need to do so much more, though. We need to do so much more. Until women can earn the same as men, are economically equal to men, we will always be under attack. Let's change that, Madam Speaker, starting with you.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the member from Burlington.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I am pleased to stand in this House today and follow the always eloquent member from Parkdale–High Park, who has been in this place for a long time and for whom I have a great deal of respect. I appreciated her comments about not just what we do in here but what happens outside. I think that's the essence of the conversation and the dialogue that we're having today, Speaker, and I'm going to speak to that, if I may, in my comments, as well.

This subject matter is especially important to me, as I took part in the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment. As a result of that experience, I heard from witnesses who courageously shared their stories about what it's like to work in an environment where misogynistic and sexist behaviour is considered normal. As you know, Speaker, their stories, their observations, resonated with me, and I began to realize just how much I have, like so many women of a certain age who have been around—for me, 30 years—become somewhat immune to the realities that continue to face women every day, not because I don't face them myself, but because, simply put, I, we, so many of us, have become numb to what we see around us. At a certain level, we rage against it, but we also understand or somehow have come to expect that it's part of how we live, and I'm not sure that's right; in fact, I know it isn't. That's why I'm so proud to stand in my place and talk about this important

subject today. That decision to sometimes ignore it helps us to cope with the undeniable fact that every day, even sometimes in this place, I'm sorry to say, there are subtle and pernicious choices, words and actions that demonstrate we still have much to do. After all, this is a workplace too, as the minister mentioned. With people watching, it is undeniably a place where what we do and say really matters.

As has been said, it is 2016, and there's a growing awareness of the importance of a harassment-free workplace and a harassment-free society, as well. Much has been done in the recent past to help put a stop to sexual violence and harassment in Ontario and across Canada, from an important decision to call an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, to a decision to create a gender parity in cabinet—both of those of tremendous value, not just in real terms but symbolically too—and, closer to home, the work of the select committee, as I mentioned, and the creation of Ontario's sexual violence and harassment action plan.

We are going in the right direction, to be sure, but there's more that can be and needs to be done—and, every day, reminders that we need to do both.

We live in a time when everyone has a cellphone and they can record the comments and behaviour of anyone else at any time and in any place. You would think that this increased scrutiny would change people's choices and behaviours, but it hasn't. Combined with the 24-hour news cycle and the Internet, where a video can go viral in a matter of minutes, technology has served to remind us that the public realm exists well beyond the four walls of the workplace. As such, those who behave inappropriately must be held accountable for their decisions.

Imagine a scenario where your boss overhears you in the workplace make a harassing comment to a co-worker. Would you not expect that your employer would take action to ensure that such behaviour is not repeated and is addressed? We must all be accountable for our actions, and our words, too, because words can become weapons. Ask anyone who has suffered abuse at the hands of a partner, a parent, a guardian, a sibling. Why should a colleague be any different?

Ontarians want and deserve both a workplace and a society that is free of harassment: where employers, where colleagues, where we all contribute to a safe and healthy environment. An ill-considered comment or a decision to make a colleague the butt of your jokes is not only damaging to them, but those choices diminish us all.

It is often said that leadership starts at the top. But as someone reminded me recently, leadership exists at many levels in workplaces, and there's always opportunity to show it, to send a clear signal about exactly which behaviours are tolerated and accepted and which are not. Why, then, would your employer not be able to take similar action if you make similar comments, whether you're inside the workplace or outside it?

Brands—and it's often talked about—are important. Regardless of where you find yourself, an employee represents the brand of their employer, and, after all, the

brand is nothing more than the values that underpin the place where we work. Any inappropriate behaviour outside the physical workplace can still reflect negatively on that brand and on that reputation, and as I mentioned, brand equity is a resonant example of the values that underpin where we work.

1440

This is especially true of us as public figures. As role models in the public spotlight, we must all be held to a higher standard. We do not simply represent our own personal brand, but the brand of those who sent us here, our constituents who elect us to public office. How we treat each other matters. Young Ontarians across the province see how we conduct ourselves. If we expect them to treat each other with kindness, respect and collegiality, then we must do the same.

Speaker, last week I had a group in from my riding for Girls' Government and they attended question period on a day when the debate was difficult. We all know that in this place, feelings run high. But before I went into question period, we had a talk about public life and public service. When we came out we had the same conversation, and I can tell you their desire to represent Ontarians in this place diminished considerably after the time they had spent here in question period. I found that very sad.

When we diminish each other, we chip away at the overall public confidence that we all enjoy and that we all have an obligation to uphold. Although I'm relatively new to this place, I've realized just how dehumanizing it can sometimes become. When we shout over each other, when our conduct is less than becoming, we have effectively stopped listening. It reminds me of the old saying that those who throw dirt also lose ground.

Ontarians expect that they will never have to endure harassment of any kind. Why should the place of work be any different? Arguably, our conduct at work should be a reflection of the values of our workplace, but when it comes to harassment—whether it's on the playing field, on the shop floor, in the board room, in the Ontario Legislature or elsewhere—it should never be tolerated. We all have an obligation to call it out, to name it, to hold people to account when they are out of line, because not to do so, particularly in our case, as I mentioned, diminishes us all.

Allowing employers to amend their workplace harassment and sexual harassment policies to reflect the fact that the workplace no longer simply encompasses the physical location that an employee works in could go a long way to signaling that incidents of sexism, sexual harassment, bullying and hectoring cannot and should not be tolerated. Whether it's a public employee making inappropriate and sexually harassing comments to a reporter, or a colleague making misogynistic jokes at a public event, we all have a responsibility to make a clear statement, Madam Speaker, that it's never okay.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to return to the member from Cambridge to wrap up.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I want to thank the members this afternoon for their comments: the members

from Niagara West–Glanbrook and from Kitchener–Waterloo, the minister responsible for women's issues, and the members from Thornhill, from Parkdale–High Park, and from Burlington.

Madam Speaker, we hear all too often that people are tired of political correctness, but political correctness is just another term for civility. As a society, it's as simple as exercising etiquette and basic good manners, and to simply treat each other with respect. Civility promotes equality, good working relationships, collaboration and success, and reducing workplace harassment is a basic human right.

I want to take this opportunity to give a shout-out to some of the shining examples of employers who expect, demand and support civility and decency from their employees and act swiftly to address employees engaged in sexual harassment in the workplace. Furthermore, workplaces are increasingly updating their own policies to provide a clearer definition of workplace and work activities. This should be the standard across our province.

The term "employment" within the Ontario Human Rights Code should include work-related activities or events that happen outside of normal business hours or off business premises. As we heard earlier today in the discussion, a boor is a boor no matter where they are.

Madam Speaker, I just want to leave everyone with this thought: The way we treat each other is a reflection of who we really are. Therefore, we all win when we treat each other with respect at all times in all places. Thank you.

IMMIGRATION POLICY

Mr. Vic Dhillon: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario supports the federal government's decision to offer a full apology in the House of Commons for the Komagata Maru incident of 1914, and calls upon future federal governments to never again enact immigration laws based on one's religion, ethnicity, gender, race or any other discriminatory grounds.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Dhillon has moved private member's notice of motion number 71. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As you know, this House recognized April as Sikh Heritage Month in Ontario in 2013. This has allowed us, the Sikh community, to share our history, culture and accomplishments with all Ontarians, and helped us keep our heritage alive and well through sharing these stories with younger generations of Ontario-born Sikhs.

Sikhs have been dedicated members of Canadian society for many years. They have contributed to the greatness of this country as hard-working, socially and politically active members of communities across Canada, including Ontario, where the Sikh population is 200,000 strong.

The year 1904 saw the first wave of Sikh immigrants to Canada: 258 Sikhs, according to the census. Among these immigrants was Bhai Arjan Singh, who brought the first Sri Guru Granth Sahib, our holy book, to Canada.

Many will recall the name Baltej Singh Dhillon. He was the first Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer allowed to wear a turban and unshorn beard. A former member of Parliament, the Honourable Gurbax Singh Malhi, our very own MPP Harinder Malhi's father, was the first turbaned Sikh to be elected to the Canadian Parliament.

As our Premier, the Honourable Kathleen Wynne, often reminds us, other than the aboriginal peoples of Canada, we all came from somewhere else. Looking around at my colleagues, I see people from different backgrounds, speakers of different languages and members of different religions.

For many families in Ontario, the journey and struggle to start a better life in Canada in Ontario is still a fresh-lived experience. Madam Speaker, my family came to Canada in the late 1960s. They arrived in Alberta—actually, the border of Alberta and BC—working on farms and hearing stories of not having proper winter clothes and being forced to do jobs that were harder than some and being paid half the wages.

What we can learn from this is that we should pass on these experiences to our future generations. In my house, I make it a priority that my kids know to respect, and not take for granted, the great country they live in. As a matter of fact, when we travel abroad, I remember that one time we were in India and I showed them the schools and hospitals so they know and can appreciate what they have here and preserve and build upon what we have so they can continue to live in a great country and, moreover, leave a better country for future generations.

In the past few days, we saw the raising of the Nishan Sahib, which is the Sikh flag, outside our Legislature for the first time. Just this past Monday, we held the first Sikh prayer, which is called a kirtan, and welcomed the Sri Guru Granth Sahib inside the Ontario Legislature. These are just a few examples of how Ontario and Canada have grown to celebrate and appreciate different cultures, traditions and ways of life.

As we celebrate accomplishments, new and old, it is equally important for us to acknowledge the challenges that those before us faced. It's important that we do not forget the mistakes that were made, and we must ensure that generations ahead do not repeat them. This is a sentiment that many in Ontario will not only understand but relate to as well. Various communities that now call Ontario home first experienced prejudice and uncertainty upon their arrival in this new country.

The multicultural fabric of Ontario and the diversity of Canada are something we are all proud of. We know that Canada and true Canadians strive to uphold the rights and freedoms of all, and to be inclusive and accepting of all, regardless of our differences. But we're not ignorant of the prejudices that existed, the discrimination that was practised and the hatred that stemmed from a lack of acceptance and understanding.

1450

What makes this even worse is that the prejudices were embedded in Canadian policy and law. This was a systemic racism, one that we continue fighting to eradicate in various aspects of our society.

