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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

G-12

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

G-12

**Standing Committee on
General Government**

Getting Ontario Moving Act
(Transportation Statute Law
Amendment), 2019

1st Session
42nd Parliament

Wednesday 22 May 2019

**Comité permanent des
affaires gouvernementales**

Loi de 2019 pour un Ontario
en mouvement (modifiant
des lois en ce qui concerne
le transport)

1^{re} session
42^e législature

Mercredi 22 mai 2019

Chair: Dave Smith
Clerk: Julia Douglas

Président : Dave Smith
Greffière : Julia Douglas

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Wednesday 22 May 2019

Mercredi 22 mai 2019

The committee met at 0900 in room 151.

**GETTING ONTARIO MOVING ACT
(TRANSPORTATION STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT), 2019**

**LOI DE 2019 POUR UN ONTARIO
EN MOUVEMENT (MODIFIANT DES LOIS
EN CE QUI CONCERNE LE TRANSPORT)**

Consideration of the following bill:

Bill 107, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and various other statutes in respect of transportation-related matters / *Projet de loi 107, Loi modifiant le Code de la route et diverses autres lois à l'égard de questions relatives au transport.*

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Good morning. We're back today to meet for public hearings on Bill 107, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and various other statutes in respect of transportation-related matters.

Pursuant to the order of the House dated April 15, 2019, each witness will receive up to six minutes for their presentation, followed by up to 14 minutes for questions from committee members, with two minutes allotted to the independent member of the committee and 12 minutes divided equally between the two recognized parties.

Before we begin, are there any questions?

MR. JOHN SEWELL

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Seeing none, I would like to call our first presenter, please. Could John Sewell please come up to the table and introduce yourself? You will have six minutes for your presentation.

Mr. John Sewell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This bill, Bill 107—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Sorry, could you introduce yourself for Hansard first, please?

Mr. John Sewell: You want me to introduce myself?

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Yes.

Mr. John Sewell: I'm John Sewell. I'm a former mayor of Toronto. I've been involved in city politics in Toronto for about the last 50 years, so I have some experience about city politics.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you.

Mr. John Sewell: Bill 107 offends one of the most basic values in Ontario, which is respect for private property. The bill, in section 3, would deny the rights of the

city of Toronto and its agencies to properties of various kinds which it owns and controls.

Schedule 3 of the legislation gives the power to the government's agency Metrolinx to take over responsibility of any new rapid transit facilities in Toronto.

Section 47 of that schedule states: "The Lieutenant Governor in Council"—that's the cabinet—"may, by order, transfer to" Metrolinx, "with or without compensation, all or some of the city of Toronto's and its agencies' assets, liabilities, rights and obligations with respect to a project prescribed as a rapid transit project...." That includes "intellectual property, contractual rights, interests, approvals, registrations" etc.

It can do that without compensation. The legislation requires the city to provide documents demanded by the province, and any transfer of those documents is deemed not to give rise to any kind of legal action.

The legislation also states that the transfer "does not constitute an expropriation or injurious affection for the purposes of the Expropriations Act or otherwise at law."

In other words, the government is proposing in this legislation to seize the assets of the city of Toronto without compensation and without legal recourse for the city.

I've looked at schedule 3 quite closely, and I've read it. I'm a former lawyer, so I have some understanding of these things. Half the words in schedule 3 are about preventing legal action—half. The others are about other things. But you can tell that the lawyer who drafted it was very, very concerned that this was an extraordinary action that was being taken—the denial of property rights—and therefore, half the sections are saying, "You can't take any legal action here, folks. It's not permitted."

If you go through it, just to be clear, that's what subsection 47(1) is about.

Subsection (4), subsection (5), subsection (6) and subsection (8) are all about denying any legal recourse.

Subsections 50(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) and (7) are all about denying legal rights.

Obviously, the lawyer was very, very concerned that this is an extraordinary act that probably has never happened before in Ontario, that the government is saying, "We can seize somebody's property without compensation."

It's really difficult to imagine that any government in Ontario would suggest that this is a reasonable action. It is wrong. It is morally wrong. It should not occur. Governments should never have the ability to take away the property of others without compensation and without legal

recourse. We know that other governments in other parts of the world have done this, not to great acclaim but to shame. This should not be happening. I urge the committee to remove those sections of this legislation.

That's my presentation.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you very much. Picking up where we left off from yesterday, I believe the Green Party—I'm sorry, the independent member—has the first question today. Mr. Schreiner.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Thank you, Chair.

Can we still refer to you as "Your Worship"? Glad to have you join us today.

Mr. John Sewell: Thank you.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: What do you think the legal implications of such an extraordinary action contained within schedule 3 are?

Mr. John Sewell: I don't know. I can understand the bill being challenged; I'm not quite sure how. I don't think we've got any example in Ontario, or in Canada, of a government saying, "We can seize property without compensation." So I don't think there's a lot of case law on the matter. This is really new, uncharted territory.

When I think of what this is about—just to give the comparison, when there was the Russian Revolution and the Bolsheviks took over, they were the government of the people, and they seized property without compensation. That's what we're dealing with: the same kind of issue. It's just so out of the ordinary, so extraordinary in the Canadian context, that I'm not sure there's any good legal precedent. But smart lawyers—I'm not one of them—will probably be able to find some way of challenging it. It's really extraordinary.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Why do you think the government would take—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thirty seconds.

Mr. Mike Schreiner:—such extraordinary means?

Mr. John Sewell: Why would they?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Yes.

Mr. John Sewell: I don't understand that. I think if the government says, "Look, we want to run the transit system in Ontario" or in Toronto, they could say, "Okay, we're going to do it and we're going to figure out how to do it." But you don't have to seize somebody's assets without compensation to do that.

I might argue with whether people who were elected in North Bay should be running the Toronto transit system, just as people elected in Toronto shouldn't be running North Bay's transit system, but that's a different question. We're dealing here with a very serious moral issue.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you. The government side: Ms. Surma.

Miss Kinga Surma: Do you think that the city has invested enough in public transit—the city of Toronto—over the last 15 years?

Mr. John Sewell: I don't know. It's an interesting question. I don't know.

Miss Kinga Surma: Well, most people in this city would say that we haven't.

Mr. John Sewell: I'm not sure that's the case. I think you might be wrong about that. My impression is that most

people in Toronto think the city government is not all that bad. My experience is in city politics. That's where I've spent my life. So I make a judgment about how things are working.

Miss Kinga Surma: Sure. Do you think that the residents of Toronto will benefit from our proposed transit plan?

Mr. John Sewell: Oh, no. For seizing assets without compensation, they will not benefit. You're stealing properties from people in Toronto who own those through their city government, and they would never support that. If people got serious about this and realized what was happening, they would be absolutely appalled to think that they could be sitting in their home and one day the government can come along and say, "By the way, for the public good, we're seizing your property and we aren't paying you a cent." To support this legislation? Of course they would not support that.

Miss Kinga Surma: So, sir, you're implying that the people out in Scarborough are not happy and supportive of our Scarborough extension?

Mr. John Sewell: I'm sorry?

Miss Kinga Surma: So you're implying that the people out in Scarborough are not happy with our Scarborough subway extension? You're implying that the people of Toronto—

Mr. John Sewell: No, I'm not. I'm not saying that.

