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CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 28 February 2019 / Jeudi 28 février 2019

Notice of reasoned amendment

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott) 3323

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act, 2019, Bill 68, Ms. Jones / Loi de 2019 sur la refonte complète des services de police de l'Ontario, projet de loi 68, Mme Jones

Mr. Joel Harden..... 3323
Mr. Billy Pang..... 3323
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong 3324
Mr. Rick Nicholls..... 3324
Mr. Jeff Burch..... 3324
Mr. Dave Smith..... 3325
Ms. Marit Stiles..... 3326
Mrs. Nina Tangri..... 3326
Mr. Gilles Bisson 3326
Mr. Michael Parsa 3327
Mr. Dave Smith..... 3327
M. Guy Bourgouin 3328
Mr. Stephen Lecce 3329
Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens 3329
Mme Gila Martow..... 3329
Mr. Jeff Burch..... 3330
Mr. Guy Bourgouin..... 3330
Mr. Mike Harris 3330
Vote deferred..... 3332

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Percy Hatfield..... 3332
Ms. Jill Dunlop..... 3332
Mr. Doug Downey 3332
Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos 3332
Ms. Jessica Bell..... 3332
Mrs. Nina Tangri..... 3332
Miss Monique Taylor..... 3332
Hon. Laurie Scott 3332
Ms. Doly Begum 3332
Ms. Lindsey Park 3332
Ms. Catherine Fife..... 3333
Ms. Bhutla Karpoche 3333
Mr. Michael Mantha 3333
Mr. Percy Hatfield..... 3333
Mr. Amarjot Sandhu 3333

Bruce Kyereh-Addo

Hon. Rod Phillips 3333

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Health care

Ms. Andrea Horwath..... 3333
Hon. Christine Elliott 3334

Health care

Ms. Andrea Horwath 3334
Hon. Christine Elliott 3334

Autism treatment

Ms. Andrea Horwath..... 3335
Hon. Lisa M. Thompson 3335

Health care

Mrs. Nina Tangri..... 3336
Hon. Christine Elliott 3336

Fundraising

Mr. Taras Natyshak 3336
Hon. Todd Smith..... 3337

Consumer protection

Mrs. Robin Martin..... 3337
Hon. Bill Walker 3337

Autism treatment

Miss Monique Taylor..... 3338
Hon. Lisa MacLeod..... 3338

Police services

Mr. Michael Gravelle 3339
Hon. Sylvia Jones..... 3339

Health care

Mr. Billy Pang..... 3339
Hon. Christine Elliott 3339

Tuition

Mr. Chris Glover 3340
Hon. Merrilee Fullerton..... 3340

Waste diversion

Mr. Parm Gill 3340
Hon. Rod Phillips 3341

Child care

Ms. Doly Begum 3341
Hon. Lisa M. Thompson 3341

Municipal government

Mr. Stephen Crawford..... 3342
Hon. Steve Clark 3342

Addiction services

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong 3342
Hon. Christine Elliott 3342

Seniors	
Ms. Lindsey Park	3343
Hon. Steve Clark	3343
Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho	3343
Visitors	
Mr. Tom Rakocevic	3343
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	3343
Ms. Suze Morrison.....	3343
Private members' public business	
The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott)	3343

DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act, 2019, Bill 68, Ms. Jones / Loi de 2019 sur la refonte complète des services de police de l'Ontario, projet de loi 68, Mme Jones	
Second reading agreed to	3344
Private members' public business	
The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott)	3344

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Faisal Hassan.....	3344
Mr. Dave Smith.....	3344
Mr. Lorne Coe.....	3344

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Tenant protection	
Ms. Suze Morrison.....	3344
Professional engineers	
Mr. Vincent Ke	3345
Autism treatment	
Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell	3345
Animal protection	
Ms. Christine Hogarth.....	3345
Erica Fryer and Kylie Masse	
Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	3345
Zebra Technologies	
Mr. Sheref Sabawy.....	3346
Autism treatment	
Mr. Tom Rakocevic	3346
Fayne Bullen	
Ms. Jill Dunlop.....	3346
Walk for homelessness	
Mr. Michael Parsa.....	3347
Visitor	
Ms. Doly Begum.....	3347

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

Abitare Design Inc. Act, 2019, Bill Pr6, Ms. Karpoche	
First reading agreed to.....	3347

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES

Crime prevention	
Hon. Sylvia Jones.....	3347
Mr. Kevin Yarde	3348

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Child care workers	
Ms. Rima Berns-McGown	3349
Fish and wildlife management	
Mr. Mike Harris	3349
Autism treatment	
Mr. Faisal Hassan.....	3349
Animal protection	
Ms. Christine Hogarth.....	3349
Child care workers	
Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell	3350
Ontario economy	
Mrs. Gila Martow	3350
Long-term care	
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong	3350
Fish and wildlife management	
Ms. Jill Dunlop.....	3350
Toronto Transit Commission	
Ms. Bhutla Karpoche	3350
Public safety	
Mr. Deepak Anand.....	3351
Autism treatment	
Miss Monique Taylor	3351
Child care workers	
Ms. Peggy Sattler	3351
Child care workers	
Ms. Doly Begum	3351

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS / AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS

Youth employment	
Mr. Faisal Hassan.....	3352
Mr. David Piccini	3354
Ms. Peggy Sattler	3354
Ms. Andrea Khanjin.....	3355
Ms. Rima Berns-McGown	3355

Mr. Lorne Coe.....	3356	Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos	3366
Mr. Faisal Hassan.....	3357	Ms. Christine Hogarth.....	3366
Registered Professional Planners Act, 2019, Bill 70, Mr. Coe / Loi de 2019 sur les urbanistes certifiés, projet de loi 70, M. Coe		Ms. Lindsey Park	3367
Mr. Lorne Coe.....	3357	Youth employment	
Mr. Tom Rakocevic	3358	The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French)	3367
Ms. Christine Hogarth.....	3359	Registered Professional Planners Act, 2019, Bill 70, Mr. Coe / Loi de 2019 sur les urbanistes certifiés, projet de loi 70, M. Coe	
Mr. John Vanthof.....	3360	Second reading agreed to	3368
Mrs. Gila Martow.....	3360	Golden Girls Act, 2019, Bill 69, Ms. Park / Loi de 2019 sur les Golden Girls, projet de loi 69, Mme Park	
Mr. Lorne Coe.....	3361	Second reading agreed to	3368
Golden Girls Act, 2019, Bill 69, Ms. Park / Loi de 2019 sur les Golden Girls, projet de loi 69, Mme Park		Youth employment	
Ms. Lindsey Park	3362	Motion agreed to	3368
Ms. Suze Morrison.....	3363	Visitors	
Mr. Mike Schreiner.....	3364	Mr. Sheref Sabawy.....	3368
Mr. Stephen Lecce	3365	Mr. Amarjot Sandhu.....	3368
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	3365		

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 28 February 2019

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 28 février 2019

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Let us begin this morning with a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

Prayers.

NOTICE OF REASONED AMENDMENT

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 71(c), the member for Timmins has filed with the Clerk a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 74, An Act concerning the provision of health care, continuing Ontario Health and making consequential and related amendments and repeals. The order for second reading of Bill 74 may therefore not be called today.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMPREHENSIVE ONTARIO POLICE SERVICES ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LA REFONTE COMPLÈTE DES SERVICES DE POLICE DE L'ONTARIO

Resuming the debate adjourned on February 27, 2019, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 68, An Act with respect to community safety and policing / Projet de loi 68, Loi portant sur la sécurité communautaire et les services policiers.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): When we last debated this bill, we had heard a presentation from the member for Niagara Centre. He's in the House now. We're going to now go to questions and comments relating to his remarks.

Questions and comments?

Mr. Joel Harden: Good morning, everybody. Good morning, colleagues. It's an honour to rise to talk about the women and men who work to protect us every day. I'm glad my colleagues in government have brought the matter forward for us, but I have concerns, like my colleague from Niagara Centre has voiced. I have concerns in particular that the matter that has been raised to me when I've met with Matt Skof and other local officials in our police association in Ottawa—that the issue of privatization of police services is not addressed by this bill.

So we have to remember that when women and men take risks every single day, when they decide to make a vocational choice to work to serve and protect people, the integrity of that profession has to be foremost in our minds

as legislators. And, to me, when we start parceling off the work of police to other security agencies that fulfill those critical public safety functions, that should be ringing alarm bells for us, Speaker. That is not acceptable in the province of Ontario. We've come to a moment now where we are so reliant on the folks who protect us that we can't sacrifice the health and safety of their profession.

I also want to say, Speaker, that the recent bus crash that happened in my city of Ottawa and the immediate response of the local police played a critical role—along with firefighters, paramedics, other crisis workers—in making sure not only that the terrible, terrible incident and the people who suffered that incident were dealt with immediately, but also that our city had a sense that our first-responder network was going to activate immediately and quickly. If we move down the road of privatization of police services, what I worry is that we're not going to be ready in moments like that. My city, through the tornadoes that hit us in September 2018 and the recent Westboro bus crash, has seen how important it is to have resilient and strong police services. I invite my friends in government to include this in their legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Billy Pang: It is my honour to add reflections to the COPS Act.

A couple of years ago, in the middle of the night and in the middle of nowhere, I was stopped by a police vehicle. I was pulled over, and the officer came up to me and asked for my identity and all the information. The officer was very polite and he asked me if I drank anything, where I come from, where did I go and where I was going. I was just back from a prayer meeting from the church and I was going back home. After a few minutes, the officer handed me back all my identity and let me go. My feeling the other night was that I felt safe because police officers are around me. I think, as a citizen in a community, yes of course I don't like to be pulled over, but after that, my feeling was I was well covered by the police officers.

There was another incident when I was driving. The passenger told me, "Hey, you have to be careful. There's a police car following us." I said, "There is nothing to worry about, because I'm following all the regulations."

I have a strong feeling that "to serve and protect" is not just a slogan but it is a very good statement declared by the police that we are being protected. In this scenario, I believe that we need to give all our tools from this government to support the police that are securing the community. Especially in my riding, lately, there are a lot of robberies and break-ins, so I think we need more tools to let the police do their job.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments? I recognize the member for London–Fanshawe.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I wasn't sure if one of the colleagues across the way was standing up for their questions and comments.

Speaker, I would like to compliment the member from Niagara on his debate on Bill 68, because he pointed something out that I had seen earlier and thought was a concern. He talked about it in some detail, about the change in this bill, where it's going to change how we have the independent police commission, the Ontario Civilian Police Commission. What it's doing is actually scrapping that and setting up a different structure for complaints with regard to police misconduct.

I did a little bit of research on that because I wanted to understand when it was in place and the purpose of it. It was previously known as the Ontario Police Commission. What happened was, it got changed to the Ontario Civilian Police Commission. It's an independent, quasi-judicial agency that provides civilian oversight of police services. In 1990, it was known as the Ontario Police Commission, and in 2007 it was changed to the Ontario Civilian Police Commission. What it does is it ensures adequate and effective policing services provided in a way that's fair and accountable, and it handles complaints involving police conduct, but it doesn't look into serious cases like death or injury. Those cases, of course, at the time are investigated by the SIU.

0910

I'm concerned about that piece because I think having community involvement with police, when it comes to concerns, is a good model. I know that in London, our police service is always trying to engage the community. We have a diversity officer that actually goes into schools to talk about policing. So I hope the government may reconsider that.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's a pleasure to stand here this morning and to just add my comments to the bill being debated.

The Liberal government should have called the bill that they introduced in the last Parliament the "anti-police act." But we are calling it today the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act.

I hear a lot from the official opposition about privatization. They fearmonger on privatization on every single bill that we seem to be bringing forward. That's absolutely not true; absolutely not true. Again, I look at this—they like to put carding and street checks, calling it one or the other, and saying that it's wrong. We've come out and said that carding is wrong. But street checks are not wrong, and carding and street checks are not the same.

The NDP want to basically handcuff our police services people. We want to instill trust back into the minds and lives of our police officers. We respect them. As a matter of fact, when I think about trust, I think, number one, of training. Training is the first thing that would be imparted

with regard to not only our police services—those who want to keep our communities safe—but also instilling that trust back into our communities.

The R in "trust" stands for respect. We need to respect and have that respect for our police officers for the wonderful, incredible job that they are doing.

The U stands for "understanding," and we need to develop that understanding. We need to understand the issues, the challenges that our police officers are faced with, and that's why we've introduced this particular bill.

The "S" in trust stands for support. We need to be able to stand together. I'll use an NDP term: We need to stand in solidarity with our police officers.

Lastly, the last T in "trust" is be thorough.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member from Niagara Centre for his remarks.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Thank you for the thoughtful comments, to the member from Ottawa Centre, around contracting out, and to the member from Markham–Unionville about respect for the police, which I think we all have.

Just to address the member from Chatham–Kent–Leamington: He probably wasn't here yesterday, but what I talked about at the beginning of my speech was my own history in law enforcement and my years with security, with representing security officers across the province, and with the auxiliary police force of the Niagara Regional Police, and my distaste for listening to members from across the way telling people in the NDP that we are police-haters, when I've devoted dozens of hours of my own time to community policing and volunteer policing and representing security officers.

To hear that kind of insult thrown across the way is similar to the debates we've had on the military, and people who have relatives in the military, and then we hear accusations that we're anti-military.

I hope that that kind of language and that kind of partisanship can be changed, moving forward in the House, because there are people on this side of the House who have relatives in the police force, and people like me who have law enforcement experience, and it really is quite insulting when we hear that kind of thing.

As well, the concerns about contracting out: They're not made up. Yesterday, if the member had listened to my speech, I referenced sections 14 and 16 of this bill, which leave the way open for contracting out. If the member wants to look it up, it talks about special areas of policing.

With my experience in contract agreement language, I can tell you that it leaves the way open for contracting out. I hope that the member will consider that in the future.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member from Chatham–Kent–Leamington on a point of order.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. In this Legislature, I know it is not customary to refer to a member when he or she may not be present in the Legislature. The previous member on the other side did make reference to the fact that a certain individual from Chatham–Kent–Leamington wasn't here yesterday. Well,

there are reasons for that, but again, it's not parliamentary to make reference to when a member is not here.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member from Timmins will come to order.

A reminder to all members that it is not appropriate to reference members who are not in the House.

Further debate? I recognize the member for Peterborough–Kawartha.

Mr. Dave Smith: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I recognize you as well.

We're talking about Bill 68 today, the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act. I will freely admit that I have a lot of police officer friends. My wife is an employee of the Peterborough Police Service. She's not an officer; she's a civilian who works for them. So I've known a large number of police officers for a long time.

The last bill that we saw, the one that was introduced by the Liberals, didn't truly respect police officers. It's been said a number of times that it was really an anti-policing bill, and I heard that a lot from a number of my friends, a number of the officers.

I'd like to point out the motto for the Peterborough police. It's two words, and I think it encompasses all police services, really. Their motto is "Professional" and "Friendly," and you need to have both of those as a police service. You must act in a professional manner. You have to do things in a way that really shows the respect for the job that you have. You're doing things because you are trying to protect the community.

But the second key, and as large a pillar to it, is the word "friendly." Police officers need to be seen as contributing members in our community. They need to be seen as someone who you can come up to and ask for advice, can ask for help. What we saw over the last bill that the Liberals introduced was that that friendly aspect was being taken away from them. There was an adversarial approach to it. We don't want to have that. We recognize that our police officers are very important. They are there to serve the community. They are there to protect the community.

I've been involved in a lot of community things in my riding. One of them, in particular: We brought Hockey Day in Canada to Peterborough back in 2013. The police service did some things for us without our asking for them to do it, and it added to the event. It added to the community feel to it. I want to talk a little bit about it. A number of officers pulled up in their cruisers, popped open their trunks, grabbed their skates, hockey sticks and gloves, and came down onto the ice surface in uniform and played shinny with a number of the players. It was both professional and friendly. It provided an opportunity for thousands of kids that were there to see those police officers as regular people, as someone they could play with, as someone that they could approach. I think this bill recognizes things like that. We recognize that our police officers are there doing a job, and they need to be respected. They need to be respected because they're giving respect back to the community.

On the police oversight, officers have said to me a number of times that they are not concerned about oversight. They believe fully in oversight. They want to make sure that all police officers are doing the job most effectively, that they are doing the job they're hired to do. They welcome oversight. But what they don't welcome is interference. They want to make sure that the police officers have the ability to go out and do their job, protect the community, serve the community. That's what they are there for. But they don't want to be in a position where they're being interfered with and they can't protect, they can't serve, they can't do the things in our communities to make sure that we're safe.

I'm very lucky, I'm blessed, because of the community that I live in. We don't have a high crime rate. There are very, very few violent crimes that occur in my area. I'm blessed that way. What I think happened with the last bill that the Liberals introduced was, they took a high-crime area and decided that that needed to be the standard that was applied everywhere. They tightened things down so much it was so difficult for police officers to do the right thing, to do what they needed to do. They made it very, very difficult for those officers, the good officers who wanted to serve the community to do their job properly. We're making some changes to that. We're going to have the key oversight that's needed to make sure that every officer is doing the job properly.

0920

I've talked a lot about officers in particular. For the most part, they do great jobs, but in every profession, regardless of what it is—whether it's policing, whether it's a doctor, whether it's being a politician, whether it's being a janitor—there are exceptional people in those positions, and there are some people who aren't exceptional, and we need to find the balance. We believe that we have found that balance, that we're putting in that type of oversight to make sure all of the good officers can do their jobs most effectively, and the officers who perhaps shouldn't be there, who perhaps aren't doing the job that they should be, will be dealt with. Officers need gratitude and respect. They don't need to be scorned. They don't need to have that one bad apple reflected on all of them.

One of the other changes that we made that I applaud is that the chief of police now has the ability—or will have the ability, once this passes—to suspend an officer without pay if the officer has done something egregious. We've had numerous examples come up over the last few days as we've been debating this, about officers who didn't follow the motto, who weren't professional, who weren't friendly, who weren't there to serve the people. The previous bills, previous legislation—a number of them—tied the hands of the police services, and they weren't able to effectively do something about that. We're giving the police chiefs the power now that, under certain circumstances, they can suspend an officer without pay. We know there's a due process that has to go through, to make sure that everyone is following the process properly. But it's really inappropriate to be paying someone hundreds of thousands of dollars because the process drags on for years

and years and years when the officer himself has committed something that was a criminal act. We need to make sure that the chiefs of police have the ability, then, under certain circumstances, to look after their community, to ensure that they are acting in a professional manner. I'm happy to say that that's something that is in this bill: Under certain circumstances, a police officer can be suspended without pay. As I said, we had a number of examples that have come up over the last couple of days on this.

I'd like to also touch on the mandatory blood testing and the changes that are being made to that. This should provide some comfort to victims, officers and so on, on the mandatory blood testing. Again, I've had the opportunity—a number of opportunities, because a lot of the police officers in the Peterborough police force are friends of mine. They don't get treated with respect. There are issues that come up because of that. They'll be out at a crime scene or be out investigating something, and they'll be attacked. They'll be bitten. They'll be spit on. They'll be cut. They'll be dealing with someone who has been cut. They'll be exposed to different bodily fluids. This will give as much peace of mind as we can give to the officers or the civilians who are involved because of that mandatory blood testing. We want to make sure that everyone is safe. No one should be going to their job and wondering whether or not they're going to be able to go home.

The changes to the SIU—I applaud that. I'm going to talk about one particular incident in Peterborough. An officer was responding to a call. The call came in: The individual was armed. They had attacked someone. The police officer got to them. This individual lunged at the officer and stabbed him in the leg. The officer pulled out his service revolver and shot the suspect. It was more than two years that that case went on. The officer was stabbed—severely stabbed. He was off work for months because of it. Yet he had to endure an almost two-year process: Did he act appropriately when someone stabbed him? Could he have done something else other than to react and protect his life? Those were the questions that were being asked. No officer should have to go through that. The changes that we're implementing will make it better, more effective, for those officers so that they don't have to worry about that, so that they can do their jobs knowing that the government is protecting them, that the government has their back.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments?

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm pleased to be here again this morning to speak to Bill 68.

I was listening very closely to what the member opposite had to say. I grew up in a very small town in Newfoundland and even in the great big city, the metropolis of St. John's. It was a little smaller than most cities here. So I found it very interesting to hear the member opposite talk about how there's a different approach to policing perhaps necessary in smaller communities versus what he called, I think, "high-crime areas" or "high-crime cities." I have to say, I think I know where he's coming from on that. But I

would just say this: At the end of the day, isn't what we are trying to achieve that everyone in all of our communities, our youth, and particularly our most vulnerable people, feel safe and feel cared for—and, yes, even in what the member opposite might consider high-crime areas?

To that end, I have to say that one of the things I find most disappointing about this legislation is that nowhere in there—nowhere in there—is there a mention that carding will be banned or that identification related to the carding will be shredded. I have to say, when we speak about how you feel vulnerable and when you feel cared for and valued—I've spoken to many, many youth in my community and across the GTA who will tell you that they come to school sometimes after having been pulled aside, feeling like they're not valued, feeling like there's something wrong with them, feeling like they don't matter or that somehow they are criminal even if they are not responsible for anything.

I just ask the members opposite to consider that and to consider that the issues that we all share—and, again, I say this speaking as somebody who grew up in a very small place—are not all that different.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments?

Mrs. Nina Tangri: I rise today to speak about such an integral part of our community. I had the opportunity to join our great Peel police for a ride-along last month. It gave me the ability to see first-hand what our officers on the front line face each and every day. Just think about it: a traffic stop. When approaching the vehicle, you are completely unaware of who the person is. Are they armed? Are they aggressive or violent? And then think about a domestic dispute: Parties are often angry, violent, and can be injured. I observed how calmly and effectively the officers handled the situations and what they faced. I also asked what we, as a government, could do to ensure that they have the tools to do their job most effectively. They asked that we let them do their job, that we respect their profession.

I'd like to talk a little bit about the person I did a ride-along with, a supervisor. He was a homicide officer prior to becoming the supervisor. Sometimes they would see children who had witnessed their parents' murder—how traumatizing. When he had children, he could no longer do that job because of what he had faced, and then he went back to being a supervisor. It was very difficult for him, and I could see that from some of the things he was telling me that he had faced. I think we need to respect and understand what our front-line officers have to face all the time.

I do urge all parties here in this House to support Bill 68, our comprehensive police services act, because it's bringing respect back to our front-line police officers and at the same time making sure that the SIU has a position to make sure that the bad apples are taken out.

0930

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: What's interesting in this debate is that the government is saying two things. The first thing

that they're saying is, "Oh, work with us. We want you to work closely with us so that we can do all the right things for the police." Nobody on this side has a problem doing what's right for the police. But they have a funny way of trying to draw people to support them by calling us names, saying that we in the New Democratic Party don't like police, that we in the—

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: See, there they go again, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member for Kitchener–Conestoga will come to order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: To my point, without naming the member from Waterloo over there—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Kitchener–Conestoga will come to order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: He's making the point that, somehow or other, New Democrats don't support the military and we don't support the police. All they can do is send insults. What I've learned as a human being, let alone as a politician—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member for Kitchener–Conestoga will come to order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson:—is that if your only defence is to lob insults at the other side, it means to say that you don't have much to offer. That's really what this comes down to.

It's not me who's feeling rather frustrated by this, but I think the public gets frustrated by this because they look and they say, "Listen, I may agree or disagree with the NDP or the Conservatives on any one matter, but to all of a sudden say that a whole group of people are opposed to the police and are opposed to the military is way off base and it is not the way of being able to attract the support that you want."

I served in the military. How many people can say that? I served in the military. I was in the Royal 22nd Regiment.