One such event with significance to the Sikh community is the SS Komagata Maru incident of 1914. May 23, 1914, was a sad day in Canadian history. A ship sailed from Hong Kong to Vancouver. On board were 376 passengers: 12 Hindus, 24 Muslims and 340 Sikhs. After spending over one month at sea, the passengers, on their way to a new, better life, were denied entry into Canada. They were not even permitted to disembark.

For two months, the Komagata Maru and its passengers sat stranded at Vancouver's docks. During this time, the passengers were denied the most basic necessities, such as food and water. I would call this a truly un-Canadian welcome. These poor souls waited on the ship, fighting against hunger and disease, with the hope that they would be granted access to a new life, a prosperous life, a Canadian life. It's hard to think that what they fought so hard for, yet never received, is what so many of us in Ontario are blessed with today.

On July 23, 1914, their hopes were completely crushed. The Canadian government sent two naval ships to escort the Komagata Maru out of Canadian territory. With heavy hearts and empty stomachs, the passengers on board began another two months' journey at sea. Upon their arrival in Calcutta, India, 20 passengers were killed by gunfire, nine were wounded, and the rest were taken as prisoners.

The Komagata Maru incident violated human rights. The Canadian immigration laws that kept the passengers of the Komagata Maru off Canadian soil are a disgrace to what Canada represents.

On August 3, 2008, then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized to the South Asian community in British Columbia. He offered an apology on one hand while he led a government that toyed with restrictive and selective immigration policies that discriminated against certain groups of people. I'm saddened and disturbed to know that members of that former governing party, some of whom sit in this House with us, were privy to that type of discriminatory practice and would have allowed for such policies, ones that remind us of the prejudice faced by the early Sikh and South Asian immigrants.

We are fortunate to have a new government in Ottawa, one that represents the accepting and inclusive nature of true Canadians. That's why Prime Minister Trudeau helped welcome 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada, many of whom have settled in Ontario. We have a federal government, much like our Ontario government, that truly looks like the Canada it represents.

Yet even in such a public arena, we have seen and heard the deep-rooted prejudice and discrimination from members who think it's okay to make fun of a turban or someone who speaks more than one language. Then again, we have also seen and heard the sexist behaviour of some members of this House.

But let me stay focused on this issue.

The laws that violated the rights of those Sikhs and South Asians, the laws that showcased deep-rooted hatred towards immigrants, were not created in Surrey, BC. They were created in the Canadian Parliament. The horrid acts related to the Komagata Maru incident took life in the House of Commons. That is why this Premier, this government and this caucus applaud Prime Minister Trudeau's recent announcement that he will offer a formal apology in the House of Commons for the Komagata Maru incident. This official apology will acknowledge the wrongdoings during that dark time. It will acknowledge that those who suffered through this incident deserve the same respect and dignity that Canada offers to so many people from diverse backgrounds. This official apology will right those wrongs. I support the federal government's decision to offer a full apology for this incident. I also call upon future governments to never again enact discriminatory immigration laws based on one's religion, ethnicity, gender or race.

The Prime Minister's announcement demonstrates Canada's focus on fostering a strong partnership with the Sikh community, a partnership that we can truly celebrate here in Ontario. So as we continue to enjoy Sikh Heritage Month, and as we share stories and memories of the Sikh community's achievements and resilience, let's take a moment to appreciate and acknowledge the sacrifices and struggles that came before us that allowed us to have our time of celebration.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member from Thornhill.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to speak on this motion, number 34. I just want to read it out again: "That, in the opinion of this House, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario supports the federal government's decision to offer a full apology in the House of Commons for the Komagata Maru incident of 1914 and calls upon future federal governments to never again enact immigration laws based on one's religion, ethnicity, gender, race or any other discriminatory grounds."

I just want to talk a little bit about what the Komagata Maru incident was. It involved a Japanese steamship of that name that sailed from Hong Kong through Shanghai to Japan, then to Vancouver, carrying 376 passengers from Punjab, British India. This was in 1914. Only 24 passengers were admitted to Canada. The other 352 were not allowed to land and were forced to return to India. The passengers comprised 346: 340 Sikhs, 24 Muslims and 12 Hindus—all British subjects. This was one of several incidents in the history of the early 20th century involving exclusion laws in both Canada and the United States designed to keep out immigrants of only Asian origin.

Of course, the PC caucus supports raising public awareness of historical wrongs, not just the Komagata Maru and the Japanese internment camps, but the MS St. Louis ship as well as many, many others.

I just want to mention, in case people are listening and aren't aware, that the attack on Pearl Harbor is what

spurred the government to intern ethnic Japanese living in Canada under the Defence of Canada Regulations and part of the War Measures Act. Canada has since apologized, as we know. The MS St. Louis was a German ocean liner most notable for a single voyage in 1939 when its captain tried to find homes for 908 Jewish refugees from Germany. After they were denied entry to Cuba, Canada, and the United States, the refugees were finally accepted in various European countries. Historians have estimated that approximately a quarter of them died in the death camps during World War II.

These apologies are crucial in ensuring that we as a society learn from history and avoid repeating these mistakes. On August 3, 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper appeared at the 13th annual Gadri Babian da Mela festival in Surrey, BC, to issue an apology for the Komagata Maru incident on behalf of the government of Canada. He said, in response to the House of Commons motion calling for an apology by the government, "On behalf of the government of Canada, I am officially conveying as Prime Minister that apology."

Some members of the Sikh community were unsatisfied with the apology, as they expected it to be made in Parliament, which Prime Minister Trudeau will now be doing. Harper's apology was made part of the official record of the House of Commons by Canada's first turban-wearing Sikh minister, Tim Uppal, under Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who should be congratulated for that.

The Conservative government funded the creation of the Komagata Maru museum as well as a travelling exhibit. They also included the Komagata Maru in the Canadian Museum of Immigration in Halifax and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. The Conservatives funded a monument at the Vancouver harbour and invested \$5 million in commemorative and educational projects about the Komagata Maru. The Conservatives ensured that the citizenship study guide now includes the Komagata Maru and issued an official Komagata Maru commemorative stamp for the centenary.

The Liberals have nothing on record up till now that even acknowledges this incident. I'm just reading all these out, which I really wasn't planning to, in my original notes, except that the member who presented this motion, the member from Brampton West, gave us a great historical account and then turned it into a partisan issue, which is very unfortunate, especially since it was the Conservatives who have done so much to raise awareness of this issue.

Obviously a lot more can be done to teach people about Canada's history, even the tough-to-hear Canadian history. Today we had a wonderful reception with the Vietnamese community, and many of us still have scarves here to commemorate Journey to Freedom Day. We tasted some of their food and we got to meet many members of the community. They were here to listen to statements from both sides of the House on it. We all know that they were referred to as "boat people" because

so many of the Vietnamese who fled Vietnam after the Vietnam War came by boat. There isn't enough time this afternoon; unfortunately, it's too long a list to talk about so many incidents.

1500

What I want to say is, I myself felt very uncomfortable and it was one of the reasons why I left Montreal because of Bill 101 in Quebec, which I felt was discriminatory against anglophone rights. I think it's a very unfortunate footnote in Canadian history that anglophones felt so uncomfortable and left Quebec, but I think that the Ontario Legislature benefits from so many—I call them “anglophone refugees”—who came predominantly from Montreal and many of them are residing in my riding of Thornhill.

We also have to look to the future, Madam Speaker, and we have to think about what is going on now that we could ensure does not cause us to have to give restitution or supply apologies in the future—for wrongdoings that may be going on on Canadian soil, or maybe things on other soil that we're not doing enough to prevent.

One that came to my mind—I hate to even say it; it's Thursday afternoon before we have the Jewish holiday of Passover tomorrow, we have Coptic Easter coming up and I think there's a Baha'i holiday this week. Everyone's looking forward to celebrating, and I feel bad when I bring up uncomfortable subjects. But are we doing enough to ensure that young girls in Canada aren't being taken overseas to have genital mutilation performed on them? Will they be coming back to us to say, “You did not take away my passport. You did not educate my parents. You did not question where I was going.” Doctors are not forced to report when this is done, as far as I know, in many jurisdictions. Is it even a crime in our province? These are things that we need to look at. We have to protect the young girls of the future in Canada.

We just spoke about a motion about sexual harassment in the workplace. Well, let's do more to ensure and be proactive so that we're not coming back and apologizing for wrongdoings in future.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member from Essex.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'm honoured to add my voice on behalf of my riding of Essex to those of other elected officials from all political spectrums who now, after more than 100 years, finally offer our apologies to the passengers of the Komagata Maru, their families and their descendants.

This moment is long overdue, and while the incident will leave a black mark on the history of our country, the importance of recognizing this historic wrong is critical to reminding us that Canada must remain a place of hope, open to those in the world who suffer in the crossfire of war, from grinding poverty and oppressive political persecution, regardless of their religion, their colour or the country from which they come.

I am particularly proud that here at Queen's Park we are talking about making amends for our mistakes in not welcoming the passengers of the Komagata Maru at a

time when communities across our province are opening their hearts and receiving refugees from war-ravaged Syria. It's not just important to say the words, “I'm sorry”; it is equally important that we follow up those words with a renewed commitment to those values which make our country such a beacon to oppressed people across the globe and those seeking opportunity to make a better life for themselves and their families.

The parallels between what happened in Vancouver with the Komagata Maru and what we are seeing play out in the United States presidential election are poignant and significant: Donald Trump calling for a ban on Muslims entering the US or building a wall on the southern border is the same mentality which saw Canada refuse entry to British subjects who also happened to be Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus at a time when immigrants from white Europe were streaming into Canada in numbers not surpassed since.

When I think about all the great things Canadians have achieved, I can't help but think that, with the exception of indigenous peoples, all those achievements were made by immigrants or descendants of immigrants. I also can't help but think about the contributions to Canada that may have been lost because the Komagata Maru was rejected and sent back out to sea by the government of the day.

Selective immigration based on race, creed or culture is not a Canadian value. It doesn't make our country stronger; in fact, it makes our country weaker. Let us all, in this Legislature, today offer a full and unreserved apology for the Komagata Maru incident and recommit ourselves to building a fairer, more inclusive, diverse and open Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade.