Miss Kinga Surma: I asked you—

Mr. John Sewell: Come on, now; let's be serious. I am talking about the fact that you're seizing property without compensation. That's what I am arguing about, and I'm saying that no government can be supported for doing that. People in Scarborough have got to be desperately unhappy about that. If you as a government want to provide transit in Scarborough at your own expense, do it, but don't seize property from the city of Toronto that you don't own. Don't steal it.

Miss Kinga Surma: Sir, you don't need to raise your voice at me. I'm just asking—

Mr. John Sewell: Of course I'm angry. This is unfortunate. What you're doing is—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Sewell?

Mr. John Sewell: Yes?

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): I'm sorry; if you could take the tone down a little bit. You do need to show a little bit of respect.

0910

Mr. John Sewell: Of course I will. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you.

Miss Kinga Surma: My question to you was, do you think that our transit plan benefits the people of this city? Therefore, do you think that the people in Scarborough, the people in Etobicoke, the people who live downtown who will now have a relief line, and the people in Richmond Hill are happy about our proposed plan?

Mr. John Sewell: Any transit plan that is based on stealing property, taking it without compensation, cannot be supported, and no one should be happy about that. That's what the plan does. If you wanted to bring forward

a plan that did not steal property, that funded itself, then I think people would be willing to look at it and give it fair consideration. But that is not what you're doing.

Miss Kinga Surma: Municipalities have often complained about provincial governments downloading upon them—services, different aspects. We are now uploading. So, I'm just a bit confused that municipalities often challenge provincial governments for downloading services, when we're taking leadership and ownership and in fact uploading a service.

Mr. John Sewell: Miss Surma, you're missing my point. You can't do what you're trying to do through an act that is immoral, which is taking property without compensation. That's the problem, and that's the issue that I'm trying to address.

Miss Kinga Surma: Sir, what's immoral is the fact that we haven't invested in public transit, and people have no way to get to work and home. Thank you very much.

Mr. John Sewell: I don't think you can compare stealing property with the question of investing in transit.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Any further questions?

Miss Kinga Surma: I'm finished.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you. Ms. Bell?

Ms. Jessica Bell: Does it concern you that there's no money in the Ministry of Transportation's budget or the Ministry of Infrastructure's budget for this Ontario government's new transit plan?

Miss Kinga Surma: Point of clarification?

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'm asking him; I'm not asking you. Thank you.

Miss Kinga Surma: Can I have a point of clarification?

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Sorry, Miss Surma. Just a moment please.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): A clarification is not a point of order, so I'm afraid I can't accept that.

Miss Kinga Surma: But she's not—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): A point of clarification is not a point of order, and unfortunately—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Pardon me?

Miss Kinga Surma: Can I say "point of order" there?

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): You can say "point of order," but I have to rule it out of order, because clarifying a statement made by one of the other members is not a point of order.

Miss Kinga Surma: Okay. I'll clarify it at another time.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Sorry. Ms. Bell.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Does it concern you that there is no money for the \$11.1-billion plan in the Ministry of Transportation's or the Ministry of Infrastructure's budgets for this plan?

Mr. John Sewell: It is a concern, but it's nothing compared to the concern that I raised about the taking of property without compensation. That, to me, is the very substantial issue that has to be addressed here.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Have you ever seen anything like this in your 50 years of experience working at the city level?

Mr. John Sewell: No, I have not. I have not ever seen a situation where a government has said, "We're seizing property without compensation." Never.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Do you think it's possible for the provincial government to build transit without seizing assets from the city of Toronto?

Mr. John Sewell: Of course it is. Of course they could build transit. If they wanted to put money into transit, of course they could do that.

I might happen to say that that's not a particularly wise decision, but that's not the issue. I'm dealing here with a moral issue.

Ms. Jessica Bell: If the provincial government was going to move forward with building transit, what are some transit lines that you think would make sense to build?

Mr. John Sewell: I can't get into that. I don't know. I can't help you on that. Sorry.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Okay, thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Glover.

Mr. Chris Glover: Do you think that there is a charter challenge over the seizure of property and the infringement on the property rights of the people of the city of Toronto?

Mr. John Sewell: I don't know about that. The charter doesn't talk specifically about property rights. But again, really smart lawyers might be able to find some device to deal with it. This is extraordinary in Canadian politics, to see this.

Mr. Chris Glover: Are you concerned about the precedent that this government is setting by seizing property without compensation and trying to deny legal recourse?

Mr. John Sewell: Very much. This is a line that should never be crossed. If they cross it here, they're going to cross it again, no question about that.

Mr. Chris Glover: Okay. The Conservatives are trying to make the statement that the Conservatives have been good at building transit. Do you remember the Eglinton subway being cancelled and Transit City being cancelled by Conservative politicians?

Mr. John Sewell: Yes, I do.

Mr. Chris Glover: Thank you. Those are my questions.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you very much. That ends the time, then, that we have for it.

Mr. John Sewell: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): I appreciate your time.

TTCRIDERS

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Next we have the TTCriders. If you could come to the table and please introduce yourself. You will have six minutes for your presentation.

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: Good morning. Thank you so much for having me. My name is Shelagh Pizey-Allen, and I'm here representing TTCriders. We're a membership-based organization of transit riders that campaigns for a world-class, affordable public transit system.

We're hear to speak about Bill 107 and the amendments it makes to the Metrolinx Act. There are three major parts of the bill that I want to speak about that are gravely concerning to transit riders, and that will impact us and mean more delays to world-class public transit in our city.

Firstly, Bill 107 means more delays to transit in Toronto, because it cancels projects that are already in motion and allows the province to prohibit the city of Toronto from moving ahead with our own plans, such as the Eglinton East LRT to Malvern and the University of Toronto Scarborough, and the waterfront LRT to southern Etobicoke.

Secondly, it does not address the biggest problem facing the TTC, which is the lack of funding. In fact, the 2019 provincial budget cancels \$1.1 billion to the TTC over the next 10 years.

Finally, there's a real concern around the lack of accountability and consultation that was promised when this government entered into terms of reference with the city of Toronto.

To start, I want to talk about the top concern, which is more delays.

The transit map in the budget that is advanced by this act rips up \$200 million worth of planning work that has been done by the city of Toronto, and it sends the relief line back to the drawing board. It also cancels the Eglinton East LRT to eastern Scarborough, which would serve 40,000 residents in Scarborough, the University of Toronto Scarborough, Centennial College and Malvern, and the Waterfront LRT, which would serve the incredibly dense population of Humber Bay Shores and Humber College in southern Etobicoke. In May 2018, Premier Ford promised that if he was elected, he would build the Eglinton East LRT, and it is no longer on the map.

The other place that we see delays is with the Scarborough subway extension. Adding two stops onto the plan actually delays the opening to at least 2029. But the SRT that runs from Kennedy to Scarborough Town is set to fail and close in 2026, so people will be riding buses under this plan for at least three years, and likely more.

The other significant delay, of course, that I think everybody is really concerned about is the relief line, which has already gone through an environmental assessment. The province, in the 2019 budget, has said that the new Ontario Line would use different technology, which has not been clarified, and would be a free-standing line.

There are a few reasons why this is incredibly concerning. One is that, likely, another yard will have to be procured and built to house any new rail technology, instead of using existing TTC yards. So that is another delay. Secondly, the province has not made any commitments that the Ontario Line will be fully integrated with the TTC.

The use of "free-standing" evokes the Union Pearson Express, which is privatized. When it opened, it cost almost \$30 to ride and is still not integrated with the TTC.