Mr. Mike Harris: I applaud you for that.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The House will come to order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, this is the point, Madam Speaker. There are people here who have made a living in the armed forces, serving either as reservists or full-time members. You have people who have been involved with the police, who have family in the police and understand the issues. But when it comes to legislation having to deal with the police, we need to make sure that we give the police the tools that they need, but hurling insults is not the way that you're going to get the support that you're looking for.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): A reminder to all members that during debate rotations, they do have the opportunity for questions and comments in an orderly rotating fashion. Anyone who would like to be on record is welcome to do so at that time. Thank you.

Further questions and comments?

Mr. Michael Parsa: It's a pleasure to rise today to speak to Bill 68, the Comprehensive Ontario Police

Services Act. I don't think that anyone in this House would disagree that we rely on the police to keep us safe. They continuously make sacrifices and work very hard to keep our communities safe. Oftentimes, the work that the police do goes without recognition. At times, the work that they do can be thankless. For our government, it's a job for us to ensure that the men and women on the police front lines have the support they need to continue making this province a safe place to live. Ontarians expect nothing less, and in this bill, we're going to do just that.

With this bill, we're letting our men and women in law enforcement know that we stand shoulder to shoulder with them. The police deserve our gratitude and respect, not our suspicion and scorn. The previous government's legislation did not even acknowledge the principles of fairness and due process for our police officers. The previous legislation was quite simply disrespectful and unfair to our police officers who risk their lives to keep us safe.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Stop the clock. I apologize for interrupting the member. The side conversations are distracting.

The member has the floor. I'll return to the member to continue his remarks.

Mr. Michael Parsa: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Through service clubs in our town, I've been very involved with some of the programs with our at-risk youth. I have to tell you that there's much need for this, because sometimes some of the youth that we deal with have had some setbacks in their lives, and you can just hear it in the tone of the way that they speak. We've worked very hard to bring them closer to our law enforcement, closer to police officers, and they have done such a great job. I'm so thankful to all the men and women in our area with York Regional Police who come to our programs that we put together for them to connect with these youth and let them know that they're here to serve them and they're here to help them. I thank the minister for putting this bill forward.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member for Mushkegowuk–James Bay.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, madame la Présidente. I rise today to share my concern with regard to Bill 68—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I apologize to the member. It's not actually his turn to speak. I should have returned to the member from Peterborough–Kawartha for his remarks.

Mr. Dave Smith: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to thank the member from Davenport for her comments. You did bring up an interesting point. There is something, though, that I would like to say, and that is with respect to street checks. That's not something that happens very frequently in our area, and I would like to make sure that they still have that tool to be able to do that to talk to people. They do it in a very respectful way. It's not something that happens in a rural area very often.

The member from Mississauga–Streetsville: Thank you very much for your comments on that, as well.

And to the member from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill: I appreciated everything you had to say.

For the member from Timmins: I was quite disappointed with the comments that you made on it. Nowhere in my speech did I talk about anyone from the opposition. I talked about being professional. I talked about being friendly. It's unfortunate that the member from Timmins took his two minutes to make that statement that he can stick on social media—completely away from what I had been talking about. I was disappointed by that.

In the end, this bill's purpose is to show respect for the police. It is to put forward something that is going to be respectful to all of the police officers, to the police service, to those people who deal with the police. It is disappointing to see, when I'm talking about something in a very professional and friendly way, that it's taken completely off-topic to make another type of a statement. That is unfortunate when we're talking about being respectful, being friendly and trying to work together. I thought that I had given the speech in a way that was not attacking anyone, that was talking about being respectful, and it's disappointing to see that someone has decided to make another type of statement.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I am thrilled to appropriately recognize the member from Mushkegowuk—James Bay.

M. Guy Bourguin: Merci, madame la Présidente, encore une fois.

I rise today to share my concern with regard to Bill 68, the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act, or COPS for short.

Je veux commencer en disant une chose sur laquelle nous sommes tous d'accord : nous voulons que tous, nos familles et nos enfants, vivent en sécurité et que nos agents de la police aient les moyens et le respect qu'ils méritent.

Les libéraux ont eu 15 ans—oui, 15 ans—pour proposer une réforme aux services de police en Ontario. Le projet de loi 175 a vu la lumière juste avant leur départ l'an passé. Et puis, au lieu d'attaquer les points essentiels concernant la sécurité des gens, les libéraux ont essayé d'ouvrir la porte des services de police aux entités privées. Le projet de loi 68 des conservateurs fait de même.

What about this bill? Is there anything new under the sun? Experts in the media have been very clear on the character of this bill. This is not a major change from Bill 175. The first thing you notice when reading Bill 68 is that it's mostly a copycat of its predecessor.

Comme on dit en bon français, c'est entre chien et loup.

But when the Conservatives introduced Bill 68, the rhetoric could not be more spectacular: The bill came to fix the disaster that the Liberal bill had created roughly a year ago. Bill 175, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services said, was "the most anti-police legislation in Canadian history." Those are pretty big shoes to fill, I think.

But the Conservative bill doesn't live up to its expectations, to say the least. Again, what was labelled "the most anti-police legislation in Canadian history" is actually the backbone of this new piece of legislation. Again, Bill 68

continues along the path created by its predecessor and, to add insult to injury, it makes some regressive changes that will make things worse for Ontarians.

0940

There are multiple areas of this bill that require qualification, but for the sake of brevity, I want to speak to you about two aspects that have gone completely unnoticed: funding and recruitment for northern and First Nations police services, and street checks.

Time and again, we have heard from the Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service—NAPS, for short—that they face incredible challenges when it comes to receiving the bare minimum funding from the province. These are people who oftentimes work in complete isolation, are poorly equipped and deal with the vastness of the northern territories in generally dire conditions.

NAPS polices 35 First Nations in a territory that goes from Manitoba to Quebec and from Hudson Bay to northern Sudbury. This is about two thirds of the territory of this province—the size of France. They do so with a mere 160 officers.

Mr. Speaker, NAPS' budget has averaged from \$25 million to \$27 million for the past eight years, with constant pushback from this province concerning further funding for equipment such as telecommunications and the hiring of new officers. According to media reports a few years back, the OPP indicated that taking over NAPS' territory could cost at least \$80 million.

In June, NAPS was promised \$30 million in funding for, among other things, partnering up officers, the purchase of radio equipment, housing and hiring new officers. But again, they had to go through months of negotiation with this government in order to get part of the funding they truly deserve. They were literally on the verge of shutting down activities because of this government's inaction.

Le rôle et les conditions de travail pèsent également sur le statut de la force ainsi que sur le nombre d'officiers sur le terrain. Selon des rapports de 2016, 21 % des agents du NAPS étaient en congé de stress ou d'invalidité. Ça, c'est plus de deux sur 10. Et des agents en congé, 24 % étaient atteints d'un syndrome de stress post-traumatique. Je ne suis pas le seul à dire que les agents du NAPS ont un travail des plus difficiles avec des conditions de travail affreuses.

Officers are also seriously undertrained despite the fact that they face dire situations, with some of the highest homicides and sexual violence rates in the province. If you don't have enough officers, if you overburden those who are on the field, if you offer no help for development, what happens is quite simple: People leave their jobs. Officers just leave for greener pastures. And what does this bill do for them? For one, nothing is mentioned with regard to training and issues such as de-escalation. Recent studies have shown that we have erratic and uneven de-escalation training across the province, with the quality, amount and type of instruction depending on the time and resources that many police services lack.

Ce projet de loi ne reconnaît pas l'importance d'entraîner nos agents pour mieux gérer les situations où

des problèmes d'addiction ou de santé mentale sont en jeu. En fait, trop souvent nos agents doivent traiter des problèmes médicaux au lieu de mettre l'accent sur la sécurité de nos communautés.

À Thunder Bay, où la force a récemment fait l'objet d'une enquête sur des allégations de racisme systémique, on fait appel au gouvernement à investir davantage dans l'entraînement des nouveaux agents. En fait, des échecs répétés pour remédier à la méfiance entre les communautés autochtones et la police ont été surlignés comme une urgence.

What is this government doing to fund our agents? What is this government doing to help NAPS recruit officers and to keep them in the job, to keep our communities safe? Nothing, rien.

What about one of the most controversial and arguably illegal enforcement activities: carding, or street checks? The recent Tulloch report indicates that there is absolutely no value in performing random checks and that there is no evidence to back their undertaking. They play absolutely no role in preventing, intervening and suppressing crime. Justice Tulloch says that this practice has disproportionately affected racialized communities, especially Black and Indigenous people. Carding has been shown, time and again, to affect people's lives and careers. Street checks are, in other words, a poor tool for enforcement that simply encourage the profiling and the marginalization of members of our communities.

This bill says nothing in light of carding. What do we read here about modernizing police services, about enhancing our police service involvement in our communities, about bringing law enforcement at par within the 21st century? Absolute radio silence.

If you truly think that our police officers deserve our respect for protecting our families, you would do otherwise. If you truly think that your intention is to improve public safety by police officers fairly, you would do otherwise. If you wish to enhance the safety and well-being of all Ontarians, you would do otherwise.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments?

Mr. Stephen Lecce: I want to thank the member from Mushkegowuk—James Bay for his comments and his thoughts today.

I want to just very briefly reaffirm to this House that our party is one that supports, categorically, victims' rights in this Parliament and in this province. We believe that the interests of victims must trump those of recidivist violent criminals in this province. We believe that the rights of law-abiding, tax-paying Canadians must always come first within our criminal justice system. For our government, this legislation, the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act, will do just that.

If I may add a new aspect to the debate today, it was just days ago that the Attorney General of this province and the Minister of Community Safety announced an additional one million new dollars to support a one-time funding for sexual assault victims in the province of Ontario. It is these types of commitments that are manifestly demonstrated through dollars, through resources,

through support. They're going to make a difference for perhaps some of the most vulnerable people within our communities right across the province, in urban and rural settings.

Madam Speaker, I also want to note our categorical support for those who serve in uniform—men and women who valiantly put on a uniform in the defence of our safety and the defence of our security. There's an interesting quote, which I will conclude with, by the president of the Ontario police services association, Mr. Chapman, no doubt a colleague and friend to all members, including those opposite. He said that the "Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act will serve to restore fairness and respect for professional policing, make oversight more effective, and improve governance, training, and transparency." We will heed the perspective and the advice of this gentleman, of someone who served in uniform, and continue to make every effort possible to give our police the tools and the resources to do the important work and keep our families safe.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments?

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: This legislation is critical in strengthening community safety by ensuring that police officers have this province's support. Police can only do their job by knowing that we, as a province, are confident in their ability and provide them with all of the resources and legislation necessary to perform their services to the best of their ability.

0950

The Liberal government implemented a piece of legislation that diminished the everyday reality of police officers, what their roles entailed and what their needs for our government are, completely letting down Ontario. How do we expect our men and women in uniform to continually provide us with the utmost attention and care when fundamental legislation is against keeping Ontario communities safe?

On the surface, Bill 68 tweaks previous policies to ensure that police officers are treated with fairness and respect. Training, as Bill 68 points out, is a major catalyst of change. Changes in the effectiveness of policing can only come about through better and more comprehensive training for our officers. These changes hold more power when the way police are governed is taken into consideration and improved upon.

I seriously value that the proposed legislation mentions issues of transparency as well. Being transparent about where improvements need to be, and openly discussing where past governments have dropped the ball, is completely necessary in figuring out which areas of policing need the most attention. This, I feel, is important in the legislation in heightening the public's trust in the police.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments?

M^{me} Gila Martow: On vient d'entendre les remarques du membre de Mushkegowuk—James Bay. Il parle souvent ici en français, alors je fais un effort de faire mes réponses aussi en français. Il représente des communautés au nord de l'Ontario. Souvent, ce sont des communautés où on

entend des gens qui parlent français. Aussi, ce sont souvent des communautés autochtones.

Alors, on sait que la police, ils ont des défis dans toutes les communautés—même rurales, même où on a des fermes, même dans les grandes villes—et on veut aider, avec ces nouvelles règles, nos policiers à aider nos citoyens pour garder leurs communautés fortes. On sait que la sécurité de nos communautés, c'est « paramount » pour tout le monde ici dans la législature. On veut aider nos municipalités, aussi, à faire des planifications pour garder les communautés fortes pour nos citoyens, mais aussi pour les aider à faire des communautés où on peut aider les membres avec des problèmes de santé mentale. C'est très difficile pour nos policiers de penser—s'ils ont une interaction avec quelqu'un, qu'est-ce qui se passe dans leur crâne? Alors, on veut les aider.

On veut entendre. On a discuté avec les communautés, les municipalités, la police et tout le monde. J'espère que nos résidents dans tous nos comtés peuvent nous parler aussi.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jeff Burch: I want to compliment my friend from Mushkegowuk–James Bay for his very thoughtful commentary on the bill. I just want to pick up on a couple of things that he said.

First of all, it is interesting to hear the government talk about this bill as being some groundbreaking piece of legislation when, as my friend points out, it's basically Bill 175 with a few tweaks. There's no question about that. It's taking the bill, cutting and pasting a few things and adding a few tweaks, and that's really what it is. So let's not pretend that Bill 175 was some horrible anti-police piece of legislation and then this is the gift to the Ontario police. It's not the case at all.

Also, there are some things that haven't been done in this bill that are really a lost opportunity, and addressing carding is the first thing that comes to mind. This is an issue that has been brought up numerous times in this House. The racialized communities in Toronto and all across the province have brought this issue forward, and we've tried, as the opposition, to bring it to the government's attention. It's really a burning issue out there in the community, and here we have a bill on policing, a great opportunity for this government to address a very legitimate concern from the public, and crickets. Nothing at all. It's really incredible.

The other thing that was picked up on is addressing racism in certain parts of Ontario. The Ontario Civilian Police Commission had some success in doing that. They had some success in Thunder Bay with addressing institutional racism there. Completely getting rid of the Ontario Civilian Police Commission—I'm not sure how advisable that is. We'll see what they replace it with.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member from Mushkegowuk–James Bay for his two-minute response.

Mr. Guy Bourgoin: I want to thank my colleagues from King–Vaughan, St. Catharines, Thornhill and Niagara Centre for their comments.

I would just ask—when I hear people talking about my riding, Mushkegowuk–James Bay, I have many comments from people in my riding saying they should get the name of my riding right. It's Mushkegowuk–James Bay. It's offending them. So please, if you need a hand—it took me a while to learn it right, but, please, I'll ask you to say it right.

To come back to what we have discussed, the NAPS police seem to be the black sheep of policing. They need funding like any other police in Ontario. When I said in my comments that they represent two thirds of the territories in Ontario—you have to travel it to realize how much, with 160 officers. It's the size of France, with 160 officers. They need to police, they have issues no different than other police services, and they have to serve that with 160.

Keep that in mind when NAPS comes to you for funding to get the training they need to deal with post-traumatic stress and to deal with other issues that any other officers deal with. They need the help also and, not giving them the funding necessary to be able to deliver the service, I think we're doing a disservice to the communities in my riding and the northern communities that they service. So we've got to keep that in mind. They deserve the same funding and service that they can deliver like the rest of the OPP or any other police officers in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Harris: I'm honoured to have the opportunity to rise in the House today to debate the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act, introduced by the Honourable Sylvia Jones, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Our government has made it clear since day one that we are committed to making Ontario a safer place to live, holding criminals accountable for their actions and standing up for victims. With the introduction of Bill 68, we have held true to these commitments. The Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act proposes the creation of a stronger police oversight structure, the provision of fair disciplinary processes for police officers and the strengthening of transparency and training requirements for police forces, which will in turn improve public confidence.

The fact is, Madam Speaker, the current rules are not fair for our brave men and women in blue. The previous government did not treat officers fairly. They passed some of the most anti-police legislation in the history of our province. To give you a sense of the hand we are dealt, the heroes who respond to some of the most tragic incidents and save the lives of many innocent people can often spend up to six months under the eye of the Special Investigations Unit—and six months, if you can believe it, Madam Speaker, is considered a quick SIU investigation when compared to others. To provide another example, under the current policy, any officer who is unable to prevent someone from committing suicide is automatically subject to an SIU investigation.

After a thorough review, we have identified the main pitfalls of the current system and quickly responded to the

bill we are debating here today. Under our new policy, police officers attempting to save a life will no longer be subject to SIU investigations. I am happy to inform the House that with Bill 68, Ontario police officers and the families that depend on them will finally be able to count on a fair and transparent oversight process which will put public safety first.

1000

Public trust is essential for police to do their jobs effectively. Public trust hangs on effective measures of police oversight. The system of oversight left to us by the previous government is, to say at the very least, broken. But I am happy to say, Madam Speaker, that Bill 68 will fix this, firstly by reducing duplication through the creation of a one-window public complaints system. As was stated by MPP Rasheed during second reading, “Justice Tulloch recommended that the OIPRD be renamed to facilitate better understanding by the public of its functions. As suggested, the OIPRD would be renamed the Law Enforcement Complaints Agency.” The new, independent Law Enforcement Complaints Agency will handle public complaints, Madam Speaker.

Secondly, it will focus the mandate of the Special Investigations Unit. As Minister Jones explained, “By repealing and replacing the Police Services Act, 2018, the Ontario Special Investigations Unit Act, 2018, and the Policing Oversight Act, 2018, and repealing the Ontario Policing Discipline Tribunal Act, 2018, we have set a new course to develop better and stronger policing legislation and oversight that works for police officers and the people of Ontario.”

Bill 68 will make the process more transparent. As MPP McKenna eloquently put it during second reading, “Under the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act, the Special Investigations Unit, the SIU, would be established as a fully independent provincial agency in a new, separate act administered by the Attorney General. This is important for a very simple, plain-language reason: If you are being investigated, it should be reasonably easy for you to go to the legislation, have a look at the new law and understand what you can expect to happen.”

Currently, SIU investigations take far too long to complete. The Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act will streamline the SIU investigation process, which otherwise would have persisted under Bill 175 and forced many police officers to continue to labour under months- or years-long investigations, even in cases where they had no contact with an individual. To refer back to comments made by MPP McKenna once more, “Our legislation will require the SIU to complete investigations within 120 days or provide an explanation for delays to that timeline.”

By treating police fairly, the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act will ensure the police, the government and the people of Ontario remain partners in creating a more secure province. Ontarians want fairness and transparency for police officers, and for the general public.

In December, I joined the Waterloo Regional Police north division for a ride-along to understand the incredible and dangerous work that our front-line officers face every

day. What struck me was the prevalence of calls responding to individuals with serious mental health issues. In these instances, just like responding to overdose calls as well, Madam Speaker, police need to know that they can act decisively and not be subjected to burdensome and prolonged investigations by the SIU.

Under previous legislation from the Liberal government, police officers were automatically subjected to an investigation when attempting to save a life with naloxone, or put under SIU investigation if they couldn't stop an individual from committing suicide. Two Waterloo regional officers were recently placed under the SIU microscope after attempting to revive a 41-year-old Cambridge woman who overdosed when they were unsuccessful, unfortunately, in saving her life.

The current system is beyond ridiculous, Madam Speaker. It is not that we are against oversight. We are actually for enhanced oversight, but it has to make sense. In these changes, our government has the full support of Waterloo Regional Police Chief Larkin. He argues bluntly regarding our police legislation and its protections for life-saving actions: “Why shouldn't it protect the police officers? Our front-line members should have the same protection as everyday citizens. It's not about shirking responsibilities, I want to be clear. But we should have some common sense.”

Madam Speaker, we need a system of oversight that trusts our front-line officers, who best know the situation on the ground and the means to protect our communities. What the current rules dictate for the training of our officers and the governance of our police system does not serve the interests of Ontarians. The current system is failing our province. Bill 68 will improve training and governance.

As an early response to Justice Tulloch's report on street checks, for example, Bill 68 mandates that new police officers and special constables receive training in the areas of human rights, systemic racism, diversity and Indigenous culture and rights. These new training requirements will also be made mandatory for members of police service boards.

Our vision for police reform and community safety is not narrow-minded or overly simplistic. The Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act recognizes that the pressures on police officers are becoming more diverse and intense. I have done my best to understand the pressures first-hand and to support our brave men and women on the front-line who put their lives on the line to protect our communities every day. In the fall, I met with Waterloo Regional Police Chief Larkin to get up to speed on the nature and extent of the crime in urban and rural areas that affects Kitchener–Conestoga. This includes increasing gang activity, spiking violent crime, and police officers who are dealing with repeat offenders.

I am pleased that our government is taking concrete action on these underlying issues such as record investments of \$3.8 million in mental health and addiction funding while supporting concrete initiatives to support low-income individuals. This includes eliminating the

provincial income tax for minimum-wage earners, creating more apprentices in the trades, and ensuring that students receive free tuition grants.

However, we should never forget that despite these initiatives, individuals will continue to join gangs, commit violent crimes and prey on the most vulnerable in society. Too many people and too many neighbourhoods are living in fear of gang and gun violence. Too many people and police officers are paralyzed by our court systems that have left far too many arrested criminals back on the streets the next day.

With that, Madam Speaker, pursuant to standing order 48, I move that the question now be put.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Harris has moved that the question be now put. I am satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow this question to be put to the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion that the question be now put, please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion that the question be now put, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, this vote will be deferred until after question period today.

Vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Orders of the day? I recognize the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you, Speaker. No further business.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 10:30 today.

The House recessed from 1008 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I have a special guest from my riding this morning. Anneke Smit is a professor of law at the University of Windsor and the mother of today's page captain Pieter Waters. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Jill Dunlop: I'd like to welcome my constituents from Lakehead University Student Union and Canadian Federation of Students—Ontario: Brandon Amyot and Sami Pritchard. Thank you for being here today.

Mr. Doug Downey: I'd like to introduce, in the gallery, John MacIntyre, Cathy Pettigrew, her daughter, Anne Pettigrew, and Patrick Tohill with JDRF, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Welcome.

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: It's my pleasure to welcome to the Legislature today Dr. Panagiotis Skandalakis, George Dimitrakopoulos and Yiannis Stamatakos. Dr. Skandalakis is a member of Parliament from the Greek New Democracy Party, and he is a shadow minister for Hellenes Abroad. Welcome to Ontario, and I hope you enjoy your day here at Queen's Park.

Applause.

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: It's also my pleasure to welcome a constituent of mine to the Legislature today: Bill Sargeant. Welcome, Bill.

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'd like to welcome a few guests from University—Rosedale: Marcel Carriere, Michael Santos, Megan Teves, Hafiz Rahaman, Jennifer Hamlyn and Jamal Ahamad. They are all registered early childhood educators at Orde Day Care, which is in the University—Rosedale riding. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mrs. Nina Tangri: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I have two introductions this morning.

Today, February 28, is International Rare Disease Day, and I would like to welcome to the Legislature patients who are affected by rare diseases, and caregivers and advocates, from the Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders, or COD. More than a million Ontarians suffer from a rare disorder, and two thirds of them are children. I'd like to recognize Dr. Durhane Wong-Rieger, president and CEO of COD, and Dr. Ronald Cohn, incoming president and CEO of SickKids hospital. Welcome.

I'd also like to welcome, from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Patrick Tohill, John MacIntyre, Cathy Pettigrew, Dan Pettigrew and Anne Pettigrew. Welcome to the Legislature.

Miss Monique Taylor: It gives me great pleasure to welcome Shay Boshis, who is the mom of six-year-old Wesley, to the House today. Welcome to Queen's Park, Shay.

Hon. Laurie Scott: I'd like to introduce Sarah Keys, who is here to support her son, Thomas Keys-Brasier, as page here today in this Legislature. Of course, they're from the great riding of Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock. Welcome to the Legislature.