Hon. Michael Chan: Thank you for the opportunity. One hundred and two years ago, in 1914, there was a dark moment in Canada—a moment that failed human rights, a moment that failed humanity and a moment that desecrated the good name of Canada. I'm referring to the motion introduced by my colleague MPP Vic Dhillon from Brampton West. The experience of Sikhs in Canada, like many other immigrants, is littered with prejudice, discrimination and hostility. Unfortunately, this treatment and way of thinking was reinforced through immigration policies over time.

Immigration policies have been used to discourage certain groups of people from making Canada their home. The Asian community, in addition to many others, has faced a number of difficult challenges. The Continuous Passage Act required all immigrants to arrive on an uninterrupted journey from their port of origin to Canada. This was especially difficult for immigrants from Asia, because no steamship line provided continuous service from Asia to Canada.

Additional legislation required immigrants from Asia who wished to enter Canada to have \$200 in their hands upon arrival. That was a lot of money in those times, and those who chose to immigrate to Canada did not have the

means to bring that kind of money with them. Let's not forget about the Chinese Immigration Act, which put a head tax on Chinese immigrants.

It is important for our government to acknowledge the wrong committed against immigrant communities and to work toward creating legislation that will make it impossible for such prejudice and discriminatory ways of thinking from impacting the lives of old and new Canadians, now and in the future.

I speak to support the motion brought forward to support the federal government's decision to offer a full apology for this incident, and also call upon future governments to never again enact discriminatory immigration laws based on one's religion, ethnicity, gender or race.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Tim Hudak: I'm pleased to rise in support of the motion brought forward by my colleague Mr. Dhillon. He made a presentation about the historic facts, and I commend him for bringing this forward to the assembly. My colleague from Thornhill, as well, spoke in support of the motion here today.

There's no doubt that the Komagata Maru was an extraordinary tragedy, and it's important for us in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to recognize that for what it was. The passengers arrived in Canadian waters on May 21, 1914. They were anchored in Vancouver's harbour. Not a single one of the passengers was allowed ashore, even for a preliminary examination, except for 20 returning residents and a very few special cases. The vast majority found themselves confined in the ship, like prisoners, throughout their entire time in the Canadian waters.

1510

The journey to get there was devastating as well. Initially, 355 disappointed, radicalized passengers left for Asia. After a long delay in Japan where some passengers disembarked, 321 passengers reached the Indian port of Budge Budge near Kolkata, on the September 29, 1914. Of course, by then, the First World War had begun.

Passengers on board had hoped that they would find freedom and safety in our country—which we take for granted and have always enjoyed. It's a shameful part of our history that, because of their religion, their race and their country of origin, they were treated in this fashion. It's unconscionable to us in 2016, but, sadly, it was the reality of the decision Canadians made in 1914. Even though some folks may say that's 102 years ago, I do think it is very important for us to send the right signal today, the apology, and to put the historical facts on the record—and our collective shame, I think, from all three parties. So I commend the member from Brampton West for doing this.

It reminds me of the sad reality of the MS St. Louis as well, with German Jewish people who were turned away. The 907 Jewish refugees aboard the St. Louis were denied entry to Canada. They were fleeing Nazi Germany, but the decision-makers at the time sent them back

to Europe. Tragically, 254 of those original passengers were killed in the Holocaust—wiped out, eradicated. I can only imagine, if people had been more thoughtful in 1939, the contributions and the vitality that would have created our nation. It's shameful that decision-makers at that point in time not only said “no,” but had this attitude that “none is too many.” It was the same with the Komagata Maru.

I know, in Parliament, that Prime Minister Harper's apology was made part of the official record in the House of Commons by Canada's first turban-wearing Sikh minister, Tim Uppal. The Conservative government funded the creation of the Komagata Maru Museum, as well as a travelling exhibit—because I bet a lot of Canadians, even those gathered here today for this solemn debate, really wouldn't know much about this. Thankfully, it's before the assembly today, so we do. This includes the Komagata Maru in the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The government of the day and Prime Minister Harper funded a monument at the Vancouver Harbour and invested \$5 million in commemorative and educational projects about the Komagata Maru. The citizen guide at the time also recognized it. I understand Prime Minister Trudeau is making a formal apology as well.

I think it's important we recognize this goes beyond partisan politics and that all of us, as Canadians, are truly sorry and apologize to the Sikh people and the families affected by this tragedy.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Harinder S. Takhar: First of all, I want to say that I wholeheartedly agree with the motion put forward by my colleague from Brampton West.

As you have heard, Sikhs were returned from the shores of Vancouver, BC, in 1914, due to the unfair and discriminatory immigration practices that existed at that time. Today, however, I want to talk about how the times have changed and about how the descendants of the same Sikhs are making incredible contributions to Canadian society 100 years later.

It is ironic that in the same province, 76 years later, in 1986, Mr. Munmohan Singh Sihota became the first Sikh to be elected to the British Columbia legislature and later on became the first Sikh to join the BC cabinet as a minister and held very important portfolios, including education, environment, labour and human rights.

In the same province, Mr. Ujjal Dosanjh, another Sikh, served as the Attorney General of that province and, later on, in 1999, became the Premier of the province of British Columbia.

Mr. Herb Dhaliwal, another Sikh from the same province, became the first Sikh ever to be appointed to the federal cabinet in Canada.

All these leaders were pioneers and paved the way for further significant political appointments. Recently, the Honourable Harjit Singh Sajjan was appointed as the minister of defence in Prime Minister Trudeau's cabinet.

The British Columbia Sikhs have come a long way from the days of the Komagata Maru and now are considered an integral and important part of British Columbia's fabric and are making great contributions to the well-being of the province.

Madam Speaker, as I have said so many times, the Sikhs in Ontario have done really well. Right here in the Legislature, we have five members of Sikh heritage. I had the honour to serve as the first Sikh in the Ontario cabinet. We now have two Sikh cabinet ministers in the federal cabinet, holding very important economic portfolios.

The presence of Sikhs can be felt in every aspect of our society. The Sikhs, by nature, are entrepreneurs, and they have made a very strong contribution to our provincial economy.

Madam Speaker, Komagata Maru was an unfortunate incident. Our province and our country is richer because of the diversity of our population. I'm very proud of the contribution that the Sikhs have made to the culture and economic fabric of our society.

The Komagata Maru was forgotten by Canadians at some point, but since then, I think that Sikhs have been insisting that the apology should be offered right in the House of Commons. I'm very glad that our Prime Minister has decided to do just that.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: I rise today to support the motion put forward by my colleague from Brampton West.

The Komagata Maru incident is a dark stain on the face of the value of tolerance and inclusiveness. When I immigrated to Canada from India, I first lived in Vancouver and I had the opportunity to visit Coal Harbour, where I was told the Komagata Maru had been anchored. While there, in my mind, I could see the faces of the 376 passengers who endured the most deplorable, prison-like conditions for two months. They were denied entry to Canada because of a deliberate and exclusionary policy of our federal government of the day. They wanted to keep out people of certain ethnicities—innocent Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims from India—who arrived with hope in their eyes and a dream of a better life for their families in their hearts.

This ill-fated ship was escorted out of Canadian waters by the military and forced to return to India. When the ship arrived at Budge Budge harbour in Calcutta, British soldiers shot at those innocent, tired and desperate migrants, killing 19 and imprisoning most of them. Madam Speaker, what a punishment for harbouring hope and for seeking a better future for their families. We cannot bring back those who lost their lives in this tragedy. We also cannot heal the pain and suffering of those who lost their loved ones.

Our Canada today prides itself on being a tolerant and inclusive society. Therefore, we should not hesitate to accept responsibility for historic wrongs and unfortunate actions of our government of the day.

Madam Speaker, the announcement of an apology for the Komagata Maru tragedy by our Prime Minister, the

Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, in the House of Commons on May 18, 2016, is the only right thing to do.

1520

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: First, I want to begin by saying that I think it's absolutely appropriate that an apology is being delivered by the Prime Minister of our country. I think that's a very positive thing, and I think that it's important to commit to apologizing for wrongdoings that happened in the past. I think that's the appropriate thing for any Prime Minister to do, so I acknowledge that, and I acknowledge a commitment to ensuring that, moving forward, we don't repeat these types of policies, which are regressive, which are racist, which are exclusionary. That's an important commitment.

With respect to the motion, those elements of the motion are positive things and I want to acknowledge that. But there are some very key things we have to address when it comes to the language being used. One of the things that's being brought up time and time again is that this was an unfortunate incident. I want to challenge that notion. This wasn't an "unfortunate incident." It was, and continues to be, part of a systemic problem. It wasn't a one-off situation.

In fact, the Minister of Immigration raised some of the issues here in Ontario. Across Canada there was systemic racism with respect to immigration policies. This wasn't one incident that targeted a group of people. This was a snapshot of a broader problem, starting in 1900, with the head tax on Chinese immigrants; then 1903, when that head tax was increased; and looking forward to 1910, when the Immigration Act's section 38 very clearly stated that the government was able to prohibit the landing of immigrants "belonging to any race deemed unsuited to the climate or requirements of Canada, or of immigrants of any specified class, occupation or character."

This was a systemic issue. This was not an incident in the history of Canada; this was a broad problem of racism that existed very clearly. When we refer to it as an unfortunate incident—"Oh, this was one bad problem that happened, one bad specific moment in time"—it actually does an injustice to the reality of a systemic history of oppression of racialized people in this country that has happened. We need to acknowledge it as a systemic issue, not as a one-off incident. That's important.

The War Measures Act was passed, which gave government wide powers to arrest and to detain. In 1917—this is important—the Wartime Elections Act disenfranchised all people from "enemy-alien" countries who had been naturalized since 1902. That is a systemic approach. That is a government approach. That is not a one-off incident where one boat was landing. This is a systemic issue that's going on here.

In June 1919, Doukhobors, Mennonites and Hutterites were prohibited entry because of their "peculiar habits, modes of life and methods of holding property." Again, it was a systemic approach to another marginalized community.

Our colleague from the Conservative Party addressed the St. Louis incident. In 1939, the St. Louis sailed from Germany with 930 Jewish refugees on board. No country in the Americas allowed them to land. The ship was forced to return to Europe, where three quarters of the refugees died at the hands of the Nazis. Again, it was a systemic approach to racist policies when it comes to dealing with people from other countries coming to Canada, not a one-off incident. We need to address it like that.

I am very proud, of course, of my Sikh heritage, but this incident impacted not only Sikhs. There were 340 Sikhs on board, but there were 24 Muslims and there were 12 Hindus. This was an issue of racism that was perpetuated against people of South Asian descent. It was not specifically targeted towards the Sikhs; it was targeted towards South Asians, broadly speaking.

We need to speak about that as well. This is an issue that impacted South Asians. They were treated unfairly. These were folks who were a part of the British Empire, but they were not treated fairly. The continuous journey was not a one-off incident; it was a policy in place which specifically targeted people who came from farther away. The continuous journey law did not apply to folks coming from the United Kingdom, because they could come directly. That was not chance, that was not a coincidence; that was a specific, targeted, racist policy, and that's why we need to speak about it that way.

When we talk about ensuring that these wrongs don't occur in the future, what should we do? What happens when we have an apology that's limited to just looking at a specific incident from the past is that it relegates the issue to being a one-off incident, and we relegate the issue to being a historical problem. Well, there's problems today.

It's important to apologize for issues that happened in the past, but how can we really commit to ensuring that we have a country that's committed to social justice? Well, we can do a couple of things. We can talk about some of the systemic problems that exist. What are those problems for new Canadians? The fact that there are so many talented, skilled people coming to this country who don't have the opportunity to use their expertise and their skills in this country because they're not acknowledged—their skills, their training. Internationally trained individuals who come to Canada to make it their home are not able to actually use their skills to contribute back to the country because we don't have a process that allows them to get accredited in terms of their skills. That's something we can commit to. The province can commit to a process to ensuring that people can become accredited in an easy, accessible and affordable manner.

What else can we do? We can ensure that we increase funding to new Canadians coming so that they can have language resources, that they can have educational opportunities, that they can actually become successful in the country.

We have a past decade of cuts to refugee health care, refugee services, and if we really want to be committed

to ensuring that our country redresses the wrongs from the past and looks at the systemic issues, then we should be committed to ensuring that we increase funding for those services, that people who come here—and we welcome them—are also provided with resources to succeed, provided with language opportunities, provided with health care opportunities. These are the issues we need to address.

Another component: If we really want to talk about apologizing for racist policies from the past, let's look at current policies that are going to impact people. Right now, we have in this land Bill C-51, which is the law of the land. We should have a motion which says that the federal government should repeal that, not amend it. It's a law that was criticized by previous Prime Ministers, a law that was criticized by previous Supreme Court judges, a law that was criticized by artists, journalists and by a wide range of civil society. That's a law that's currently in existence in this land.

There are a number of individuals who have come forward and said that not only does this disproportionately impact racialized people, people from different ethnic backgrounds, it disproportionately impacts natives, aboriginals. This is a law, which is currently a law in this land, which is going to, and does, systemically target certain people based on their religious beliefs and the colour of their skin. That's a policy we need to have immediately repealed. That's a law that we need to see immediately repealed. That would be a meaningful way to do justice to those who were wronged in the past. That is something we can do today.

In addition, we have ongoing issues of discriminatory policing practices, like carding. That's an issue today that impacts new Canadians. The current regulations that have been presented by this government do not actually end this practice. They provide a huge loophole which, in effect, renders the entire regulation meaningless. It does not actually provide protection to people who are from racialized backgrounds, people who are being targeted just because of the colour of their skin—not because they are the subject of a particular investigation, not because there's any evidence against them, but simply because of the colour of their skin. That's exactly what happened to people on the Komagata Maru ship.

If we want to do justice to the injustices of the past, we need to address them in a systemic fashion and address the wrongdoings that are going on right now in our country. That's the way you really pay homage to the injustices: by ensuring that those that are happening in the present are rectified and ensuring that they don't happen again in the future.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the member from Brampton–Springdale.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I rise today to support the decision of the federal government to apologize for the Komagata Maru incident in 1914.

Coming from a Sikh family, this is a proud moment for us as Sikh Canadians. I know Vic mentioned earlier that my father was the first turbaned Sikh elected as a

member of Parliament in Canada. It was a proud moment for us all. But as a child, I also saw the struggles he faced and the barriers he had to overcome so that we could be here today, we could be in a position of power. I remember when he first went to our local Legion and he wasn't allowed to enter the Legion with his turban because they didn't allow headgear. It was a barrier that he had to cross. It was racism that he had to overcome.

Last week, when the Prime Minister celebrated Vaisakhi on the Hill, he talked about an experience he once had while he was standing at the Centennial Flame, where somebody came up and asked him where his taxi was. Instead of saying anything else, he responded politely, "I'm not driving today"—because 20 years ago, in 1993, Sikhs were still known as being taxi drivers.

1530

I completely agree with the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton that we need to recognize foreign credentials, but we also need to recognize incidents of the past and apologize. We need to apologize, as a nation, for the intolerance suffered by the Sikh community in 1914—not only for the Sikh community, but for the South Asian community as a whole—at the hands of the Canadian government of the day. The passengers, all British subjects, were challenging the continuous-passage regulation, which stated that immigrants must “come from the country of their birth, or citizenship, by a continuous journey and on through tickets purchased before leaving the country of their birth, or citizenship.”

The events surrounding the Komagata Maru had not been acknowledged in Canadian history until beyond the 1970s. I understand that Prime Minister Harper did recognize them. Prime Minister Trudeau is recognizing them in the House of Commons, and it's a proud moment for us all. Prime Minister Trudeau has acted on it. Sikhs have become an important part of the political fabric of Canada. He has four Sikh cabinet ministers. I think he made a joke by saying that he has more Sikh cabinet ministers than they do today in India. So he has recognized and acknowledged and he has moved forward on that and delivered for the Sikh community. We're proud to say that today he will be apologizing for the Komagata Maru incident. The apology is not only for the families of all the passengers, Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims, but for the millions of immigrants that now call Canada home.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I return to the member from Brampton West.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: I want to begin by first thanking the members who spoke on this motion: the members from Thornhill and Essex; the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade; and the members from Niagara West–Glanbrook, Mississauga–Erindale, Mississauga–Brampton South, Bramalea–Gore–Malton and Brampton–Springdale.

Madam Speaker, I think we can all agree that the Komagata Maru incident was a very dark time in Canadian history. As the member from Essex stated, a formal, full apology in the House of Commons is long overdue. It's truly a time for righting a wrong. This apology by

Prime Minister Trudeau will be heard loudly across the world as a message of our Canadian values, as a caring, compassionate and inclusive society.

As a Canadian who happens to be Sikh and a member of the government under Premier Kathleen Wynne's leadership, I'm very proud to say that we support the Prime Minister in his upcoming apology in the House of Commons.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Jim Wilson: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government should put an immediate and permanent stop to the wpd wind turbine project next to the Collingwood Regional Airport; in the name of pilot safety and public safety, as well as protecting economic development and jobs.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Wilson has moved private member's notice of motion number 67. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I want to start off by thanking all of the constituents who have come down from the riding today, taking the time to come down for such an important issue and to watch. Frankly, it's a majority government, so it doesn't really matter how many there are on this side of the House or how we vote, it's how the people on that side of the House vote—because they'll outvote us on every occasion. So 50 minutes from now, we'll be watching very, very carefully.

Madam Speaker, my private member's resolution calls on the government to put an immediate and permanent stop to the wpd wind turbine project next to the Collingwood Regional Airport and the Stayner Aerodrome. The people of my riding don't want the wpd turbines. They don't want them because they threaten pilot safety. They don't want them because they threaten public safety. They also don't want them because of what they mean to human health.

We've all read reports about people living near wind turbines and stories about how residents are plagued by dizziness and ringing in the ears and flickering. My constituents don't want to deal with these issues in the years to come. Another reason my constituents don't want the turbines is, they will hinder economic development and job creation.

Now, all of these reasons are pretty straightforward. I understand them. Most people I talk to understand them. They are positions the community has put forward since this project first became public knowledge back in 2010. Sadly, at each step it seems these views haven't been heard—or maybe a better term is that they haven't been valued—because it seems we have a government that is so set on allowing these turbines to happen that it doesn't care one iota about the views of the people of Simcoe–Grey.

Let us for a moment, Madam Speaker, look at the sheer height of these turbines. wpd wants to erect eight 500-foot turbines—that's 152 metres—next to the

Collingwood airport and near the Stayner airport. Two of the turbines will be 2.1 nautical miles from the airport—that's about 2.5 regular miles—and they're as tall as a 50-storey office building here in downtown Toronto. There's nothing like them in my riding or in Canada. It's ludicrous. Simply put, it's the strangest plan I have ever heard of in my 25 years at Queen's Park.

Planes landing and taking off at the airport will be just seconds away from colliding with these structures. We all remember than on April 27, 2014, a Piper aircraft was destroyed when it collided with the blade of a wind turbine near the Highmore Municipal Airport in South Dakota. Four men died in that crash. These tragedies can happen, Madam Speaker.

Let's take a moment to look at how busy the Collingwood airport is. It's extremely busy for a regional airport. On average, the airport experiences more than 11,000 landings and takeoffs each year. These are business people using the airport; these are recreational flyers and student pilots; these are tourists coming into the area; these are government flights. That number, Madam Speaker, that more than 11,000 landings and takeoffs each year, is expected to grow. It's imperative that nothing put this facility at risk.

The township of Clearview and the town of Collingwood stated they don't believe the turbines should be placed next to the airport because of the negative economic impact these structures will have on the airport and neighbouring lands. They backed this position with a study they commissioned. The study notes that the airport and related businesses directly employ 30 people and support another 20 indirect jobs, and that these generate annual totals of \$2.8 million in labour income and \$3 million in GDP—not big numbers for Toronto but big numbers for Simcoe–Grey.

Let me say, Madam Speaker, that I've sat awake at night trying to figure out why the government is allowing these turbines in the riding. The environment minister likes to say that Nav Canada doesn't have any concerns about these turbines, but the pilots using the Collingwood airport certainly do. They don't take the matter lightly, and neither should the Liberals. Nav Canada told me a year and a half ago that they don't have any rules for this sort of situation because they didn't think any government would be stupid enough to build 500-foot-high wind turbines next to an airport.

The Collingwood airport is a registered aerodrome and not a Transport Canada-certified airport. Therefore, its operational airspace is not protected by Transport Canada. That means Transport Canada will not interfere with the province's decision to approve the placement of wind turbines within the operational airspace of the airport. Hence, flight risks—mainly wind turbines next to the airport—have not been reviewed or assessed by Transport Canada or Nav Canada, as they have no authority to act. So, Madam Speaker, it's disingenuous when the government states that Transport Canada and Nav Canada have no concerns.

On top of all of this, Clearview township, the municipality of which the—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member from Simcoe–Grey, you need to withdraw that statement.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Withdraw.

On top of all this, Clearview township, the local municipality where the turbines will be located, has stated that it's not a willing host to the turbines.

And as you know, Madam Speaker, I want to point out that the government was wrong to strip municipalities of planning authority in regard to wind turbines and renewable energy projects under the Green Energy Act. They are the only government in Canada to do so. Municipalities have so many land planning powers. Removing their authority over the placement of wind turbines is opportunistic on the part of the Liberal government here at Queen's Park.

For residents in my riding, this whole issue has been incredibly frustrating. On numerous occasions, in writing and through demonstrations in the riding and here at Queen's Park, residents have said they don't want these turbines. But the government ignores them.

Well, Madam Speaker, people don't like to be ignored. By not listening to the people of my riding, the government is showing its arrogance. People remember that type of treatment; they remember it for years to come. I quite frankly find it a puzzling way to treat residents of this province.

1540

For many people living near the airport, their concerns tie into quality of life. They believe their quality of life will be negatively impacted if these turbines are built, and I agree with them. Think about it for a moment: Would you want to live right next to one of these mammoth structures?

Then there's the whole issue of property values. These properties near the airport, near the site where the turbines will be built, are beautiful rural parcels. There are gorgeous views of the Niagara Escarpment and Wasaga Beach. These properties are valuable pieces of land. The owners have worked hard for many years to afford where they live today. Now those turbines are going in. The property owners are worried about what that will mean to the value of their land, and so they should be. The turbines will also diminish the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the area, which is in close proximity to the Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO world biosphere reserve.

I want to share some of the comments from people in my riding. Mr. Kevin Elwood, who was with us here today, is a business owner in the riding and he's a local pilot. He has his own airfield near the turbines. He's also a municipal councillor. Mr. Elwood said, when the government approved the wpd project, “[I] agree this is not good news. The province has knowingly approved a project that will have long-lasting negative economic impacts along with risks to human health....” He went on to say, “With a province as large as Ontario, it is inconceivable that there is a need to shoehorn eight wind turbines tight beside two aerodromes....”

Now I must quote the many pilots using Collingwood Regional Airport. I must note that many of the pilots

using the airport do so without high-tech instrumentation. They make visual landings. Can you imagine approaching the airport in heavy rain or when the snow is blowing and having to avoid these turbines?

The Liberals like to hide behind their Green Energy Act when talking about wind turbines. The fact is that that piece of legislation, in this regard, is terribly flawed. I say so because no well-thought-out legislation would ever permit wind turbines anywhere near an airport. It's simply preposterous that this project was even considered, let alone approved.

Despite the tough road that has led us here today, Madam Speaker, I am more proud of my constituents than ever before. They are tenacious when it comes to something they believe in. Mr. Jeffrey Shearer, publisher of *On The Bay Magazine*, states, "But local residents have not given up. Six legal appeals have been lodged against the Liberal government's decision, based on a number of environmental and aviation issues. Private citizens' groups have filed three of the appeals, while the municipalities of Collingwood, Clearview and Simcoe county are behind the other three."

Clearview resident Betty Schneider has a petition on change.org to try to stop the turbine project from happening. Each day, it gets more signatures.

The government has a chance here to do the right thing. We know this project is wrong. We just need someone in the government to admit it. Now, Mr. Speaker—Madam Speaker, there's nothing wrong with the government saying it made a mistake. In fact, admitting when we are wrong shows great maturity and fortitude. It's my hope today—it's our hope today—that the government will take that step, that it will use this opportunity to stand before the people in the gallery of this House, those at home, those across Ontario and, frankly, pilots around North America: Admit, "We were wrong. We didn't get this right. We're going to put a stop to this madness." Imagine, Madam Speaker, the goodwill that would create. Imagine how this government would be remembered in the south Georgian Bay area in the years to come.

As it stands right now, things do look bleak. In the words of Clearview township mayor Chris Vanderkruys, "We are extremely disappointed that the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change has granted wpd Canada a renewable energy approval for the Fairview Wind Project." We are all very, very disappointed. While we're disappointed too, Mr. Speaker—Madam Speaker. You're new at the job, so I'm getting used to it; congratulations—we're all hopeful over here. You can do the right thing.

I just want to tell you the position of the airport authority, the board that runs the airport. They've had the position that they didn't want to get caught up in the Green Energy Act and they didn't want to get caught up on whether wind is good or bad. Their official position has been since 2010, before the Green Energy Act, just move the turbines. Just move them. Why do you have to put them between two very busy airports, where they're not wanted?

I want to end with this: People ask me, "Why are they so big?" We don't have that much wind up there. Why are they so big? It's because you get paid for installed capacity, whether they ever work or not—millions of dollars to be made on these things, whether they ever go around or not—and that's a real shame.

You have the chance to do the right thing. I ask the honourable members that are here today—and I appreciate you being here—to do just that: Send a message to your own government that this just isn't right. You don't want the blood of civilians and pilots on your hands. It's not a matter of if someone's going to get hurt or if there's going to be an accident. It's a matter of when there's going to be an accident and when there's going to be a death.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I appreciate the opportunity to rise. I have to say that the member for Simcoe—Grey is a very capable speaker, a capable debater, so I don't generally relish disagreeing with him. But in this case—and I'm sure he will not be surprised—I do disagree with him.

I wanted to look at his arguments, because I had an opportunity to hear them when he presented them earlier today in the media studio, and he reprised them largely in his presentation this afternoon.

The first has to do with protection of pilot and public safety. I see those as worthy goals. I think that anyone who has any development in the area of an airport has to think about those matters, and frankly, any airport administration should be taking those into consideration. Any process for reviewing a development has to take those into consideration.

I had an opportunity, when I heard about this motion coming forward, to take a look at the document that was provided by Nav Canada when they were asked to comment on this proposal.

They sent a letter March 15, 2016, and I will read what they have to say. This is in response to the developer. I said, "Ok, you've got this proposal coming forward. This is opposed. Show me what your documentation is." This is the letter, March 15, 2016, from Nav Canada. They state, "We have evaluated the captioned proposal—the eight wind turbines at Stayner, Ontario—and Nav Canada has no objection to the project as submitted. Be advised that the locations and heights of the proposed turbines will require the following publication amendments to the procedures for Collingwood airport...."

In fact, Nav Canada will say to you, if you're building near an airport, "If you change the topography, you have to give us notice so that we can inform pilots, so that we can put it out for the public." Anyone who's planning a flight path, who's coming into this area, has to know what is there.

The Nav Canada letter goes on to say that "impacts can be limited by sectoring the circling" for planes to north of this particular area. In fact, you can't circle to

the south. Yes, then you would come into conflict with those wind turbines. But if you go to the north, that's a perfectly reasonable accommodation.

I have to note, and I'll talk further about it as I go on, about Billy Bishop that planes that circle Billy Bishop don't come north of the airport to circle through the financial district. They go south to circle over Lake Ontario. It's entirely reasonable for an airport in a constrained area to have rules and regulations that tell pilots where they can safely circle and where they should not be going.

"Nav Canada's evaluation and conclusions are based only on the impacts to procedures we maintain; therefore, we do not object to the proposal as submitted provided our construction notification requirements ... are met.

"With respect to impacts to instrument procedures maintained by external organizations, we encourage you to consult directly with all affected aerodromes and external instrument procedure design organizations. As procedures to Stayner (Clearview Field) Airport ... are also impacted by the project we recommend you contact the design firm for those procedures to discuss mitigations."

In other words, they're saying, "If you're going forward with this, in our books, this works. There are design features, there are matters to do with instrument flight, that you need to be looking at mitigation for." They don't say anywhere that this airport and this development should not coexist. They're saying there have to be adjustments so that they can coexist.

1550

I have to say that the member, in his very thorough presentation, referred to the question of jobs. I'm assuming—and he may correct me when he speaks later—he's talking about the proposed Clearview Aviation Business Park. I took the opportunity to read the Enterprise Bulletin's recent report from February 11, 2016—commentary on the aviation business park. The Enterprise Bulletin reported:

"The Fairview project will be built on land owned by farmers John and Andrew Beattie." For those not familiar, the Fairview project is the windmill project that's in question here today.

"In a statement sent to local officials and media Thursday afternoon, they"—the farmers John and Andrew Beattie—"wrote that airport industrial growth should go to the business park located near the Lake Simcoe Regional Airport in Oro-Medonte township, north of Barrie, rather than take up agricultural land adjacent to the Collingwood airport.

"Land zoned agricultural and environmental will have to be rezoned and an official plan amendment would have to be passed by the county of Simcoe; the county, in following the growth plan for the greater horseshoe within the Places to Grow Act, will find that the business park plans don't fit within those policies, they wrote."

Now, I haven't read the official plan for this area and I haven't gone through Places to Grow on everything to do with Simcoe county, but it strikes me that these farmers,

business people, who are supporting this project, are pointing out that there are substantial zoning problems with this aviation industrial park. What we seem to have here is a conflict between two businesses. The question is, what's the way to find the right ground, the middle ground, between those businesses?

In fact, the business that's proposed, the aviation industrial park, will encroach on and eliminate agricultural land. It was my understanding around this chamber, in this Legislature, that there's great support for protection of agricultural land. If, in fact, there is already zoned industrial park property near another airport within the same region, it makes sense to develop there rather than go to what is already a greenfield—productive agricultural land in a country that doesn't have enough of it—and convert to it industrial.

They say, "In fact, we have been told that such a zoning application would be dead in the water and could not stand up to an Ontario Municipal Board appeal if for some reason Simcoe approved it," read the statement.

"The growth plan aims to, among other things, protect farmland. The previous council was on record as supporting agriculture, but it's unclear to us how the present council's intention to remove (89 hectares) of agricultural land achieves this," they added in the statement."

Again, it seems to me that what we have are two different business models, two different business views, on how local land use should be carried forward. We've got the farmers who are saying, "We want to have these windmills on our property. We want them to generate revenue. We think that this industrial park or this business park around the airport is going to have substantial zoning problems and may not even go forward at all." I would say that protecting agricultural land and having green energy—clean energy—makes a lot of sense.

I just want to note, as well, that there are competing interests in terms of this land. That's something that, frankly, should be sorted out by those who have the jurisdiction to decide on zoning. I don't think that politicizing the process, ignoring technical bodies who are going to be assessing that and bringing it to this chamber—I'm not sure that that's something that the opposition wants to do. I think if every planning decision came to this body, we would have very profound problems. If this body decided that protection of agricultural land was not something that it wanted to do, again, I think there would be great difficulties in this chamber.

There are a few larger issues here. One is, does Ontario need to develop renewable power? I don't think there's any question. If you look at what we're facing in terms of climate change and the impact it will have on society, the need to move very quickly, very ambitiously, to transform away from a fossil-fuel-powered energy system is imperative.

The other side of it, frankly, is that there are trillions of dollars' worth of energy development on the table over the next few decades. Those jurisdictions that have the expertise, the history and the ability to develop green power have a tremendous opportunity.

People need to remember that the development of hydro power in Ontario wasn't just something that benefited the local economies in southwestern Ontario—and “benefited” is greatly understating it. In fact, we developed a generation of entrepreneurs, engineers and planners who went around the world developing water power. We became a powerhouse for knowledge and energy development, not just a powerhouse for clean energy here in southern Ontario. For us to be backing off the development of clean energy when it's not supported through a reasonable assessment of the facts doesn't make sense to me.

I understand that the opposition has taken this position on renewable energy on a consistent basis. I disagree with them. I think that they have made an incorrect read of where the economy is going, and for a party that prides itself on being a party of business, I find that confusing at best.

I have to say this about the government party, and I'm not speaking about them in a laudatory way: I think they've made a huge mistake in not having the public sector and the community sector dramatically expand renewable energy in this province. I think there would have been far greater acceptance. I made these arguments when we were going through clause-by-clause on the Green Energy Act: that if you looked at what happened in Europe—in Denmark and Germany and other countries—where you have local support and local power co-ops, you have dramatically more support for the power itself, and where you have privately owned multinational firms muscling their way in, you have substantial problems. We would have benefited from a very different approach if the government had done that; unfortunately, they didn't.

The question before us is, do we follow a technical process for assessing a project that seems to actually accord with the facts on the ground or not? I think we need to do that.

Speaker, the member is a capable parliamentarian and a dynamite speaker. I always am reluctant to disagree with him, but on this, I must.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: It is a pleasure to pick up where my colleague from Toronto–Danforth left off. In fact, I must commend him for having made some of the points that I was wondering whether or not I could squeeze in. Like him, I have a great deal of respect for my colleague from Simcoe–Grey because I understand where he's coming from.

My colleague from Toronto–Danforth has made some points that I think are important: Should local zoning considerations and should planning decisions be made here on the floor of the Legislature? I don't think so; neither does he. He points out that NavCan did due diligence—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm been very tolerant of the opposition party and the noise. I

know this is a very heated discussion, and very colourful language will be used very shortly, I'm sure, so can we please tone it down? Respectfully, you don't have the floor; the member for Mississauga–Streetsville does. We return back to him.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Thank you very much, Speaker.

I would point out that we listened very politely to what the member for Simcoe–Grey had to say, and I hope he will accord us the same courtesy.

Ontario's investment in renewable energy has been, in fact, a significant portion of the province's ability to end all coal-fired generation in 2014. This has been a key part for Ontario in being able to move toward meeting our portion of the climate change accord signed last December. As a consequence, by 2015 more than 90% of the power generated in Ontario had come from clean sources of energy, such as water, nuclear and non-hydro renewables.

1600

The province has made significant progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the energy sector, which included that exact phasing out of coal-fired electronic generation and shifting to clean, non-emitting sources. Ten years ago, Ontario relied on coal for nearly a quarter of its electrical energy. Ontario is now completely coal-free—something like taking seven million cars off Ontario's roads. It is the single largest, most successful climate change initiative in North America, saving an estimated \$4.5 billion per year in health, financial and environmental costs.

Secondly, as the member for Toronto–Danforth pointed out, Ontario's renewable program has grown into one of the fastest-growing clean-tech sectors in Canada. We have some 2,700 clean-tech firms that employ about 65,000 people in the clean technology sector, generating annual revenues of more than \$8 billion. To date, Ontario has more than 18,500 megawatts of renewable energy on-line or announced, which includes more than 9,000 megawatts of hydroelectric capacity and almost the same—9,500 megawatts—of solar, wind and bioenergy capacity.

The project we are discussing today is a contract awarded through the Feed-In Tariff program. The program rules are focused on the procurement of electricity from renewable energy projects. I'm sure the member opposite knows that it is the Independent Electricity System Operator, not the Legislature and not the Ministry of Energy, that is responsible for selecting the successful proponents for energy procurement. At the time this contract was awarded in 2010, it was the Ontario Power Authority, another independent agency, that held this role, and now this responsibility lies with the IESO since they plan the power system to meet Ontario's electricity needs, now and in the future.

It is therefore the IESO that is a party to the contract with the project developer and not the Ministry of Energy or the government of Ontario. I say to the member that this is an issue to be dealt with through the process already in place, and I'm sure the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change will speak to this later.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It's a great pleasure to speak to the member for Simcoe–Grey's private member's bill. I think Jim Wilson has probably written the book on how to advocate for his community. I certainly lean on him, when issues are coming up in Dufferin–Caledon, on how to bring them forward and get this government to finally do the right thing. I thank him for that.

I did a bit of research on airports in Ontario, because I fly in a small plane. I'm not a pilot, but I have the pleasure of having some good friends who are, so I understand that every landing isn't a perfect landing and every day isn't a perfect day to fly. We cannot have airports that have these limitations.

A very personal story: Last fall, a very close friend of mine had an emergency landing in his small plane. He almost died. He is just now recovering, six months later. He couldn't do that perfect landing we all like to think we can every time we see an airport. I hate to think we are facing another Dunnville Airport.

I just want to read very quickly: "As of May 30, 2013, all flight operations ceased at the" Dunnville "airport to make way for industrial wind turbines being built on that site."

What we are talking about is limiting the ability of this Collingwood airport to bring in economic providers that will make that community grow; that will make it a hub for our infrastructure in Ontario. That is directly related to infrastructure, to airports and flight operations.

Airports are the new railroads of Ontario. We have fly-in communities, where the only way people can get there is through flight. Why we would ever be thinking that it's a smart thing to limit an airport's ability to grow, to limit an airport's ability to serve its community, is beyond the pale.

As the member from Simcoe–Grey aptly said, it is never too late to do the right thing. Let's not have another Dunnville Airport.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: This is an issue I'm all too familiar with. Eight turbines were approved inside federally protected airport zoning regulations at the Chatham-Kent Municipal Airport. I've talked to numerous pilots who were concerned about their safety, especially in adverse weather conditions. These pilots themselves expressed that they could not understand how anyone could possibly think that this is a good idea.

When it comes to the issue of flying safely, I side with the pilots and their passengers. They're the ones whose lives are put at risk by dangerous decision-making on the part of this government. They're the ones who should be listened to. We don't want to see any body bags at our airports—including at the Collingwood airport.

The experts are the pilots who fly in and out of small airports under all kinds of weather conditions: snow, heavy rain, fog and strong winds. It's unfortunate that close calls or incidents are not recorded. May there never be an accident.

These are the experts, not the Liberal government sitting in offices making decisions from afar. I welcome the opportunity to take them up in a small aircraft to experience hair-raising takeoffs or landings.

Back to my riding: Transport Canada eventually ruled that the eight industrial wind turbines had to be removed. But after the turbine company launched an appeal, the federal government eventually backed down. The legal fight would be costly for the government, and these companies had deep pockets. The trouble with these cases is that once they're up, they're nearly impossible to remove. That's why we need to use some common sense and stop this reckless project before it goes forward.

One wonders how such a project could possibly be approved in the first place. Well, surprise, surprise, Speaker: The president of the turbine company that was allowed to build the turbines next to the Chatham airport was a former Liberal Party president, Mike Crawley. The insane decision to build the turbines around an airport inside federally protected zoning regulations was approved to help line the pockets of a Liberal Party president.

Here's what former NDP leader Howard Hampton had to say about the stench surrounding what he called "inside deals."

Speaker, I want to point something out. These are serious allegations, but I need to be very clear that these are direct quotes from Hansard.

Interjection.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Are you suggesting I can't use direct quotes from Hansard?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to remind the member to be careful with your choice of words. We have already spoken about this before. I'm going to say again, you're going to have to withdraw your comments.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I withdraw.

The former MPP from Leeds–Grenville and former interim leader of the PC Party, Bob Runciman, made a shocking discovery back in 2004. In the Legislature, he stated, "Mr. Mike Crawley, the president of AIM PowerGen, sent an email in the midst of the bid process to various parties encouraging their attendance at the energy minister's fundraiser at \$5,000 a pop." I might add, Speaker, that AIM PowerGen—now called GDF SUEZ—is located in my riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex.

Let me cut to the chase. This government can spin this any way they want—as they always do—but the fact is that this is a safety issue, and I will continue to advocate for the safety of pilots, passengers and community safety. To the government, I say, do the right thing; just move those turbine locations. It's easier to move them on a map than to move them once they're built.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's a pleasure to support my colleague's motion before the House today. I'm so pleased to see so many people who have made the trip here to support Mr. Wilson today. I congratulate him for

the tremendous position of advocacy that he has always taken.

I just want to note that with this airport issue in Collingwood, as with so many other issues surrounding the Green Energy Act and wind turbines and communities, every time communities come up with another reason why it shouldn't proceed, they are thwarted by this government. The game is rigged, Speaker. When the government doesn't like the results of something, they change the rules. The game is rigged so that the people in the communities can't win.

1610

The changes in the act that took away that municipal planning power—the member from Mississauga says, “Would we want to make zoning decisions in this Legislature?” That's exactly what this government did with the Green Energy Act. They took away the rights of municipalities to make the decisions that are in the best interests of their people. Would this project be approved if the people in the area of Collingwood, if their government, were making the decision? I think not, but it is because this government took away that power that this project is proceeding, to the detriment of the economy, to the detriment of the safety of the community and the safety of the pilots.

As a matter of fact, I've heard that if it comes down to a decision, a choice between the turbines and the airport, if the airport can't operate safely with these turbines, then they have to close the airport. Now, what kind of an economic effect would that have on the community? Close the airport, because long after the airport was there, this Liberal government decided they were going to allow somebody to build 500-foot monstrosities that are a detriment to safety in that airport. That's the kind of thinking that is going on because of the blindness of their desire to help their friends in the wind development industry—big fundraisers, big turbines, big mistake.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Norm Miller: I'm pleased to get the opportunity to speak for a couple of moments to the member from Simcoe-Grey's motion today. I am a pilot, and I wore my Canadian Owners and Pilots Association wings today with the thought that this was going to be debated.

I first landed at Collingwood airport some 44 years ago on my first cross-country flight, in August 1972. I can tell you that since that time the airport's expanded. It was a shorter runway; now it's a 5,000-foot runway, and it's a busy airport, as we heard, with some 11,000 landings and takeoffs each year. They've also got another runway, a 2,500-foot strip, there as well. To build these 500-foot wind turbines right beside not just one airport, but there's also Stayner airport—I'm looking at the flying map, and they're right beside each other. These turbines are going to be in the operational airspace of these busy airports. That is just a crazy idea, an absolutely crazy idea.

As I said when I had the opportunity to interject a comment in question period, people are going to die. It's

not a question of when or if; there will be an accident. You'll have a VFR pilot, a visual flight rules pilot who is going to be flying in, and there's fog that comes off of Georgian Bay, and low clouds. They're not going to have perfect visibility, and somebody's going to fly into one of those, just like they did in South Dakota. Or you're going to have an instrument flight pilot who is going to be following an approach, may not have it perfectly down; they're going to be a little off-course and they're going to fly into one of these in the clouds.

It's just a really, really bad idea to build these right beside Collingwood airport, not to mention all the other negative effects it's going to have on tourism and on the economy of the area. I hope the government will realize this is just a really bad idea. Just do the right thing and not go ahead with this project, because it's just going to be very, very bad for Collingwood, the province and for the people that are flying the planes that hit the wind turbine.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I wanted to listen very carefully because I know that for many members opposite that this is an issue of great concern, and I have a great deal of respect for the member opposite. I have been sitting in this House with him for six years and I have no doubt of the veracity of his concern or the sincerity of the motion he's put before the House today.

But like the member for Toronto-Danforth, this has to stand on the test of evidence. As the minister who oversees this process, my primary job is to make sure that it is evidence-based, that the proper process was put in place, that the thoroughness and rigor was undertaken by the public servants who do their job, that there was complete independence in their judgment and that there is no interference in the process now that six community members have filed appeals of the director's decision to the Environmental Review Tribunal.

It is my job to make sure that the ERT process is protected. I think it's up to all members of the Legislature to ensure that people are treated on all sides of this debate with fairness and impartiality. Where I take issue with the members opposite is that the last thing that I am prepared to do is politicize the process or insert myself in the process.

Let's just go through what the process is. First of all, with renewable energy projects, we have to ensure that safety is a concern. The member opposite said that Nav Canada didn't have jurisdiction here and there was no approval process. Let me just explain why that might have been something less than accurate. In this case, Nav Canada accepted wpd's land use submission form and stated that they did not object to the proposal as submitted, provided their construction notification requirements are met. In the second approval process, Transport Canada accepted wpd's aeronautical obstruction assessment form and approved the turbines and the turbine lighting plan. That was quite an extensive process.

Not only did the director, when she undertook this, say that she wouldn't do it within the six months; she made

an unprecedented decision to extend the decision-making process and the review for two years, in a process that is normally six months. That's what a public servant with integrity does. If you look at the correspondence and the amount of consultation with experts that she undertook, it is quite remarkable. She also went as far as requiring as a condition that another aeronautical review by expert consultants be undertaken yet again before these turbines could be installed. So there's another process that has to go through, experts—not pilots, not other people, people who fly, but people whose expertise are in the turbine business.

Nav Canada has the authority for all aspects of air traffic control in Canadian air space while under Transport Canada-regulated air space. Nav Canada is also responsible for the distribution of aeronautical information, publications, standards, maps and charts, etc., and they have a major interest in the impacts of new structures on the operations of the electronic systems used in the support of air traffic control responsibilities in their impact on the use of air space. The safety issue was one that I very much take seriously because I used to work in northern—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke: I'm going to warn you. The next time I hear you, you'll be named.

I return back to the minister.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: In June 2011, a form was submitted on land use to Nav Canada. On September 11, Nav Canada responded in a land use evaluation letter and assessment of the land use submission form, stating that several turbines were located within the lateral confines of the air space, known as circling areas, of Collingwood Regional Airport. This affected two specific instrument approach procedures.

On March 19, 2013, Nav Canada communicated with the officer of the minister responsible for this, provided an updated land use evaluation letter for wpd. These letters are only valid for 12 months. The letter confirmed that there are no concerns with the turbine layout provided. However, instrument approach procedures adopted by Collingwood Regional Airport required changes, including comments indicating that they would only speak to navigational systems and obstructions. They stated that instrument approaches should be altered to account for the presence of the turbines.

On April 16—this is now the fifth interaction—Nav Canada provides yet another updated land use evaluation letter to wpd. The letter stated that Nav Canada's evaluations and conclusions are based only on the impacts to procedures they maintain and therefore they do not object to the proposal as submitted, provided their construction notification requirements are met.

1620

Again, on March 19, 2015, Nav Canada provided an updated land use evaluation letter to wpd. The letter noted that the location and the heights—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I am going to warn the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex. I've already warned the member from the opposition. This is not a very respectful debate.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Could we stop the clock at least?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Stop the clock. I already said no cross-talk. Okay?

I'm going to warn the member. Next time, you will be named. I am going to return back to the minister.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I won't go through them all, but there were many, many submissions, many revisions of the letter, many reviews of the land use plan, many, many discussions with independent experts and many, many discussions with Nav Canada.

What would this Legislature expect people to do who are independent officers but consult with the experts in the area of authority that covers the jurisdiction? That's what I'm supposed to protect.

One opposition member actually suggested outright—didn't even hint at it and thankfully withdrew the comment—that somehow we're bought and sold as ministers over here, that you have a fundraiser and you buy a vote. Well, it's sweet passing strange to me that that's exactly what they're suggesting. They're saying that we ignore the independent rules and we interfere before the Environmental Review Tribunal has actually heard it. They're actually suggesting that we somehow, by motion of this House, overturn the entire evidence-based process, even before the appeal process has ruled.

Isn't that exactly what money and politics are supposed to be about? Here the Liberal government is standing up and saying, "I don't care who you donate to. I don't care how powerful you are. We are protecting the integrity of the process." In complete contradiction to everything they've said, the party opposite is saying, "No, my local MPP doesn't like it, so throw all the evidence out"—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to return to the member from Simcoe–Grey to wrap up.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Again, thank you to my constituents who are here today and to the pilot experts who are here and all the pilot experts I've heard from, including large commercial pilots from Air Canada. Many of them live in the riding and they go down Airport Road to work. It's unanimous that the experts are saying that these should not be built. I gather, from how you spoke over there, that you don't want to vote for this resolution and at least move the turbines. I'll say to the minister, when he blames this on a director—a director, by the way, who has only been there a few short months. I was a minister—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Can we stop the clock? I already warned both sides: no cross-talk. I want to hear the wrap-up from the member from Simcoe–Grey.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Madam Speaker, on a point of order: I counted. I lost two minutes and 30 seconds of

about a five-minute intervention because of heckling and I asked to have the clock stopped. Madam Speaker—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Sit down.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Excuse me.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Go home, you crybaby. Sit down.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member from Renfrew has already been warned. I already warned the member from Renfrew. So the next time I hear from you again, you will be named. I already warned you. Minister?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: My point was—sorry.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I believe the member from Simcoe—Grey is doing the wrap-up. I respectfully ask everybody to hear this wrapped up so that we can deal with the motions. Okay? I'm going to return back to the member from Simcoe—Grey.

Mr. Jim Wilson: As I was saying, Madam Speaker, I was a senior minister for some eight years, and at the end of the day, no matter what arguments and evidence you have or don't have—and by the way, you have zero evidence—you can quote all the correspondence from Nav Canada, but the law is very clear and they don't have a jurisdiction over an airport that is not certified by the federal government. It's a regional airport, including the Stayner aerodrome, or the Clearview Field airport, as it's called.

At the end of the day the buck stops with you as a minister and with the Premier as the head of government. I stepped aside for 10 weeks when one of my assistants said something stupid to a reporter. This is a far bigger issue. You can't tell me the day that someone gets killed or a family crashes into one of these things and gets killed, the reporters are going to go for your director. They're going to go for you and they're going to go for the Premier. They're going to personally blame you.

So, have a heart. Just think of all the experts you've heard from, and the common sense, when these things are just seconds away from takeoff and seconds away before you land, and we're on Georgian Bay, and all the arguments you've heard here and in the past. I say to the minister and the Premier, who is here, you have the chance to do the right thing. Please do the right thing. They're willing to compromise, in terms of the airport authority and my local constituents. Just move them. Why put them between two very, very busy airports?

You've been warned now. Again, when something happens, it's not going to be the bureaucrats that the media and the families will go after; it's going to be you and your government.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Before I start the voting procedure, I just want to remind our visitors that there will be no clapping, shouting or any other disturbance while you're visiting. We welcome all guests, but there will not be any disturbance of the conversation. Thank you.

The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): We will deal first with ballot item number 33, standing in the name of Mrs. McGarry.

Mrs. McGarry has moved private member's notice of motion number 70. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I hear "carried." In my opinion, the motion carries. I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

IMMIGRATION POLICY

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Dhillon has moved private member's notice of motion number 71. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I hear "carried." I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

WIND TURBINES

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Wilson has moved private member's notice of motion number 67. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I hear a "no."

All those in favour of the motion shall say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion shall say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1627 to 1632.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Members, please take your seats.

Mr. Wilson has moved private member's notice of motion number 67. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Bailey, Robert	Jones, Sylvia	Munro, Julia
Coe, Lorne	Martow, Gila	Nicholls, Rick
Hardeman, Ernie	McDonell, Jim	Thompson, Lisa M.
Harris, Michael	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
Hudak, Tim	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Anderson, Granville	Fraser, John	McMeekin, Ted
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Ballard, Chris	Hoggarth, Ann	Moridi, Reza
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Murray, Glen R.
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzi	Naqvi, Yasir
Chan, Michael	Jaczek, Helena	Potts, Arthur
Colle, Mike	Kiwala, Sophie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sandals, Liz
Damerla, Dipika	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Del Duca, Steven	MacCharles, Tracy	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Malhi, Harinder	Thibeault, Glenn
Dhillon, Vic	Mangat, Amrit	Vernile, Daiene
Dickson, Joe	Martins, Cristina	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dong, Han	McGarry, Kathryn	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMahon, Eleanor	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 15; the nays are 43.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I declare the motion lost.

Motion negatived.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Orders of the day?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move to adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): There's a motion to adjourn the House. Does the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until Monday, May 2, 2016, at 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1635.

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, William Short

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	
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
Brown, Patrick (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
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	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
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 Anti-Racism 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
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
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
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
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	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
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
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonnell, 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
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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	
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
Oraziotti, 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	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
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	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
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
Vacant	Scarborough–Rouge River	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Présidente: Cheri DiNovo
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo
Han Dong, Michael Harris
Sophie Kiwala, Arthur Potts
Todd Smith, Monique Taylor
Glenn Thibeault
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Yvan Baker
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Toby Barrett, Han Dong
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Peter Z. Milczyn
Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lou Rinaldi
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Lisa Gretzky, Ann Hoggarth
Harinder Malhi, Jim McDonell
Eleanor McMahan, Lou Rinaldi
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Présidente: Cristina Martins
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Daiene Vernile
Robert Bailey, Wayne Gates
Monte Kwinter, Marie-France Lalonde
Amrit Mangat, Cristina Martins
Randy Pettapiece, Shafiq Qaadri
Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Randy Hillier, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadri
Laurie Scott
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Monte McNaughton
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Steve Clark
Granville Anderson, Robert Bailey
Steve Clark, Vic Dhillon
Sophie Kiwala, Michael Mantha
Eleanor McMahan, Monte McNaughton
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
Chris Ballard, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Peter Z. Milczyn, Julia Munro
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**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
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Joe Dickson, Jennifer K. French
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Bill Walker
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Lorne Coe
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Marie-France Lalonde, Gila Martow
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

Continued from back cover

Consumer protection

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	8902
Hon. David Orazietti.....	8903

Retirement homes

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri.....	8903
Hon. Mario Sergio.....	8903

Government appointments

Mr. Jim McDonell.....	8904
Hon. David Orazietti.....	8904

Visitor

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	8904
------------------------------------	------

Legislative pages

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	8904
------------------------------------	------

Visitor

Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	8904
-----------------------	------

DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

Time allocation

Motion agreed to.....	8905
-----------------------	------

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS /
PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mrs. Julia Munro.....	8905
Ms. Sophie Kiwala.....	8905

**MEMBERS' STATEMENTS /
DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

Journey to Freedom Day

Mrs. Julia Munro.....	8905
-----------------------	------

Girls' Government

Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	8905
-----------------------	------

Journey to Freedom Day

Mrs. Amrit Mangat.....	8905
------------------------	------

Johnny Whitteker

Mr. Jim McDonell.....	8906
-----------------------	------

Autism treatment

Ms. Catherine Fife.....	8906
-------------------------	------

Multicultural Children's Day

Ms. Sophie Kiwala.....	8906
------------------------	------

Ordre de la Pléiade

Mme Gila Martow.....	8906
----------------------	------

Cultural diversity

Ms. Daiene Vernile.....	8907
-------------------------	------

Carnation Revolution

Mrs. Cristina Martins.....	8907
----------------------------	------

Visitors

Mr. Granville Anderson.....	8907
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	8907

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS /
DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

**Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Number Plates
and Carrying Racks), 2016, Bill 191, Mr. Norm
Miller, Ms. McMahan / Loi de 2016 modifiant le
Code de la route (plaques d'immatriculation et
supports de transport), projet de loi 191, M. Norm
Miller, Mme McMahan**

First reading agreed to.....	8908
Mr. Norm Miller.....	8908

**Highway Traffic Amendment Act (Keep our Roads
Safer through the use of Intelligent Drive
Technologies), 2016, Bill 192, Mr. Takhar / Loi de
2016 modifiant le Code de la route (sécurité
routière accrue grâce à l'emploi de technologies de
conduite intelligente), projet de loi 192, M. Takhar**

First reading agreed to.....	8908
Mr. Harinder S. Takhar.....	8908

MOTIONS

Committee membership

Hon. James J. Bradley.....	8908
Motion agreed to.....	8908

**STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS
MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES**

National Day of Mourning

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	8908
Mr. Ted Arnott.....	8909
Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	8910

Visitor

Ms. Sophie Kiwala.....	8911
------------------------	------

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Autism treatment

Mr. Michael Harris.....	8911
-------------------------	------

Privatisation des biens publics

M. Taras Natyshak.....	8911
------------------------	------

Home inspection industry

Mrs. Cristina Martins.....	8911
----------------------------	------

Health care funding

Mrs. Julia Munro.....	8911
-----------------------	------

Health care funding	
Mr. Wayne Gates	8912
Autism treatment	
Mr. Lorne Coe.....	8912
Queen Elizabeth II	
Hon. Tracy MacCharles	8912
Autism treatment	
Mrs. Julia Munro.....	8912
Dental care	
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	8913
Lung health	
Mrs. Cristina Martins	8913
Health care funding	
Mrs. Gila Martow.....	8913
Prix de l'essence	
M. John Vanthof	8913

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS /
AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC
ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS**

Workplace harassment	
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry.....	8914
Mr. Tim Hudak	8915
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	8917
Hon. Tracy MacCharles	8917
Mrs. Gila Martow.....	8918
Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	8919

Ms. Eleanor McMahon.....	8920
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry.....	8921
Immigration policy	
Mr. Vic Dhillon.....	8921
Mrs. Gila Martow	8923
Mr. Taras Natyshak	8924
Hon. Michael Chan	8924
Mr. Tim Hudak.....	8925
Mr. Harinder S. Takhar	8925
Mrs. Amrit Mangat.....	8926
Mr. Jagmeet Singh	8926
Ms. Harinder Malhi.....	8927
Mr. Vic Dhillon.....	8928
Wind turbines	
Mr. Jim Wilson.....	8928
Mr. Peter Tabuns	8930
Mr. Bob Delaney	8932
Ms. Sylvia Jones.....	8933
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	8933
Mr. John Yakabuski	8933
Mr. Norm Miller.....	8934
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	8934
Mr. Jim Wilson.....	8935
Workplace harassment	
Motion agreed to	8936
Immigration policy	
Motion agreed to	8936
Wind turbines	
Motion negated	8937

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 21 April 2016 / Jeudi 21 avril 2016

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Act (Strengthening Retirement Security for Ontarians), 2016, Bill 186, Ms. Hunter / Loi de 2016 sur le Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario (sécuriser la retraite en Ontario), projet de loi 186, Mme Hunter

Mrs. Julia Munro.....	8883
Mme France Gélinas.....	8885
Hon. David Zimmer.....	8885
Mrs. Gila Martow.....	8886
Ms. Cindy Forster.....	8886
Mrs. Julia Munro.....	8886
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	8886
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	8892

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Ms. Cindy Forster.....	8892
Mr. Bob Delaney.....	8892
Mr. Jeff Yurek.....	8892
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	8892
Hon. Tracy MacCharles.....	8892
Mr. Patrick Brown.....	8892
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	8892
Mrs. Julia Munro.....	8892
Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	8893
Hon. Reza Moridi.....	8893
Mr. Jim Wilson.....	8893
Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	8893
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	8893
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	8893
Mr. Chris Ballard.....	8893
Mr. Todd Smith.....	8893
Mr. John Fraser.....	8893
Ms. Sophie Kiwala.....	8893
Hon. David Zimmer.....	8893
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	8893
Ms. Daiene Vernile.....	8893
Mr. Lou Rinaldi.....	8893
Ms. Soo Wong.....	8893

Wearing of pins

Mr. John Fraser.....	8893
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	8894

Wearing of scarves

Mrs. Julia Munro.....	8894
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	8894

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Hydro rates

Mr. Patrick Brown.....	8894
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	8894

Hydro rates

Mr. Patrick Brown.....	8895
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	8895

Electoral reform

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	8896
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	8896
Hon. Deborah Matthews.....	8897

Teachers' collective bargaining

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	8897
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	8897

Autism treatment

Mrs. Gila Martow.....	8898
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	8898
Ms. Sylvia Jones.....	8898
Hon. Tracy MacCharles.....	8898

Tenant protection

Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	8898
Hon. Ted McMeekin.....	8899

Mining industry

Mr. Glenn Thibeault.....	8899
Hon. Michael Gravelle.....	8899

Police oversight

Mr. Randy Hillier.....	8900
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur.....	8900

Cancer treatment

Mme France Gélinas.....	8900
Hon. Eric Hoskins.....	8900

Highway improvement

Ms. Ann Hoggarth.....	8901
Hon. Steven Del Duca.....	8901

Wind turbines

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	8902
Hon. Glen R. Murray.....	8902

Continued on inside back cover