To truly relieve pressure and build a network, the Ontario Line needs to be owned, operated and maintained by the TTC and be publicly integrated—but also, not rip

up years of planning work that have been done on the relief line. It's almost ready to build.

The city manager has 61 questions about the plan, including very basic questions, such as who prepared and validated the cost estimates for the provincial transit map.

For all these reasons, we're very concerned that this plan just means more delays to new transit in Toronto.

Our second major concern is about cuts, and that Bill 107 does not actually address the most pressing need of the TTC, which is a lack of funding.

This government made a commitment before the election to double the gas tax funding to municipalities all across Ontario, not just Toronto. There are over 100 towns and cities that would have seen their transit funding from this province increase, and that has been rolled back. The TTC has actually already budgeted that money, so \$24 million this year has to be found because of that cut. And \$200 million had been allocated for station accessibility upgrades; that means elevators, ramps, really important work that is now in jeopardy.

The last piece I want to talk about is accountability. The provincial government and the city of Toronto signed terms of reference that included a commitment to public consultation on this issue, because it impacts so many people in Toronto. We heard the previous deputant talk about the seizure of assets without compensation. And there was a commitment made to have public consultations about this issue; that has not happened yet.

0920

There's no guarantee that Toronto will keep revenue control over operations of rapid transit. This opens the TTC up to privatization and, really, higher fares. We know that Metrolinx has been considering charging fare by distance and fare by speed, and that would really hurt communities in Etobicoke and in Scarborough, who have to commute farther distances. This is why we need public consultation and why we're deeply concerned that this bill means more delays and sends us backwards in our transit planning.

The best way to improve Toronto's transit is to fund it. The TTC is still the least-subsidized transit system in North America. We need to reverse the cuts.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thirty seconds.

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: We need to increase funding to the TTC rather than take away critical assets and rip up years of transit planning.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you very much for that. Questions? Ms. Hogarth.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Thank you very much for being here today. Just a couple of things you were saying: You mentioned that the fares are going up in Etobicoke. I'd just like to let you know that under our government, the fares have gone down. At Mimico and at Long Branch—those are both in my riding—they went down. They went down \$1.00 at Long Branch and they went down \$1.50—I think it's \$1.50; don't quote me on that; it's \$1.49 or something like that—at Mimico. Because of our plan, we've actually lowered those fares to get people on the GO, to give them an alternative of getting off the

roads, on the GO Transit to get downtown. So I just want to make sure that record is clear: that we have actually lowered those fares.

You talk about having more planning and more work and more discussion, but then you also talk about delays. We want to get shovels in the ground. That is our goal. We had people saying yesterday that over the last 35 years, nothing has been done. We want to get people into transit. We want to get Toronto moving. That is our campaign commitment. That is our commitment. That's what we need to do. So, yes, there will be construction. That's part of transit building, and that's part of Toronto. We have construction building, we have time. It's not going to be any more of a delay; it's construction.

But one stop to three stops in Scarborough helps more people. Do you not agree? Do you not agree that changing from one stop to three stops actually enhances transit?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: Changing plans that are already in motion will mean more delays. The Minister of Transportation has said that changing the Scarborough subway extension plans will mean it will be delayed until at least 2029. We can't argue about those facts.

The relief line has gone through an environmental assessment. It's almost ready to go, so changing the plans—

Ms. Christine Hogarth: But just a note, though: It's going to be enhanced transit. So you're going to have more stops. So you're going to look after more people.

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: The fact is that the plan in the provincial budget takes away transit. It cancels the Eglinton East LRT even though Premier Ford promised to build it. It cancels the waterfront LRT to your riding that the city of Toronto has already completed many consultations about. And it rips up all the planning for the relief line.

Everybody wants to move ahead with transit, but it's almost ready to build.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: We actually are using the planning that's in place. I think Miss Surma talked about it yesterday. We are using planning that's in place.

There are government shelves and shelves and shelves of planning. We have planned ourselves to death. We need to get shovels in the ground and get people moving. Our city is growing. We can't wait. We need to get things moving. We can't have this bickering back and forth. We need to get shovels in the ground.

Do you believe transit has improved over the last 15 years?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: The biggest challenge faced by the TTC is a lack of funding, and this government has cancelled \$1 billion in increased funding to the TTC that was promised.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: We actually just invested \$28 billion.

Mr. Chris Glover: Chair, point of order.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Glover.

Mr. Chris Glover: Is this a debate or is this questions? For clarification.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Questions are fine. There's nothing wrong with what—

Mr. Chris Glover: Are we allowed to interrupt the speakers when they're responding?

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): If the speaker stops to listen to the question, yes. I'm sorry, Mr. Glover, that is not a point of order.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I only have a short time for asking questions; that's why.

We are actually investing \$28 billion in transit. We are investing. That is the most any government has ever invested.

But, again, a question to you: Has transit improved over the last 15 years?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: I just want to be clear that this government is cutting \$1.1 billion in promised funding to the TTC over the next 10 years, and that other levels of government have not yet agreed to fund the new transit map that the city manager of Toronto still has 61 questions about.

The fact is, it rips up years of planning: \$200 million worth of planning. The relief line is almost ready to build, and there have been no commitments to ensure that it's fully integrated with the TTC and that it is publicly owned, maintained and operated. And there are cancellations to critical transit projects, like the Eglinton East, which would serve 40,000 residents in eastern Scarborough. That has been cancelled, but it was a campaign promise. The waterfront LRT to your riding and to Humber Bay Shores, which is so densely populated—that is now off the map. So, yes, this plan does mean more delays to the transit that we need in this city.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: What we did in Etobicoke—you keep talking about Humber Bay Shores. We are looking after those people by lowering the fare at Mimico and Long Branch so they can take the GO downtown at a cheaper price. We've done that. We integrated that in April. That is a commitment that we made and we fulfilled, because we want to get people off the roads and give them an alternative to get to work.

We've had 15 years of Liberals doing absolutely nothing when it comes to transit. Our government has actioned. We can't build the transit overnight. That's something that's impossible. But what we could do is lower the fares to get those people off the road, and a way to get to work quicker or to home quicker at the end of the day.

No further questions. Anybody else?

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Kramp.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: What I would like to say is that there is a bit of an overview. What's the cost of inaction to this province, to this city? Billions and billions of dollars of delay; coming in and out of the city, you're two, three, four hours on many, many occasions—the loss to the general economy, let alone the business, let alone the aggravation, let alone the family interruption. We've had paralysis, folks, for years and years and years.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thirty seconds.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: There's going to be debate, but we have to be able to move on and make something happen. I think that's the bottom line.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Any further questions?

Miss Kinga Surma: I would just like to clarify something.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Miss Surma.

Miss Kinga Surma: I don't think that the Minister of Transportation, Jeff Yurek, ever said such a thing. I would like that on the record.

Also, I would like to state, so that it is on record, that the funding is included in estimates under the 10-year capital plan. So I think that constant comment that it's not budgeted appropriately—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you. Ms. Bell.

Ms. Jessica Bell: MPP Surma, I look forward to a public letter on that. I'd definitely be interested in reading it carefully. Until then, I don't see the funding.

I do want to be clear, also, that GO fares were planned to be reduced to \$3, and the provincial government chose—

Interjection.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Yes, it is—and the provincial government—

Interjection.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Yes. And the provincial government chose to only decrease it to \$3.70.