Ms. Doly Begum: I would like to welcome some wonderful guests to the gallery today: Fatima Alif, from Ontario Campaign 2000, who lives in Milton; Pankaja Udavant, a George Brown College early childhood education student from Scarborough North; Karen Farrell, a registered early childhood educator from Ajax; Cadence Emery, a registered childhood educator, a mother and a member of the Halton Advocates for Quality Child Care, from the riding of Oakville; Michelle Jones, a registered early childhood educator from Wellington county; Christie Leja and Annabel Fernandes, who are registered early childhood educators at the Lakeshore Community Child Care Centre in Etobicoke—Lakeshore; Chel Byrne, an early childhood education student from Don Valley North; Melissa Booker, who lives in York Centre; Peter Ochs, from Ontario Campaign 2000; and Kim Mantulak, a registered early childhood educator from my wonderful riding of Scarborough Southwest. Welcome, everyone, to Queen's Park.

I also have Carolyn Ferns, from the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, as well as any other parents and ECEs that I've missed. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Lindsey Park: It's my great honour this morning to introduce the real Golden Girls of Port Perry, who inspired my private member's bill. From my riding we

have Martha Casson, Louise Bardswich and Sandy McCully, as well as their home builder, John Lucyk, and Louise's grandson, Griffin. Thank you for joining us.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's my pleasure to welcome Jenn Wallage, a registered early childhood educator, mother and president of her ETFO local, here to Queen's Park today. Welcome, Jenn.

Ms. Bhutila Karpoche: I'd like to welcome Erin Williams, from Parkdale–High Park. She is a registered early childhood educator at Ferncliff Daycare. Welcome.

Mr. Michael Mantha: It saddens me to make this announcement that, after eight years of service, I'm going to have to retire this suit. I just can't take it anymore. Today is the last day of service for this suit so please, if you want a selfie, enjoy it, but it's going to be retired today.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's my pleasure to welcome John Malcolmson to the gallery today. John is up with the rare medical disorders group but he's perhaps best known as the mastermind behind the take a kid to camp Tim Hortons golf foundation tournaments. Welcome, John, to Queen's Park.

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: I want to welcome the parents of our page, Keya Thakkar: Pinky Thakkar and Parin Thakkar. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes the introductions of our guests this morning.

I'm pleased to recognize the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks on a point of order.

Hon. Rod Phillips: Speaker, I seek unanimous consent of the House to make a brief statement in memory of my dear friend Bruce Addo.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks is seeking unanimous consent of the House to make a brief statement. Agreed? Agreed.

Again, I recognize the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

BRUCE KYEREH-ADDO

Hon. Rod Phillips: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I express my sincere appreciation to my colleagues here for allowing me to make this statement. It is a statement, you can imagine, though, that I had hoped I would never have to give.

I rise today to pay tribute to a beloved son, a cherished brother, a respected mentor, loyal confidant and faithful friend, who was loved by his family and by many, many across the country, Bruce Kyereh-Addo. His mother, Christine, and siblings Jessie, Joy and Sam Jr. join us in the gallery today.

Bruce served our government as my director of operations. He passed away of natural causes this past Christmas Eve.

Born and raised in Scarborough, Bruce had his first taste for politics in Ottawa when he ran to be the student council president of Carleton, and it emboldened a life that we all got to share where he was engaged, as so many of

us are, in the potential of politics to make a difference in people's lives. He would go to work for various political campaigns and on various political opportunities across our country in many, many provinces, and that brought him to Ontario and to my campaign and to my office this time last year.

1040

Bruce was a once-in-a-lifetime kind of person. When you met him, you had this unmistakable feeling that you were the only person that mattered to him. That infectious enthusiasm was something that, of course, made him very effective in politics but also made him such a dear friend.

He was a leader and exemplary role model to the Ghanaian community as well as a young person who was doing great things and helping others in that community do great things. To know Bruce was to know his love, to know his compassion, and particularly compassion for those in need. His own experience had taught him that with support, there were many, many things that people could do, and without that support, there were also things that could happen that were not so positive.

In his 33 years, he reminded us that we must always be ready to help others, whoever they are and wherever we find them, and he lived that life. It was one of the reasons that he was so valued by his dear friends.

Again, as I said, when you talked to Bruce, you had that sense that you had his undivided attention, and that's because you did. He was a big man physically but also had a huge heart and a very active mind. When he was engaged with you and when he was looking in your eyes, you knew you were the person who mattered in that moment. You could really feel his presence.

While we laid him to rest a month ago and the sorrow does subside with time and the pain does subside with time, his memory does not subside. All of us here who had the opportunity to know him can sense and feel his presence here today and every day.

To my colleagues from all parties who have lent their support, I thank you. I also thank you on behalf of Bruce's colleagues and on behalf of Bruce's family, who, as I mentioned, have joined us in the gallery here today.

Christine, you raised Bruce to be smart, loving, intelligent, caring and compassionate. Thank you for that. That gave us all something to share. He was nothing short of exceptional. Thank you for sharing your son, your brother, a community leader and a mentor. May he rest in peace and his memory remain with us. Thank you.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Before I begin, I just want to extend on behalf of New Democrats in the Legislature our sincerest condolences on the loss of Bruce to the minister

and to his family and friends and community. Minister, you made us all more aware of the deep loss of this young man.

Speaker, my first question goes to the Acting Premier. Ontario families remember the disastrous health transformation of the Mike Harris era, when hospital beds were closed, hospitals were shuttered and thousands of nurses were fired. Not long ago, the Premier pretended that under his Conservative government not a single job would be lost. However, just yesterday, the Grand River Hospital in Kitchener announced that 40 nurses would be losing their jobs this week due to budget shortfalls.

Is the Acting Premier willing to echo the Premier's claim that front-line health jobs won't be lost on their watch?

Hon. Christine Elliott: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. We are certainly aware of the situation with the Grand River Hospital. Our members have kept us fully aware and the ministry, of course, is aware of the concern there.

We are working with the Grand River Hospital to help them deal with the financial losses that they have experienced. We want to make sure that patients have the front-line care that they need in their community, and that certainly includes the Grand River Hospital.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: News flash for the minister: You don't get front-line care without nurses there to provide the front-line care.

The people of Kitchener are already seeing the impact of the Premier's health plans: 40 nursing jobs gone, four fewer beds in that hospital, which means of course more people will be in hallways.

The Ford government this week announced that they would be merging 20 agencies that employ 10,500 health professionals, but she has refused to say how many jobs will be lost. Will the Acting Premier tell us how many more nurses will be losing jobs as the government imposes their new health scheme on Ontarians?

Hon. Christine Elliott: As I indicated previously, the ministry is working with the people of Grand River Hospital to help them deal with their financial situation, so nothing is certain as yet with what will happen.

But what I would say, with respect to the transformation that you refer to, is the reason why it is being done is because we need to re-centre our health care system on patients, families and caregivers. That is not happening now. We are seeing huge disruptions. We want to put more people into front-line care. That's what the people of Ontario expect and deserve.

To suggest that the way things are now is okay is not right. People across Ontario see the cracks: 30,000 people waiting for a long-term-care bed, 1,000 people every day receiving care in hospital hallways and storage rooms, and thousands of people waiting for mental health and addiction care. This needs to change.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I have to say that patients, families and caregivers remember the Conservative legacy in our province, where 6,000 nurses lost their jobs and 28 hospitals were shuttered. I dare say, Speaker, that that wasn't right either, was it?

This week, when the Acting Premier was asked how many health care professionals would be losing their jobs, she said it was something that she just couldn't answer. How did the Ford government move so quickly from "not a single job lost" to "who knows how many?"

Hon. Christine Elliott: As the leader of the official opposition will know, the way the system is being re-structured is so that care will be provided on the front lines by local care providers. It's premature to say at this point what their plan is going to be. We are opening up the doors to allow them, to allow the providers, to work together—the local providers within our public health care system.

But let me just say, I'd like to quote from some of the care providers. I am encouraged by their responses. Anthony Dale, president and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association: "Ontario's hospitals are encouraged by the prospect of working more closely with partners in their communities to find local solutions to better meet patient needs." Sue VanderBent, CEO, Home Care Ontario: "We need all parts of the health system working together to help patients stay at home and to get them back home from acute care as quickly as possible. The current system, unfortunately, is fragmented, siloed and makes that co-operation difficult"—broad support from health care providers.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Acting Premier. The legacy of the Harris Conservative era isn't just firing nurses and comparing them to hula hoops. That government also opened the door for private, for-profit health companies, inviting private home care providers to bid on home care contracts and approving Ontario's first private hospitals.

Does the Acting Premier think that this legacy is worth repeating?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the leader of the official opposition: Any suggestion with respect to privatization being the goal of this exercise is ludicrous. What we are doing is strengthening our public health care system, and it's going to be up to the providers who already provide care. It may be a hospital, a home care provider and a mental health agency, for example, that may choose to come together to apply to become the local Ontario health team. If they are accepted under the strict criteria that we are putting together, they will then have fiscal responsibility to deliver care with all of the health care providers in their area. They will also be required to deliver the quality of care that will be expected and will be required to continue to exercise their responsibilities with patients at the centre of it all. It's all—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Supplementary?

1050

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I dare say that privatization is absolutely going to be a bonus for all those folks who paid \$1,250 to go to a dinner last night for the Conservatives.

Families in Ontario have lived through this before, unfortunately, and they heard the same excuses then that we are hearing today from both Liberal and Conservative governments. Meanwhile, they're living with the legacy of a broken home care system and paying the price for expensive P3 hospitals.

What health services does the Acting Premier plan to privatize this time? Because we know it's coming.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Again, through you, Mr. Speaker: What I would say is being done by the leader of the official opposition is fearmongering, without any basis whatsoever. For the fifteenth time, if I need to tell you, we are strengthening our public health care system—that's what it's about—to centre it onto patients and to make sure—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I apologize. The opposition will come to order. I have to be able to hear the Deputy Premier's response.

Deputy Premier, please conclude your response.

Hon. Christine Elliott: We are taking steps to ensure that the patients of Ontario receive the coordinated care that they expect and deserve, which they are not receiving under the current system. That is what this transformation is all about within our public health care system.

Just to read one more quote—and this is from Dr. Doris Grinspun, the CEO of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario: "Today's announcement marks the beginning of"—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Families across Ontario are looking for a public health system—a public health system—that gets them the care they need without leaving them stranded in a hallway for hours. But what they're seeing is nurses who are still losing their jobs, hospital beds that are closing—at this moment, hospital beds that are closing—a health minister who can't or won't say how many more jobs are going to be lost, and the Conservatives of the Mike Harris era being handed six-figure paycheques as health advisers to this government.

Does the Acting Premier think people will be fooled again?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government members must come to order. That wasn't appropriate at all.

Deputy Premier, please respond.

Hon. Christine Elliott: I'm sorry; I did just want to read this one quote from Dr. Doris Grinspun, CEO of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario—because it has to do with nurses and I think it's important—who said, "Today's announcement marks the beginning of important changes that are needed in the health system" and the

continued role registered nurses must play in both coordinating care with patients in their communities and in helping Ontarians navigate its complexities.

Dr. Grinspun and the RNAO support the changes we are bringing forward. The OMA, the Ontario Medical Association, supports these changes. Home Care Ontario supports these changes. The Ontario Hospital Association—on and on it goes. I don't understand why all of these providers are so excited about the changes coming to our public health care system while the official opposition just seemingly doesn't get it.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is to the Minister of Education. Parents of children with autism were devastated by the Premier's decision to pull the support they need for treatment for their children and infuriated by the government's threats, intimidation and manipulation. They were deeply hurt watching backbench Progressive Conservatives applaud and cheer as they cry and worry for their children's future.

Now school boards are also sounding the alarm about the government's scheme. As the chair of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association puts it, "We need to know how many students are coming to us, what their needs are going to be and how that's going to be funded."

When will the Minister of Education give them some answers?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Again, I'm pleased to be able to stand in this House and talk about the actions that we have already taken.

I've spoken about Bill 48, and now I'm going to remind everybody about the pilot program that I agreed to extend. I asked people to keep this pilot going, because we need to take a look at what's working and what's not. We're working with 19 boards across Ontario with this pilot, and we're exploring ways to improve and make sure students with autism have the services and the support that they need.

Do you know what? This pilot actually is offering targeted EA training. Honestly, this pilot in particular is providing dedicated space for autism services through an external ABA provider on-site in schools. Also, we're looking at funding for school boards to hire board-certified behaviour analysts. Speaker, we're doing our part.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, a small fraction of school boards in this province having pilot projects brings no comfort to the thousands of parents who don't know what's going to happen to their children who have autism who need treatment and supports.

Those parents are very, very worried. The government's new scheme puts huge financial burdens on those parents, and many children will be entering the public school system without the supports that they have already been able to rely on. This isn't the parents' fault and it's not the schools' fault; this is the Ford government's scheme and it's the Ford government's fault.

The Ford government needs to immediately start giving schools answers and resources to help them deal with the challenges that this terrible scheme is causing, or better yet stop cheering for this disastrous scheme and replace it with one that works for families and children in Ontario. Which will it be, Speaker?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members will please take their seats.

Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I have to suggest to the leader of the opposition party: Seriously, she needs to stop fearmongering, because the fact of the matter is, with regard to boards, we have given \$3 billion. Again, I'm going to repeat this: We have given school boards \$3 billion to make sure that they have the opportunity to prepare and offer the services that are required by children with autism.

We look forward to seeing, as well, the results from our pilot project. We're going to be receiving the results from our evaluator that's looking at the pilot projects, and that is going to inform how we approach supports for our students, our parents and the system outcomes, because that's so, so important.

Again, \$3 billion across this province is going to school boards. We're taking action now, and we're going to be taking further action—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Next question.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs. Nina Tangri: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. After 15 years of reckless Liberal mismanagement, Ontario has been left with a health care system that needs immediate help. That is why I couldn't be more pleased that the Minister of Health introduced our government's plan to do just that: fix and strengthen our health care system with The People's Health Care Act.

Fixing the health care system the former Liberal government left us with was a core campaign promise, which our government is proudly delivering on. Mr. Speaker, can the minister please explain why our proposed changes are so desperately needed for our health care system?

Hon. Christine Elliott: I thank the member from Mississauga—Streetsville for her question. There is no question that our health care system is struggling on many fronts. Over the last five years, Ontario has spent 30% more than the Canadian average in administrative expenses on its health care system. I don't know about you, Mr. Speaker, but I haven't noticed a 30% improvement in our health care, nor have the over 1,000 patients each and every day receiving health care in hospital hallways and storage rooms.

1100

After increasing across-the-board spending over and over again, year after year, average wait times to get into

a long-term-care home have ballooned 300% since 2003, from 36 days to now 146 days. We know that in Ontario, health care represents 42 cents of every dollar collected from taxpayers, yet we rank poorly on critical factors such as wait times, quality of care and system integration compared to our—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mrs. Nina Tangri: I thank the minister for her response. There is no doubt that our health care system needs immediate attention. I have heard many stories from my constituents about their troubles dealing with the system. I'm sure the minister has heard many stories from patients over her many years as health critic, Patient Ombudsman and now Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to remember that at the end of the day, everything we do here is for the people of Ontario. There is a human element to everything we do—it's patient care, unlike the opposition's patient scare—especially with health care, as we heard this morning from CORD and Dr. Cohn of SickKids hospital.

Could the minister please elaborate why these changes are so important?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you again to the member. You're absolutely right: Patient care and patient priorities and safety are absolutely central to everything that we do.

I would like to share one patient story with you, if I might. There was a gentleman I met not too long ago who, unfortunately, while he was in good health, suffered a catastrophic injury and ended up in a quadriplegic condition. His family worked incredibly hard with his community hospital to try to find a rehabilitation place for him to go to, but he still remained on a ventilator. While he wanted to go somewhere else, the only place he could stay to be on the mechanical ventilator was in the intensive care unit of a hospital, and he stayed there for 13 months. Can you imagine that? I personally can't. That was only because there was no other place in Ontario for him to go. That is not patient-centred care. That's totally system-driven care, and that's what—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will please take their seats.

Restart the clock. The member for Essex.

FUNDRAISING

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Acting Premier. Speaker, media reports in the Toronto Star today indicate that some unusual edicts have been coming out of the Premier's office. Desperate to sell tickets, the Premier's office allegedly ordered lobbyists to sell tickets to clients under threat of losing access to this government. Late yesterday, the order banning journalists from the evening's festivities also came out of the Premier's office.

Can the Acting Premier tell us who in the Premier's office is issuing these disturbing edicts?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Order.

I'm going to give the member the opportunity to rephrase his question so that it focuses on government policy.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Speaker, I had a similar question yesterday. The question is about accountability and transparency in government. Yesterday the government wasn't able to answer the question. It's obvious that they're not willing to answer the question today. I will rephrase it.

There is a disturbing pattern coming out of this Premier's office: issuing ordinances, threatening lobbyists, threatening journalists, banning journalists from events that the government is putting on. Who is making these orders? Is it the Premier's staff driving the bus, or is it the Premier himself?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the Deputy Premier to respond.

Hon. Christine Elliott: To the Minister of Economic Development.

Hon. Todd Smith: I just want to say that the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario hosted the dinner last night. It happens to be the most successful political fundraiser in Canadian history. In spite of the fact that there was a winter storm last night, there were over 3,100 people who attended the event last night, making their own personal donations from their own personal bank accounts. Gone are the Liberal fundraising days when they raised tens of thousands of corporate and union donations and then made government policy based on those corporate and union donations.

It was an excellent night last night. It was open to everyone who wanted to buy a ticket, and then it was open to everyone via livestream last night. You could hear the positive message. People are excited—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The House will come to order.

Start the clock. Supplementary?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm sure that the families of kids with autism and those who were protesting outside of the event last night are overjoyed to hear about the PC Party's \$4-million one-night windfall when they're struggling and when they're in crisis. I'm glad to hear you're so tone-deaf.

If this were the first time we'd heard stories from the Premier's office, it might not be concerning. But media reports have stories about Dean French, the Premier's chief of staff, insisting that police time arrests to make the afternoon news, and stories about Dean French, the Premier's chief of staff, blowing a half a million dollars to get Alykhan Velshi fired from OPG after one day's work. Yesterday, we learned that Dean French, the Premier's chief of staff, is being questioned by the Integrity Commissioner for his role in the appointment of the next OPP commissioner, Ron Taverner. This sounds like Gerald Butts 2.0 to me; I don't know about anybody else. Now we're learning that the Premier's chief of staff is threatening lobbyists and declaring the fundraisers a media-free zone. I—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Response?

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks to the member for another bizarre question. We've been getting them on a regular basis here in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I can only tell you that what the people of Ontario want, and what the people of Essex actually want, is a government that's acting in their best interests, and that is exactly what we've been doing. We've been making Ontario open for business. We've been making Essex open for business.

I think the people in Essex are probably a bit embarrassed by the performances over the last couple of weeks by their member. I think they're probably looking long and hard at what this government has been able to do.

When it comes to fundraising, our party is doing exceptionally well. I can understand why he's turning red in the face or green with envy. It's because they're not raising anything. Do you know why, Mr. Speaker? People aren't buying what they're selling. They're buying what we're selling: such big news for the people of Ontario.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mrs. Robin Martin: My question is to the great Minister of Government and Consumer Services. Earlier this month, the minister announced the government's plan to reform Tarion. For many of my constituents in Eglinton–Lawrence, buying a home is one of the most important decisions they will make in their lives. They want to know how our government is improving consumer protection for them and all new homebuyers across Ontario so that their investment and their family are protected.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I ask, would the minister share the specific steps that this government is taking to fix Tarion and the new home warranty program?

Hon. Bill Walker: I want to thank the member from Eglinton–Lawrence, Robin Martin, for her excellent question and for responding to her constituents on this important issue.

As the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, I am committed to strengthening consumer protections to put the people of Ontario first. I am pleased to speak about the decisive and specific action our government is taking to change Tarion's structure and better protect homebuyers.

1110

Last week, I announced we are creating a new, separate regulator from Tarion to improve oversight of builders and vendors. We're exploring the feasibility of a multi-provider insurance model for new home warranties. We're looking at proposed legislative amendments to require Tarion to make executive and board compensation publicly available, and moving to a more balanced, skills-based board composition with fewer builder-vendor sector representatives. And we are introducing new initiatives to better inform and protect purchasers of cancelled condominium projects.

Mr. Speaker, we are reforming Tarion in order to put the people of Ontario first.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I thank the minister for the great actions he is taking to restore confidence to countless Ontario families. It is refreshing to see a government standing up for homeowners. Tarion has been in place for 40 years and, yet, to quote the Honourable Justice Douglas Cunningham, “much tinkering had taken place over the years” while Tarion remained “unresponsive, difficult to deal with and not transparent.”

Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain how our government has responded to the recommendations in Justice Cunningham’s 2016 independent report and how we are changing Tarion’s structure to better protect Ontario’s consumers?

Hon. Bill Walker: Thank you very much again to the hard-working member and my colleague from Eglinton–Lawrence. Unfortunately, the previous Liberal government did very little with Honourable Justice Douglas Cunningham’s report. Sadly, they left homeowners vulnerable. We are cleaning up yet another mess left by the Liberals that they left without taking any action. We’re moving forward with key recommendations to make sure we are protecting Ontarians.

I’m going to repeat: We’re creating a new, separate regulator from Tarion to improve oversight of builders and vendors. We’re exploring the feasibility of a multi-provider insurance model for new home warranties. We’re looking at proposed legislative amendments to require Tarion to make executive and board compensation publicly available, and moving to a more balanced, skills-based board. We’re going to introduce new initiatives to better inform and protect purchasers of cancelled condominium projects.

I am pleased to share with the members of this House that Justice Cunningham is “delighted to see that the Ontario government is about to implement many of the recommendations contained in my report.”

These are just the first steps on the road to reforming Tarion. We will continue to move forward in restoring trust—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Next question.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Miss Monique Taylor: My question is for the Acting Premier. Last night, CityNews Edmonton reported that autism agencies in Alberta are getting calls from Ontario parents. Families feel they have no choice but to move to Alberta, because their system actually provides needs-based autism services. Their system gives kids a chance.

Jolene, the mom featured in this story, moved to Alberta last year to get therapy for her son due to the Liberals’ failed plan. Now, with this government’s disastrous autism plan, she feels that she can’t come home.

With news reports of layoffs at Ontario therapy providers, it looks like families will have even less access to services. Does the Acting Premier believe that parents

should be forced to move provinces just to access needs-based services for their children?

Hon. Christine Elliott: To the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Speaker, our plan, as you know, is rooted in the belief that every child with autism in the province of Ontario deserves support from their Ontario government. Presently, today, three out of four children in Ontario are denied support from their Ontario government. That’s 23,000 children who we’re going to make sure get off of the waiting list in the next 18 months. We’re going to do it by doubling our investment into diagnostic hubs and providing a direct fund to moms and dads across this province so that they can get the services their children so desperately need. We will continue to support all children.

But I have a question for the honourable member. On December 1, 2015, she asked the previous Liberal administration, “Will the Premier commit today to immediately ending the chronic wait-list...?” This government is doing that. I don’t know why she can’t take yes for an answer.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Miss Monique Taylor: Speaker, I don’t know why the minister doesn’t understand that the program needs to be needs-based, as in Alberta.

Families keep reaching out to my office to share their stories because they have no hope of getting help from their Conservative MPPs. Shay, who is here with us today, lives in the riding of Burlington. Her son, Wesley, is six. He is non-verbal and has violent outbursts when he’s overwhelmed. He needs constant one-on-one support. Since starting therapy, Wesley has learned to communicate and regulate his emotions. He needs needs-based therapy, and it’s working.

Shay will receive \$4,600 a year under the new plan, but Wesley’s current cost of therapy is \$92,000 a year. The new autism program will fail her family.

What does the minister suggest that Shay should do with her \$4,600, given that that’s one—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members will please take their seats.

Minister?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: My commitment, and the commitment of this government, is to clear the wait-list in 18 months. Some 23,000 children right now are languishing on the wait-list.

I remember when the member in the opposition would stand in this Legislature and call consistently for the end of the wait-list, like she did on November 3, 2015, again on November 4, 2015, and again on December 1, 2015. She used to have a record of wanting to get those children off the wait-list and into service. That’s what this plan will do.

I’ll reiterate: Three out of four children in the province of Ontario are currently denied support by their Ontario government. I believe that that is wrong. It’s unconscionable. That’s why we are committed to ending the wait-list in 18 months by doubling the investment into diagnostic

hubs and ensuring there is a direct fund of upwards of \$140,000 per child across the province of Ontario. We're proud of this plan; this plan will be implemented on April 1.

POLICE SERVICES

Mr. Michael Gravelle: My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Speaker, the Thunder Bay Police Service is moving forward to implement recommendations that resulted from reports of the Office of the Independent Police Review Director and the office of the Ontario Civilian Police Commission, which came down late last year, reports that focused on systemic racism within the force and the impact that has had on relations with Indigenous people in the community.

The commitment to move to implement these many recommendations is crucial, and a strong commitment from the police services too is crucial, to developing a positive relationship with the Indigenous community, but it is not without substantial financial implications.

Speaker, in that all levels of government have made a commitment towards reconciliation, may I ask the minister whether the province will financially support the Thunder Bay Police Service as they move to implement these vital recommendations?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you, to the member from Thunder Bay. It's great to see you in the House today.

This is an important issue. I have spoken to the mayor of Thunder Bay. We've spoken about this issue as well. I appreciate your interest. I absolutely understand your interest.

These are issues that the Thunder Bay Police Services Board and the Thunder Bay police have committed to embark on and to make changes. These are issues that are critically important to make sure that we have a police service that is serving our community to the best of their abilities and making sure that the community is ably served by their police.

So while I appreciate your interest in this issue, I think it is very incumbent on the Thunder Bay Police Services Board and the police to do the work that is necessary to make sure that their standards are appropriate across Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Gravelle: Thank you very much, Minister, for that response, although I do think it's important for the province to play a significant role in making sure that these recommendations can be implemented. I would like to think that you will consider that.

Another challenge facing the Thunder Bay Police Service is increased gang activity and violent crimes. Between September and December of last year, there were 268 arrests for gun- and drug-related crimes, with 97 of those individuals charged coming from southern Ontario. Speaker, Thunder Bay may be far from Toronto geographically but that does not make us immune to gang activity coming from there.

Your ministry has provided significant funding to the Toronto Police Service to deal with this ever-increasing

problem. Today, I would like to know if the minister will support the Thunder Bay Police Service by providing funding to create a permanent task force that will combat the effects of the infiltration of guns, gangs and drugs into the city of Thunder Bay.

1120

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Again, to the member from Thunder Bay—Superior North, thank you for your interest. Our government has taken a very proactive and serious issue with guns and gangs across Ontario. You're absolutely right; we have made a first commitment to the city of Toronto of \$25 million in late summer. But that is only the start. We have to ensure and we have to empower all of our police services to be able to work together to make sure that guns and gangs, wherever they are happening in the province of Ontario—and the member is absolutely right; there is a lot of transfer of gangs and guns that cross borders. We have to give police services the tools to be able to work together to shut down some of those very, very serious illegal activities.

I am happy to continue to work with the member opposite to make sure that we can empower the police. I hope part of that is supporting Bill 68, because there are parts of that legislation that will assist us as a government to make sure that guns and gangs are shut down in our streets.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Billy Pang: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Our government is committed to delivering on our campaign promise to end hallway health care. It is about time we build a health care system centred around the patient. This is why I am so excited that our government has introduced The People's Health Care Act so that patients and families will have access to faster, better and more connected services.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister please update the members of this Legislature on how this plan will improve access to services and the patient experience?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you very much to the member from Markham—Unionville for your question. The People's Health Care Act, if passed, will improve access to services and the patient experience. If passed, it would allow health care providers to work together as one coordinated team focused on patients and specific local needs. Patients would experience easy transitions from one health care provider to another, and it would integrate multiple provincial agencies and specialized provincial programs into a single agency to provide a central point of accountability and oversight for the health care system.

Finally, our plan would improve access to secure digital tools, including online health records and virtual care options for patients—finally, a 21st-century approach to health care. I'm confident that The People's Health Care Act, if passed, will allow us to create a modernized public health care system for all Ontarians.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Billy Pang: I thank the minister for her response. I'm proud to support a plan that brings forward desperately

needed and overdue improvements to public health care in this province.

The mess we inherited from the previous Liberal government called for swift action and substantial improvements to Ontario's health care system. I've heard from many of my constituents over the last 48 hours, face to face, over the radio and over social media. Many of them are so excited about our plan.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister highlight the feedback she has received from health care experts and health care providers in this province?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you again to the member. I am really encouraged that The People's Health Care Act has been so well received by health care experts, health care organizations and health care providers. I would like to share a few of their responses.

Sue VanderBent, the CEO at Home Care Ontario, said, "This announcement is great news for patients and their families. People want to stay in their homes as they age and these proposed changes will make that a reality for more patients."

Anthony Dale, president and CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association, agrees that "given the continued capacity pressures facing hospitals as a result of a growing and aging population, this legislation encourages increased collaboration among health care providers."

Finally, Michael Decter, former deputy minister, believes, "The new direction for health policy and delivery is sound and long overdue."

Mr. Speaker, I know that together we will finally build a coordinated health care system—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Next question.

TUITION

Mr. Chris Glover: My question is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Ontario students are saddled with the highest student debt levels in the country. The student debt levels force students to delay buying houses and starting families. Yet this government is making their situation worse by converting student grants to loans and by changing the period they're considered dependent on their parents from four to six years. Also, their debts will start accumulating interest the moment they graduate.

Why does this minister believe that students in Ontario should have even worse levels of student debt?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you to the member opposite for the question. Students and their families make great sacrifices to pursue post-secondary education, and for them, every dollar counts. Ontario's government for the people is lowering tuition fees and giving students the power to choose services that they support on their campuses.

Lowering tuition fees keeps money in the pockets of students. We will restore financial sustainability to OSAP to ensure that the program is sustainable for the students now and for years to come.

We are bringing predictability and transparency to the fees students pay by setting up a province-wide student choice initiative to ensure that students can opt out of non-essential fees while ensuring that critical services are retained.

Reducing tuition and increasing the affordability of college and university will help Ontario students get the education and training needed for good-paying jobs in our modern economy.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Chris Glover: I've been on a tour of colleges and universities across this province and I've been incredibly impressed with the number of services that are provided by student unions. These services include operating food banks, campus newspapers, radio stations, first aid response teams and student clubs. Student unions also provide safe spaces for students with disabilities, for female students, for racialized, Indigenous and LGBTQ2 students.

When the minister declared that these student unions were non-essential, was she aware of the services that they provide to all students across the province? We just learned this week, Mr. Speaker, that OSAP is not going to provide grants or loans to students to cover these services. Was the minister aware of the impact that these changes would have on the students?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you again to the member opposite for the question.

Speaker, I would like to read a quote from the member from Spadina-Fort York. In a letter that he sent to me on December 20, 2018, the member asks me to "freeze tuition at all post-secondary institutions in Ontario," that this will "help families and students plan for their futures and have a more affordable and predictable post-secondary experience."

The member keeps flip-flopping on this issue. On December 20, he was for tuition relief and now he is against it. For years, the NDP have campaigned on a tuition freeze, and only now that they are not the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. I will say to the government members that that sort of behaviour is not conducive to having a civil House.

Start the clock again. Next question.

WASTE DIVERSION

Mr. Parm Gill: My question is for the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. Our government has been clear that we're committed to taking meaningful action to keep our province beautiful, strong and vibrant.

1130

Ontario families understand that we have a personal responsibility to leave behind a province better than the one we inherited, not only environmentally but financially as well. To do so, we will reduce litter and waste in our communities across Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister share with us why Ontario needs a new approach to reducing litter and waste in our communities?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Thank you to the member from Milton. I know he takes his constituents' concerns very seriously. Thank you for that question.

Mr. Speaker, our province generates nearly a tonne of waste per Ontarian every year. Our recycling rate has been stuck at 30% for the last 15 years. That means that 70% of the waste that we produce goes into landfills, and it doesn't take an expert to know that that's not a sustainable solution.

That's why I'm pleased to advise the House that next Wednesday, on March 5, when I'm speaking to the Ontario Waste Management Association, we'll be releasing our consultation paper on waste and litter. This is an important part of our made-in-Ontario environment plan. It's a part that clearly commits us to focusing on litter and waste, and breaking the cycle of the increasing use of landfills over the last number of years.

It will be posted on the Environmental Registry for a 45-day consultation period. I would invite all the members of the House to encourage their constituents to give us their feedback on this important initiative.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Parm Gill: I want to thank the minister for his answer. On this side of the House, it is clear that our made-in-Ontario environment plan is driven by a desire to protect and preserve Ontario's natural beauty. I'm proud to be part of a government that is ready to take action on something that's been ignored for far too long.

Many of my constituents in Milton are concerned. Years of inaction on this issue have meant that Ontario's waste diversion rate for residential, commercial and industrial waste has been stalled at below 30% over the past 15 years. We know we can do better.

Can the minister please explain to the House how our made-in-Ontario environment plan will reduce litter and waste in Ontario?

Hon. Rod Phillips: I again thank the member for the question and I look forward to speaking to his constituents in Milton about solutions. I recently had the opportunity to host, with our members from Brampton, a round table where community members came together with municipal leaders to talk about the sorts of things that we need to do, based on the made-in-Ontario plan.

Our waste discussion paper will build on and explore emerging technologies and how we can better recover and recycle. We'll look at ways to improve waste diversion. We'll look at how to make safe food donations. We're looking at ways of making producers more responsible for their waste and how we can use thermal technology, chemical technologies and other technologies that are used around the world to improve our waste diversion level.

Mr. Speaker, this is part of our made-in-Ontario plan to preserve Ontario's environment. I look forward to the input of all the members of the House, particularly the constituents in Milton, about how we're going to proceed.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Doly Begum: My question is to the Minister of Education. Ontarians already pay the highest child care costs in the entire nation. Families in my riding pay as much as \$20,000 a year for child care.

The provincial Wage Enhancement Grant provides \$2 an hour in wage support to many early childhood educators and child care workers across Ontario, but funding for this important program has yet to be confirmed beyond the end of March. Parents and workers are deeply concerned about what will happen next month when this funding dries up.

Does the minister believe that our ECEs and our child care workers deserve to be valued and paid a decent wage for the important work that they do caring for our children?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Absolutely. I feel very strongly when it comes to ECEs and their assistants. They do amazing work in terms of child care development and we need to celebrate them. In doing that, we need to recognize the fact that we need to make sure that when it comes to child care in Ontario, we have as much choice, and as much flexibility as well, to allow us to let parents know that we hear them loud and clear.

Parents have been asking for choice. Parents have been asking for flexibility. That's why Bill 56 is so, so important, because you know what? We're enabling families who work shifts, who work different hours of the day, to actually bring into their house child care providers. That's a great, progressive move on our response.

There is so much more I will talk about in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, this is a pay equity issue in a sector that employs mainly women. It should be a mark of shame for this government—and for the Liberal government which failed in the past. We trust our ECEs to do an important job—take care of our children—and we should value their work. If provincial support is scrapped, parents will have to take on that additional cost. They will have to pay even more. That means more expensive child care for families, more precarious work and more challenges retaining qualified staff who help our little ones thrive.

I ask the minister again, because I didn't get an answer before: Will the minister commit today to this small step; stand up for parents, for children, for workers; and commit to maintaining the Wage Enhancement Grant?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm very pleased to talk about child care and what the PC government is doing right here in Ontario. We've already taken steps to ensure—and we're putting more money in parents' pockets by giving them choice. But over and above that, last year we approved \$225 million in new child care funding for operating costs as well as subsidies. That means that almost \$200 million went towards wage enhancements for our child care workers.

Speaker, we're taking very great steps forward. We feel that child care in Ontario is so, so important, and this PC

government is getting it right. Again, we're listening to parents. We're making sure there's flexibility, we're making sure there's choice, and we're respecting our ECEs and their assistants every step of the way. Again, we introduced \$225 million last year.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Stephen Crawford: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Ontario's system of regional government has been in place for almost 50 years. In that time, there has been a lot of change and growth. I know that in Halton region, municipalities like Oakville have expanded, and what might have worked 50 years ago, in terms of delivering the best service for my constituents, does not necessarily work today.

That's why I was pleased when the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced the launch of the regional government review in January and the appointment of two special advisers to lead that review.

Can the minister please update the House on why he feels this review is so important?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for Oakville for his hard work and his advocacy and, really, his commitment to his constituents. Speaker, I was honoured to announce the appointment of two special advisers for our regional government review, Michael Fenn and Ken Seiling. Both gentlemen have a great deal of experience in the municipal sector. They've been busy, Speaker, meeting with municipalities and heads of council since they were appointed about a month and a half ago.

Like the member said, Speaker, the current system has been in place for almost 50 years. Each region and its municipalities are unique. That's why the advisers are meeting with the different regions and the different councils to find out what has been working and what might need improvement. By listening and seeking advice, we can make better use of taxpayers' dollars and make it easier for their residents to access those very important municipal services.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Thank you to the minister for that answer. I'm so glad to hear that our government is doing the work it is to put Ontarians first by reviewing local governments so that they can continue to provide the vital services that the residents need. I know many Oakville constituents are excited to participate in the review and provide their ideas as well.

But, Speaker, some of my constituents have raised concerns that the review is simply about amalgamating all the municipalities within the regions under review. Can the minister please explain what the next steps are and the purpose of this review?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, thank you for the question. The goal of the review is to help ensure that regional governments are working harder, smarter and more efficiently. Our government promised to make the municipal level of government more accountable and to respect taxpayers' dollars, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

1140

But let me be clear. This review isn't about amalgamation; it's about making sure we improve service, we improve governance and we improve decision-making at the municipal level.

I want to make it also clear that we've decided on nothing. The advisers are currently meeting with municipalities. They're meeting with those heads of councils. I look forward to getting their recommendations in the very near future.

Further, we want to have broader consultations with the public to participate. Speaker, through you to the member, I'm going to have more to say on that in the coming weeks.

ADDICTION SERVICES

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. The Quintin Warner House in London provides residential addiction treatment services for men and places them in supportive housing once they have successfully completed the addiction treatment program. Funding from the province has been dwindling for the program for quite some time. They have increasingly had to rely on donations, but they have gotten to a point where this is not sustainable.

Last spring, Mission Services of London requested additional funding to support programs like Quintin Warner House, but were denied. Why did the government deny funding for Londoners seeking addiction treatment?

Hon. Christine Elliott: I thank the member very much for the question. As she will know, we have made a commitment to invest \$3.8 billion into mental health and addiction services over the next 10 years—\$1.9 billion in the province to match \$1.9 billion from the federal government.

We are undergoing our consultations right now with communities across the province, with health care providers. We are also going to be speaking with people with lived experience. So we certainly welcome the opportunity to hear from this organization to understand where they fit in in terms of the services that are provided in the London area, to determine whether that is where we need to go in the future, because we do know that the people of Ontario are desperately underserved by mental health and addiction services.

That is something that we want to deal with as part of our transformation exercise, to make sure that we can follow the great example set by Cancer Care Ontario with their model for leadership in service across the province. I think that could be very easily translated into a system for mental health and addictions as well.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Speaker, back to the minister: We are in the midst of an opioid crisis, with people dying across this province every day. This is the time to step up supports for programs like Quintin Warner House and not let them fail. As a result of being denied funding, Mission Services of London is going to have to scale back their addiction treatment services and lay off front-line staff.

Will the minister do the right thing and provide the requested \$700,000 to Mission Services of London so Quintin Warner House can continue to successfully treat Londoners battling addictions?

Hon. Christine Elliott: We certainly do know that there is an urgent need for more addiction services in Ontario. We have made some strides with consumption and treatment services sites, but there is no question we need to have more detox beds and more mental health and addiction services combined together.

What I can commit to is that I will definitely take your matter under advisement and discuss with my ministry to understand what has happened and why the funding was not approved through the LHIN, and see what we can do. I'm happy to look at it.

SENIORS

Ms. Lindsey Park: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. There is a housing crisis. It's very difficult for many to find housing that is affordable, and it's even more difficult for many seniors. In my riding of Durham, a group of my constituents explained to me the hurdles they faced in trying to implement an innovative idea for housing in their community. That's why I was proud to introduce the Golden Girls Act to this House.

Can the minister please explain why embracing innovative housing solutions in Ontario is so important?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for Durham for that excellent question. I want to thank her for her advocacy.

The member is right. We are at a crisis position. That's why we began consultations for our Housing Supply Action Plan. I'm pleased to announce that we received over 2,000 submissions in our consultations. We are reviewing it and taking action on the housing crisis.

But I do want to thank the member for engaging with her constituents. I want to thank her for embracing innovative solutions. Speaker, I want to thank her for being a friend.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Lindsey Park: Thank you to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for keeping this issue of housing a top priority.

My PMB will be debated this afternoon and, if passed, will provide further clarity in the Planning Act on housing.

Seniors living together has not only economic benefits but many social and health benefits. Can the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility explain the importance of socializing for seniors?

Hon. Steve Clark: Minister for Seniors and Accessibility.

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Thank you to the honourable member for the great question. We want all seniors in Ontario to have a happy, healthy, active and engaged life. The well-being of seniors is one of our government's top priorities. Partaking in social activities is important for all seniors. While there are many places

that seniors can go, such as Seniors Active Living Centres, living with others can definitely reduce social isolation and help create an engaged life.

Thank you to the member for fighting for the people of her riding of Durham, especially the seniors there.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Thunder Bay.

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: My question is for the Acting Premier. Children—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I thought you were standing on a point of order. Question period is over.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Humber River–Black Creek on a point of order.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I'm very proud to welcome and recognize a resident from my home riding of Humber River–Black Creek. Welcome, Duy Huoham, a George Brown College early childhood education student. Welcome.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: A friend of mine just came into the chamber, Evan Tanovich, my first legislative page. Welcome back to Queen's Park.

Ms. Suze Morrison: I have two constituents from my riding of Toronto Centre that I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today: Rey Suico, who is an ECE student at George Brown College, and Surida Dinanth, who is a registered early childhood educator. Welcome to Queen's Park.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business, such that Ms. Berns-McGown assumes ballot item number 58 and Ms. Shaw assumes ballot item number 62.

DEFERRED VOTES

COMPREHENSIVE ONTARIO POLICE SERVICES ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LA REFORTE COMPLÈTE DES SERVICES DE POLICE DE L'ONTARIO

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 68, An Act with respect to community safety and policing / Projet de loi 68, Loi portant sur la sécurité communautaire et les services policiers.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We now have a deferred vote on a motion for closure on the motion for second reading of Bill 68.

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

The division bells rang from 1148 to 1153.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On February 25, 2019, Ms. Jones moved second reading of Bill 68, An Act with respect to community safety and policing. Mr. Harris has moved that the question now be put.

All those in favour of Mr. Harris's motion will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy
Baber, Roman	Harris, Mike	Phillips, Rod
Babikian, Aris	Hogarth, Christine	Piccini, David
Barrett, Toby	Jones, Sylvia	Rasheed, Kaleed
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Kanapathi, Logan	Romano, Ross
Bouma, Will	Karahalios, Belinda	Sabawy, Sheref
Calandra, Paul	Ke, Vincent	Sandhu, Amarjot
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Khanjin, Andrea	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Stan	Kramp, Daryl	Skelly, Donna
Clark, Steve	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	MacLeod, Lisa	Smith, Todd
Crawford, Stephen	Martin, Robin	Tangri, Nina
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Martow, Gila	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	McKenna, Jane	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Jill	Miller, Norman	Tibollo, Michael A.
Elliott, Christine	Mulroney, Caroline	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fedeli, Victor	Nicholls, Rick	Wai, Daisy
Fee, Amy	Oosterhoff, Sam	Walker, Bill
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Yakabuski, John
Ghamari, Goldie	Park, Lindsey	Yurek, Jeff
Gill, Parm	Parsa, Michael	

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Glover, Chris	Natyshak, Taras
Arthur, Ian	Gravelle, Michael	Rakocevic, Tom
Begum, Doly	Gretzky, Lisa	Sattler, Peggy
Bell, Jessica	Harden, Joel	Schreiner, Mike
Berns-McGown, Rima	Hassan, Faisal	Shaw, Sandy
Bisson, Gilles	Hatfield, Percy	Singh, Sara
Bourgouin, Guy	Horwath, Andrea	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Burch, Jeff	Karpoche, Bhutila	Stiles, Marit
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Mamakwa, Sol	Tabuns, Peter
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
Fraser, John	Miller, Paul	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Yarde, Kevin
Gates, Wayne	Morrison, Suze	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 62; the nays are 38.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion carried.

Ms. Jones has moved second reading of Bill 68, An Act with respect to community safety and policing. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. The motion is carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Minister of Community Safety.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I respectfully ask that it be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): It has been referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. Agreed? Agreed.

This House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1158 until 1300.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business, such that Mr. Glover assumes ballot item number 57 and Mr. Rakocevic assumes ballot item number 75.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I would like to welcome student leaders William Webb, Canadian Intern Association; Nora Parker, Canadian Intern Association; Evan Tanovich, a University of Toronto student; Kiara Osborne-Pimentel, York University; Entisar Yusuf, University of Toronto, and also the Black Graduate Students Association president; Maryama Ahmed, University of Toronto Somali Students Association; Safia Abdale, University of Toronto; Ikran Ali, University of Toronto; Ilhaan Dahir; and Abdullah Mushtaq. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Dave Smith: I'd liked to introduce Claire Williams. Claire is currently here as one of the students in the high school model Parliament. She's from the city of Peterborough. And Claire served as a Legislative page for us back in 2016.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'd to welcome to the Legislature Jason Ferrigan, who is the president of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, and Robert Kirsic, who is the registrar. Welcome to Queen's Park.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Suze Morrison: Today I rise in this Legislature to share a story from my community that is truly inspiring and highlights the resilience of the residents of Toronto Centre.

St. James Town is a neighbourhood in my community that has been ravaged by entirely preventable, but catastrophic, events. This past August, 1,500 residents were displaced from their homes after an electrical fire in a high-rise building. These residents continue to be displaced to this day.

Over the past several weeks, a series of buildings in the same neighbourhood have had their electricity and their heat turned off because of dangerous conditions and the need for extensive electrical inspections. Reasonably, my constituents are angry with the level of neglect that they continue to witness from their landlords. It is difficult to

understand why a building would not have regular electrical inspections or work orders that are filled in a timely manner.

Last week, the neighbourhood had a community town hall, and it was at this meeting that the community voted to form the first-ever St. James Town residents' association. Additionally, many of the buildings are individually organizing into tenants' associations so that they can better advocate for their rights. There is power when we come together, when we organize and when we use our collective voice to fight for our community.

I want to congratulate my constituents for coming together, and I can't wait to see the positive impact that this has on our neighbourhood.

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

Mr. Vincent Ke: Tomorrow, March 1, is the second Professional Engineers Day in the province. This day is greatly supported by the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers. Professional engineers are trusted, ethical leaders, builders and doers. They are on the front lines of innovation and create paradigm-changing solutions to complex problems that drive and improve our world.

Professional engineers are the economic engine of our province and help create jobs, wealth and prosperity that can be enjoyed by all Ontarians.

As you may know, before I became an MPP, I worked as a design-and-development electronic engineer for over 25 years in China, Germany and Canada. My wife, Changhong, is working as an engineer too. Furthermore, my son, Han, has continued our family's legacy, working as a professional engineer.

Engineering is a great profession that improves the world around us. Engineering can also be a connection with your family members.

I want to wish all of you a happy Professional Engineers Day.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: Children on the autism spectrum and their parents face a number of challenges in northwestern Ontario. One of my constituents, Alina Cameron, has a daughter. Her name is Fiona and she is four. She told me that her daughter is non-verbal, severely autistic and needs 24-hour care. She is currently receiving services through a pilot program in Thunder Bay. Alina told me that her daughter has had amazing results, but this program is ending soon. Her daughter will have nowhere to go for services.