What I'm also concerned about is that the Metrolinx budget is slated to decrease. We are concerned that that will mean service cuts and fare hikes on GO Transit across the GTHA.

I do want to ask a question to you. This government has heard many deputations over the last day about the importance of accessibility and the fact that the TTC is not accessible. Can you speak to the impact of the \$1.1-billion cut to TTC funding in terms of service and accessibility on the TTC?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: Yes. As I mentioned, during the election period, there was a promise to maintain the promised gas tax funding increase that would not just serve Toronto but 100 towns and cities across Ontario. What it means in Toronto to lose this \$1.1 billion over 10 years is, just in 2019, \$24 million will evaporate from the TTC budget. That is about equivalent to another fare increase of \$5 a month on a monthly pass to make up that money.

The \$1.1 billion was already allocated to accessibility upgrades to meet the AODA requirements by 2025, and \$200 million had been allocated for station accessibility upgrades. That includes elevators and ramps to make sure stations are compliant with the AODA by 2025. And \$22 million had been allocated to purchase more Wheel-Trans buses. So it's vital that this funding continue and that funding is increased.

As I mentioned, the TTC remains the least-subsidized transit system in North America, and we're seeing the result of that. This infrastructure is crumbling, and we need more than new lines; we need funding to maintain the current system or we're going to see more delays, more

signal problems. That is a maintenance funding issue, and it needs to be solved by keeping the promise to fund \$1.1 billion to Toronto over the next 10 years, but also to boost transit systems all across the province.

0930

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Glover?

Mr. Chris Glover: I've been told—and it's the first time I've actually agreed with something that came from the government side—that delays, the gridlock in the city, cost about \$6 billion a year in productivity. Is that an accurate number, or a reasonably accurate number?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: I would have to go back and look at it. I think the C.D. Howe Institute did a study, but I would have to check the number.

Mr. Chris Glover: Right. If we had had the Eglinton subway built in 1995, instead of the Harris government filling in the hole that had already been started, and if we had the Transit City plan and the Scarborough LRT up and running right now—

Interjections.

Mr. Chris Glover: Excuse me. I've got the floor.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Order, please.

Mr. Chris Glover: Would the gridlock have been reduced?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: Everybody knows that we need more transit in Toronto, and people are sick of waiting and delays. So to go backwards now on plans that have already been through environmental assessment, that people have already been consulted on, will only delay the transit that we need all across the city.

I can speak to the Eglinton East LRT. That would serve 40,000 residents in eastern Scarborough, and two campuses in Scarborough that do not have rapid transit connections. The relief line is so crucial, because the current Yonge line is already over capacity, and it has been for the last 10 years.

Mr. Chris Glover: And you're concerned about the relief line—that if they change the type of track or the type of train, that will lead to further delays in actually getting the shovels in the ground?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: Yes, because the relief line is designed to use existing TTC subway integration on their rails, so extra cars would need to be stored in a current TTC yard. To change the technology means needing to procure another piece of property to house those new cars. We still don't know what the technology is, and how it would be integrated just in terms of fares with the TTC. We don't know that it will actually provide the relief that we need.

But what we do know is that the relief line is almost ready to build. There are plans. The TTC, I think, has even put out, for procurement, tunnel boring equipment. It's almost ready to go. We can't afford to rip up all our plans and start from scratch when we lack so many details about what the Ontario Line is—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): One minute.

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: —where the stations are, or whether the costs are truly as they appear.

Mr. Chris Glover: Okay. Thank you very much. Ms. Bell has one more.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Ms. Bell.

Ms. Jessica Bell: In your work at TTCriders, I'm guessing that you speak regularly to transit riders in Scarborough. When you talk to them, what is their response to the Ontario government's plan?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: People are sick of waiting for transit to eastern Scarborough. It was promised last year. People have been consulted for years about the project. People are so angry that they're organizing a march in Malvern this Saturday to MPP Vijay Thanigasalam's office, because they do not want to see the Eglinton East LRT cancelled.

What this bill does is not only move ahead with a plan that doesn't include Eglinton East, but it will prevent the city of Toronto from continuing to do the design and work on the project. The Eglinton East LRT is desperately needed. People do not want more delays to the plans that are already in motion.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you. Mr. Schreiner.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Thank you for being here today, and thanks for the good work that TTCriders does. I want to follow up on the question about TTC riders in Scarborough. They would have had a seven-stop LRT opening this year, but then Mayor Ford ripped those plans up, even though they were fully funded.

Now we're in a situation where we have the Eglinton East promise that would have provided, particularly for Malvern, that has no transit service—that was promised, and now those plans are being ripped up. How is this going to affect transit in Scarborough?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: I understand that there was a Malvern resident who came to this committee yesterday, and he travelled for two hours to get here. It's really about access to jobs, and moving around in the community. Most trips in Scarborough happen within Scarborough. Adding an extra few stops from downtown is not only going to delay the opening of the subway extension and leave people on the bus for years—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): One minute.

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: —but it's going to reduce people's access to transportation in the neighbourhood. Some 40,000 residents would be served by the line, including two campuses. People are really desperate for rapid transit. People are not taking jobs or opportunities, or they're moving out of communities in Scarborough because they're travelling and commuting for hours every day.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Just really quickly: Does TTCriders have a position on, or any concerns around, seizing of private property without compensation or legal recourse when it comes to the subway?

Ms. Shelagh Pizey-Allen: I think one of the biggest concerns with the seizing—that this bill does allow the province to seize assets without compensation—is around allowing developers to dictate when stations get built and where. The province has been clear that one of the motivations for taking over the subway is to have the private sector contribute to building new transit, and—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you. We've come to the end of time for this. Thank you very much.

MR. ADAM COHOON

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Our next presenter is joining us via teleconference. Mr. Cohoon, if you could introduce yourself, please.

Mr. Adam Cohoon: Hi. I'm Adam Cohoon. I have worked in transportation advocacy for accessible TTC and also, I am a member of Walk Toronto, so I'm open to answer questions on the vulnerable users bylaw. But the main reason why I wanted to speak to you today was about accessibility and the subway upload.

All right, should I start?

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Absolutely. You have five minutes and 15 seconds left.

Mr. Adam Cohoon: All right. The main concern I have is we've already been shown, with Metrolinx, that a lot of the best practices that the TTC has set up with designing subway stations and LRT stations are already being thrown out the window in the fact that the elevators in the new LRT stations, even when they're flow-through, they're not actually putting the buttons on the sides of the elevators; they're leaving the buttons in the corner of the elevator. If you're driving through an elevator, it's very hard to actually reach the buttons. Sometimes, it's easier to just press the buttons on the actual wall as you're driving through. You can get a good example of this at any of the TTC stations that are flow-through.

Also, when it comes to accessibility, even as advocates, we have had a hell of a time actually communicating with Metrolinx, communicating our concerns and our problems with this, and even communicating our concerns about fare accessibility with the exclusivity of the Presto-at-Loblaws situation. Even though Metrolinx always says, "We're reaching out, we're reaching out," they say so, and then when you try to call them on the issue, they don't actually want to reach out. It is going to have a detrimental effect on health determinants for the vulnerable and marginalized.

I also want to say, with the vulnerable users and the connection to the Highway Traffic Act, we do need to really stiffen the penalties. We need no more slaps on the wrist. We've got to stop calling pedestrian-and-vehicle collisions "accidents" and actually call them what they are: inattentive collisions. And we really have to make it so people won't keep taking risks.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you, Mr. Cohoon. Are you finished with your statement?