This government's plan takes things from bad to worse. There simply aren't enough diagnosticians and service providers available in northwestern Ontario. That's the reality that the families face. There is nothing in this plan to address that.

The plan ignores the travel costs that families in northwestern Ontario face. There are many families that

have to travel great distances to access autism programs. For families, that means less money for autism services.

What we need is a concrete plan to ensure that all children receive services based on need. What we need is a plan that addresses the regional disparities in the availability of services and service providers, a plan that addresses the thousands of dollars that families spend just to get to appointments. None of that is in this plan.

I call on this government to go back and consult with parents and professionals. We need a plan that works.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I know a lot of people out there know that animal welfare is very important to me. Almost every Thursday, I read out a petition that I've had signed by people all across this province about the need for enhancing protections for our animals and our pets.

That is why I introduced my first private member's bill, the Protecting Our Pets Act, 2018, to bring forward solutions from stakeholders on the important issue of ending animal cruelty and putting an end to puppy mills. This bill is up for second reading in this House next Thursday.

And that's why I have been a constant supporter of the Etobicoke Humane Society in my riding. Last year, I included animals from our local humane society in my calendar, which I sent out to households all across my riding. I have to say that adoption has been up in the Etobicoke Humane Society in January.

During our legislative break, I was happy to attend the fourth annual Fur Ball, a gala fundraiser in support of both the Etobicoke Humane Society and Rescue Foodie, which works to supply pet food for animal rescues across Canada. It was a wonderful evening, complete with a red-carpet entrance and a three-course meal.

Just this week, we found out the fundraising totals from the gala. They sold over 400 tickets and raised \$40,000 to go towards those animals. Of that, \$10,000 will go towards the hard-working volunteers at the Etobicoke Humane Society, which is great news for all the people who work there and all the pets in their care.

I look forward to welcoming members from the Etobicoke Humane Society here next week for the second reading of the Protecting Our Pets Act.

ERICA FRYER AND KYLIE MASSE

Mr. Taras Natyshak: One of the most rewarding things about having the privilege to serve in this Legislature is being able to recognize people from my riding who do great things and make the people of our riding proud.

Today I want to recognize two young women from my riding who are achieving great things in sport right here at the University of Toronto.

In her first year of kinesiology at the University of Toronto, and as the rookie starting goalie for the women's hockey team, Erica Fryer from Amherstburg was named athlete of the month this past January. Erica led her team to a third-place finish in the OUA, and they are now

battling the Western Mustangs in the semifinals. Last night, Erica recorded a shutout to propel her team to a one-game-to-nothing lead in the best-of-three series.

1310

Speaker, the team is headed up by former Team Canada women's hockey team coach Vicky Sunohara. Coach Sunohara and I both encourage all members of this Legislature to catch a game this Friday just across the street at the Varsity rink.

I also want to recognize Kylie Masse from LaSalle. Kylie is an Olympic medal winner. She holds national records in the 50-metre and the 100-metre backstroke. She also broke a world record that stood for eight years in the 50-metre backstroke while at the 2017 World Championships in Budapest. Kylie's record with the University of Toronto Varsity Blues has been exceptional, as she finishes her OUA career with a fifth consecutive award as the OUA female swimmer of the year.

Congratulations to both Kylie and Erica. You're both inspirations to young athletes, like my son and daughter back home, and we are so proud of your achievements not only through sport but academically as well.

ZEBRA TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. Sherif Sabawy: I rise today to recognize the incredible and important work of Zebra Technologies, which is an outstanding company respected for innovation and reliability in technology, for empowering those on the front lines in retail, health care, transportation, logistics, manufacturing and many other industries to achieve their best performance.

I had the pleasure of meeting with Zebra Technologies and their executives at their Mississauga head office. Zebra Technologies offer a full variety of technologies designed for many industries and businesses. During our meeting, we spoke specifically about Zebra health care technology solutions. Zebra offers the latest technologies and devices in health care to help provide better care in our facilities.

Mr. Speaker, health care in Ontario is growing, and as the population continues to grow, we need the best innovative and developed technologies to provide the best care for our patients and caregivers. We need to encourage and incent Canadian manufacturers to produce the highest level of quality in medical devices.

Our government is creating an environment where businesses can grow. Our government has made it a priority to cut red tape so that the business sector can grow and invest right here in Ontario.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I first spoke with Jordan early last year before I became an MPP. He shared the story of how he and his wife, Christina, are raising their two lovely daughters, Rachel and Lily, who are both on the autism spectrum. He told me then that the system needed substantially more funding because, for one, the needs for many families don't end when their child turns 18.

Rachel, his eldest, has benefited from six years of three blocks of ABA programming for social skills development and emotional regulation. Rachel enjoyed it and found it very helpful. Jordan recently told me that he believes Rachel is on a path that will see her live an independent life.

Lily, who will be turning four years old this spring, has been on a waiting list for the ABA class called Basic Communication. As of today, they have been waiting a little over a year.

For Jordan and Christina, the thought that this government ordered the wait-list for ABA frozen is reprehensible. What gains could Lily have made by now had she begun therapy? Has this government held language back from her? Time to communicate with their precious daughter has been irrevocably lost.

But what this government is undertaking is no solution at all. Simply eliminating the wait-list and providing families with a fraction of the funding they need helps nobody. Jordan and Christina do not want to see publicly funded therapies eliminated and thousands of therapists lost.

I don't trust this solution by the government that will see parents receive inadequate and unhelpful assistance. I trust Jordan and Christina, two amazing parents who state that the only path to truly help families is real and expanded funding, period. Thank you, Jordan and Christina, for sharing your story and for your tireless advocacy.

FAYNE BULLEN

Ms. Jill Dunlop: This month, members of Simcoe North gathered to celebrate the 90th birthday of former city councillor, teacher and NDP candidate Fayne Bullen. I was honoured to attend the celebration and spend time with Fayne, his friends and family.

Originally from Grenada, Fayne has lived and served in the community of Orillia for the majority of his life. Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "The great teacher is not the man who supplies the most facts, but the one in whose presence we become different people." I believe this quote reflects the kind of teacher that Mr. Bullen was.

A teacher at Park Street Collegiate Institute for several decades, many of his former students have told me that he inspired in them a love of learning and a desire to pursue studies further in history and politics. But Fayne's passion for teaching did not end in the classroom. Fayne is an avid cricket enthusiast and a member of the Orillia Cricket Club, taking any opportunity that presents itself to teach residents in the area about the history of the sport.

Fayne is also a founding member of the not-for-profit Paso Por Paso, which provides much-needed medical aid as well as financial support to children and families in Guatemala. It also matches schools in the Orillia area with schools in Guatemala to provide enriching educational exchanges.

Fayne has been a tireless champion in our communities, providing support to groups such as Helping Hands, as

well as an advocate for affordable housing in Orillia, helping to build the St. James Court housing project.

Fayne has been an exemplary community leader, and I would like to thank him for all the good he has done in our communities across my great riding.

WALK FOR HOMELESSNESS

Mr. Michael Parsa: Last Saturday, I had the pleasure of taking part in the Coldest Night of the Year walkathon organized by Mosaic Interfaith Out of the Cold, which operates 16 emergency homeless shelters in southern York region in partnership with various interfaith communities in Markham, Thornhill, Vaughan and Richmond Hill.

Speaker, homelessness affects about 12,000 Ontarians every night. These individuals are often facing tough circumstances at no fault of their own.

The annual walkathon in Richmond Hill is a grassroots initiative to raise funds for those who are hungry, homeless and hurting in the community. This weekend, I was joined by more than 130 participants, including many friends, family members, community leaders and representatives from all levels of government.

I want to thank members of Team Parsa for joining me in helping raise funds and supporting this great initiative. Participants were able to join by taking part in either a 2K, 5K or 10K walk, followed by delicious food and live entertainment.

I'm happy to report that this year's Richmond Hill Coldest Night of the Year walkathon raised an astounding \$43,000. I should point out that the initial goal was only \$25,000, so this was an absolutely fantastic effort by everyone involved.

I want to thank the participants, volunteers and organizers, in particular Rehana Sumar for organizing this great event. The fundraising went really well. Especially at this time of year, it's very important. I encourage everyone to make sure that they get involved in this great initiative in their local area.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our members' statements for today.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order, member for Scarborough Southwest.

Ms. Doly Begum: I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce to the House a wonderful friend and a wonderful organizer who has been dedicated to helping children and women, and who is a resident of Scarborough: Laxy Sunthajan is in the House today.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ABITARE DESIGN INC. ACT, 2019

Ms. Karpoche moved first reading of the following bill: Bill Pr6, An Act to Revive Abitare Design Inc.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

CRIME PREVENTION

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Yesterday, it was my pleasure to help launch the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police crime prevention campaign and the release of their new crime prevention booklet. This booklet will be a great help to Ontario police services as they promote crime prevention awareness in their communities. The content is all there: legal cannabis, distracted driving, online scams, ID theft and insurance fraud, just to mention a few. I hope the public understands that community safety is a shared responsibility.

1320

As a government, we have many important responsibilities, such as health care. This last week, my colleague the health minister, Christine Elliott, announced transformative change to end hallway health care and put the patient back at the centre of our health system. Minister Elliott's announcement reminds us that governments do make an impact on people's lives.

When it comes to keeping criminals off our streets and standing up for victims, this could not be more true, and it's our police who are on the front lines. Every day, our police do incredible work to keep our families safe. Often, this work is silent, preventive and unseen.

Just last week, I was at the Barrie police headquarters. The police service had just wrapped up a joint investigation with the OPP and the Canadian Border Services Agency that rescued 43 victims of human trafficking, one of the most horrific crimes imaginable. Working with many community partners, these law enforcement partners have reminded us of all the incredible impacts police officers have each and every day in our communities.

Just yesterday, we learned about a police operation following reports from employees at a number of Ford dealerships about illegal drugs that had been smuggled into Canada via new cars. The OPP had lauded the employees, including Fines Ford in Bolton, for discovering the drugs and ensuring they don't make their way to our streets.

The crime prevention campaign is an initiative of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. I'd like to say a special thank you to the police leaders of Ontario. From the outside, leadership may look easy but, as anyone who has been in a leadership position knows, with more responsibility comes more challenges. It has been a period of rapid change for police in Ontario—from dealing with

cannabis legalization to cyber fraud to online child exploitation—and chiefs and our police officers have had to adapt in the face of risk and uncertainty. Policing must respond to the practical challenges as our world evolves. For example, as more and more of us are buying products online, thieves known as “porch pirates” are increasingly stealing parcels from doorsteps after delivery. This is an increasingly frequent crime that wasn’t on anyone’s radar five or 10 years ago.

With the challenges of leadership come the opportunities to make a difference, and Ontario’s police chiefs truly keep our families safe, stand up for victims and hold criminals accountable each and every day. But police chiefs and police officers can’t do it alone.

Ensuring the security of the people is government’s most fundamental responsibility. That’s why our government introduced the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act. This legislation is a key part of our promise to make Ontario safer, stand up for victims and hold criminals accountable for their actions. Ontarians now have a government that is tackling crime and making neighbourhoods safer by restoring fairness and respect for police, enhancing oversight and improving governance, training and transparency.

Police services also need help from the public. To borrow the theme from this year’s campaign, “You Are Crime Prevention.” Every Ontarian should feel empowered to prevent crime and be engaged in community safety, and every Ontarian has the right to feel safe and secure in their neighbourhoods and in the province. Many of us already take part in crime-prevention initiatives without really thinking about it—protecting our PIN numbers, subscribing to alerts on our credit cards or installing home security systems. But we can also do more. If you see something on the subway, say something. If you know a vulnerable person has been targeted for online fraud, report it. If you suspect an impaired driver, phone 911. These are methods of protecting ourselves and keeping our families safe, but they also reduce opportunities for crime. Accepting community safety as a shared responsibility takes crime prevention to a whole new level, which is the value of the OACP campaign and the launch of their crime prevention booklet. Crime prevention on the community level is an important part of reducing crime and making our neighbourhoods safer. Let’s see more of that.

I wish the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police and all police services across Ontario success in getting the prevention message out there, and I encourage all of my colleagues to promote this important initiative in their own communities.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Responses?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: As always, it is a pleasure and an honour to rise here in the House to represent the people in my riding of Brampton North. As the community safety and corrections critic for the official opposition, it is a great privilege to speak on the “You Are Crime Prevention” campaign.

Everyone in Ontario wants the same thing: to be safe and to know that their children will come home safely

every night. To make sure this happens, we all need to work together to prevent crime. That’s the aim of this campaign, launched by police leaders right across the province.

As critic, I have had the pleasure of talking with the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. They see themselves first and foremost—and are—public servants. As a member of the NDP caucus, I want to express my gratitude to police officers, who are out there protecting our communities and risking their lives to ensure the safety of others.

It is so important to recognize that crime prevention requires not only the hard work of police but the help of the government and the collaboration of all of the ministries. Crime prevention also requires individuals and community members to work together to prevent crime before it happens. That means working as a community to ensure the safety of our neighbourhoods.

We’re all too familiar with the increase, as the minister mentioned, of porch thefts in recent years. Also a concern are identity theft, bank and credit card fraud, and online and lottery scams—all of these crimes we have to work together to combat.

Right now we have communities across this great province of Ontario, including mine in Brampton, that are concerned with drugs, opioids, violence and especially youth violence. I have had the opportunity to sit down with many constituents, hearing troubling stories of crime, including financial scams that have left many with nowhere to go for help.

The best way to combat these crimes is to attack the root cause. If we want to reduce violence and crime in our communities, we actually have to invest in our communities. We must recognize that crime is not a solo issue. We must make sure that we realize that it stems from many other problems within our communities, such as lack of housing, drug use, and mental illness.

Currently, there is a lack of funding to provide services to those suffering from mental health illnesses. We need to increase funding and supports for mental health and addictions so that police can focus on community safety instead of focusing on people in medical crisis.

As we know, there is a major opioid crisis right here in this province. Escalation of the opioid crisis means that communities need more support, not less. We need to mobilize our resources to help those who need it the most.

The world has changed. Police are dealing with vulnerable issues, including mental health, as I mentioned, and addictions, so we need to modernize how we deal with policing. We need to be ready for the next challenges. We need to increase funding and supports for mental health and addictions. But the government has made cuts, unfortunately, to mental health services in Ontario.

We need to make life more affordable for citizens so that they are not left in precarious situations. We need to take action to make housing more affordable so everyone can build their best life right here in Ontario. We need to ensure that our youth and our communities have well-paying jobs with workplace protections and benefits, paid sick days, and living wages—not wages; living wages.

We need to educate and invest in our communities, especially in our youth. We need to invest in education so that we can put our youth on the right track and make sure that they have success in life. We also need to make education more accessible as well as more affordable. What we do not need is to make education more inaccessible by not funding campuses such as the ones in Brampton, Milton and Markham.

If the government wants to reduce crime and make our communities safe, it has to stop making cuts to these essential services such as mental health care, post-secondary education and health care. The government needs to address the housing and opioid crisis. We must work hard with law enforcement and community leaders to get to the root cause.

1330

I'll always fight for community safety and crime prevention as the critic in this portfolio.

PETITIONS

CHILD CARE WORKERS

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: I have here a petition with 749 signatures from my riding of Beaches–East York and across Ontario.

“Petition to Maintain the Provincial Wage Enhancement Grant for Registered Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Workers in Licensed Child Care.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant provides \$2 per hour in wage support to many registered early childhood educators and child care workers in licensed child care;

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant supports staff recruitment and retention in licensed child care, increases income security among registered early childhood educators and child care workers, and begins to recognize their contributions to Ontario communities;

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant helps close the gender wage gap;

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant helps keep parents’ child care fees from rising;

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

“Maintain the \$2-per-hour provincial Wage Enhancement Grant for registered early childhood educators and child care workers in licensed child care.”

I firmly agree with the petition, will affix my signature to it and pass it to Cameron to take to the Clerk.

FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Mr. Mike Harris: It’s a pleasure to rise today and read this petition in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the ban on hunting and trapping in sections of Ontario to protect the eastern hybrid wolf was put in place without regard for the overall ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban has adversely affected the ability of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), hunters and trappers to properly manage animal populations and Ontario’s ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban is no longer needed and is in fact causing more damage to Ontario’s ecosystem and increasing unnecessary encounters between wildlife and Ontarians;

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

“That the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry immediately lift the ban on hunting and trapping set in place to protect the eastern hybrid wolf.”

I have already affixed my name to this, and I pass it to page Julian.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I have a petition entitled, “Support Ontario Families with Autism.”

“Whereas every child with autism deserves access to sufficient treatment and support so that they can live to their fullest potential;

“Whereas the Ontario Autism Program was badly broken under the Liberals, and the changes introduced by the Conservatives have made it worse;

“Whereas the new funding caps are based on age and income, and not the clinical needs of the child;

“Whereas Ontario needs a true investment in evidence-based autism services that meets the needs of autistic children and their families;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to invest in equitable, needs-based autism services for all children who need them.”

I fully support this petition. I’ll be affixing my signature to it and providing it to page Siya to deliver to the table.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

Ms. Christine Hogarth: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas certain commercial operations known as ‘puppy/kitten mills’ have been reported to keep animals in precarious conditions in breach of provincial animal welfare laws; and

“Whereas dog/cat breeding in accordance with the law is a legitimate economic activity; and

“Whereas it is the duty of any government to ensure the laws of Canada and Ontario are respected and that the health and well-being of innocent animals is protected;

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

“That the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services work proactively with all amateur and professional dog/cat breeders, as well as consumers, with the intent to tackle confirmed animal cruelty cases in puppy/kitten mills and to educate all stakeholders about animal welfare standards.”

I’m happy to sign this and give it to Michelle.

CHILD CARE WORKERS

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I have here a petition to maintain the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant for registered early childhood educators and child care workers in licensed child care.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant provides \$2 per hour in wage support to many registered early childhood educators and child care workers in licensed child care;

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant supports staff recruitment and retention in licensed child care, increases income security among registered early childhood educators and child care workers, and begins to recognize their contributions to Ontario communities;

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant helps close the gender wage gap;

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant helps keep parents’ child care fees from rising;

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

“Maintain the \$2-per-hour provincial Wage Enhancement Grant for registered early childhood educators and child care workers in licensed child care.”

I will gladly support this petition, affix my signature and give it to page Hidayah to bring to the Clerk.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

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

“Whereas unnecessary regulations are squeezing businesses in every economic sector and driving jobs and investment out of Ontario;

“Whereas red tape is costing employers time, money and resources that they would rather invest in growing their business, creating good jobs and launching innovative products and services that will improve people’s lives;

“Whereas the real cost of red tape is in the businesses that are forced to close their doors, the job-creating investments that we scare away or in the workers who are forced to leave Ontario in order to find work;

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

“To pass the Making Ontario Open for Business Act to build prosperity, put Ontario back on track as a growth leader in North America and restore our province to its rightful place as the economic engine of Canada.”

Of course, I’m going to affix my signature and give it to page Michelle.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My petition is regarding the Time to Care Act, Bill 13.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas quality care for the 78,000 residents of (LTC) homes is a priority for many Ontario families; and

“Whereas the provincial government does not provide adequate funding to ensure care and staffing levels in LTC homes keep pace with residents’ increasing needs and the growing number of residents with complex behaviours; and

“Whereas several Ontario coroner’s inquests into LTC home deaths have recommended an increase in direct hands-on care for residents and staffing levels and the most reputable studies on this topic recommend 4.1 hours of direct care per day;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the LTC Homes Act (2007) for a legislated minimum care standard to provide an average of four hours per resident per day, adjusted for acuity level and case mix.”

I fully support this petition, sign it and give it to page Anika to deliver to the table.

FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Ms. Jill Dunlop: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the ban on hunting and trapping in sections of Ontario to protect the eastern hybrid wolf was put in place without regard for the overall ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban has adversely affected the ability of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), hunters and trappers to properly manage animal populations and Ontario’s ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban is no longer needed and is in fact causing more damage to Ontario’s ecosystem and increasing unnecessary encounters between wildlife and Ontarians;

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

“That the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry immediately lift the ban on hunting and trapping set in place to protect the eastern hybrid wolf.”

I fully support this petition and will sign and hand it to page Ahmad.

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: This petition is titled “Keep Transit Public: Stop the Subway Sell-Off.” I’d like to thank my constituents in Parkdale–High Park, transit riders who signed this petition at Runnymede subway station. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the TTC has owned, operated and maintained Toronto’s public transit system since 1921; and

“Whereas the people of Toronto have paid for the TTC at the fare box and through their property taxes; and

“Whereas breaking up the subway will mean higher fares, reduced service and less say for transit riders; and

1340

“Whereas the TTC is accountable to the people of Toronto because elected Toronto city councillors sit on its board;

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

"Reject legislation that allows for the breakup and sell-off of any aspect of the TTC to the province of Ontario, and reject the privatization or contracting out of any part of the TTC;

"Match the city of Toronto's financial contribution to the TTC so transit riders can have improved service and affordable fares."

As a transit rider myself, I couldn't agree more with this petition, and I will be affixing my signature to it as well.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Deepak Anand: It's a pleasure to read this petition.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Justin Trudeau government is not doing enough to protect the people of Ontario from convicted terrorists; and

"Whereas safety, security and peace of mind is of the utmost importance to the Ford government; and

"Whereas Ontario residents who have not been convicted of criminal acts could find themselves unable to gain access to various privileges they enjoy; and

"Whereas there are no provisions to prevent convicted terrorists from accessing privileges in Ontario;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 46 and disallow anyone convicted of a crime under section 83 of the Criminal Code of Canada and any international treaties that may apply from receiving:

"(1) a licence under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997;

"(2) health insurance benefits under the Health Insurance Act;

"(3) a driver's licence under the Highway Traffic Act;

"(4) rent-gear-to-income assistance or special needs housing under the Housing Services Act, 2011;

"(5) grants, awards or loans under the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act;

"(6) income support or employment supports under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997;

"(7) assistance under the Ontario Works Act, 1997;

"(8) coverage under the insurance plan under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997."

I sign this petition.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Miss Monique Taylor: My petition is titled, "Support Ontario Families with Autism."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas every child with autism deserves access to sufficient treatment and support so that they can live" their life "to their fullest potential;

"Whereas the Ontario Autism Program was badly broken under the Liberals, and the changes introduced by the Conservatives have made it worse;

"Whereas the new funding caps are based on age and income, and not the clinical needs of the child;

"Whereas Ontario needs a true investment in evidence-based autism services that meet the needs of autistic children and their families;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to invest in equitable, needs-based autism services for all children who need them."

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

CHILD CARE WORKERS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'd like to thank Kim Mitchell from Western Day Care Centre and Kara Pihlak from Oak Park Co-operative Children's Centre, both in my riding of London West, for bringing me this petition. It reads:

"Petition to Maintain the Provincial Wage Enhancement Grant for Registered Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Workers in Licensed Child Care.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant provides \$2 per hour in wage support to many registered early childhood educators and child care workers in licensed child care;

"Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant supports staff recruitment and retention in licensed child care, increases income security among registered early childhood educators and child care workers, and begins to recognize their contributions to Ontario communities;

"Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant helps close the gender wage gap;

"Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant helps keep parents' child care fees from rising;

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

"Maintain the \$2-per-hour provincial Wage Enhancement Grant for registered early childhood educators and child care workers in licensed child care."

I couldn't agree more. I will affix my signature and give it to page Siya to take to the table.

CHILD CARE WORKERS

Ms. Doly Begum: I also have a petition from my riding of Scarborough Southwest.

"Petition to Maintain the Provincial Wage Enhancement Grant for Registered Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Workers in Licensed Child Care.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant provides \$2 per hour in wage support to many registered early childhood educators and child care workers in licensed child care;

"Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant supports staff recruitment and retention in licensed child care, increases income security among registered early

childhood educators and child care workers, and begins to recognize their contributions to Ontario communities;

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant helps close the gender wage gap;

“Whereas the provincial Wage Enhancement Grant helps keep parents’ child care fees from rising;

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

“Maintain the \$2-per-hour provincial Wage Enhancement Grant for registered early childhood educators and child care workers in licensed child care.”

I’m very proud to support this petition and will affix my signature to it and give it to page Cameron.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The time for petitions has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should create 27,000 new, paid work opportunities for students, recent graduates and unemployed youth in the public and private sector and the skilled trades so they can move into the workforce with real-world experience and a path to full-time employment.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Hassan has moved private members’ notice of motion number 30. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I am honoured to rise today, as member of provincial Parliament for York South–Weston and the official opposition critic for youth engagement, to speak in support of my first private member’s motion—work-integrated learning. I am excited to address, this afternoon, the members of this House and to talk to them about the importance of making a difference in the lives of the young people we represent.

The overall objective of this motion is to create 27,000 new, paid work opportunities for students, recent graduates and unemployed youth in the public and private sector and the skilled trades so they can move into the workforce with real-world experience and a path to full-time employment. Making sure that young people get a solid start in the job market is a smart investment for Ontario’s economic future.

I would like to thank the many people who have devoted a great deal of time and energy to advocating for this motion, including collecting petition signatures and sharing their personal stories.

I would like to give special thanks to many students who have taken time out of their busy schedules to attend today in the gallery and support this motion.

I would also like to thank my colleagues, who have been so supportive of this motion. In particular, I would

like to thank the member from London West, my colleague Peggy Sattler, who has done so much important work on work-integrated learning, which has provided a strong foundation for this motion.

Finally, I would like to thank several organizations for their endorsement of this motion, including the Canadian Federation of Students, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, the Central Ontario Building Trades’ Hammer Heads, and the Canadian Intern Association. As the endorsements of these organizations attest, work-integrated learning has a great number of benefits, not only for the students who gain valuable job experience that will help them launch a successful career, but also for the employers who benefit from the creativity and energy of these students.

Young people deserve less debt and more job opportunities. That is why I’m calling for the creation of 27,000 new, paid work opportunities for students, recent graduates and the unemployed. This investment in 27,000 new, paid work-integrated learning placements, internships, co-ops will help to ensure that young people are more productive in the economy, that our growth industries can keep up with the demand for well-trained workers, and that we are spurring the kind of innovation that Ontario needs in order to compete in the global market. The smartest investment we can make as a province is in the success of our young people. This motion represents a first step towards that goal.

1350

Ontario’s youth unemployment rate is persistently higher than the national average and is on the rise. This means that Ontario’s youth are being left behind. The issue is particularly pressing in my riding of York South–Weston, where high rates of youth unemployment create a skills gap, resulting in epidemic rates of adult unemployment and underemployment. By providing young people with relevant experience and professional titles they need to get a job in their field of study, work-integrated learning will break the cycle of poverty for young people in my community and neighbourhoods across Ontario.

It is important our young people see a clear path from school to employment and that we provide support during those critical periods of transition in order to ensure that a young person’s destiny is not predetermined by their financial means or the professional networks of their families. Equal-opportunity paid placements are a promise to young people that their hard work will not be overlooked and a promise to the rest of the province that we are identifying and nurturing our talent and not letting that talent fall through the cracks.

This motion is particularly important and has a special promise for two reasons. First, the motion stipulates that the placements created will be paid. Second, these positions will not be limited to students and will extend, as well, to recent graduates and unemployed youth. Ensuring that students are paid for their work is not only the right thing to do; it is imperative to ensure that students have equal opportunity to succeed and that we are maximizing our talent pool.

Many students cannot afford to participate in an internship, placements and co-op programs which require that they work for free, particularly if that internship, placement or co-op is in a different city, where they would be unable to stay with family.

We need to ensure that a work-integrated learning placement is awarded based on need and merit, not merely a further privilege afforded only to those who have already led privileged lives.

This motion also seeks to extend work-integrated learning beyond the student population. While work-integrated learning is an important, if not vital, aspect of education, these opportunities can be an important intervention for young people who have already graduated or who have not pursued post-secondary education.

Ontario has thousands of young people who are not in education, employment or training. These young people are at a vital juncture in their lives. Some will find the right opportunity on their own, others will struggle with unemployment or underemployment for the rest of their lives, and still others will turn to the underground economy. It is critical that we not neglect young people at this juncture, not only for their sakes but also for all of our sakes. We have a vested interest in ensuring that they are able to support themselves and that they see a future for themselves in a society that is full of promise. For many of these people, all they need to succeed is to be given a chance. This motion will make sure that more young people get that chance.

I'm proud to have the support of many organizations, and I would like to take a few minutes to share with you why these organizations are supporting my effort. I have spoken to countless young people about this motion, and that more work-integrated learning opportunities needs to be a top priority.

Nour Alideeb, the chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students—Ontario, sent me a statement in support of this motion, which reads, in part, that the most important time for students to find work in their field “is immediately after graduation, when they are least likely to have prior job experience. That is why work-integrated learning opportunities, which provide students with relevant job experience, are so important. The government has a responsibility to help bridge the gaps between our education system and workplaces that will lead to full-time employment.”

Likewise, Danny Chang, the president of the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, sent me a statement in support of this motion, which states: “Students want to participate in experiential learning opportunities that allow them to apply their class learning to the real world. OUSA supports increasing these types of opportunities so that more students can graduate with the skills they need to succeed in the workforce and reach their full potential here in Ontario.”

William Webb of the Canadian Intern Association, endorsing this motion, states, in part: “Experiential learning will strengthen Ontario’s economy. Investing in paid work-integrated learning opportunities will help to

build a highly skilled workforce that is ready to meet employer needs. Youth gain the experience and skills that they need to transition into the labour market, while employers benefit from lower recruitment costs and bringing in new talent.”

Young people know better than any one of us what they need to be successful, and they are asking us to pass this motion. We all need to step up today to answer their call.

It must also be said that the merits of this motion extend far beyond the participating youth; Ontario’s businesses are growing and need well-qualified employees to sustain and increase that growth. The most common concern I hear from many people who come through my office is the challenge in attracting young people to their profession.

It is clear that good careers exist, and that we have the talent to fill those positions, but we are failing to connect these groups. It is valuable to businesses to be able to train employees at the earliest stage in their career while also benefiting from their novel and unprejudiced insights.

It is important to consider that work-integrated learning is as necessary as it is beneficial. The most recent Ministry of Finance Ontario population projection update states that the number of seniors aged 65 years and over is projected to almost double, from 2.4 million to 4.7 million, by 2041, which is projected to represent 25% of Ontario’s population. We need people who will be ready to step in as retirement rates increase to support our economy, to support our public services and to ensure our aging population is cared for. We are putting an extraordinary burden on the generations that will follow us, and it is the least we can do to ensure that they have the tools they need today to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

This motion seeks not only to specifically increase Ontario’s investment in work-integrated learning, but also to fill programming gaps for NEET youth—Not in Education, Employment or Training.

In October 2014, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce released a report called *A Battle We Cannot Afford to Lose: Getting Young Canadians from Education to Employment*, in which they argued government, education providers and employers work together to allow more students to reap the benefits of work-integrated learning opportunities.

In June 2016, the Ontario government’s Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel released its final report, entitled *Building the Workforce of Ontario: A Shared Responsibility*. The panel recommended that Ontario should commit to ensuring that every student has at least one experiential learning opportunity by the end of their secondary schooling and, further, that every student has at least one experiential learning opportunity by the time they graduate from post-secondary education.

In its 2013 report on youth unemployment in Ontario entitled *The Young and the Jobless*, the Canadian Centre for—I’ll stay there.

I urge your support for this motion and welcome hearing your comments.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. David Piccini: Thank you to the honourable member opposite for this private member's motion. I'm very pleased to say this government will be supporting Mr. Hassan's motion and I look forward to hearing from my other colleagues. I thank him for introducing this and thank him for bringing the young people in the Legislature today. I heard you speak very eloquently yesterday, or a few days ago when he tabled that, so thank you for joining us.

Ontario's government is committed to working to make life better for our next generation. If there is something we can all agree on, if there's something we must reach across the aisle and the aisle must reach across to us in agreeing on, it's that we must make a better future. We must stay resolute in a better future for our next generation.

Over the course of the campaign and into my first few months in office, I heard from countless numbers of young people who said that some of them don't feel they have the skill sets needed to enter the workforce; some of them feel they don't have those experiences. We heard from employers that they can't find the workers that they need to enter the workforce.

We know that important to bridging that gap is work-integrated learning, particularly in the skilled trades system. In fact, Skills Ontario, that I met with just a few days ago, estimates that there will be hundreds of thousands of unfilled jobs in the coming years if we don't immediately act to fill the skilled trades gap in Ontario.

1400

Workers in the skilled trades are usually trained through apprenticeships, a combination of in-classroom and on-the-job training. Apprenticeship opportunities help businesses harness new talent while equipping workers with the practical skills they need to succeed. It offers a viable and fruitful path to well-paying jobs that are also in high demand. According to Skills Canada, 40% of new jobs created in the next decade will be in the trades. However, the current apprenticeship system is so complex that it's not working for employers, and it's certainly not working for our next generation. That's why our government committed to improving Ontario's skilled trades and apprenticeship system so that it better serves employers and tradespeople and the public. In fact, we've invested \$13.2 million in pre-apprenticeship training programs to create positions for over 1,200 youth. In addition, we've created 6,000 work-integrated learning positions as part of our auto strategy.

But we know we can and must do more for our next generation. That's why I'm pleased to highlight one of the immediate actions our government took when forming government, and that was reducing the journey-person-to-apprenticeship ratio to 1 to 1. In Ontario, our ratios of tradespeople required to train apprentices were among the highest in Canada. According to the folks we heard at committee, the changes we made will create thousands of apprenticeship positions across Ontario. In fact, I'd like to highlight just one from young Adam in Cobourg, in my riding, who is a plumber. He was working a minimum wage job because of the ratios, was unable to enter the workforce because of those restrictive ratios, and was

waiting for a spot to open up in plumbing. Because of that ratio change we made, Adam went from working a minimum wage job—and now he and his lovely fiancée are looking at buying a home, attaining that dream of home ownership, because he has gone out of that minimum wage job and is now in gainful employment.

We know that it's not just in the skilled trades, which is why I was pleased to join Minister Fullerton over the past number of months, working with our universities. In fact, I just got back from Ryerson two days ago, where we met with young students in the accelerator hub. This government stands resolute and shoulder to shoulder with our universities, with our college system.

I'm glad I could have the opportunity to highlight the skilled trades piece. Of course, it's more than that as well; it's also our university sector.

I'd like to thank the member opposite for this very important motion that I'm proud to stand and support him on.

Thank you to the young people for joining us today. I look forward to working with you and everyone in this House to ensure that we create a brighter future for our next generation.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm very pleased today to be able to rise to speak in support of the motion that was brought forward by my colleague the member for York South-Weston. I think we all heard, in his presentation of the motion, his passion for ensuring that young people have the opportunities that they need and have the support that they need to be able to enter the labour market and find meaningful work.

We know that young people in Ontario have been facing challenges. Just in the last couple of months, we've heard about the challenges that young people are facing with the cuts to OSAP, the cuts to financial aid, and the fact that more and more students will graduate with larger and larger debts—if they can afford to go to post-secondary at all. So this motion to create paid work-integrated learning opportunities can be a game-changer for thousands and thousands of young people in this province.

I want to commend the member for three specific aspects of this motion that I'm going to focus on, and first is the fact that these work-integrated learning opportunities, these 27,000 opportunities, will be paid. Before I was elected, I was a policy researcher. I started working in the area of work-integrated learning way back in 2010. I've published five reports on work-integrated learning. It's very exciting to see what's happening not just in Ontario, but across the province and federally as well, as more and more governments are recognizing the importance of these kinds of programs.

But I do want to refer to research that is undertaken in the US on an annual basis by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. They compare outcomes for students who have participated in unpaid work-integrated learning versus paid work-integrated learning, and what

they have found is that it is those paid work opportunities that really give students a leg up when they go into the labour market. Students who participate in paid programs are much more likely to get more jobs offered when they graduate, and they are much more likely to have much higher starting salaries. For young people who participate in unpaid work-integrated learning there are a number of benefits, but when you look specifically at job offers and salaries, those unpaid opportunities are equivalent to no opportunities in terms of giving young people that little extra support that they need to enter the labour market. So the focus on paid opportunities is really important.

The second aspect of this motion that I wanted to highlight is that it doesn't specify what sectors we're going to be focusing on. We've seen programs from the federal government that look specifically at STEM—science, technology, education and math—and, yes, that is critical for our economic success as a province. But we also know that fully one third of Fortune 500 CEOs have liberal arts degrees. There is great value in providing students from across disciplines with real-life experience where they can apply the learning that they have gained in the classroom in a work setting, and we need to continue to ensure that liberal arts graduates have these same kinds of programs that enable them to get into the labour market.

The third point that I'd like to highlight is the fact that this motion is broader than work-integrated learning in the post-secondary sector; it also applies to recent graduates and unemployed youth. Speaker, we know that nations around the world grapple with the challenge of youth who are left behind, youth who have not been able to gain that foothold in the labour market, youth who are not in education and not working. They are literally left behind, and we need to do everything that we can to support those young people.

There is also the other challenge that we face collectively around graduates who are entering the labour market and are not working to their full capacity. In many cases, they are seriously underemployed when you look at the kinds of skills and qualifications that they could bring to the labour market and the kind of boost that it would bring to our economy if they were working to their full capacity. The fact that this motion addresses paid work-integrated learning, that it applies across sectors and that it supports both students who are in post-secondary and those who are recently graduated or not in education or the workforce at all—these are very critical benefits that this motion is going to bring.

But, Speaker, I did want to just make one final point. If this government—and they've said they are going to be supporting this motion—is serious about this, they have to recognize that these placements won't just appear. We need to ensure that our post-secondary institutions have the infrastructure required to deliver these programs, to make sure that students are getting meaningful, quality work experiences when they are participating, and this is a government that has decided that underfunding post-secondary education, cutting supports to post-secondary institutions, is the way they want to go.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: As the member for Northumberland–Peterborough South has said, our government is committed to creating good jobs, and that is why we're supporting the opposition motion on work-integrated learning introduced by the member from York South–Weston.

1410

Ontario's government is committed to bringing quality jobs back to this province for everyone who is ready to work, including our students, our graduates and our unemployed youth. Over the next decade, almost one in five new jobs in Ontario is expected to be in trades-related occupations. That's why we are committed to overhauling our apprenticeship program to make it easier for people to pursue careers in the trades.

Supporting an apprenticeship system that is effective, cost-efficient and meets the needs of employers is going to be critical to the success of our province. Work-integrated learning plays a large role in that. It's where students learn by doing, thereby improving their employability by building their knowledge and their skills.

Apprenticeships are one kind of work-integrated learning where students participate in classroom and job training. More than 73,000 apprentices are working in Ontario right now as electricians, as carpenters, as automotive service technicians—just to name a few of the in-demand jobs that are available in apprenticeship pathways. The trades are an exciting, respected and in-demand career option. We know that they offer good and well-paying jobs.

As Ontario's economy continues to grow, we can't let good jobs and other opportunities pass people by. This is why our government is investing more than \$13 million in our pre-apprenticeship training program.

Mr. David Piccini: Hear, hear.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: It's a great announcement. Let me tell you, these programs offer opportunities for training and experience that make Ontarians ready for work right away and to be hired as an apprentice. These programs promote careers in the trades for all Ontarians, including new Canadians, women and Indigenous people. These programs teach electricians how to wire a light switch in new homes. They teach arborists how to recognize disease in trees, and automotive service technicians how to diagnose and repair vehicles.

But, Madam Speaker, we need to go further. That's why our government is working every day to create good-paying jobs in Ontario. We are delivering on that promise every day by lowering taxes, cutting red tape and getting rid of the job-killing cap-and-trade carbon tax and making Ontario open for business.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: It's a really deep honour to rise today in the House to support my colleague from York South–Weston's motion on work-integrated learning opportunities. This is so important for individuals but also

for Ontario's economy and society. Every economist tells us that we need skilled labour and that we don't have enough of it at the moment. So everything that we can do to reinforce the opportunities to have more of that skilled labour is a good thing.

This really is a question of equity. As a former university professor, I know how difficult it is for young people to break into the job market. However difficult it is for the average young person who has families who already have networks and connections, it's that much harder for young people who face systemic barriers. It's that much harder for people who face systemic racism. The barriers are simply higher for kids who are Black, Indigenous or otherwise racialized, or who are newcomers. They don't have the family networks that kids whose families have been here for longer, who are middle-class, may already have. Social capital is an enormous part of being able to break into the workforce. We cannot underestimate the importance of networks. We know that most jobs are gained via networks and not via cold calls.

In a former life, I was the president of the Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs. Couchiching ran a series, for the better part of 100 years, of famed conferences north of the city on Lake Couchiching. What was really magical about those conferences was that it brought people from all walks of life there as participants, as well as speakers. This was an extraordinary place where politicians and business leaders, leaders in the arts, leaders in every field, would come. We invested a lot of money bringing young people—particularly young people who wouldn't necessarily rub shoulders with politicians at their parents' dinner table—to these events. It was extraordinary the way that lives were changed. The moment that you create opportunities for people to have networks, lives change.

Underemployment is as much of a scourge as unemployment, particularly for disadvantaged communities. Unfortunately, we have seen in the course of this government, so far, a number of measures that have cut the ability of racialized folks and folks who otherwise face barriers to rise above these issues. So it's important that we now have a program that actually breaks barriers down, that allows people to get into the workforce, and this program is going to do exactly that.

It's really important and symbolic that this program be passed on the last day of Black History Month. Black History Month cannot simply be about recognizing the great contributions that Black Ontarians have made to the province; it has to be about thoughtfully and systemically breaking down those barriers that exist and breaking down questions of equity.

It's important, as well, that we take into account a point that my colleagues have made before me: that unpaid internships are the province of the privileged. It takes a certain level of comfort and privilege to be able to afford to take an internship that isn't paid. Many young people from racialized backgrounds and newcomer backgrounds cannot afford to do that. So it's really incumbent, if we're not going to consign people to underemployment, that we make sure we put in place steps to ensure that we're

getting over those issues, that we're actually paying people for their first jobs.

The final point I want to make is that diversity is good for business. For instance, companies that take diversity seriously—where it's not just a question of tokenism, but they actually ensure that they represent the voices and perspectives of diverse employees—do better. They have better profit margins. They create new business for themselves.

The wonderful thing about this program is that it actually helps to educate companies, as well as providing individuals with new opportunities.

Once again, I just want to say it's good for Ontario. It's good for Ontario's economy. It is going to bring down rates of poverty in the future. It's good for individuals. So I think it's really important that we pass this today.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Lorne Coe: One of the key priorities of this government continues to be creating and protecting jobs and supporting workers and businesses so that the Ontario economy can grow and thrive. Employers from many industries across Ontario and throughout the region of Durham tell us that they have trouble finding workers with the skill sets they need. At the same time, our college and university graduates tell us that they find it hard to get good jobs. That's why our government sees experiential learning as an effective way to help both employers and job seekers in our province. Young people get the chance to connect with the real job world and develop in-demand skills and work experience while they're in school, and Ontario employers get much better access to the talent they need to grow their businesses right here at home.

Speaker, a great example of such a partnership is the Driving Prosperity plan that Premier Ford announced last Thursday at the auto show in Toronto. The Driving Prosperity plan sets out key priorities and actions to transform the auto sector over the next 10 years. The plan is designed to support and provide economic development opportunities for communities across Ontario, including the ones that you and I represent.

To build a reliable and effective talent pipeline, our government will be working with industry, along with research and education partners, to develop a strong workforce for Ontario's auto sector. We have set out immediate actions to develop a strong workforce for Ontario's auto sector.

1420

We have set out immediate actions to develop talent, such as:

- creating 6,000 new internships and training opportunities;
- supporting online industry-led training to aid in the upskilling of workers;
- giving targeted support for laid-off and other unemployed or underemployed Ontarians from the auto sector to get back to work quickly; and
- developing a talent road map and skills inventory to help identify current and future skills needed in the competitive auto sector.

Speaker, as the member of provincial Parliament for Whitby, many of my constituents, not unlike yourself, work for General Motors or connected companies in the General Motors supply chain. That's why I'm proud that our government is taking action to ensure the training and support of auto workers across the province, in particular in the town of Whitby and in the region of Durham.

Thank you for the opportunity to debate motion 30. I look forward to supporting that motion when the time comes.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? Further debate?

I return to the member for York South–Weston, who has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Faisal Hassan: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to thank the members from Northumberland–Peterborough South; London West—my colleague Peggy Sattler; Barrie–Innisfil; Beaches–East York; and Whitby.

In January of 2019, the youth jobless rate—the rate of young people actively looking for work and unable to find it—was a staggering 11.2%, well above the rest of the Ontario labour force. Too many young people are still finding it difficult to land their first paid job and to get the experience that they need to build their career. Imagine, Madam Speaker, a province where students and young people that work hard actually get a shot to build their best life in Ontario. Years of Conservatives and Liberals robbed young people of this chance and created an environment where there are just too few entry-level jobs to go around.

Young people should be expecting more from their government, not less, and an opportunity to build their best life in Ontario. Ontario has been headed in the wrong direction for a long time, with more and more debt being piled on students and fewer and fewer paid jobs for students and young people. That is why I am calling for the creation of 27,000 new, paid work opportunities for students, recent graduates and unemployed youth.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LES URBANISTES CERTIFIÉS

Mr. Coe moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 70, An Act respecting the regulation of Registered Professional Planners / Projet de loi 70, Loi concernant la réglementation des urbanistes certifiés.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Lorne Coe: The proposed bill has been crafted with the support of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Some of the members of the institute are in the east gallery this afternoon. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Bill 70 repeals the Ontario Professional Planners Institute Act, 1994 and enacts an updated and more modern act

called the Registered Professional Planners Act, 2019. The proposed legislation provides a framework for membership in the institute, but it's also important to note that the proposed legislation does not create new red tape or a regulatory regime.

Bill 70 demonstrates once again the government's commitment to improve the quality and livability of Ontario's communities. The proposed act continues the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, an organization that governs and regulates its 4,500 members made up of urban, regional and rural planners from across the province.

If passed, Speaker, this act will safeguard the public interest by strengthening the profession's practice requirements and the accountability of the institute and its members. The proposed bill sets out procedures for dealing with complaints and establishes a disciplinary process, including a right to appeal. In addition, the proposed legislation provides for the appointment of investigators to conduct investigations under the act and sets out their powers. Further, the act establishes procedures for determining whether a member of the institute is incapacitated, including a committee process with the right of appeal, as you would expect.

If passed, Bill 70 will safeguard the public interest by strengthening the profession's practice requirements and the accountability of institute members for the planning advice and counsel they provide to clients.

Speaker, let me give you a little bit of background about the institute. Some of the work that they do falls within the private, educational and not-for-profit sectors, including urban and rural development, urban design, environmental planning, heritage conservation, housing, and economic development.

Some in the Legislative Assembly will know that, prior to my election as the MPP for then-Whitby–Oshawa in the by-election when I was elected on February 11, 2016, I served as both a municipal and regional councillor with the town of Whitby and the regional municipality of Durham. During many of those 13 years, I was the chair of the planning and development committee for the town of Whitby. I came to appreciate that planners are skilled professionals who work to improve the quality and livability of Ontario's communities, and they all aim to ensure that we have healthy and sustainable communities.