Mr. Adam Cohoon: Yes, I am.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): We'll start with the opposition, then. Ms. Bell.

0940

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you for speaking to us, Adam. I want to speak to your experiences with Metrolinx. Does it concern you that Metrolinx will have greater control over the TTC if this bill is passed?

Mr. Adam Cohoon: Yes. It adds greater concern for me, mostly because they have set themselves up to be private, and they really do not do as much consultation. They are not very open to even listening to accessibility issues and actually letting the public that has experience—I have over 10 years' experience, and I sat on ACAT for 16 years and also worked with TTCriders for the last two years. I very much know that the only people who actually can really talk about accessibility issues are people with disabilities.

If you're getting people who just want to push through and say, "Oh, we can't afford that; we can't afford that," then you are going to end up having systems where they aren't going to be fully accessible. They're maybe going to meet the minimums of the AODA, but they're not going to really help people actually, truly get around conveniently, to be able to get jobs and contribute to the society and the city.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Glover.

Mr. Chris Glover: Thank you, Adam. Thank you for your deputation. One of the questions I have is that the unemployment rate among people with disabilities is 50%. Do you think the inaccessibility of public transit in Toronto contributes to that unemployment rate?

Mr. Adam Cohoon: Definitely. If you guys would actually listen to the wider community and actually spend the extra money, you're going to have a harvest of people who can actually use the system and use it more and be able to contribute to society. It's not going to happen right away, but it will happen in a few years. Or you can stay on the track of what you want, and people in years down the road will belittle this government for doing very little on making transit accessible and just following the minimum standards.

Mr. Chris Glover: The other question I have, Adam, is that the government is cutting \$1.1 billion from TTC funding, some of which—about \$200 million—had been slated for making the TTC more accessible. What impact could that have on people like yourself who need accessibility?

Mr. Adam Cohoon: It will have an impact, but I know that all it is to do is to try and strong-arm the TTC into signing on to the upload. You will also find, as with this Presto-Loblaws exclusivity deal, areas where people can't even get access to properly maintain their Presto card. You will find pockets of the city where there are going to be higher health problems and higher rates of depression and all these issues that will probably not be found out for years, because even the people who are on the ground who will be watching for this trend are being cut with the health care cuts.

Mr. Chris Glover: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Any further questions? Mr. Schreiner.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Thank you, Adam, for joining us. I have two minutes. I'm hoping to get in two questions. The first is that you ended your presentation talking about road safety, which is another component of this bill. Do you believe that a vulnerable road users act would improve safety for people with disabilities in particular?

Mr. Adam Cohoon: It will definitely help people with disabilities, and it will actually give justice to the people who are newly disabled because of concussions and because of other incidents that they had with cars. It will definitely make it safer, especially if this transit system isn't going to be more accessible to us and more of us are going to be driving our wheelchairs on the sidewalk to get places.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Adam, that leads right into my next question. What type of investments does the TTC need to make to make transit more accessible?

Mr. Adam Cohoon: Well, they actually have to be open to more consultation on whether accessible transit is going to be under a red label or a green label under Metrolinx, and looking at best practices and improving customer service for communities and for the disabled and actually working with us, rather than just making us all anxious about what the future of transit holds in Toronto.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Thank you, Adam.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Ms. Hogarth.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: First of all, I'd like to say thank you so very much for calling in and joining the conversation. It's so important to have your point of view on today's discussion.

What I'd like to ask you is: Are there any specific factors that you would like to see addressed when the discussions are happening between the province and the city and the federal government with respect to investments in new subway lines and existing work?

Mr. Adam Cohoon: I want to see more open consultation. I want to see the Metrolinx meetings more open. I want to see transparency when it comes to accessibility issues. I want people to actually flag problems and concerns, rather than just bury them in the need for total speed and efficiency. If you bring concerns to us early, we can help you fix them economically, rather than having people, years down the road, have to rip out and rebuild elevators or change accessibility because all you've done is the AODA minimum, and more people are going to need it.

So you're going to want to, in some ways, look after your legacy by doing accessibility right, so that as the baby boomers age, they're not calling Wheel-Trans more, and they're using the subway and other transit systems like GO when their drivers' licences are taken away.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Okay. Thank you very much for sharing that. I just have one other question. What are some of the challenges that persons with disabilities face when riding on public transit that many of us don't appreciate? I know you've mentioned some already, but did you want to expand on some other areas of issues?

Mr. Adam Cohoon: The other issue is communication. On subway cars right now, there is no way we can communicate with transit staff without pressing the emergency red button, which actually stops everything and turns on emergency alarms. We want to be able to communicate with staff in the subway car or even in transit control and just let them know that we're getting off at a certain station. People with hearing loss and even people who

have earphones in—when there are announcements on the subway, there is technology now that would let them push the text announcements to the message screens in the train. But the drivers are just announcing short turns or that the subway car is being taken out of service, and people with hearing loss or who rely on text for their communication can't hear those audio announcements.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Did you have anything further you wanted to share?

Mr. Adam Cohoon: The one last thing I will say is that in order to actually be accessible, you guys have to allow open access. Right now, even with Metrolinx, transit advocates in Toronto are having a hard time navigating or even getting our messages to Metrolinx. They seem to actually be scared of hearing from our community, whereas people with disabilities and transit advocates in Toronto love our transit system and actually want to openly work with the TTC and Metrolinx to actively communicate and talk about our issues, rather than being patronized and making us just anxious, nervous riders.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Kramp, you have about a minute.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Thank you, Adam. Thank you very, very kindly today for sharing your experiences here with us. I can assure you that I know all of this entire committee, regardless of where we are on the political spectrum, values your testimony, and it certainly can help shape the direction that we need to go on this.

I was particularly interested with one point you made, and I totally concur: It will be easier to build than it will be to retrofit. So we have to do this right when we do it.

If I can make one request of you—I want to put you to work a little further. A lot of you made a lot of good suggestions. If you can forward those suggestions to this committee in writing sometime, I think we would all appreciate that. Adam, thanks a lot for your time today.

Mr. Adam Cohoon: All right.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Any further questions? Thank you, Adam, for your time. This ends this presentation.

Mr. Adam Cohoon: All right.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Our next scheduled presenter has cancelled, and since the presenters after that are not here yet, we will take a recess, then, until 10:20.

The committee recessed from 0953 to 1020.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Welcome back, everyone. We are here to conclude the public hearings on Bill 107, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and various other statutes in respect of transportation-related matters. Before we begin, are there any questions?

CHINESE WORKERS NETWORK
TORONTO AND YORK REGION
LABOUR COUNCIL

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Seeing none, I'd like to call forward our next presenters, please: the Chinese Workers Network, and the Toronto and York Region

Labour Council. If you could come to the table and introduce yourselves. You'll have six minutes for your presentation.

Ms. Jennifer Huang: My name is Jennifer Huang. I'm here, as is Susan McMurray, representing both the Toronto and York Region Labour Council and the Chinese Workers Network. We represent roughly 200,000 working women and men in Toronto and York region.

Ms. Susan McMurray: Susan McMurray, executive assistant at Toronto and York Region Labour Council.

Ms. Jennifer Huang: First and foremost, I would like to start off by saying that other than my other identities, I identify mostly as being a child immigrant coming here from Hong Kong to Scarborough in the late 1980s, and I'll explain why later. Basically, having moved from Hong Kong to Scarborough, I witnessed first-hand as a child the public transit woes of both of my working-class parents, who had really long commutes from our home in Scarborough to their places of work.

Even at a young age, I knew that my parents struggled in Canada. They struggled economically, saving every dollar toward a home purchase. They struggled in a new country, where they spoke English as a second language and they spoke with an accent. I realized how incredibly humbling and hard it is for a lot of these folks, these racialized communities living in the suburban communities in Toronto. I know for my dad himself, it was an incredibly humbling and emasculating experience.

Along this road where I grew up, in this Malvern community in the northern part of Scarborough, I also saw the difficulty that many parents, not just my own, had in terms of the long commutes they would take to go to work and go home from work. They did not have enough time to give to their children, either for leisure or to help with homework.

I just want to say that after several years of my mother riding a bus, an RT and a subway to get from Scarborough to downtown, she cobbled up enough money to purchase a second-hand car so that she could drive to her job downtown every day. My father had an even longer commute. He had to commute somehow from Malvern all the way to Woodbridge, to his factory of work. I remember my dad talking about how, some days, he would actually walk the distance to Steeles to save on the cost of an extra fare, so that he could just take York Region Transit all the way to Woodbridge.

It wasn't until I was older that I realized how far that distance was. I was incredulous that my dad actually did that. You might think that's a story of people from 20 or 30 years ago, but even today, at the Ontario Chinese Seniors Association, one of my friends, my late friend Helen Liu, would also talk about the cost of transit being prohibitive for many seniors. For them, they said to me that it was either the cost of food, or walking to where they had to go, or staying home and being socially isolated.

What I want to say and relate is that I think today, the government's plan to fragment our transit system would not only lead to higher fares and possibly the implementation of a fare system that is fare-by-distance or fare-by-

speed. My concern is, what will this do to some of these communities and the distant parts of Scarborough?

I know your government has a plan to make a three-stop subway in Scarborough, but that ends at McCowan, and McCowan is not where Scarborough ends. There are lots of communities in the northern part, in the eastern part, that are still not served. Will this plan make a commitment that they will not increase fares or introduce a fare system that calculates fare by distance or fare by mode of transit? Will poorer people be stuck on buses, while only the rich and well-to-do can ride subways?

The current plan proposed by the provincial government continues, in my opinion, to relegate Scarborough as a transit-starved community. I think an Eglinton East LRT would serve the residents and other parts of Scarborough much better.

The other concern I have with this proposed plan, this bill, is that accountability and democracy would be removed. I was very much involved when they wanted to put the McNicoll Bus Garage at the intersection of McNicoll and Kennedy. All the deputations that went—the Mon Sheong residents; there was a Scarborough Chinese Baptist Church there that I think had 3,000 parishioners—they all went to city hall to depute—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): One minute.

Ms. Jennifer Huang: —and talk about how they were afraid of Lac-Mégantic happening. That process would be absent when the province takes over this entire transit system, because I think about Metrolinx and how their board meetings are completely private and closed off to the public. It's even reflected in the room. There are no chairs for the public. There is no way for people to actually give input into what they want to see. My concern for that is that there's no accountability and democracy in this plan to take transit.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you very much. Questions from the government side: Miss Surma?

Miss Kinga Surma: Thank you very much for coming in today. So you don't think that the transit plan we have proposed is an improvement to what exists today, just to be clear?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: No, it is not an improvement.

Miss Kinga Surma: So you don't think that anyone in Scarborough will appreciate the three-stop subway expansion that the people of Scarborough have been waiting for years for, that they have been advocating for years for at the municipal level and at the provincial level—a huge issue in the provincial campaign? You don't think that the people of Scarborough are going to be happy with the three-stop subway?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: I think the people in Scarborough are really disappointed that the city has already sunk the cost of \$220 million into designing and doing the assessment for a one-stop subway, and that this new three-stop subway is going to be active in 2029, while the RT will fail in 2026. That's three years of people having to ride more buses and doing those connecting factors. I think the people in Scarborough are hugely disappointed that those costs were sunk and that there's no rapid transit access.

Miss Kinga Surma: You are aware that the mayor of the city of Toronto has come forward and has said that our plans are based on previous studies and plans proposed by the city of Toronto? You are aware that the mayor has said that—that we are in fact utilizing what the city has already done and expanding on the proposal.

Ms. Jennifer Huang: I know that the mayor has said that, but I know that the city has still 61 unanswered questions for this current government on how this whole new transit and all these plans would be implemented.

Miss Kinga Surma: The mayor has confirmed the fact that we are utilizing existing studies and plans and we are expanding on that. Obviously, this is a huge infrastructure investment, so there will be many conversations back and forth. I don't think that's a shock to anyone.

In terms of the expansion out in the west end, you don't think that Etobicoke will benefit?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: I think that's for Etobicoke residents to come and advocate. For my part, I speak on behalf of many of the communities in Scarborough that are underserved by this government's transit plan. I'm really concerned about the failure of the RT in 2026 and that the new proposed subway will be in 2029, and who knows? There might be even more delays than that.

What really concerns me is that there was so much consultation into building that McNicoll Bus Garage—I know that the technology for the new relief line is supposed to be not integrated with Line 1 and Line 2 trains. Where will this new garage to house these new trains be built? And will the community, or wherever this is going to be built, be able to give deputations on their concerns with the new trains being put wherever they may be?

Miss Kinga Surma: Ma'am, are you aware of the fact that one of the reasons why we are uploading new expansions and new builds of the subway is in fact to build faster, because nothing has been built in the city of Toronto for years? I think that's something everyone in this room can build consensus on. Nothing has been built for years.

The Premier made a commitment to the people in Scarborough. He made a commitment to the people in Toronto and also in the region to improve public transit. We are uploading because the province has resources at hand at its disposal in order to speed up the process, to make sure we build faster and we get shovels in the ground.

Ms. Jennifer Huang: With all due respect, I think the reason that the city of Toronto has experienced so many transit delays is because every time we have a really good plan, one of the Ford brothers comes and makes it really political, and all the transit plans get thrown into the trash and we have to start all over.

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Miss Kinga Surma: So just to be clear: It's Premier Ford's fault, the fact that the previous Liberal government did nothing for the last 15 years and the fact that the current mayor of the city built nothing in the last four years? That's the fault of our Premier, Premier Ford? Just to be clear.

Ms. Jennifer Huang: I think the fault is shared by both his late brother, Rob Ford, and the Premier. I do think it's

just that people are really tired of promises. I think the city has a wealth of experience in managing transit.

The people of Toronto had a referendum a hundred years ago to bring transit back into the public sector because private operators were gouging them with scheduling and prices. They made it public. The TTC and the city of Toronto actually have a wealth of experience. This government's intentions may be really good; I don't think they could do it better than the city of Toronto.

Miss Kinga Surma: Let me just tell you that one of the reasons why Mayor Rob Ford was elected as mayor was because he was fighting for subways in Scarborough, and one of the reasons why Premier Ford has so much support out in Scarborough is because he was fighting for subways in Scarborough.

Ms. Jennifer Huang: That's wonderful.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): One minute.

Ms. Jennifer Huang: Tell that to the constituents in 2026 when they have to wait three, four or five more years for a subway to be built.

Miss Kinga Surma: Just to reiterate what I said, part of the purpose of the upload is to build faster, so I just want to make that clear to you. Our government will keep its commitment. As PA for transportation, I can assure you of that. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Kanapathi.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you, Jennifer, for coming and making a deputation and talking about affordability. Thank you for sharing your personal story, your dad's story. I used to live in Scarborough, the northeast part of Scarborough; now I'm in Markham, the Markham MPP.

Could you elaborate on the connectivity? Your dad was walking all the way to Steeles Avenue to avoid another fare, the second fare—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): I'm sorry. We've run out of time.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Could you elaborate—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): I'm sorry, Mr. Kanapathi. We're out of time.

Ms. Bell. No? Mr. Glover.

Mr. Chris Glover: Hi. Thank you very much for your deputation. I'm just summarizing your concerns. The first one is that they're going to create a fragmented system. If they use different tracks for the Ontario relief line, then that will cause further delays and fragment the system. Is that correct?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: Yes. It will fragment the system.

Mr. Chris Glover: And you're concerned that the reason this government is seizing control of the subway is that ultimately, they would like to privatize it. Is that one of your concerns as well?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: Yes, and that's why I reiterated that the people in Toronto, over a hundred years ago, or nearly a hundred years ago, voted to make it public.

Mr. Chris Glover: Okay. The other concern you mentioned with your family's own experience in northeast Scarborough—if you look at the maps of northeast Scarborough and the northwest parts of the city in Etobicoke,

they've become pockets of poverty, if you look at the Hulchanski maps. Do you think the lack of transit is part of the reason that apartments are cheaper there, because it's just that much more difficult to get to work in other parts of the city?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: I think so. I think it still remains a transit desert. There's nothing serving those communities other than a network of buses. I'm really concerned that this government will make different pricing based on bus routes, RTs, LRTs and subways, and I think that this will further harm the residents in Scarborough.

Mr. Chris Glover: Do you think that this government should enact the sections of this bill where they seize control of the subway from the people of Toronto and deny the people of Toronto legal recourse for the seizure of this asset without compensation?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: Definitely not. Our transit system is paid 70% by the fare box and by our property taxes, and I don't think it's right for anyone to ever come and say, "I'm going to take any asset of yours without compensation."

Mr. Chris Glover: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Ms. Bell.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you, both of you, for coming in today. Earlier deputants expressed concern that the provincial government promised that they would build the Eglinton East LRT, and now that the map has been released, the Eglinton East LRT is no longer present. Does it concern you that the government has changed its mind in terms of whether they're going to build the lines that they said they're going to build on this map, given that they've already changed their minds?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: It's hugely concerning. What's also concerning was that in the election, we were promised the gas revenue, and that's also missing. So fundamentally, we're missing \$1.1 billion that was promised to the TTC that would probably have gone towards the \$24 billion they had in backlog for capital repairs. I think it's not surprising that the Eglinton East LRT is missing and that the promised gas tax revenue isn't coming from the province.

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'm under the impression that the Line 1 extension was built through a collaboration with York, the city of Toronto and the provincial government. Is that your understanding?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: Yes.

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'm also under the impression that the Eglinton Crosstown extension, which is currently under operation, was built through a collaboration with the city of Toronto and the provincial government. Is that also your understanding?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: Yes.

Ms. Jessica Bell: So those would be some examples of the city and the province collaborating and working together to build transit. Would it seem reasonable that that kind of approach, of the city and the province working together to build transit, could also be applied to Scarborough and that a subway upload is not necessary?

Ms. Jennifer Huang: I think so. I think that we need to be negotiating in good faith with the city of Toronto. We

shouldn't be proposing legislation where we actually say that the city and the TTC can no longer make any plans towards these areas.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Any further questions? Since the independent member is not here, we have no questions from him. Thank you very much for your presentation.

Ms. Jennifer Huang: Thank you.

UNITED SENIOR CITIZENS OF ONTARIO

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Next, we have the United Senior Citizens of Ontario. If you could come to the table for us, please, and introduce yourselves. You'll have six minutes for your presentation.

Ms. Marie Smith: Good morning. I'm with the United Senior Citizens of Ontario. Thank you for the privilege of giving us a time to speak here today on this important matter. I'm Marie Smith. I'm a board member right at the present time, but I am a past president.

The United Senior Citizens is a grassroots organization that most of you have probably never heard of. We've been in business since 1956. We have been working with seniors. We're all volunteers, except our two office staff. We own our own building at 3033 Lake Shore Boulevard in Toronto. We have two staff there who are paid.

As our clubs now are diminishing, and as things are happening with the seniors of this province, we ask only that the members pay \$3 a year to belong to the club. They find that too much, the \$3—that's a year—and \$25 a year if you join individually. The clubs are finding it's too much money.

We also print our own paper, the Voice, and we put it out each month. It's done in the basement of our building. We have Roots and Shoots, and we're on the Internet, where you can find out about this wonderful organization that built this land of Ontario.

We have a convention every year. It's August 12, 13 and 14 this year, in Cobourg. We hope that the government will release some money so that we can get some of the speakers from the government that we've been looking forward to.

All of the resolutions are sent in from each club. We get the resolutions, and they're brought to the convention. At the convention, they talk about them, they discuss them and sometimes they even argue and fight about the resolutions. But the ones that are passed we make into a brief that we send every fall to the government. That's where you find out what is going on all around the province and what is happening in each area, because you will know by this brief that we send in that most governments, except one, have always answered our brief in the spring. There's only one government that hasn't in the past.

We want to bring seniors' problems and awareness to your front. There are three things that the United Senior Citizens are: We're non-racial, we're non-sectarian and we're non-partisan, so it doesn't matter what government we're working with; it's all the same to us. We want the

best deal for our seniors in this province, who have done so much for you.

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Without our seniors in this province, do you realize that our hospitals wouldn't be organized and working? Do you realize that any seniors group wouldn't be going without all the volunteers of this province? And who are they? Some 95% are seniors that do all the volunteer work.

We are also a group that looks to vote. More seniors per capita vote than any other age group, so always remember that. We speak for 300,000 seniors across this province at the present time.

As a result of the disproportionately increased number of seniors being struck down and killed or seriously injured as pedestrians on our roads, United Senior Citizens demand changes to hold that all distracted or bad drivers be held accountable for their actions. It is no longer acceptable that when a bad or distracted driver breaks the law and kills a senior, they walk away with a smile.

My friend was walking across at a green light with another lady who was much younger. She was 89 at the time. She was hit by a car turning right—at a green light for her, but red for turning into. It hit the two of them. The other lady was killed and my friend spent six months in hospital. Today, she knows where every scar and break is from that accident.

It is no longer acceptable that we—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): One minute left.

Ms. Marie Smith: Pardon me?

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): You have one minute left.

Ms. Marie Smith: Okay.

In order to make sure there's accountability, we are asking for an amendment to Bill 107 to make it mandatory, when anyone breaks one of the 45 sections of the Highway Traffic Act, resulting in death or serious injury of a vulnerable road user, that (a) they must take a mandatory driving course; (b) they must do community service in road safety; and (c) until they do this, their licence be suspended. Those are three things, and they're also in our brief that you received this year from there—the resolution. They must also attend court and listen to the family's impact statement. That is important, that they don't just walk away with a slap on the wrist or a \$500 fine.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you very much.

Ms. Marie Smith: You're welcome.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): We'll start with questions from the opposition. Ms. Bell.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you very much for coming in. Did you manage to finish your presentation? Because if you need another minute or two to finish your presentation, now would be the time to do that.

Ms. Marie Smith: May I?

Ms. Jessica Bell: Yes.

Ms. Marie Smith: Okay. Thank you.

Changes to the law for careless driving are a good start. However, that only represents one section of the 45 in the traffic act. We need to catch all lawbreakers. Let's put

seniors first and ensure that there's proper deference to ensure that they are protected and can move around their communities in safety without fear of harm. This is why we passed our annual resolution requesting this law last year. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Ms. Bell.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you very much for finishing your presentation, and thank you for coming. Why is this issue important to you? Why did you decide to get involved in this issue?

Ms. Marie Smith: Why? Partly because a friend of mine was hit. I was on the Ontario Network for Prevention of Elder Abuse for nine years. I also helped hire the 12 consultants who we have, and have been very involved in working on all the regulations you put out for long-term care, nursing homes, retirement homes and so on. We've always been involved and have been working on those all these years.

As I say, you may not have heard of us, but we've been there working behind the scenes.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Glover.

Mr. Chris Glover: Thank you very much for coming in and for your deputation. Thank you also for the work that you're doing and that the seniors are doing. You mentioned the volunteer work and that 95% of volunteer work done in the province is by seniors. Certainly that's what makes our province a much better place to live in, so thank you for all of that and thank you for your advocacy.

So you're asking for an amendment to support and to take stronger action to protect vulnerable road users?

Ms. Marie Smith: Yes.

Mr. Chris Glover: And that's the main point of your presentation today?

Ms. Marie Smith: That's right.

Mr. Chris Glover: Okay. I'll let you know that we do have an amendment that we will be bringing forward next week to do what you're asking for. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Any further questions?

Mr. Chris Glover: No.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): From the government side: Ms. Kusendova.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Good morning, Ms. Smith. Thank you so much for being here. I just wanted to say, on behalf of this government, we are so grateful for all the wonderful seniors who have built up our province and our country. You have paid into our taxes and you have certainly contributed to the development of our province throughout many areas. So we do value seniors.

I work as a nurse, and I do know that the hospitals are in fact run by the volunteers, who are, like you mentioned, 95% seniors. So any time I go on my shift and I see a senior wearing that volunteer jacket, I'm reminded how important the contributions that members of your organization make are to this province.

In fact, our government has been clear: We are supporting seniors. We have invested \$90 million into a new dental plan for low-income seniors and we have recently announced a new seniors grant program. But today we're

here to talk about transit and transit infrastructure. Thank you so much for giving us some ideas of how to improve our safety on our streets and our highways. Can you elaborate a little bit about what your members are telling you are the main road safety concerns?

Ms. Marie Smith: The main road safety concerns are about walking. More time at a light would be necessary and more things like that, because we seniors move a little slower than you young people. Someday you're going to catch up to us and you will be moving as slowly as we do. But we need more time there.

It's a two-way street. I also know that bicycle riders and walkers aren't always the careful-est. We also have to play our part, as well as the drivers of the cars play their part in being much more careful in their driving and making a turn instead of—let's say they're looking into the sun and say they can't see the pedestrians when they hit them. That's what happened to my friend, and ever since then, I've been very involved in this.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: That's very unfortunate, what happened to your friend.

Our government, we're all about making life more affordable, and that's including for seniors. We're looking at different areas, including in transit, at reducing red tape burden and cutting red tape. Are there any ideas that your organization and members of your organization would like to see explored in the future in terms of red tape reduction?

Ms. Marie Smith: Like to see in the future?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: If there are any regulations that you find are burdensome that you would like our government to look into in terms of reducing red tape in our province.

Ms. Marie Smith: We will have some resolutions on that, but we'll come to you with a brief that you can answer on what we think should be done.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Any further questions? Mr. Kramp.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Thank you again. I think I can almost see eye to eye with you; I think I'm the only senior here.

Ms. Marie Smith: Well, I'm a senior senior.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: But one point that I would maybe make is we also have a responsibility to adhere to the laws of the land. I do like a number of your suggestions. As a matter of fact, the suggestion made by Mr. Glover, I know, has also been considered by the government here on this side. I think there's a lot of validity to try to deal with that as being part of a solution.

The only caution that I would advise all of us is we still have to, as I said, follow the laws of the land. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms does have a lot of overriding principles regarding the ability or the lack of ability to be able to departmentalize or compartmentalize particular groups of individuals or people. So we have to be careful whether or not we would be able to actually devise legislation that would basically either disadvantage some or give advantage to other priorities out there as to what is more important. A life is a life is a life, and so we have to be cautious as to how we approach that. But I do like your suggestion.

I want to thank you for coming here today. As has been mentioned, we have a fairly new program that is out there that I would certainly encourage your organization to take a look at, being as you're totally volunteer, because we do place a high priority on volunteerism. I think that's wonderful.

The only other thing is, I'm not too far from Cobourg.

Ms. Marie Smith: Okay.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Perhaps, if you wouldn't mind, certainly I would appreciate some information as to your date and location, and if at all available, and with permission from my wife, I would just love to be able to attend.

Laughter.

Ms. Marie Smith: We would be delighted to have you.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Ms. Hogarth.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Again, I also want to thank you very much for being here and sharing your point of view. It's very important that people come and share their experiences. I really do thank you for sharing your tragic story. Over the last couple of days, we've heard a lot of very sad stories.

We can all do better when it comes to safety, and a lot of it is making sure that people are aware when they're driving. Sunshine is not an excuse not to follow the laws and to stop at those stop signs, and we just have to really enforce that message.

Part of this bill is talking about transit. Do you have any suggestions on improving transit?

Ms. Marie Smith: In Toronto or up our way? I'm from Orillia.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: You're from Orillia? Okay, so I guess—

Ms. Marie Smith: And we do exist, you know, beyond Steeles street.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: That's right.

Ms. Marie Smith: Would you mind telling Mr. Ford that? That the rest of the province is there?

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Well, you mentioned the Lakeshore, so I was thinking around the GO station lines. I was just wondering if there were any thoughts—

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you, Ms. Hogarth.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Oh, okay.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Mr. Schreiner, do you have any questions?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Thank you for being here today. I want to apologize for coming in late. I had other responsibilities a couple of doors down.

Thanks for having the courage to share your story. I know we've had others come and share tragic stories, and it's not an easy thing to do.

I just want Mr. Kramp to know that seniors are wise, and so I appreciate your wisdom for coming here today and sharing your suggestions with us.

I apologize if this has already been addressed, but we've had other people come and suggest a vulnerable road users act would help in potentially preventing serious injuries and deaths on our roads, or at the very least making sure that victims are properly shown justice. What does your organization feel about that? Do you think such an act would be beneficial?

Ms. Marie Smith: Partially, and with the suggestions that I made on there. You've probably had some other good suggestions the last two days. Hopefully, you'll incorporate all of them into this and use them.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Great. I'm hoping we will as well. Thank you for bringing those forward.

Ms. Marie Smith: You're welcome.

The Chair (Mr. Dave Smith): Thank you very much for your presentation.

This concludes our business today. The committee will adjourn, then, until 9 a.m. on Monday, May 27, when we will meet for clause-by-clause consideration.

I would like to remind everyone that the deadline to send in a written submission to the Clerk of the Committee is 6 p.m. this Thursday, May 23, and the deadline to file amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee is 10 a.m. Friday, May 24, 2019, and that the amendments must be filed in hard copy.

We are adjourned until Monday, May 27.

The committee adjourned at 1054.

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