In that period of time, I also came to understand and respect the impact that their recommendations have on the development of healthy communities. In the case of the region of Durham, professional planners have worked closely with eight municipalities, with public servants in those municipalities and with other partners to move growth along with effective, progressive and integrated long-term planning. In that process, they have to consider the master planning processes that each municipality has and also that those particular plans have to be consistent with the region of Durham's master plan on planning.

It's equally important, as part of this debate this afternoon, Speaker, to acknowledge the shifting policy objectives and competing interests in communities, because they continue to evolve, don't they? They evolve

every day, with social and technological changes. Planners have a significant, continuing role in effectively developing and trying to aspire towards healthy and sustainable communities.

Let me take you back to 1994, Speaker. At that time—that's a long time ago, isn't it?; 25 years ago—Ontario pioneered the first private legislation in the country in support of the title of professional planners. But here we are, after 25 years. Many other jurisdictions across the country have enacted more updated legislation that reflects the current practices within the planning and development profession.

Speaker, I described earlier that there are some real benefits in Bill 70 for the public and OPPI members, and they bear some repeating: allowing OPPI to carry out many of the duties of a regulator, such as providing new investigative powers; improving and enhancing professional standards by strengthening practice requirements and accountability; and providing for an investigative vehicle for professional misconduct. None of those features are vastly different than other regulatory aspects that we have for other professions, but they all aim to improve the practice of the planning that goes on in this province.

1430

Speaker, Bill 70 creates prohibitions and offences respecting the use of specified designations and initials by unauthorized individuals. Further, the legislation provides a framework for membership and sets out procedures for dealing with matters such as complaints against former registered professional planners. Bill 70 addresses and develops procedures for determining whether a member of the institute is incapacitated and outlines powers to appoint an investigator to examine incidents of professional misconduct. Overall, Bill 70 makes the profession more accountable. It ensures that consumers are receiving advice from accredited professionals, and further ensures that there are adequate mechanisms in place to ensure that malpractice is dealt with appropriately.

What's clear when you step back and consider the implications of this legislation is that professional planners are people who are ultimately tasked with determining our communities' state of health and well-being. This bill, if passed, will improve a system that in its current state limits the enforcement provisions of its members. We believe that more robust powers for enforcement of professional standards will lead to a healthier profession.

Speaker, again, I look at my own riding of Whitby. There are currently 10 developments under way in west Whitby—and I'm sure you've driven through them—along the corridor of Rossland Road, and also within the village of Brooklin, just north of the main part of town. It's covering hundreds of acres of land, and there are evolving and urgent economic and social infrastructure issues that place pressures on my community to make choices. And Whitby is certainly not unique. There are pressures on other municipalities that comprise the region of Durham.

Our communities turn to registered professional planners to professionally inform these choices. They're important choices. They're important choices to families

in the region of Durham. Professional planners' knowledge and experience support decision-makers within municipalities on their path to sustainably build social and natural environments. The result of all that effort is a truly inspired region of Durham, a truly inspired province of Ontario.

I thank you for the time, and I look forward to the contributions of others who will be speaking on Bill 70. I also look forward to the outcome of the vote this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: It's always an honour to rise here.

I also want to congratulate and thank the member from Whitby for this very important legislation, and also his brief conversation prior to this being tabled just now—or the second reading being tabled, actually.

It's also good to see the government recognizing regulation and how it is very important in protecting people. That's what this does. This bill is a reimagining, a retableting of a bill in the prior session of the Legislature, but I guess, with a little bit of time, I believe it to be also an improvement—because in one area, which I'll get into later, it does improve. It also touches on an area which I'm critic of: protecting consumer rights. It doesn't create a new profession, but rather protects the title of planners, and that will, in turn, protect consumers.

I also want to thank the planners and those who are here to be here as part of this bill. Thank you for all of your incredible work over the years. I recognize that.

In my past life working for a city councillor, I had the privilege to learn a lot from planners. I'd like to recognize—and probably embarrass, because he is a humble man—one such planner. His name is Al Rezoski, and he works for the city of Toronto. I've been able to learn a lot from him over the years.

Planning, like everything, grows, and we learn with time. In the area I live in and represent, we have, for instance, townhouse subdivisions that had issues because, if first responders wanted to come, it was difficult for them to find which unit in particular they had to visit. Planners with that sort of past have been able to develop and strengthen planning processes as they move forward.

City planners—and I would love to recognize all of them—play such an important role in protecting communities, because all planners improve the quality and livability of communities and the sustainability of the future. One issue that Toronto is facing is the replacement of parcels of land where jobs are being protected. We are seeing them replaced by intensified condos and residential. But planners are the ones I've seen over the years working with the city councillor who were steadfast in ensuring that decisions made around planning were made in a very holistic way, in a way that looked at all needs, but above all the needs of the communities themselves, and that is so important.

Like many things in life, if it's not our area of expertise, I think we all just look at it and rely on it and take it for

granted. But everything that we see around us in this municipality and everywhere else is a tapestry with many, many considerations by these planners that go in to put together something that benefits all of us. It is for that reason that I really respect their important work.

I also want to read out some words of support from stakeholders that show the importance of this legislation. For instance, Jason Ferrigan, who is an RPP and member of OPPI: “For more than 20 years, registered professional planners ... in Ontario have operated under our current legislation. We hope this new bill will better protect the public and those who use planning services by articulating the role and value of professional planners in the planning process. Great plans need great planners.”

As I mentioned, one of the improvements is to actually place penalties for individuals who are posing as professional planners when, in fact, they are not. This bill will allow exclusive rights for the designation of professional planner—again, exclusive rights to those who have earned it—“registered professional planner,” « urbaniste » and « urbaniste professionnel certifié », and the initials “RPP” and « UPC ». If someone poses as a planner, whether it be in a speech or in reference to membership or whatnot, they may face up to \$15,000 in fines, and other issues. This is very important in protecting those who are relying on the knowledge and service of these planners.

Again, I’m really proud to be able to rise and discuss something that we can all agree on, because sometimes in this House, it gets a little heated, and those of us on either side of the aisle here may be at odds on how we believe the future should be. But I think this afternoon seems to be a bit of a love-in, because we are discussing things that we both agree on.

Certainly the respect of planners, giving them a designation and the exclusive use of that is very, very important. I’m really proud to be here in support, and I thank the member opposite, the member for Whitby, for re-tabling, improving upon and modernizing an act that has taken 25 years for us to consider. I sincerely hope that as we move forward we will be able to modernize and improve things in a way that we can both, as government and opposition, agree upon. Thank you, Speaker, and thank you for the opportunity to speak.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member on a—oh, no. I’m sorry. I can’t recognize the member during private members’.

I recognize the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Good afternoon. I’m happy to speak in favour of this bill brought forward by the member for Whitby.

I want to commend my colleague across the hall. He also brought up that the Registered Professional Planners Act, 2019, was introduced as Bill 122 during the previous Parliament, and it had all-party support. I’m happy to see that we’re in agreement once again. It was actually introduced as a private member’s bill by my predecessor,

the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore in the 41st Parliament. It would be remiss for me not to acknowledge his work on this. I’ll even quote him when he spoke in the House on this bill during the last Parliament. He said, “Great plans need great planners, and great planners need great governance for their profession,” and this bill seeks to do that.

1440

During my time working at Toronto city hall, before being elected to this House, I came to appreciate the importance of a robust and effective planning system. Ontario’s planners are professionals working every day to create healthy, livable cities.

I want to make a brief aside for a moment here because I always want to highlight this wherever I can and it underscores the importance of good professional planning. In my community of Etobicoke–Lakeshore one only needs to look at the Humber Bay Shores community to understand why good planning is important. That community, which includes a number of condo towers that have grown over the last 10 years, is the home of tens of thousands of people—28,000 people—and it only has one road in and out and no close transit. That’s why, when we build up our communities, it’s so important to plan for the ways that people can get around and get in and out of their communities and not leave transit to an afterthought.

That’s why having a robust and effective planning system is so essential. That story is also a great example—I know that the Minister of Transportation is in the room—for the need of a Park Lawn GO station. But that is a conversation for another day.

That brings us back to the bill at hand. The bill, if passed, would create a much stronger framework to govern registered planning professionals in Ontario. As it stands, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute has a wide range of responsibilities, including establishing the professional code of practice for its members. Equally important, they also institute a mandatory program of continuous professional learning as a requirement of membership to ensure that members are current with modern practices. The bill would improve upon these existing functions. It would do this by repealing the 1994 Ontario Professional Planners Institute Act and replacing it with a modern and updated version put forward in this bill.

The original 1994 act was, for its time, fairly revolutionary. It was the first piece of legislation in Canada to protect the title of registered professional planner, but after nearly 25 years, it’s time to update that legislation. The bill would continue the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, which governs and regulates the over 4,500 planners who work across all of Ontario in urban and rural communities. Right now, the OPPI is lacking key provisions to create a complete governance structure. For example, this bill creates rules around who can use specified designations and post-nominal initials by people who aren’t authorized to do so. Registered professional planners, or RPPs for short, are designated members of the professional planning institute. They go through university, training, work experience and certification before they receive their designation.

Ontarians deserve confidence that the designations given have meaning. This bill, if passed, will ensure that happens by creating prohibitions and offences for people who claim these designations without actually being designated by the OPPI.

Additionally, right now it is financially difficult for the OPPI, as a professional regulator, to actually pursue a claim of negligence or malpractice against someone in that profession who is negligent or commits malpractice. This bill, if passed, would provide the OPPI the opportunity and ability to pursue these claims, providing accountability to the sector.

It is important to note that the Ontario Professional Planners Institute is eager to see these changes passed. I've been told that the institute was disappointed that the bill was not a priority of the previous government and did not make it to third reading.

Altogether, these changes will provide better title protection of professional planners and increase accountability to the people of Ontario, both of which are important and laudable goals.

During the last Parliament, this bill received support from all parties of this Legislature, and I'm sure this bill will receive similar support today.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to stand in the House and talk about the issues at hand. I have to say, and I say this almost every Thursday, that Thursdays are my favourite day because we actually talk about, usually, non-partisan issues. We talk about issues that are important to people's communities and important to people's lives. On that, I would like to commend the member from Whitby for bringing forward this piece of legislation, and I'd like to thank the planners who are here and planners across the province.

In my former life, I was also a councillor in a much smaller municipality in northern Ontario, and, I have to say, sometimes our planners frustrated me because the councillors, the political people, want to get things done immediately, with immediate gratification and to show that they're getting things done, and there was a planner going, "No; if we're looking longer-term, maybe putting that there doesn't make as much sense as actually taking a 25- or 50-year picture and thinking about your community 50 years from now." That, to me, is the biggest benefit of planning, because you have a much broader window and much longer landscape.

I'd like to commend—

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Are you heckling our audience?

Mr. John Vanthof: I heckle everyone. Your time is coming.

But that is the strength of planning, and planners need good legislation backing them up.

We are in full support of this piece of legislation—full support. But the question you have to ask yourselves, and we all have to ask ourselves—this is a good piece of legislation. I commend the member from Whitby. The one that was presented before by Mr. McMeekin was also a

piece of good legislation. It passed unanimously at this stage, but it didn't go any farther. The trick is to get this farther. That lies solely on the government side. The government controls the calendar of what gets passed and what doesn't. We all agree that we're going to vote for this piece of legislation—we all agree—but for this legislation to pass, the government of the day has to bring it forward. That's up to them.

There are a couple of roadblocks to that. I'm not trying to be partisan here; I'm trying to lay out the land. This particular government has stated over and over and over again that Ontario is massively overregulated and that, in their mandate, they are going to eliminate 25% of the regulations. I don't know if these are included or if they're really going to want to add regulations to a sector—even though it needs it—but that is up to the government to decide.

So the planners are going against the tide a little, because the government is stating that they are going to get rid of 25% of Ontario's regulations in the next three and a half years. So the tide is going towards less regulation and, in effect, less planning. The tide is going strongly—the government tide, notwithstanding the member from Whitby, is going strongly against this bill.

They can prove me wrong, and I would like to be proven wrong on this bill. It is fully within the government members—the House leader, the whip or the Premier's office could say tomorrow that whatever committee this bill goes to, this bill gets priority. It could be passed in a very short time. We all agree. It could be passed.

1450

I can assure you that the opposition is not going to stand in the way of this bill. We didn't stand in the way of it last time. We weren't the opposition last time. We were the third party. Now we're the official opposition—we weren't quite as successful as these guys.

The only thing that is stopping this bill from becoming reality—and maybe nothing is stopping it. Maybe in six months this will be passed and I will stand here and congratulate the government. But if it isn't, it could very well be that after the next election, unfortunately, tragically, you could be sitting there again talking about this good piece of legislation, because—news flash—there are many other good pieces of legislation that come here on Thursdays that get unanimous consent and they go nowhere, and that is at the government's purview.

As much as they frustrated me when I was on Evanturel council, I fully understand how important planning is, how important it is that you know that the planners you hire are actually planners. I fully understand how important that is.

I implore the government to take a cue from the member from Whitby, from a former Liberal member. The government seems to say that everything the Liberals ever had was bad. This one wasn't a bad Liberal bill. But now it's incumbent on our current government to pass it.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate.

Mrs. Gila Martow: We're debating today a private member's bill put forward by our member for Whitby.

He's also our chief government whip. I'm very honoured to speak on An Act respecting the regulation of Registered Professional Planners.

I think that a lot of times our constituents are at home and they're not sure how government works. They're not even sure sometimes what's a municipal issue, what's a provincial issue, what's a federal issue. They just hear a lot of excuses a lot of times. They want a project to move forward or a project not to be moved forward or a project to be changed, and they are told lots of different things by lots of different politicians and their staff, and they're frustrated. A lot of times, I think that the planners get blamed for what other people might want to hide behind.

The fact is that planners are professionals who have a very difficult task, because they're the ones who get trapped sometimes—different levels of government, different rules and regulations. They're trying, obviously, to do what's best for the community and to follow whatever mandate they're given, to look at so many different aspects and so many different variables. People always pick the one thing that they think is important that they felt was missed. So it's difficult. We appreciate that, but we also understand that it's important that our planners are well-trained, well-educated, have the experience and have the insight to do the proper job. A lot of times that requires regulating the profession.

I've said it here before: I'm an optometrist by training. Optometrists belong to the college of optometrists. We're regulated. We have continuing education. We have to keep up with professional standards.

So I think that the bill that we're discussing today is modernizing what was the original—I think it was 1994 that Ontario pioneered the first piece of legislation in terms of regulating planners. Then we kind of fell behind, and other provinces and jurisdictions leapfrogged over us and made improvements. Now we have to do the catch-up and make sure that we're managing to allow the profession to regulate its members—even one of the things is that they should be able to have oversight over members who resign, so that people can't resign from the profession to absolve themselves of any type of responsibility or malpractice.

What are residents worried about? Well, we see downtown that there was discussion this week that roads are being blocked for construction of condos. I think if planners are given the instruction that they can only approve development where roads are not going to have to be blocked, that's going to change a little bit. They're going to have to go back to the politicians and the residents and say, "You want us to build right up to the sidewalk, right up to the street and not have parking lots in front like the plazas of the old days. Well, if we want to build right up to the sidewalks or street, we have to have room for the equipment to do the construction."

I think it's a bit of give and take sometimes, but we have to be realistic in what we're asking for and understand that there can be consequences, and sometimes unintended consequences. There are heritage buildings that we want to preserve. We are going to hearing soon from one of our

members. She's putting forward the Golden Girls Act to allow for people to develop suites within a home so that they can share multiple units in a single residence. It's frustrating, I think, for our constituents and the residents of our municipalities to understand the limiting factors and the effect on business and the effects on parking of things like secondary suites. Some people think it's a great idea to allow more affordable housing by taking portions of existing housing that's not being used and making it, with a separate entrance, separate living quarters for rent. The question becomes one of services for those extra people in that neighbourhood. Schools: Are they available?

What we hear up in Thornhill is that people have concerns about parking. We hear concerns about basement flooding, stormwater management and sewage management. There is a building that went up just a few years ago—a condo building—on Yonge Street in Thornhill that is not connected to the main sewer line, and a huge truck comes every Friday to empty some kind of septic tank that's there. That's of concern to the people in the neighbourhood, who felt they weren't consulted. Why did the building get built if it wasn't able to connect, and when is it going to be able to connect?

We hear that the new subway stations north of York University are leaking water. I remember during construction that there was water underground and there were a lot of concerns and it delayed the construction of it. Maybe we have to think about that when we're building condo towers with underground parking. What's the water situation? I know that the planners think about it, but maybe the politicians have to be better educated as well and not just rely on the planners.

I'm just going to end by mentioning that I spoke to Silvio DeGasperis just this week. He owns TACC Construction up in Vaughan. I asked him about regulating the planners, and he said, "Look, planners are professionals." What he would like to see is that they have more experience in the construction industry. That's his frustration: that he's dealing with something in a municipality and speaking to planners, and he's saying, "That's not realistic," or, "You're making things so much more expensive for us unnecessarily."

I think that there are a lot of variables. We all have to do our jobs, dealing with a lot of moving parts sometimes, including the planners.

Thank you very much. I'm looking forward to more debate on this.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Now I return to the member from Whitby for his two-minute response.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Thank you, Speaker. To all of the members who contributed to the debate on Bill 70: Thank you so much for your thoughtful contributions. I think that they touched on many areas of the bill that are important to the professional planners in the east gallery here today.

I think it bears repeating that the act, if it should be passed, which I hope it will, will safeguard the public interest by strengthening the professional practice requirements and improving accountability in the institute

and its members. It does not put in place a new regulatory regime. It does not add additional red tape.

It has taken us 25 years to reach this moment this afternoon in the Ontario Legislature. We have an opportunity with Bill 70 this afternoon to ensure that the government's commitment to improve the quality and livability of communities in Ontario today will be effected by one more plank. That one more plank is Bill 70, with the features that are embedded within this particular legislation.

An important aspect that we all stand up for in this Legislature is safeguarding the public interest. Bill 70 does that with the new accountability features within the legislation. It strengthens the profession's practice requirements and the accountability of institute members for the planning advice and counsel they provide to clients across Ontario.

1500

GOLDEN GIRLS ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LES GOLDEN GIRLS

Ms. Park moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 69, An Act to amend the Planning Act / Projet de loi 69, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):

Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Lindsey Park: I am thrilled to rise today to speak about my private member's bill, the short title of which is the Golden Girls Act.

I must say I'm fortunate to be joined in the members' gallery here today by three out of four of the Golden Girls of Port Perry, the group that the bill is named after. The quartet includes Martha Casson, Louise Bardswich, Sandy McCully and Beverly Brown. Thank you to Martha, Louise and Sandy for being here today.

Let me start by telling you the story of the Golden Girls of Port Perry. It's an important one. There were four senior women who decided they didn't want to live independently any longer, but didn't see themselves living in a traditional retirement home, condo or apartment. They chose to renovate a home in downtown Port Perry to meet their needs as they aged.

I had the privilege of meeting the Golden Girls of Port Perry and visiting their home for the first time in the fall. First off, let me say that they did a beautiful job renovating a heritage home; I would move in there. But there was more to the renovation than that that makes it so special.

They share the kitchen and living room, but rather than there being someone stuck with the small bedroom and another with the large bedroom, they renovated the home to provide for all of them to have large enough bedrooms and also to have their own private sitting area, walk-in closet and accessible washroom. They also built two caregiver suites in their basement, added an elevator to service the three-storey home, and even consulted experts

on everything from door handles to roll-in showers to make the home accessible for aging seniors—all of these things designed to help them age peacefully in their golden years.

When I visited their home, I also learned more about their story and some of the obstacles they faced in making this housing model a reality. This bill, the Golden Girls Act, comes out of the obstacles they faced.

One of the obstacles they initially ran into was when first helping another group of seniors interested in sharing a home this way in their town. Their local municipal council in Scugog tried to use their bylaw-making powers under the Planning Act to prevent this group of seniors from using a house in downtown Port Perry in this way.

When I tell people this story, they're shocked. There is a great need for more housing options for seniors that are affordable. Municipalities should not be trying to get in the way of seniors with innovative housing solutions.

The motive of this bill is to bring clarity to local municipalities and make sure that a group of seniors seeking this innovative housing solution in the future never has to face these obstacles again. Municipalities ought to know they cannot use their bylaw-making powers in this way. They cannot use their bylaw-making powers to prevent unrelated seniors from living together and sharing a home. This is a type of housing model that should be encouraged, not discouraged, by local municipalities.

Seniors living together can reap significant financial, health and social benefits. There's lots of evidence to show that activities that keep seniors from social isolation are good for their health. In case you haven't heard, in Britain, they even have now a minister of loneliness because it's such an important issue. Loneliness among seniors is far too common, and living together with other seniors is one of the ways to prevent that. This is also a style of housing that can be accessible to seniors of many different income levels, if part of the home, for example, is rented out, or if bedrooms are rented out.

Seniors are the fastest-growing demographic both in Durham region, the area I represent, and province-wide. This is truly an innovative solution, and it can be a housing solution for many seniors or people nearing their senior years. Many people do not like the traditional housing options they have, and would much prefer to remain living in their own homes. This option allows them to live in a home without living alone. Seniors can have the social support of living with others and at the same time sharing expenses and saving money in the long run. This is a housing model, as I said, that can reap significant health, economic and social benefits.

However, as the Golden Girls of Port Perry have told me, other seniors have approached them to describe how they have faced similar obstacles in their municipalities. I also have another example, received by email today, of a municipality putting up hurdles for seniors trying to share a home. This is why I introduced the Golden Girls Act: I want to make it clear to municipalities and to all that not only is this form of housing allowed, but it ought to be encouraged.

Since introducing this bill in the Legislature, I have been taken aback by the support. I am proud to share in this House that the following organizations support this bill: the Ontario Home Builders' Association; the Ontario Real Estate Association; the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario; the Ontario Personal Support Workers Association; the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, known as CARP; locally, the Durham real estate association; and, last but not least, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the member for Leeds–Grenville–Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes; and the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, who I see in the House with me, the member for Scarborough North. I am honoured to have their support.

Speaker, now let me tell you in specifics some of the things that different organizations supporting this bill have had to say. Joe Vaccaro, the CEO of the Ontario Home Builders' Association, had this to say about the bill: "OHBA supports your inaugural private member's legislation, Bill 69, Golden Girls Act, 2019. This legislation will provide more clarity to municipalities and members of the public that home-sharing by unrelated seniors is a housing option."

The Ontario Home Builders' Association "supports any changes that provide additional housing supply and choice for #homebelievers across Ontario."

Miranda Ferrier, president of the Ontario Personal Support Workers Association, also expressed support for the bill. She said, "The Ontario Personal Support Workers Association is proud to offer its support to MPP Lindsey Park for Durham and her private member's bill, the Golden Girls Act, 2019. The OPSWA feels strongly that such innovative action will further secure a continued high quality of life for seniors across all municipalities in Ontario. The OPSWA further applauds MPP Park in her excellent work in bringing this worthwhile initiative forward."

Tim Hudak, the former member for, most recently, Niagara West–Glanbrook, now CEO of the Ontario Real Estate Association, also saw the benefits of this legislative clarification. "All levels of government should be doing everything they can to make home ownership more affordable for Ontario seniors. Ontario realtors applaud MPP Lindsey Park for introducing the Golden Girls Act, 2019, as it is an innovative idea that will make home ownership more affordable for seniors while helping to address Ontario's housing supply crisis."

Our government for the people wants to increase the housing options that seniors have, and one way we can do that is by eliminating the red tape and confusion that is currently discouraging the very solutions we need. That's my goal. I hope that, by passing this bill, we are starting the conversation about the fundamental need in our province for more housing options that are affordable for more of our seniors. We're also turning the conversation to innovative housing models that can be the solution.

1510

I want to share one more quote from Tina Sorichetti, president of my local Durham Region Association of

Realtors. She said, "With an aging population and a housing supply shortage, a new approach to housing for seniors, such as the one taken by the Golden Girls of Port Perry, needs to be supported by all levels of government. Thank you MPP Lindsey Park for introducing the Golden Girls Act, 2019, to eliminate barriers for senior housing solutions."

With that, I look forward to listening to the rest of the debate. I hope all parties will be a friend to seniors by supporting this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Suze Morrison: First off, I'd like to thank the member from Durham for introducing this bill. I'm certainly happy to say that, as the official opposition critic for housing, I will be supporting it here today.

This bill sets out with one main objective, and that's to amend subsection 35(2) of the Planning Act to specify that people who are unrelated should include "unrelated seniors," meaning folks over the age of 55.

In my mind, and I'm sure in the minds of many of my colleagues, this bill is certainly a no-brainer. While I appreciate the background behind the member's intention, the law is clear at this point that there should be no legal restrictions to people who are unrelated living together. It's clear that constituents should be able to build a household that works for them, whether that be unrelated seniors, students who live together, unrelated queer and trans folks, adults living with disabilities or folks in rooming houses.

Being zoned out is illegal under the Planning Act and it clearly ignores the magnitude of the affordable housing crisis that our province is going through right now.

The 519 Church Street community centre is a pillar in the Church-Wellesley Village in the heart of my community in downtown Toronto. The 519 provides a plethora of services for folks who self-identify as LGBTQ2+, and that includes seniors. Frequently, they hear from queer seniors who are having a tough time finding affordable housing in retirement and are forced to go back into the closet as they move into retirement homes. A recent CBC article noted that many LGBT seniors reported heightened fear and anxiety should they disclose their sexual orientation to service providers within both health and social service agencies and have little faith and confidence that they would not experience further victimization. Imagine the benefits that these seniors would experience from living together in a supportive housing environment with other queer and trans seniors.

This is where chosen families come in. In the queer and trans communities, discrimination is very common, and many people are unable to stay in touch with their biological families because of stigma and hate. The idea of being able to live with your chosen family, folks who are unrelated to you, but who are frequently your friends or acquaintances, is a very powerful message to be sending to the queer and trans community.

I'd like to touch a little bit on subsection 35(2) of the Planning Act. This is a section that was actually enacted

under the NDP government to avoid what we refer to as “people zoning.” A good example of people zoning is when elected officials in a municipality, like the city of Toronto, for example, try to zone out a specific kind of housing; for example, a home for developmentally disabled youth. The intent of this subsection is clear: People should be able to choose how they live and with who they live, especially if such arrangements allow for more affordable housing options.

Sadly, the previous Liberal and Conservative governments have let the cost of housing spiral completely out of control. In the city of Toronto, the average price to rent a one-bedroom apartment is now over \$2,000 a month, while the average cost to purchase a semi-detached single-family home is now beyond \$825,000.

The entire province is in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. Renters have difficulty finding the rentals that they can afford, and first-time homebuyers are being priced out of many areas. Time and time again, this government has failed to address the affordable housing crisis as a whole. While it claims to care about the affordability of people’s everyday lives, we have seen this government cut rent controls, cut minimum wage and cut paid sick leave for workers.

In the neighbourhood that I live in, in Regent Park, we are currently living through the largest social development project in all of Canada, and it’s one of Canada’s largest purpose-built mixed-income neighbourhoods. A significant portion of our neighbourhood is in fact still under construction, and people are very worried in my community about how the cuts to rent control will affect secondary rental units in our new condo buildings. Can you imagine a place that was intended and purposefully designed as a community that is an inclusive and diverse mix of Toronto community housing, of market renters, of homeowners, and still, people in my community, including seniors, are being priced out? It’s no secret that seniors and people on ODSP and OW living on a fixed income are looking for the ability to put a stable roof over their heads that’s affordable.

While subsection 35(2) was brought on specifically to allow for more affordable housing options, it has been crippled by Conservative and Liberal governments who have stood by and let municipalities adopt bylaws that are not only illegal, but also truly lacking in understanding for the housing situation of folks in this province. This bill is a welcome specification to that subsection, but I would also like to see this government issue a directive on other kinds of people who are being zoned out across Ontario, like queer and trans folks, like adults and youth living with disabilities, and like people in rooming houses.

Again, I’d like to reiterate that I’m happy to say that I’m supporting this bill. Ontarians should be able to choose who they live with and where, and zoning should be based on land use, not housing that’s shared between unrelated folks. So thank you for putting this bill forward. We will be supporting it, but, again, I do wish it went a little bit further.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I’m pleased to rise to speak on Bill 69 today, the Golden Girls Act to amend the Planning Act. I want to sincerely thank the member for Durham for bringing this legislation forward, and I’m happy today to stand in support of Bill 69.

Solutions like this get me excited about what is possible when we think outside the box. For years, I’ve supported cost-effective, innovative solutions to help make housing more affordable and more inclusive, especially for seniors, and co-housing is one of these solutions. Ontario faces a housing affordability crisis, Ontario faces a mental health crisis, and every day we learn more about the increasing number of seniors experiencing loneliness and isolation. As the member from Durham stated, the UK even now has a ministry of loneliness.

Co-housing can help address these concerns. It can help address loneliness by bringing people together, it can relieve some of the strain on our health care system, it can help seniors stay at home longer and it makes better use of space, land and existing housing stock. As a member of the Green Party, I think it’s incumbent upon me to point out that solutions like this are also better for conserving energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and making better use of our built environment.

I think it’s important that we move forward with solutions like this, because it helps create a happier society, as I’ve learned from reading stories about the Golden Girls of Port Perry. Social isolation is a challenge in our society, and we are happier when we have friends to interact with, people who we can share day-to-day life with. With all these benefits, it’s surprising that sometimes municipalities can get in the way of making this happen.

1520

I just had an architect reach out to me late last year in Guelph, wanting to build a nice co-housing facility for seniors in our riding. He encountered so many barriers to making that happen that he ultimately decided to abandon the project.

I would also like to say that co-housing extends beyond seniors. It can help young people, students, artists, LGBTQ+ families and others looking for creative housing solutions. Hopefully, this legislation can drive us to think about other related housing solutions, such as secondary homes, laneway housing, granny suites and tiny homes. These are the kinds of solutions that can help us address affordability and intensification without opening up things like the greenbelt for development. If we can use land and buildings more efficiently, we can protect the places we love. If we can take care of and make life more affordable for the people we love, then we are doing a true service to the people of Ontario.

If this provincial government can work with municipalities to remove barriers that stand in the way of making better use of our built environment, we can find creative solutions for affordable housing in Ontario.

I want to thank the Golden Girls of Port Perry for bringing forward one of those creative solutions, and I want to thank the member from Durham for being an advocate on this issue. I hope that this is just the start of a

broader conversation about how we build smarter, more sustainable, more inclusive and more community-driven housing solutions for Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Stephen Lecce: I want to thank the member from Durham for taking action to support seniors in this province, and I also want to welcome three out of four of the Golden Girls to the Legislature. As the member from Durham said, I look forward to coming to say hello to you after my remarks.

We are here to really support our seniors, those who have helped build this country, who have sacrificed in so many ways to make our province and our country more prosperous and more free. We are forever grateful to you and to all of the seniors in all of our ridings across the generations who have made a difference. The greatest generation, as they are often known, really does deserve the fulsome support of all parties and all governments. They deserve common-sense policies that will enable them to live with a strong quality of life and to live affordably in the province of Ontario.

Yes, for young people, increasingly, it is tough to attain the aspiration of home ownership. It should not be a struggle. For those who have worked for 20, 30, 40, 50 years in their lives and are at the latter years of their lives, it should not be an aspirational goal. There should be policies in place to help them achieve the dignity of housing, the dignity of living and the opportunity to live together.

I want to echo the message from the Minister of Housing, who said in this place that “MPP Park’s bill, the Golden Girls Act, 2019, is a step in the right direction. I want to thank MPP Park for taking a leadership role in supporting a mix of housing options for the people of Ontario at a price they can afford. We need to encourage innovative housing solutions to meet the needs of an aging population, and this bill helps to start that conversation. I am proud to offer my support.”

Indeed, the genesis of this bill is worth reminding Canadians and Ontarians watching at home—that a group of women who sought to live together were impeded by their municipality. The municipal government used their bylaw-making authorities to prevent the home-sharing from taking place. This legislation provides clarity to local municipalities that they cannot—ought not—use local bylaw-making authorities to try to stop this kind of housing project for seniors.

Our aim is to support our seniors, as the member from Durham rightfully said. For the first time, seniors are the fastest-growing demographic in our province. By 2041, that population, that demographic, is expected to nearly double. Some 93% of seniors are living in private households. We know that seniors can reap significant health, economic and social benefits by living together. And seniors are living longer, as I noted.

It is incumbent on government to create that flexibility that I know the member from Durham is trying to champion through this legislation, to provide the incentives and

the opportunities for our seniors to live in security, with freedom and with happiness. And so, Madam Speaker, I am very proud to support this legislation. I am proud to support and stand with the member from Durham for taking this initiative.

I want to conclude—with a note to the member from Durham, if I may be so bold, and for the Golden Girls of Port Perry—with some words of wisdom:

And if you threw a party
Invited everyone you knew
Well, you would see the biggest gift would be from me
And the card attached would say
Thank you for being a friend.

Thank you all.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I want to thank the member from Durham for bringing the bill forward, as well as the member from Toronto Centre for her thoughtful remarks. I also want to recognize the Golden Girls of Port Perry, but there are some Golden Girls that we’re forgetting that already had this model in place. We know that was the Golden Girls. They had Rose and Phyllis—

Interjections.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Blanche, that’s right; I have them written down here.

Interjections.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Sophia and Dorothy, that’s right.

Those were the Golden Girls that I remember. When this bill came forward, I thought, “Very interesting how Hollywood was ahead of its time.” They already had Golden Girls literally living together in the model that we’re describing today for the current Golden Girls of Port Perry.

We’re now defining the age of seniors much earlier than we used to. A senior, technically, is now 55 years old. That means in two years, I will be identified as a senior. I already have a plan, should it come to be; my Golden Girls plan. If I ever end up alone in life at some point, I have that vision of the friends I have, and they really are, obviously, good friends.

The member from King–Vaughan started looking at the lyrics of the Golden Girls, and I too looked them up today:

Thank you for being a friend
Travelled down a road and back again
Your heart is true, you're a pal and a confidant.

I think the verses from that song, the theme song for the Golden Girls, really speak to, obviously, the relationship that the Golden Girls from Port Perry have. We all know what it’s like to live with roommates. There are some sacrifices, but there certainly are good times.

I also want to talk about how they have accommodated their home for the future of their aging process. I think that’s something that we should be rethinking when we’re

building new homes: looking at aging into the future, because demographically we know that seniors are going to out-populate our younger population. Maybe we need to start talking about, when subdivisions are being built, how we accommodate those doorways that are bigger for our parents' or our own or our relatives' devices. How do we accommodate when we have a guest who is in our home who needs to have a shower? There is probably a bigger conversation that we should have about how planning and building residential homes should be for our aging population.

I want to thank the Golden Girls from Port Perry for bringing that forward. We really, as a government, should not be dictating how people decide to cohabitate. There's home-sharing right now, where someone who is overhoused—generally, they are people who are empty nesters, of an older generation—and they have opened up their home to a younger generation to share their home, because economically it's harder. Sometimes, obviously, with the women population—women sometimes don't have that robust pension that their husbands had, and if their partner passes away they're left with a single income. There are many ways that people are creatively looking to stay in their own home.

This is a wonderful initiative. I congratulate, again, the member from Durham, but I do wish to remind everyone that the NDP was a leader in this particular design under the Planning Act, in subsection 35(2). It was dismantled and changed and chipped away at by Liberal and Conservative governments. That's why we have to reintroduce this bill, to make sure that we have the options.

1530

Who in this Legislature feels it's their right to design or stop someone from living together? I don't think many of us do. There are no laws being broken by these Golden Girls. We should be celebrating their initiative and the fact that they are taking the lead and setting an example and a footprint for other people to look at home occupancy in a creative way as we age.

I know, in London, there's a bylaw that has been passed for people to actually add on granny flats, in-law suites, so that we can have more robust rental opportunities. And for people who want to stay in their homes, they can do that, so that they can have a tenant, perhaps, or a family member move in.

It's not something that we should be waiting too long to start discussing—about how we move forward when it comes to our seniors who want to remain home. Yes, home care certainly is something that's very important, but then we talked about the isolation and loneliness, and that's also part of a good, wholesome, fulsome—as we age in our home and in the phase of life that we have, that we need to address. I think this is a great way to keep this alive. Thank you, and I look forward to supporting this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: I am pleased to join in support of Bill 69, the Golden Girls Act, 2019, introduced

by my friend and colleague the member for Durham. In her remarks, my colleague explained what this non-traditional housing arrangement includes and why it needs the support of this Legislature. I congratulate the member for bringing the bill forward as it created a sensible way to allow older adults to continue to live in their own homes as long as they can.

Home-sharing, in these cases, enables older adults to pool resources for a better common lifestyle providing companionship and care. I believe home-sharing can help preserve independence.

Many seniors are not able, nor do they wish, to live with family. They may simply prefer the independence of living with their peers. There is no ideal form of housing for seniors, but encouraging home-sharing gives an individual greater choices. I believe that's a good definition of independence: the ability to exercise your own choices.

Let me acknowledge the four wonderful women who inspired this bill, who decided they wanted to share a home and faced surprising opposition from their municipality. In November last year, I was pleased to be hosted by the real Golden Girls in their home in Port Perry. As parliamentary assistant for long-term care to the Minister of Health, I wanted to learn about this model of alternative housing that lets older adults age at home.

Beverly, Louise, Martha and Sandy have decided to age at home co-independently. It was fascinating to hear how they together created a living environment that preserves their individual independence while offering opportunities for mutual support. Their home also has a caregiver suite in the basement for when it's needed.

Our government knows that with proper support, living at home is the best and preferred option for Ontario's seniors. Meeting the four ladies in Port Perry in their beautiful home helped me understand what a good life they have created for themselves and how this innovative model benefits others. On our visit, we were also joined by John Stewart, who informed us of the positive benefits that this type of living situation can have for seniors' mental, spiritual and physical health. It also helps eliminate social isolation.

Thank you to the Golden Girls of Port Perry who persevered in building their home and worked with the member for Durham in creating this bill. I'm proud to support this bill because it is the right thing to do. The Golden Girls have led the way and shown how sharing a home worked for them and can work for others.

Just before I conclude, while I've been sitting here listening to the wonderful remarks from all sides of the House on this, I've received a couple of messages. Here are the messages people have said about this. They've said: "There you go." "Great work, Golden Girls." "Yes, our commune idea with a twist." "Love, love, love this."

Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I am so pleased to rise in favour of Bill 69, the Golden Girls Act, put forward by the

fantastic member for Durham. What an exciting and innovative idea.

Let me start by saying, as we all have said, that I love the name. I don't know who, but I can't get the song out of my head. Anybody of age who remembers the show—it just keeps playing over and over—remembers some good times.

As the member explained, this act is named after some lovely ladies who are here today, and whom I've had the opportunity to meet, living in Port Perry, who dubbed themselves the Golden Girls. They live together and are going to live out their golden years together.

I was fortunate to make a trip out to the Durham area in December as one of my first round tables for the ministry for our Housing Supply Action Plan. The round tables brought together local municipal leaders, members of industry and, of course, the Golden Girls themselves. MPP Park hosted the round table, and we both heard loud and clear that the previous government had failed to provide choice in housing, creating a supply and now a cost problem. Put simply, there are not enough housing options and people are suffering as a result. Costs are unaffordable, and in the case of people of a similar age to the Golden Girls, the housing infrastructure we have today cannot meet the needs of an aging population.

Our government for the people has heard these concerns, and we are going to take steps to help people across this province find housing they can afford. Creating more housing of types and sizes people need will help make home ownership and renting more affordable and give people more choice. We are now working hard to take the best ideas we have heard from our consultations around the province, including the people we met with in Durham, to develop an action plan to increase the supply of housing in Ontario, which will be announced this spring.

One of the topics we identified as part of the consultation was innovation. The guiding question was: What creative opportunities do we have to increase the supply of housing? This topic encouraged respondents to propose innovative forms of home ownership and creative ideas to make better use of existing homes. The Golden Girls model certainly checks both of those boxes. This bill, if passed, would make a simple and manageable change to the Planning Act. It would provide clarity around the ability for seniors to emulate the Golden Girls model across our great province.

The Planning Act already provides that municipalities cannot create bylaws about building occupancy which makes a distinction between people who are related and people who are not. This bill makes clear that this rule applies to all people, including seniors. This bill also highlights to municipalities that government should not get in the way of good ideas.

Speaker, the member for Durham is right when she notes that there are not enough affordable housing options. I commend the Golden Girls for thinking innovatively and being proactive, and I commend the member for Durham for bringing this bill forward.

I think that this housing approach can truly help many people in Ontario and give seniors more choice. Repurposing existing housing in a manner similar to the Golden Girls can help put more money back in people's pockets, both through the economic benefits of skipping expensive start-up costs of building and through the sharing economy.

Our government for the people was elected on the promise of making life more affordable for everyday Ontarians. One of the fundamental ways we can do this is by creating more choice in the housing market, and this bill starts the conversation about non-traditional and innovative choices for those who wish to pursue them.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member from Durham for her two-minute reply.

Ms. Lindsey Park: It's an honour to have so many of my colleagues from all sides of the chamber and all parties support this bill. I want to thank the member for Toronto Centre, the member for Guelph, the member for King–Vaughan, the member for London–Fanshawe, the member for Oakville North–Burlington and the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore for speaking today in support of this bill.

Just quickly, I'll touch on something the member for Toronto Centre said. She said she wishes this bill went further to include other groups. I want to be clear, the section already in the Planning Act, when you read it on its face, uses the words "any persons who are unrelated." That includes all groups. In fact, when you read it on its face, to me, it's very clear that municipalities already shouldn't be doing that and can't do that. The purpose of this bill is not to change that; the purpose of this bill is to provide a clarification so that municipalities understand what already is the law.

To the member for Guelph: I agree with you. While the focus of this bill is on seniors, I could also see, in the future, co-housing being a very attractive option to other age groups, like young people who are looking to purchase their own home and maybe don't have enough money for a down payment on a full house to themselves but can go in on it with friends.

Overall, thank you, everyone. This is really important to the seniors of Ontario, and on behalf of the seniors of Ontario, I want to thank you for your support. I hope I can count on the support of all the members of this Legislature when it comes down to the vote.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): We will deal first with ballot item number 46, standing in the name of Mr. Hassan.

Mr. Hassan has moved private members' notice of motion number 30. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”
 All those opposed to the motion will please say “nay.”
 In my opinion, the ayes have it.
 We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL
 PLANNERS ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019
 SUR LES URBANISTES CERTIFIÉS

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Coe has moved second reading of Bill 70, An Act respecting the regulation of registered professional planners. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Which committee?

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'd like to refer the bill to the committee on general government.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Is the majority in favour of this bill being referred to the Standing Committee on General Government? Agreed.

GOLDEN GIRLS ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LES GOLDEN GIRLS

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Ms. Park has moved second reading of Bill 69, An Act to amend the Planning Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Which committee?

Ms. Lindsey Park: I refer the bill to the Standing Committee on General Government.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Is the majority in favour of the bill being referred to the Standing Committee on General Government? Agreed.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1544 to 1549.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Members, please take your seats. All members, please take their seats. Order, please, and thank you.

Mr. Hassan has moved private members' notice of motion number 30. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anand, Deepak
 Armstrong, Teresa J.

Hassan, Faisal
 Hatfield, Percy

Pettapiece, Randy
 Piccini, David

Arthur, Ian	Hogarth, Christine	Rakocevic, Tom
Baber, Roman	Kanapathi, Logan	Rasheed, Kaleed
Babikian, Aris	Karahalios, Belinda	Romano, Ross
Barrett, Toby	Karpoche, Bhutila	Sabawy, Sheref
Begum, Doly	Ke, Vincent	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bell, Jessica	Khanjin, Andrea	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Berns-McGown, Rima	Kramp, Daryl	Sattler, Peggy
Bouma, Will	Lecce, Stephen	Schreiner, Mike
Cho, Stan	Mamakwa, Sol	Shaw, Sandy
Coe, Lorne	Mantha, Michael	Singh, Sara
Crawford, Stephen	Martin, Robin	Smith, Dave
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Martow, Gila	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Downey, Doug	McKenna, Jane	Stiles, Marit
Dunlop, Jill	Miller, Norman	Tabuns, Peter
Fee, Amy	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Tangri, Nina
Fife, Catherine	Morrison, Suze	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Gates, Wayne	Oosterhoff, Sam	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Ghamari, Goldie	Pang, Billy	Vanthof, John
Gretzky, Lisa	Park, Lindsey	Wai, Daisy
Harris, Mike	Parsa, Michael	

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 65; the nays are 0.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

VISITORS

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member on a point of order.

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I just want to take the opportunity to welcome Saad Baig from my constituency here today and his guests from OPPI. Thank you very much for being here. Welcome back to Queen's Park.

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member on a point of order.

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: I would like to introduce my good friend Chris Drew from Brampton. He's a strong advocate for transit in Brampton. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Orders of the day. I recognize the member from King-Vaughan.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: Madam Speaker, I move that this House stand adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Lecce moves adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Interjection: On division.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Okay, carried on division. This House stands adjourned until 10:30 on Monday, March 4, 2019.

The House adjourned at 1553.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
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Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
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Stan Cho, Jill Dunlop
John Fraser, Wayne Gates
Stephen Lecce, Gila Martow
Jane McKenna, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Lindsey Park, Randy Pettapiece
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques

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David Piccini, Kaleed Rasheed
Jeremy Roberts, Sandy Shaw
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Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Dave Smith
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Natalia Kusendova
Jessica Bell, Chris Glover
Christine Hogarth, Logan Kanapathi
Daryl Kramp, Natalia Kusendova
Amarjot Sandhu, Mike Schreiner
Dave Smith, Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens
Daisy Wai
Clerk / Greffier: Vacant

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: John Vanthof
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Roman Baber, Rudy Cuzzetto
Amy Fee, Vincent Ke
Andrea Khanjin, Marie-France Lalonde
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls
Jeremy Roberts, Marit Stiles
John Vanthof
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Parm Gill
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian
Roman Baber, Aris Babikian
Nathalie Des Rosiers, Jill Dunlop
Parm Gill, Lindsey Park
Ross Romano, Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria
Sara Singh, Monique Taylor
Kevin Yarde
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Présidente: Jane McKenna
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vijay Thanigasalam
Robert Bailey, Rima Berns-McGown
Lorne Coe, Michael Coteau
Mike Harris, Faisal Hassan
Jane McKenna, Christina Maria Mitas
Sam Oosterhoff, Gurratan Singh
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

Chair / Présidente: Catherine Fife
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Peggy Sattler
Toby Barrett, Catherine Fife
Goldie Ghamari, Jim McDonell
Norman Miller, Suze Morrison
Michael Parsa, Peggy Sattler
Kinga Surma
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Président: Kaleed Rasheed
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Will Bouma
Will Bouma, Paul Calandra
Lorne Coe, Stephen Crawford
Mitzie Hunter, Laura Mae Lindo
Paul Miller, Billy Pang
Kaleed Rasheed, Amarjot Sandhu
Jamie West
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale

Chair / Présidente: Nina Tangri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Deepak Anand
Deepak Anand, Doly Begum
Jeff Burch, Amy Fee
Michael Gravelle, Joel Harden
Belinda Karahalios, Robin Martin
Sheref Sabawy, Nina Tangri
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

Select Committee on Financial Transparency / Comité spécial de la transparence financière

Chair / Président: Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Doug Downey
Roman Baber, Doug Downey
Catherine Fife, Robin Martin
Lindsey Park, Ross Romano
Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Sandy Shaw
John Vanthof
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim