

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

No. 96

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

N° 96

1st Session
42nd Parliament

Thursday
18 April 2019

1^{re} session
42^e législature

Jeudi
18 avril 2019

Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
Greffier : Todd Decker

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



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

ISSN 1180-2987

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 18 April 2019

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 18 avril 2019

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Let us pray.
Prayers/Prières.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THE PEOPLE'S HEALTH CARE
ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LES SOINS DE SANTÉ
POUR LA POPULATION

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 17, 2019, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 74, An Act concerning the provision of health care, continuing Ontario Health and making consequential and related amendments and repeals / Projet de loi 74, Loi concernant la prestation de soins de santé, la prorogation de Santé Ontario, l'ajout de modifications corrélatives et connexes et des abrogations.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): When the House last debated Bill 74, the member for Barrie–Innisfil had the floor, and I believe she still has some time. I recognize the member for Barrie–Innisfil.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was leading off on my remarks the other day, I was discussing how we have a very antiquated system, and it's time to bring our health care system back to the 21st century to make sure we have a state-of-the-art, publicly funded health care system so patients can rely on our health care system, because when patients know that their health care providers have access to this information, they will feel well-prepared and have certainty for their next appointments and for their families who are very concerned. It will be reassuring for patients to know that their health care team has the latest and most up-to-date information about their care, their history, and that it can be accessed by a touch of a button.

Our health care modernization plan, Mr. Speaker, will ensure a greater peace of mind knowing that health care providers can easily pull up records and have the latest information. Patients will be able to have help navigating the system 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We are about customer service on this side of the House. It's time that taxpayers get value for their hard-earned taxpayer dollars. The government is listening, making life easier, not just affordable, for all Ontarians.

It's time to fill the much-needed gaps in our system. This model, Mr. Speaker, will ensure that patients get the care that they need. In Barrie–Innisfil, I will tell you many

of my constituents are very thrilled about this issue. In Barrie, we have already had a similar concept in place and it has been a great success. We're fortunate enough to have the Barrie and Community Family Health Team. The family health team is an organization that includes a team of family physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, social workers, dietitians and other professionals who have worked together to provide much-needed community care. This is the first step in the right direction.

After speaking at length on this bill and just about wrapping up my time, I did want to share the rest of my time with the member from Mississauga Centre.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member for Mississauga Centre.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you, Speaker. Good morning. It is with great pleasure that I rise in the House today to speak in support of Bill 74, The People's Health Care Act. It was just a little more than a month ago that our honourable Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care introduced The People's Health Care Act. Through this legislation, our minister laid out a blueprint for Ontario to modernize its health care system, to centralize it under one single agency capable of seamlessly connecting patients and health care providers across the province, creating Ontario health teams able to deliver quality service. The bill outlines a plan which includes digitization, use of technology, streamlining of services, modernization, investing money in the front lines and centring the care around the patient.

The day our minister introduced Bill 74 was a day long overdue. Actually, Speaker, I think it was 15 years overdue, and let me tell you why. As I often do in this House, I will speak to my personal experience as a registered nurse who worked in the emergency room of a local GTA hospital. The ER is as front-line as it gets, Mr. Speaker. Let me paint you the picture of a day, or even a few hours, in the life of an RN on a shift in Ontario.

My shift as an RN starts at the crack of dawn, at 7:30 when I report for duty. I start by checking the assignment board to see where in the ER I am actually assigned and, more often than not, as a new nurse, I would get the dreaded back hall shift. Baptism by fire, they would call it. I would proceed to the back hall, which is the hallway perimeter around the emergency room. It's an L-shape. It is about two metres wide and probably 20 metres long on each side. So this two-metre space would become my office for the next 12, 13, sometimes 14 hours.

Let me describe to you how my shift actually looks in a hospital that operates at 130% capacity every day. I would take a report from the night nurse, and I would first start by restocking my little supply cubby. I would open up the

drawers and I would see that vital supplies—basic tools such as needles, syringes, alcohol swabs—would be missing. So what would I do? Instead of checking on my patients, I would just eyeball them and I would proceed to the inside, leaving my patients unattended, just simply to restock my cubby.

Then I would proceed to look for a vital sign machine, because that is a vital tool that I need in order to check my patients' vitals in the morning. Well, guess what, Speaker? Most times, a vital sign machine was not available because either it was broken or there were simply not enough.

Then I would proceed to look for an oximeter, because I would need to check my patients' pulses and heart rates. Guess what, Speaker? Most of the time, that was not available, so I would have to sneak into another nurse's room and borrow one quickly just to be able to perform that basic vital sign check in the morning.

Then comes checking for the diabetic patients—glucometer. A glucometer is a hot commodity in the emergency room, as there are only three available for all 24 of the staff RNs. I would have to search and search until I finally found it.

Then it came time to administer medications. I would have to line up inside of the main emerg—once again leaving my patients unattended for 10-15 minutes—to be able to pull the medications out of the drawer. Finally, when it was time to hang the medications, I would have to search for a simple pump and a simple pole around all of the perimeter of the first floor to be able to provide the basic care.

When it came to changing my patients or providing personal hygiene, I would have to physically take a patient's stretcher and go into the little nook between rooms 3 and 4 to be able to provide some dignity and some comfort as I performed that personal hygiene.

Let's not even talk about the bariatric and overweight patients. I would really need some help and support from other nurses and personal support workers. But guess what, Speaker? There's only one personal support worker available for all 24 RNs on shift. That is simply not enough.

So it is about 9:30 a.m., just two hours since nurses started their shifts, and what I just outlined is the turmoil that hundreds, if not thousands, of nurses experienced this morning putting their personal licence on the line as they care for patients.

Speaker, you are probably exhausted from just listening to this; imagine how the nurses feel. Better yet, imagine how patients feel being cared for in a hallway with no privacy, no dignity and inadequate tools, for everyone to hear, see and, frankly, sometimes smell some of the most difficult, intimate and personal moments of their health care journey.

A hallway is not a place of work and it is definitely not a place of healing. Our health care system is on life support. In fact, our health care system has been receiving CPR for far too long. If real intervention does not come fast, we will lose it. That is why Bill 74 is coming not a day too soon.

True leadership means taking bold and decisive action. True leadership means less talk and more action. It means challenging the status quo. That is why we are so lucky to have such a leader in our Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Let me tell you, Speaker, how Bill 74 that she introduced will transform our health care system so that CPR can stop and life-saving measures can be administered, and the road to recovery can begin. As a result of Bill 74, gone will be the days of the endless confusion patients have to experience when they need to be looked after. Gone will be the days of having to spend countless hours repeating your health history to every new care provider you see.

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

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Ms. Kusendova 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 will 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.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: 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 0911 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce, from the riding of Cambridge, Mark Trueman, Kimberly MacFadyen, Jim Trueman and Judy Trueman. Thank you for coming to Queen's Park. Enjoy your day today.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: It's great to speak here today. Unfortunately, it's that time of the legislative session when our pages are leaving. It's our last day. I do have two parents here for a page from the town of Oakville who has been a great page, Katie Bowie. It's my pleasure to introduce Lynn McDougall and Trevor Bowie, the parents of Katie, here today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Marit Stiles: It gives me great pleasure to introduce, in the members' gallery, one of my best volunteers in my campaign, Jimmy Francis.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: It's my pleasure to welcome Jeff Mole from Community Enterprise Network to the Legislature. Also, from my riding of Scarborough-Guildwood,

Bendale Junior Public School will be touring today, so please make our students feel welcome.

Miss Monique Taylor: It gives me great pleasure to welcome Faith Munoz back to the House again today. Faith is mom to six-year-old Jeremy, and she's been here every day this week. Thanks so much.

REPORT, CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that the following document has been tabled: the post-event report 2018 on Ontario's 42nd general election from the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Ontario.

WEARING OF HOCKEY JERSEY

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I understand the member for Niagara West has a point of order.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I ask for unanimous consent, sadly, for the member for Durham and myself to wear the Oshawa Generals jersey as, unfortunately, Niagara can't win every time.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member is seeking unanimous consent to wear the hockey jersey. Agreed? Agreed.

ANNIVERSARY OF ATTACK IN TORONTO

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Willowdale on a point of order.

Mr. Stan Cho: I seek the unanimous consent of the House for a moment of silence to mark the one-year anniversary of the Yonge Street van attack that took place in my riding of Willowdale on April 23, 2018.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Willowdale is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to have a moment of silence to acknowledge and recognize the victims of the van attack a year ago. Agreed? Agreed.

The House observed a moment's silence.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

EDUCATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Before I begin, I just want to wish everyone all the best this holiday weekend. For those of us who are celebrating Easter, I hope you have a great Easter weekend with your families and a great constituency week. See you all back here when we return.

Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Parents and students are worried about the impacts of cuts in the classroom and the Premier's plan for larger class sizes and fewer course options for students. Across Ontario, teachers are receiving notices from school boards, informing them that they don't have a position next year.

Is the Premier committing that every one of the thousands of teachers and education workers receiving redundancies and layoff notices this week will be in the schools educating our kids full-time, come September?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I want to echo the Leader of the Opposition. I want to wish everyone a very happy Easter and a happy Passover. It falls on the same weekend. I wish everyone all the best.

Regarding education, myself and the minister had an opportunity to sit down and talk to a teacher this morning and, boy, was that an eye-opener. It was an eye-opener like you've never seen. It's amazing how much this teacher agreed with what we're doing. Absolutely, there were some tweaks that were happening, yes.

Believe it or not, out of the EAs and the teachers, of the 200,000 teaching folks out there, there's a tremendous amount of them who agree—because all they've been hearing is the rhetoric and rhetoric through the opposition. When you sit down and actually explain the plan, it's amazing how they sit back, as the minister saw, and say, "Wow, what a great plan." They appreciate the \$700 million we've increased from the previous government, and they fully understand the scare tactics that the opposition is doing about these layoffs. This is—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I also want to acknowledge that Passover is this weekend and many of our Jewish friends are celebrating, as well.

Speaker, the people who run our schools and work in them every day simply don't believe the Premier. In Peel, where 369 layoff notices have gone out to teachers, the superintendent of human resources says that this is not normal; it is not routine. This is real, and it is bad. He is clear that there are teachers and education workers who are now not going to have jobs in September. Very, very clearly he is stating that. Does the Premier think he's not telling the truth?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: You heard the same story leading up to this, then all of a sudden the opposition got caught flat-footed. They got caught flat-footed when we announced \$700 million more from the previous budget—from the previous budget, when it came to the Ministry of Education, that they supported. We're funding \$700 million more than what the NDP approved and the Liberals approved.

For years and years, not just this year, the Leader of the Opposition knows that these school boards will send out these notices—it has been happening forever—until they get their budgets. Then they get their budgets and they sort things out and they rehire the teachers.

I'm here to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that not one teacher will lose their job. I can't wait until September, when all the teachers are back in the classroom teaching our students, when the Leader of the Opposition will stand up and say, "You were right once again."

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, I would advise the Premier not to hold his breath.

Students and their parents simply don't believe the Premier. They see the plan for larger class sizes and fewer courses. They hear the Premier's overheated rhetoric, and they don't see a plan for education. They see a recipe for cuts in the classroom and chaos in our schools.

What evidence can the Premier offer to prove that every single one of the educators receiving a layoff notice will be in school nonetheless, come September?

1040

Hon. Doug Ford: Involuntary notices—again, these scare tactics out there, actually telling parents, telling teachers and telling the students, “Be prepared.” They're saying there are going to be 50 people in the classrooms. They're saying there are going to be 45. That's not going to happen. We will prove the Leader of the Opposition wrong once again and again and again.

These scare tactics are not going to work. There are no teachers losing their jobs. We're putting \$700 million back into education. We're going to start focusing on the students, who are on the lowest tier in our entire country when it comes to our math tests. We're going to make sure that we give the teachers the support they need to be able to teach the math courses until everyone's scores come up.

There's nothing wrong with accountability. I can assure you that there will be accountability in our education system.

TEACHERS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, since I couldn't get an answer from the Premier, I'm now going to go to the Minister of Education.

Yesterday, the minister seemed unable to answer this question, but it's important to parents and students. The minister says that no teacher will lose their job. Does she consider it a job loss if a teacher is laid off from a full-time position but is offered occasional supply teaching instead?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Again, I am getting so tired, as are Ontarians across the province, of the rhetoric and the nonsense that the Leader of the Opposition and her party are trying to perpetuate.

It's absolutely disgusting, what they're trying to do, because the fact of the matter is, this is a routine process that happens year in and year out, where school boards take a look at their roster, identify how many people are coming back from a long-term leave, and identify how many are retiring.

If I was to quote a particular education director from Thames Valley—she actually said on March 6, I believe, “At the end of the day, we don't anticipate any job loss.” The front-line workers are even saying that they don't anticipate any job loss.

So, this is nonsense, what she's doing. The whole party would be well served if they just stopped the fear-mongering.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I hope the minister has followed up with that particular person to make sure that

she knows what the budget says, because her opinion might have changed by now, Speaker.

Parents and students don't need hundreds of supply teachers waiting at home for work opportunities. They need educators in our schools, helping our students to succeed.

This week, over 2,000 educators have received a letter saying that there's no job for them in September; 2,000 educators have received a notice that there is no job for them in September. Is the minister's solution to offer them all a chance to come back from time to time as supply teachers?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The member for King–Vaughan will come to order, the member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry will come to order, and allow the members to ask their questions so that I can hear them.

Start the clock. The Minister of Education to reply.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Again, I can't stress it enough: Across Ontario, we're standing with teachers. We're standing with education workers. We want to make sure that they have the best learning environment possible in the classroom. We are standing with students and parents because that's what they deserve.

Again, I absolutely dismiss all of the rhetoric that's coming from that leader of the NDP party. Again, shame on all of you for perpetuating the fear-mongering.

Again, I'm going to quote a particular person from Guelph's Upper Grand District School Board. Gundi Barbour goes on to say, “We've ... been lucky.... As long as I've been president of the local and even when I was vice-president, we never had teachers go into the next school year without being recalled and I'm certainly hoping that will be the case this year.”

Do you know what? It just is the exclamation point behind the point that this is a routine process that happens year in—

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

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Parents and students don't want larger classes, fewer courses—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I apologize. Stop the clock. Okay, we're not going to put up with it today. Stop it.

Start the clock. I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker. Parents and students don't want larger classes, fewer courses and thousands of teachers' jobs lost. They don't believe the Ford government's promises anymore. As one of the many teachers who received a layoff notice put it, “Only in Doug Ford's Ontario could I receive an award of distinction one week and a letter confirming my job loss for September 2019 in the next week.”

Instead of denying the facts, will the minister reconsider her plans to increase class sizes and cut supports to our classrooms?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: And you know what we're hearing? We're hearing that our education focus in the budget—the budget that's focusing on what we need to be protecting and caring for most—is sitting really, really well with people across Ontario, and that includes teachers. That includes students. That includes directors of education and that includes parents, quite frankly. Because, again, we're demonstrating that we care.

We are going to get back to the basics and we're going to make sure that every cent is focused in on student achievement in that classroom. After years of mismanagement, I can understand people's frustration. But people are actually applauding the fact that we are coming forward with a plan, under the leadership of Premier Ford, that resonates with what we've been hearing. We were in opposition for seven years and we heard loud and clear what wasn't working in the education program and system, and quite frankly we've listened and we're getting it right. Ontarians are celebrating the fact that we are a government that actually is going to walk our talk and get—

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

EDUCATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My third question is back to the Premier, and I do hope that the members on the other side do get a chance over the holidays to chat with some of those people around Ontario to hear what they're really saying about their concerns of this government's direction in education, because earlier this week, I had the pleasure of hosting a meeting on education with 170 students, parents and educators.

One of the students who attended, Angel Roberts from Emery Collegiate, brought forward a concern that I'd like to share. She said, "Within our school, the technology is outdated and has not been upgraded to stand up to the current technological needs of students. With Doug Ford's recent push towards e-learning, the need is clear. We need better tech."

What does the Premier have to say to students like Angel whose schools haven't received the investments they need for the technology to support his ill-conceived e-learning scheme?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: My answer to that is, very simply, you and the Liberals destroyed the education system for the last 15 years. The Leader of the Opposition voted with the Liberals 98% of the time to help destroy the education system. We're coming in to save the education system, to support the teachers, to stand by the teachers and give them the support. Mr. Speaker, between the EAs and teachers, we have 200,000 people—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Opposition, come to order.

Hon. Doug Ford: Mr. Speaker, do you want to—thank you. Between the teachers and the EAs, we have 200,000

of them. We have two million students. Can the NDP do the math? Two million, 200,000—that's one for every 10. Again, we're going to be supporting the education system. We're going to make sure there's accountability.

When we met with a teacher this morning, when he saw us—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock, please. Thank you. I'm going to remind members to make their comments through the Chair. I'm also going to remind members to refer to each other by their riding names or by their ministerial title, as appropriate.

Start the clock. Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker.

For weeks, students, parents, teachers and school boards across the province have been trying to get the government to hear their concerns, but the government, shamefully, is not listening. A teacher at Monday's meeting asked us to pass along a message: "It would be wonderful if you would call out the education minister for ignoring the hundreds and likely thousands of emails she's received from angry and concerned citizens regarding the proposed changes ... no one I know has received so much as an automatic reply. How can the minister simply ignore Ontarians who are asking for answers?"

It's a good question, Speaker, a very good question. Does the Premier have an answer for this teacher?

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Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: My answer to that teacher is that we're there to support them. We're there to support the teachers. We're there to make sure they have the tools so that they can actually teach the students.

Again, I want to remind the Leader of the Opposition that she was part of the whole gang that destroyed the education system, that didn't have the \$700 million of funding that we're putting in right now. That is what has destroyed the education system. Under the Leader of the Opposition, supporting the previous administration, they supported the cuts, they supported when they went on strike and they supported when the students weren't in the classroom. It happened.

I want to remind everyone again, under their previous leader, Bob Rae, it was an absolute disaster when the teachers went on strike. They went on strike under Mike Harris, under McGuinty, under Wynne. They just believe in striking, holding the population of Ontario hostage. They aren't going to hold—

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

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Vincent Ke: My question is to the Premier. Last week, the Premier, the Ministers of Transportation and Infrastructure, the parliamentary assistants for transportation and infrastructure and the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore made a historic transportation announcement. The Premier unveiled a transit plan for the 21st century, a transit network that will get people moving and reduce

gridlock: a \$28.5-billion expansion to build subways. For the first time ever, our government is taking the lead and building new subways in this province.

I know my riding of Don Valley North is thrilled with this transit announcement.

Can the Premier share with the Legislature more details about the Ontario Line and how we will get the GTA moving again?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the incredible member from Don Valley North. I'll tell you, his constituents are absolutely over the top about getting a real, modern-day transit system that Toronto and the region have not seen in over 30 years. We're committing a total transit system of \$28.5 billion. It's not just a Toronto transit system, Mr. Speaker; it's a regional transit system. There are over 40,000 commuters that come in from the 905 every single day. Then you go down Line 1, right by Bloor and Yonge—it's packed. It's actually dangerous, Mr. Speaker. They can't get on to the trains. They watch these trains fly by as they're full. Sometimes they have to wait three, four or five trains. But we're going to bring relief to that line and make sure the region gets moving and Toronto gets moving—

Interjections.

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

I had to stop the clock. I couldn't hear the Premier.

Start the clock. Supplementary?

Mr. Vincent Ke: Thank you to the Premier for your great leadership. I'm so thrilled to hear that our government for the people is addressing the gridlock that is happening on Line 1. Traffic is a health and safety issue and will only get worse if not properly addressed. I can tell you that this is a project that not only myself and the residents of Don Valley North but everyone in Toronto and the GHTA want addressed, and as soon as possible. This project will relieve overcrowding on our subway network and connect new neighbourhoods.

Can the Premier further elaborate on the benefits of the Ontario Line?

Hon. Doug Ford: Again, I want to thank our great MPP from Don Valley North.

My friends, the crown jewel of this transit system—and the Leader of the Opposition should be doing cartwheels down the centre of the Legislature here, because they're going through all the NDP areas. They should be happy downtown. They should be absolutely happy with getting a modern transit system to get away from the horse and buggy days, that they'd rather be on right now.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, our Ontario line will not just run from Pape to Queen, but it's going to run from the Ontario Science Centre all the way down to Ontario Place. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that you've been to a couple of rock concerts down at Ontario Place. You see the parking and you get on the Lakeshore—you can't move. Now people are going to have a rapid transit system that can deliver 400,000 people a day. That's what we need. We're going to connect to the Eglinton line. We're going to get people moving in this province. It is the—

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

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Mr. John Vanthof: My question is to the Premier. A week ago, the Premier revealed a budget that asked families across Ontario to expect less from their government, but there was one exception: When it comes to promoting themselves and their partisan agenda, the Ford government believes in big government, spending millions of taxpayer dollars on partisan sticker ads, telling businesses that they'll face huge fines if they don't display them.

Will the Premier tell us how much of the public's money he plans to spend on his partisan sticker ad campaign?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Greg Rickford: Let's see now, Mr. Speaker: I think we've all received our postcard telling us that we may be getting \$307 back. We're hearing the radio stations talk about the carbon tax. It seems like the federal government—there's no amount of money that they will spend to talk about and tout this job-killing, regressive carbon tax.

We feel differently. We think that a sticker at a gas pump with some public notice is an important way of letting the people of Ontario know how much this tax scheme is going to cost them. Imagine them putting their hands in one pocket and saying, "It's not going to cost you. We're actually going to give you more than it's going to cost." Yeah, right, Mr. Speaker.

That's why the stickers on the price of bread are changing in grocery stores as we speak. That's why sports teams way out in northwestern Ontario are now having to figure out whether they should change their schedule, because the bus from Dryden to Thunder Bay is going to cost the Dryden Ice Dogs a lot more money.

Let's be clear: This isn't just the individual. It isn't just the family. It isn't just the seniors. It's schools and hospitals. We won't stand for it, Mr. Speaker. We're going to—

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

Supplementary question.

Mr. John Vanthof: Families want to see investment in their schools and their health care system, but instead, they're getting cuts while the government invests all their time and money promoting the Premier and his partisan agenda.

Earlier today, New Democrats wrote to Elections Canada—I'd like to give this letter to the Premier as well—because it looks like the Premier's stickers fit the definition of election advertising under federal election laws.

Will the government be taking the stickers down during this year's election campaign, or will they force gas stations to register as third-party advertisers?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Mr. Speaker, this is an issue of transparency. It's our ability and our right as a province and as a government to let the people of Ontario know how much this job-killing, regressive carbon tax is costing.

It's not available to the federal government to spend unlimited resources on touting a tax that is going to kill

jobs in the province of Ontario, cost more monies for families and for seniors, and compromise the additional funds that we're putting into education and health, when the carbon tax is actually going to compromise some of those resources by costing those institutions more. That's a fact. That member knows it. He's got farmers up in northern Ontario who spend a lot more money on heating and operating their vehicles than just about anybody else in this province. They don't want the carbon tax. I've heard from them. I'm happy to let them know, through that sticker, how much it's costing—

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

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TAXATION

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: My question is for the great Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. Speaker, while the people of Ontario call for life to be affordable in Ontario, they've been met with a federally imposed carbon tax that does the exact opposite. As our government continues to work hard to fight against the unconstitutional tax, as of April 1, Ontarians have been met with a burden of increased costs to everything.

Yesterday, I was pleased to welcome our Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Solicitor General to my riding of Mississauga–Lakeshore to speak about how the federal carbon tax will impact costs to our community. Can the minister tell this House what the imposition of this carbon tax means to our local correctional facilities and our OPP detachments?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member for Mississauga–Lakeshore, I know the Solicitor General and I very much enjoyed visiting with the member and hearing from his constituents what a great job he's doing in that constituency.

We know that Justin Trudeau's carbon tax is going to cost the average family \$648, but what we're only learning now is the cost to vital institutions. My colleague mentioned some of them. Let's talk for a moment about security. Let's talk about OPP detachments: \$1.4 million in additional heating for OPP detachments and correctional facilities; \$2 million for additional fuel for OPP vehicles. That money could pay for 60 new cruisers. It could pay for 32 new correctional officers, something the opposition is often calling for: more correctional officers. But no, Mr. Speaker. That money, if the carbon tax goes ahead, will be drained out of security, drained out of those vital institutions.

That's why we're fighting the carbon tax. We need to make sure people know that, and we need to stop this job-killing, regressive tax.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I thank the minister for his answer. I know the residents of Mississauga–Lakeshore are concerned to hear how much this carbon tax is going to take away from their safety. We want police, firefighters, paramedics, correctional officers and other front-line responders to be able to continue providing the potentially

life-saving services we rely on. The federal carbon tax threatens these services and the affordability that the people of Ontario are longing for.

I know the Minister of the Environment worked hard on the plan that will ensure Ontario does its fair share, and I am proud to be part of this government that puts the interests of the people of Ontario first. Can the minister tell this House what our government is doing to ensure Ontario understands the true cost of the Trudeau carbon tax?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, the NDP may want the people of Ontario not to have the facts, but the good news is that people are catching on. They're catching on that over \$3 million is going to be the cost for the OPP and corrections. They've caught on that it's going to be \$27 million for hospitals and over \$20 million for schools.

I was at the Ajax GO station just this morning. I was sharing the good news, with the Minister of Transportation, about the two new trains: everyday rush-hour trains that are going to reduce greenhouse gases. But someone stopped me and said, "You know, how much more is it going to cost to fuel those trains? What money is going to come out of transit? How much more is transit going to cost because of the Trudeau carbon tax?"

Mr. Speaker, the good news is, the Minister of Transportation and I are going to let them know. We're going to let them know how much this carbon tax is costing vital services, because Ontarians want to know. We're going to use all the tools we have to let them know. And we're going to try to stop this carbon tax.

EDUCATION

Mr. Joel Harden: My question is for the Minister of Education. Yesterday, we learned in Ottawa that cuts to education will put 300 Ottawa public school teacher positions at risk. If the minister wants to quarrel with that number, it doesn't come from us; it comes from Mike Carson, the CFO of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

That plan to balance the budget on the backs of our kids means taking \$32 million away from our English public schools. It means larger classes, fewer electives and fewer opportunities for our kids.

The Premier said that not one front-line job would be cut, but hundreds of teaching jobs in Ottawa are at risk. And, Speaker, those teachers and EAs—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Government side, come to order.

Mr. Joel Harden: —bad news. They have to go back into the classroom. Imagine what that feels like.

Can the minister explain how 300 fewer positions is going to help teach students in the city of Ottawa?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Once again, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, come to order; Mississauga East–Cooksville, come to order.

There is someone over here who was shouting at the top of their lungs. I don't know who it was. Come to order.

Start the clock.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Again, it's just unbelievable that this party will go to every extent to continue to fearmonger and create havoc when they shouldn't be. It's very irresponsible of all of you to continue on this path, because the fact of the matter is, we are investing, as it came out in our budget—we've set aside \$1.6 billion in attrition protection. Not one teacher is going to involuntarily lose their job. The only reason—the only reason—the party opposite is continuing to choose to fearmonger over something that isn't even real is because they want to distract from the amazing things that we've brought forward in not only our education plan but our budget.

Our education plan has hit the mark. We're getting back to the basics. We're focusing on math. We're supporting teachers. We're investing in teachers. Anyone who wants to take an additional qualification course—

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

Mr. Joel Harden: What I would remind the minister is that what she's actually saying in her response is that the CFO of the Ottawa-Carleton school board is fearmongering. She's actually saying that the officials who do the work every day on the front line are fearmongering. That is despicable, Speaker.

More than 300 teachers, 40 early childhood educators—these people are having to go back into the class with pink slips hanging over their heads. Parents are telling me they've had enough. Students are telling me they've had enough. They can't wait for the pink slips of this government to be issued. It can't happen soon enough.

Will the minister listen to teachers, will they listen to parents, and will they stop these callous cuts?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Again, we are investing and setting aside \$1.6 billion so that no teacher involuntarily loses their job. Over and above that, we're working with our school boards on a regular basis, and they know that they're going to be receiving their GSN—Grants for Student Needs—envelope by the end of this month.

I would dare say, and I'd like to share with everyone right now, that both the Peel board and the Toronto District School Board have confirmed publicly that they will not be making any final staffing decisions until they have received their GSN. That's proof in the matter that this party is doing nothing but fearmongering.

Shame on you. Ontario students deserve better. Ontario parents deserve better. Ontario teachers—and they're getting it from this government. Shame on—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Once again, I'll remind the members to make their comments through the Chair.

Start the clock. Next question.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Mike Schreiner: My question is for the Premier.

This government has a habit of making head-scratching pivots when trying to dodge a question. When asked about sex ed, they answer with math scores. When asked about

cash-for-access, they answer with spaghetti. When asked about climate change, they answer with litter pickup.

Today I heard one of the government's partisan ads and learned that they believe trash collection is a better solution to the climate crisis than making polluters pay. I'm all on board with picking up litter, but I'm unclear how it will significantly reduce GHG emissions.

Mr. Speaker, can the Premier, based on the government's scientific calculations, tell us how much trash pickup will contribute to reducing Ontario's carbon emissions?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to answer the member's question, but I know there's a chance in the supplementary, so I'm going to take this opportunity to thank the member.

When the member from Guelph and the other people who mock things like trash talk down to Ontarians who are upset because there's litter and garbage, when they say that the only people who can talk about the environment are the ones who can fly to Switzerland for a conference in their private jets, when they say environmental sophisticates are the only people allowed to talk about the environment, they feed a cynicism that is not helpful. Our made-in-Ontario plan addresses that.

The reason it talks about litter, I'll say to the member from Guelph, is because the people of Ontario care about it. That's why we're going to talk about that and we're going to talk about the other issues that affect the environment.

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Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members take their seats. The member for Markham-Stouffville will come to order. The member for Mississauga East-Cooksville, come to order. The member for Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, come to order.

Hon. John Yakubuski: The flight leaves at 4, Mike.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, come to order.

Start the clock. Supplementary?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I participate in many litter pickups and I invite the minister to join me in one of them. But given the answer that was given, I think the government should spend less time concerned about math scores and more time concerned about their grasp of basic science.

Last year alone, the climate crisis cost Ontario \$1.2 billion. It cost the average household \$350. The Bank of England yesterday announced that there's \$20 trillion of infrastructure at risk due to the global climate crisis. The Premier responds with stickers.

So I would like to ask, can the Premier tell the House today how much the government's partisan ad campaign will cost the taxpayers of Ontario?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The question has been referred to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Hon. Rod Phillips: Speaker, through you to the member—and I do know he's involved in many litter pickups. You'll be pleased to know—and I know it's part of our

environment plan—we will have the first province-wide litter pickup day, and I'll invite you to join me in Ajax for that.

I promised the member an answer. Let's talk about science. Let's talk about the National Inventory Report, something the member knows quite well. It came out this week, Mr. Speaker. I've quoted it before. It says that Ontario has reduced emissions since 2005 by 22%, while the rest of Canada—

Interjections.

Hon. Rod Phillips: Which is worth applause—the rest of Canada has increased emissions by 3%.

The new numbers are out and the good news is, Ontario continues on its path. Our made-in-Ontario plan will get from the 22% to the 30%. But, Mr. Speaker, what was very interesting from the science is that the rest of Canada has gone up not 3% but 6%.

Why does the opposition and why does the member of the Green Party want to punish Ontario families when Ontarians are doing—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Order. I ask the government side to come to order. One of the government members wants to ask a question.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I ask the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek to come to order.

Start the clock. The member for Scarborough–Rouge Park.

PUBLIC HOUSING

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the amazing Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The safety of Ontarians, especially our most vulnerable, is a top priority of this government. As it currently stands, social housing providers are not allowed to refuse to offer a unit to a tenant who has already been evicted for serious criminal activity. This has created unsafe environments for those living in community housing across Ontario in their homes, where they should feel protected.

Can the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing please share with the House the steps he's taking to protect those living in community housing?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for Scarborough–Rouge Park for that outstanding question. I also want to thank him for the tremendous advocacy that he does in his riding and in this House. Speaker—

Interjections.

Hon. Steve Clark: Yes. Give him a hand. He deserves it.

Speaker, the member is right. People have a right to feel safe within their homes and in their communities. Our government has already taken real action on violence in our communities thanks to our Attorney General and our Solicitor General, who are combatting guns and gang violence across Ontario. However, there are very serious concerns about people, especially those who are our most

vulnerable, feeling safe in their own homes. That's why our government is making community housing safer. We are giving community housing providers the authority to refuse to rehouse a tenant previously evicted for a serious criminal offence. It's going to provide greater protection to individuals living in community housing so they're not fearing for their safety.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: Thank you, Minister, for that informative answer and for showing the commitment our government has in keeping the people of Ontario safe.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard stories of individuals in community housing encountering unsafe situations because people previously evicted for a serious criminal offence get rehoused. This is not fair to the law-abiding residents who want a safe place to call home. This also creates heightened stress on community housing providers as they try to help those who need it most.

This is a long-standing issue for the city of Toronto. Mr. Speaker, can the minister please tell us more about how his proposed reforms will protect some of the most vulnerable in our province?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, I want to thank the member for that question. Speaker, the member is right. The request for enhanced powers to keep communities safe came from the city of Toronto to the previous Liberal government, who ignored the request.

However, I want to quote Mayor John Tory. This is what he said yesterday about our proposal: "We have a duty as governments to do everything possible to stop the misconduct of a small group of people who are disrupting the lives of law-abiding Toronto Community Housing residents.... This change by the province sends a strong message to criminals that they are not welcome in TCHC, and we will not tolerate them threatening the peace and well-being of our communities."

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to protecting those most vulnerable, whether they be in our communities or in our housing spaces. Through an all-of-government approach, we are getting that done. These proposed changes will not only help the residents in Toronto Community Housing, but tenants across this province.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Ian Arthur: Speaker, through you, my question is to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. The government's first budget cut over \$350 million from the Ministry of the Environment. Its budget is less than half of what it was previously.

The bulk of the cuts was from conservation programs that helped people lower their hydro bills and reduce their GHG emissions. This is the low-hanging fruit, Mr. Speaker. This is the most cost-effective thing we could do to tackle climate change in Ontario, and the government doesn't even support that.

How does this government expect to meet even its reduced GHG emission targets when it has cut the programs

that encourage reductions from households and businesses in Ontario?

Hon. Rod Phillips: I am pleased to answer the question, although I'll note that conservation programs are part of the Minister of Energy's budget. But I do want to talk about the budget and what the member mentioned.

When we look at the budget and when we compare the budget—the member knows this—year over year, the budget from last year of course included the cap-and-trade carbon tax. It included the revenues from that. It included the Drive Clean program—two things that this government got rid of.

Mr. Speaker, we will talk all day about putting \$1.2 billion back in people's pockets by getting rid of the carbon tax. We'll talk all day about eliminating Drive Clean—\$40 million back in people's pockets. We have preserved programs for conservation, we've preserved the essential programs, and we have a plan that's not the largest carbon tax in the world, to hit our GHG targets.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek will come to order. The member for Niagara Falls will come to order.

Supplementary question.

Mr. Ian Arthur: Speaker, through you, again, to the minister: Last year, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change asserted that carbon pollution must end—end, Speaker—by 2050 to avoid a devastating degree of climate change.

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This government is competing with Nero for negligence. The minister has cut conservation programs for families and businesses, he's made deep cuts to the Ministry of the Environment, and he has no credible climate change plan. Climate change is real. It's here, and it's now. This must go beyond partisan politics.

When will this government stop campaigning for Andrew Scheer and get to the business of dealing with climate change once and for all?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members, please take their seats. Government side, come to order.

Minister of the Environment to reply.

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to talk about our made-in-Ontario plan and the climate portion of that.

There are pragmatic steps in that plan that take us, you'll remember, from that 22% reduction to the 30% reduction that was agreed in Paris, that was agreed by the Prime Minister; that, in fact, was agreed by the last Prime Minister. These are the targets our country has set and these are the targets that Canada will meet.

We are going to do it through a sensible approach, through a practical approach, not through the highest carbon tax in the world. The carbon tax that Justin Trudeau is bringing in is going to raise gas prices by 11 cents.

The NDP member's carbon tax would increase the price of gasoline by 45 cents a litre. If that's what you stand for,

stand up and say it. If you want a 45-cent-a-litre increase in gasoline, stand up and say it in this Legislature.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The government side will come to order so that one of the government members can ask a question. The opposition will come to order. The independent members will come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Start the clock. The member for Niagara West.

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE FUNDING

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. I understand the minister has recently announced measures to tie operating grant funding provided to universities and colleges to performance-based outcomes for students.

Frankly, Speaker, I was shocked to hear that for the last 15 years the previous Liberal government failed to do this. Instead of shovelling billions of dollars out the door without demanding results, our government is ensuring the billions of dollars taxpayers give to universities and colleges across Ontario actually deliver the skills and training that our students need to compete in the modern economy. I'm proud to see that our government sees how irresponsible it is to spend billions of tax dollars without ensuring accountability and results for students.

My question to the minister is simple: Can the minister tell us more about how our government will ensure that students are getting the skills they need for a high-quality job after graduation?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you to the member from Niagara West for his hard work and advocacy for our students.

Our government has introduced a made-in-Ontario mechanism to encourage the training and skills needed to find high-quality jobs for our young people. Our plan is based on measurable metrics. These metrics will include: student graduation rate; experiential learning opportunities; graduate earnings; graduate employment; and skills and competencies. These metrics will encourage universities and colleges to take active steps to improve the outcomes they deliver for our students.

Importantly, this is not about competition between universities and colleges. It is about institutions improving themselves based on their historical performance to deliver better results for their students.

Our government is putting students first by making Ontario a world leader in outcomes-based funding.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Thank you to the minister for that excellent answer. It's great to hear more details about how Ontario is working to put students first and ensure that our tax dollars are actually delivering results for the people.

In addition to the nine standardized metrics the minister spoke about, I know the minister will also be working with

colleges and universities on an individual basis to select an institution-specific metric.

It's great news that the minister's plan reflects the diversity of colleges and universities across Ontario, but can the minister also tell us about how her reforms strengthening post-secondary education are being received by colleges and universities across the province?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: The reactions of universities and colleges speak for themselves. Linda Franklin, president and CEO of Colleges Ontario, says, "The government's emphasis on outcomes aligns with the colleges' position in last year's provincial election.

"Our research has found most people want higher education to prepare students for successful careers. In polling results we released a few years ago, over 60% of respondents said the main purpose of post-secondary education should be to teach specific skills and knowledge that can be used in the workplace.

"We're excited by this initiative to transform higher education. This is a tremendous opportunity to ensure more people acquire the professional and technical expertise that is essential to success in the new economy."

Speaker, I am looking forward to working collaboratively with our institutions to create positive outcomes for our students.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Ms. Jill Andrew: My question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Yesterday, the Southern Ontario Library Service announced that the ministry informed them that their budget would be slashed by over 50% this fiscal year. Shame. The Ontario Library Service—North program will also be cut by 50%.

This cut will devastate Ontarians' ability to access library services. These services provide essential support to smaller libraries, ensuring that rural communities have equal access to all of Ontario's library collections.

Why is the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport taking away Ontarians' access to books and other vital resources that libraries provide to Ontarians every single day?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you for the question. Libraries across Ontario continue to receive funding for operations from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

After 15 years of reckless and out-of-touch Liberal government, the people of Ontario voted for a change, and that change is here. For the past nine months, we have worked to restore accountability, sustainability and trust in Ontario's finances. In our recent budget, we are keeping our promises to the people of Ontario and putting the province back on a path to balance, so that we can protect what matters most to Ontarians.

Our government for the people recognizes the importance of libraries to Ontario's communities across the province. We continue to maintain strong partnerships with our municipal and Indigenous libraries, assisting them in making sure that the services we fund are in line with our mandate of providing—

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

Ms. Jill Andrew: Ontarians should be shocked but not surprised by this cut from this government. After all, it was this Premier who, while a city councillor, voted to slash the Toronto library budget by nearly \$4 million. He infamously said that he would close libraries in his own community: "Absolutely.... In a heartbeat."

These cuts mean that libraries will have to make difficult, lose-lose decisions about what staff and services they can keep.

What does the minister have to say to the people in southwest or rural Ontario or remote First Nations communities in the north, who will no longer have access to the books and services they've come to rely on?

Interjections.

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

The minister to reply.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Once again, I would like to reiterate: The libraries continue to receive funding for operations, and the ministry continues to support them.

We continue to maintain strong partnerships with our municipal and Indigenous libraries. We assist them in making sure that the services we fund are in line with our mandate of providing quality public services for the people of this province while ensuring that they're getting value for their money.

1130

Let me repeat once again that after 15 years of abuses, reckless spending and \$1.4 million a day in interest payments, we are doing what is responsible and we are servicing and supporting the libraries. The previous Liberal government's wasteful and—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Don Valley East, come to order. The member for Toronto—St. Paul's, come to order. The member for Hamilton Mountain, come to order.

Next question.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Lindsey Park: My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Speaker, our 2019 budget takes a reasonable and pragmatic approach to balancing the budget. It restores confidence in Ontario's finances while protecting what matters most. That's our health care and our education systems.

As the Minister of Health has said, every part of the government's plan to end hallway health care and build a modern, sustainable and integrated health care system starts and ends with the patient. I'm extremely proud of a government that is investing in the front lines of our health care system in Durham and province-wide.

Can the minister please inform the members of this House of what our government is doing to support Ontario's hospitals and front-line workers?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you very much to the member from Durham for this question and for the great work that you're doing in your community.

Our government is building a health care system for the patients, families and caregivers of this province, one that we can be proud of. We're taking a comprehensive approach to modernizing our public health care system, and by relentlessly focusing on the patient experience and on better connected care, we will end wait times and hallway health care.

That's why we are investing in the front lines of our health care system with hundreds of millions of dollars for operational funding in hospitals. This is just one part of our plan to create a connected and sustainable public health care system that respects and empowers front-line workers, to provide the best possible care to patients in the province.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Lindsey Park: I thank the minister for her response. I'm proud to be part of a government that supports front-line workers and hospitals while strengthening our public health care system.

My constituents in Durham and everyone in Ontario will certainly benefit from this investment in our public health care system. Could the minister explain how these investments will benefit my constituents and all patients in Ontario?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you again to the member. These investments will ensure that our hospitals are able to deliver the high-quality, patient-centred care that Ontario patients expect and deserve while addressing wait times and ending hallway health care. Because of this investment, Ontarians will have more access to essential health care surgeries like hip and knee surgery, lung surgeries and life-saving stroke treatments. Our plans to modernize the health care system will ensure that people have faster, better, more coordinated access to health care services.

The people of Ontario have been and always will be the focus and the centre of all of our investments in health care.

KASHECHEWAN FIRST NATION

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: My question is for the Minister of Indigenous Affairs. Last week we learned that Kashechewan declared a state of emergency and began its pre-emptive evacuation this Monday. In total, this involves 2,500 people, including children and elders, who will be relocated to Timmins, Kapuskasing, Cornwall and Thunder Bay. Just imagine your family having to move every spring, having to leave everything behind and live in hotel rooms for months every year, Mr. Speaker.

Minister, when will you listen to the people of Kashechewan and work with them to create a solution?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Unlike the member opposite, I've actually had that experience, with eight years of living and working in these isolated communities. I've visited Kashechewan and been part of an evacuation.

The people of Kashechewan deserve a long-term, stable location to live in. I've been in Kapuskasing. I've been in Timmins to support these families in previous roles that I've been involved in. But I can assure the member opposite that we continue to work with Kashechewan.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Where do you live now?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I live in Keewatin, actually.

We continue to offer assistance to Kashechewan to ensure that people stay safe. We're working with the federal government, who have acknowledged their responsibility in ensuring that there's a long-term plan in place. Ontario will be there to ensure that whatever crown lands are identified or whatever decision is made that's community-driven, we'll be there to support that community, Mr. Speaker.

Where does the member from Timmins live?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Supplementary question.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Mr. Speaker. The people of Kashechewan are beneficiaries of Treaty 9. Their ancestors signed the treaty with Ontario to share the land, but this government does not seem to be interested in helping the people of Kashechewan by holding up their end of the treaty. The people suffer from these relocations that happen each year—every year, Mr. Speaker. The trauma caused by these relocations and seeing their homes destroyed by flooding over and over again would not be acceptable anywhere else in Ontario.

Chief Friday from Kashechewan will be at Queen's Park on April 29. Through you, Speaker, is the minister willing to meet and listen to the chief, yes or no?

Hon. Greg Rickford: The short answer is yes. Hopefully we'll have a chance to have a discussion in the not-too-distant future, and that discussion will take place with all of our partners, not just in the context of the evacuation that's going on and the incredible work that ministry officials are doing to coordinate the safe evacuation of community members to the towns and cities that have been identified, Mr. Speaker, but as well to identify a long-term solution to this problem, including a location for that community to move to.

Mr. Speaker, offers have been made to that community in the past and they've said no and we have respected that. We've respected that, Mr. Speaker, but we hope, moving forward, that the federal government will identify the lands that they see as safe and agreeable to the community. Ontario will be there to facilitate and support that opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

HOME CARE

Mrs. Amy Fee: My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I'm proud that our government for the people has created a sustainable plan that will take us to balance in five years, while protecting the essential services that people in my riding of Kitchener South—Hespeler value the most. It restores confidence in

Ontario's finances while protecting our health care system. I'm proud to be part of a government that is building a coordinated, connected public health care system that puts the patient at the centre of care.

Can the minister please inform the members of this House what our government is doing to support Ontario's home and community care workers?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you to the member from Kitchener South—Hespeler for the question and for the great contributions you're making both to the community and to our province.

Our government is investing \$267 million in home and community care, including new investments of \$124 million for home care and \$20 million in community care. These new investments in home care will provide patients with more access to care and services across the province. This funding will directly support 1.8 million more hours of personal support services, 499,000 more nursing visits and 102,000 more therapy visits.

By relentlessly focusing on the patient experience and on better-connected care, we will reduce wait times and end hallway health care. We are building a sustainable and connected public health care service and system for the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes question period for today.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Transportation has told me he has a point of order.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Mr. Speaker, we had three visitors join us late up in the Speaker's gallery. Page Virginia Will's family are here for the last day: Melanie Will, Selena Will and Gale Rader. Welcome to the Legislature.

MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Hastings—Lennox and Addington on a point of order.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Tomorrow is a very special day, of course. Members in this House will have a chance to return back to their ridings and work for their people there.

It's also a very special day for my seatmate. She will be a young—I think it's 29 tomorrow; I'm not sure. Happy birthday, Daisy Wai.

GEORGE BINNS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Scarborough—Guildwood on a point of order.

Ms. Mitzi Hunter: I just have to wish a member from my constituency a happy birthday today. He's 80. George Binns is loved by all. Happy birthday, George.

EASTER HOLIDAY

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Ottawa South on a point of order.

Mr. John Fraser: I just want to wish all my colleagues here a happy Easter and a great time with your families this weekend. I really look forward to seeing you in a week.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask our pages to assemble. It's now time to say a word of thanks to our legislative pages.

Our pages are smart, trustworthy and hard-working. They are indispensable to the effective functioning of this chamber, and we are indeed fortunate to have all of them here. Our pages depart having made many new friends, with a better understanding of parliamentary democracy and memories that will last a lifetime.

Each of them will go home, continue their studies and no doubt will contribute to their communities, their province and their country in important ways.

We expect great things from all of you. Maybe some day some of you will take your seats in this House as members or as staff. We wish you all well.

Please join me in showing our appreciation to this group of legislative pages.

Applause.

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. Khanjin assumes ballot item number 81 and Mr. Rasheed assumes ballot item number 101.

DEFERRED VOTES

THE PEOPLE'S HEALTH CARE ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LES SOINS DE SANTÉ POUR LA POPULATION

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

Bill 74, An Act concerning the provision of health care, continuing Ontario Health and making consequential and related amendments and repeals / Projet de loi 74, Loi concernant la prestation de soins de santé, la prorogation de Santé Ontario, l'ajout de modifications corrélatives et connexes et des abrogations.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We now have a deferred vote on a motion for closure on the motion for third reading of Bill 74.

Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1143 to 1148.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the members to please take their seats.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the members once again to please take their seats.

On April 10, 2019, Ms. Elliott moved third reading of Bill 74, An Act concerning the provision of health care, continuing Ontario Health and making consequential and related amendments and repeals. Ms. Kusendova has moved that the question now be put.

All those in favour of MS. Kusendova's motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Andrew, Jill	Gélinas, France	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Glover, Chris	Rakocevic, Tom
Arthur, Ian	Gretzky, Lisa	Schreiner, Mike
Bell, Jessica	Harden, Joel	Singh, Gurratan
Berns-McGown, Rima	Hassan, Faisal	Singh, Sara
Bisson, Gilles	Hatfield, Percy	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Bourgouin, Guy	Horwath, Andrea	Stiles, Marit
Burch, Jeff	Hunter, Mitzie	Tabuns, Peter
Coteau, Michael	Karpoche, Bhutilla	Taylor, Monique
Fife, Catherine	Kernaghan, Terence	Vanthof, John
Fraser, John	Lalonde, Marie-France	West, Jamie
French, Jennifer K.	Mamakwa, Sol	Yarde, Kevin
Gates, Wayne	Mantha, Michael	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 66; the nays are 38.

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

Ms. Elliott has moved third reading of Bill 74, An Act concerning the provision of health care, continuing Ontario Health and making consequential and related amendments and repeals. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? There are many 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.

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

The division bells rang from 1152 to 1153.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Ms. Elliott has moved third reading of Bill 74, An Act concerning the provision of health care, continuing Ontario Health and making consequential and related amendments and repeals.

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

Ayes

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

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

Andrew, Jill	Gélinas, France	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Glover, Chris	Rakocevic, Tom
Arthur, Ian	Gretzky, Lisa	Schreiner, Mike
Bell, Jessica	Harden, Joel	Singh, Gurratan
Berns-McGown, Rima	Hassan, Faisal	Singh, Sara
Bisson, Gilles	Hatfield, Percy	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Bourgouin, Guy	Horwath, Andrea	Stiles, Marit
Burch, Jeff	Hunter, Mitzie	Tabuns, Peter
Coteau, Michael	Karpoche, Bhutilla	Taylor, Monique
Fife, Catherine	Kernaghan, Terence	Vanthof, John
Fraser, John	Lalonde, Marie-France	West, Jamie
French, Jennifer K.	Mamakwa, Sol	Yarde, Kevin
Gates, Wayne	Mantha, Michael	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 66; the nays are 38.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): This House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1156 to 1300.

ROYAL ASSENT SANCTION ROYALE

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to a certain bill in her office.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. William Short): The following is the title of the bill to which Her Honour did assent:

An Act concerning the provision of health care, continuing Ontario Health and making consequential and related amendments and repeals / Loi concernant la prestation de soins de santé, la prorogation de Santé Ontario, l'ajout de modifications corrélatives et connexes et des abrogations.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Michael Parsa: I'd like to welcome my friend Rabea Allos, from Richmond Hill, to Queen's Park. Thank you for coming.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Jessica Bell: I recently received a letter from Rosedale Heights School of the Arts, one of the many excellent high schools in my constituency. The letter was written by students of the school, and it was about the Ford government's cuts to education. Attached to the letter were 16 pages of handwritten signatures—nearly 400 students signed their support.

I'd like to share some of their words here: "The Ontario government's changes to education threaten the learning experience of students across the province. These changes have been implemented under the impression that all students learn the same way. It is not fair to assume that all students will benefit from 'going back to basics' or from learning online.

"The Ontario government is depriving students of excelling in courses that they are passionate about. It is also unjust that students are encouraged to attend post-secondary institutions upon graduation, but are being denied the necessary loans and grants that will get them there."

Here's how the letter ends: "We are writing to you to speak out against the changes, as our education is what determines our future."

Speaker, the passion and dedication of young people in my community is an inspiration. Our students know that education is the key to their future; they've said so right here. It's a shame that the Ford government doesn't agree.

YEZIDI NEW YEAR

Mr. Michael Parsa: Yesterday was the Yezidi New Year, also known as Sere Sal. It's with great pleasure that

I am privileged to rise and wish the Yezidi community in Ontario and all over the world a happy new year.

Sere Sal, which literally translates to "head of the year" or "beginning of the year," is celebrated on the first Wednesday after April 14. This day is also known as Charshema Sor, or Red Wednesday.

This rich and historical celebration dates back 6,769 years, and it centres around fertility and renewal. Every aspect of this auspicious event is a symbolization of the story of creation, immortality, death, rebirth and incarnation in the renewed cycle of life and fertility.

The Yezidi community all across Ontario and all over the world began their celebration of this ancient tradition on Tuesday evening. During this festive period, celebrants dress in colourful clothing and decorate their homes and communal areas with bright colours and symbols of fertility and renewal.

This sacred day is not only viewed as the beginning of a new calendar year, but it is also a time when the body and spirit are also renewed.

Last night, I joined Sheikh Mirza and other members of the Yezidi community in Richmond Hill as they celebrated the arrival of the new year. I had an absolutely fantastic time. Once again, I would like to thank the Yezidi community for inviting me, and I wish them all a happy new year full of joy—a healthy and prosperous Sere Sal.

YOUTH JOB LINK PROGRAM

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: On April 1, managers at the Neighbourhood Group in Beaches–East York woke up to a cruel joke. Out of the blue, they received a memo to let them know that the Youth Job Link program, funded by Employment Ontario, had been abruptly cancelled, effective immediately.

This meant the immediate loss of a front-line worker whose job it was to help young people figure out how to get their first jobs, grow their job search skills and plan a career. She was working with a caseload of 50 youth. This front-line worker lost her job with no notice; it just evaporated. On Friday she had a job; on Monday she didn't.

Think about the cruelty of the process for a moment. For months the neighbourhood group asked their contacts at Employment Ontario about the status of the program. For months they were met with silence. Then, suddenly, the notice that it wasn't going to be coming. Meanwhile, the neighbourhood group was left to pay layoff, termination and notice period costs.

The Premier campaigned on a promise that no one would lose a job, then that no front-line worker would lose a job. I would like the Premier to look into the eyes of the woman who lost her job on April 1 and admit that he has failed to meet that promise, and into the eyes of the youth whose paths to employment just got that much harder.

All across Ontario, 300 Youth Job Link front-line workers learned via equally cruel processes just how empty the Premier's promises were. That's not okay, Ontario.

ANNIVERSARY OF ATTACK IN TORONTO

Mr. Stan Cho: On Tuesday at 1:30 in the afternoon, my community of Willowdale will fall silent to mark a difficult anniversary. A year ago, on a sunny April 23, the first truly warm day of the year, Willowdale suffered a tragedy none of us could ever have imagined: A man intending to cause harm and terrorize our community drove a rented van up onto the sidewalk of one of the city's busiest streets, ending the lives of 10 people and injuring 16 others.

Like many of my neighbours, this event shook me to my very core. We were scared. We had been attacked in our home, on the streets we walk every single day. It was a terrible reminder that even in an amazingly diverse neighbourhood, a loving and supportive community, we can be vulnerable to unimaginable hate. There is no place for such hate in Ontario.

But in this most terrible moment, our community came together. We stood up against those who sought to divide us. Within moments, everyday heroes in my community leapt into action. They delivered first aid, they gave each other shelter and comfort, and they reached out to strangers to let them know that they were not alone. This is what makes Willowdale special. This is what makes Willowdalers so great.

This morning we rose for a moment of silence, and I want to thank my colleagues on all sides of the House. And while I believe it's important, Mr. Speaker, to mark this day and to take a moment to remember, we must also act. We must continue to be everyday heroes, to comfort our friends, to stand up against intolerance and hate, and to bring our communities together. Mr. Speaker, we must.

LEGAL AID

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: The Ford Conservative government's 30% cut to legal aid funding is discriminatory, xenophobic, possibly unconstitutional and a blatant attack on the rights of people already pushed to the margins of society. Legal aid is accessed by the most vulnerable to ensure their rights are upheld and that people gain a sense of security and dignity: people such as low-income tenants and seniors facing illegal eviction from big landlords, domestic violence survivors, workers fighting workplace discrimination and people being cut off social assistance.

Studies show that every dollar retracted from legal aid leads to a \$3 to \$5 increase in areas of government expenditure such as homelessness, health, family breakdown and incarceration. Eligibility for legal aid was already so low a single mother working a minimum wage job 40 hours a week didn't qualify for a legal aid certificate.

This government has also ceased all funding for immigration and refugee issues. This means Canadian citizens and permanent residents seeking to reunite with their spouses, or migrants and refugees in immigration detention, will get no help. Refugees fleeing situations of serious harm will get no help and could be deported and face persecution, maybe even death.

We are not a province that believes only the rich should have access to due process. We are appalled that this government thinks so. We call on this government to reverse their decision and ensure Ontario is a place where everyone has access to a fair legal process.

Cuts to legal aid means that this government is making Ontario a place to grow inequality and oppression.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Scarborough—Guildwood.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I seek unanimous consent to present a member's statement on behalf of the member from Simcoe—Grey.

1310

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member from Scarborough—Guildwood is seeking unanimous consent of the House to make a member's statement on behalf of the member for Simcoe—Grey. Agreed? I heard a no.

JASON HELMOND

Mr. Doug Downey: I'd like to take this opportunity to talk about Jason Helmond, an exceptional young man in my riding of Barrie—Springwater—Oro—Medonte, and Barrie—Innisfil. He's known throughout the area. He's a pillar of our community. He's an avid volunteer, an active fundraiser, a Special Olympian and a man of many talents.

While Jason has volunteered for a number of different causes, the Terry Fox Run is the closest to his heart. For the past three years, Jason has run his own community fundraiser, called Razors of Hope. Every year, Jason raises money from within the community and holds a head-shaving event—he shaves his own head—in support of the Terry Fox Run. Last year, Jason raised over \$5,000 on his own. He's hoping to beat that goal this year.

Jason embodies what it means to be a good citizen. He is kind, he's caring and he always puts others ahead of himself.

Thank you to Jason for all your hard work in supporting our community and inspiring local youth to follow in your footsteps.

On May 11, he'll be doing his event at Barrie city hall. Please join me in wishing him success as he begins another year of fundraising for a great cause.

STRYKER CANADA

Ms. Donna Skelly: Today I would like to talk about yet another multi-million-dollar private sector investment in the city of Hamilton and, more specifically, in my riding of Flamborough—Glanbrook.

On April 9, Stryker Canada celebrated the opening of its new headquarters in Waterdown, a nearly \$100-million commitment. This 130,000-square-foot building will be the new home of their corporate offices and operations, employing over 200 people. This move allows Stryker to consolidate all aspects of their business under one roof.

Stryker is a world leader when it comes to medical technology and equipment. They offer innovative products and services in several areas, including orthopedics

and neurotechnology, that help to improve patient and hospital outcomes.

For years, Stryker Canada has had a huge impact on the way health care is delivered in the city of Hamilton. For example, they supply hydraulic stretchers found in all Hamilton ambulances. Stryker is also the company that built a robot that was used by surgeons at St. Joe's health care in Hamilton to perform the first-ever partial knee replacement surgery in Canada.

I'm thrilled to see companies that use 21st-century technology and innovation, like Stryker, call Hamilton home and expand their operations in our very own backyard.

Once again, I would like to congratulate Stryker on the opening of their new headquarters in Waterdown. I wish them all the best as they continue to create state-of-the-art technology in our health care system.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Gurratan Singh: The Conservatives' cuts to education hurt both students and teachers. Schools across Brampton are already chronically overcrowded. These cuts will take things from bad to worse for our students' quality of education.

These cuts have a real impact in our city. Peel will see over 360 teachers lose their jobs. Over the past few days, my office has been flooded with phone calls from teachers who have just learned that, come September, they will be out of a job—teachers like Priti. She's a young mother. She has been working tirelessly to be a teacher. For more than seven years she has been doing post-secondary education and volunteering. Finally, last year, she landed a permanent position, only to learn on Tuesday that that permanent job is now gone come September—a job that she cared about, that she was passionate about. She made investments in her life because of this job, and now she doesn't know how to manage the upcoming year financially.

Despite losing her own job and being put in such a precarious situation, when I talked to her, she was more concerned about the students and their education. She already has 27 kids in her class, and she finds it hard to manage. The other classes in her school have as many as 28 to 30 kids per class. Under these Conservative cuts, that class size is bound to grow.

Teachers deserve better. Students deserve better. We need to build a society where we strengthen education, support our teachers and provide opportunities for our students, not tear down their future.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members' statements? Is it a point of order?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: A member's statement.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Scarborough–Guildwood is standing, but I don't believe you're entitled to do a member's statement today.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to present a member's statement so that we can commemorate the tragic loss of lives in Toronto a year ago.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Scarborough–Guildwood is seeking unanimous consent of the House to make a statement in recognition of the lives that were lost one year ago. Agreed? There's a no.

There's still time for one more member's statement from the government side. Members' statements?

The member for Scarborough–Guildwood.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Speaker, I'm seeking unanimous consent of the House to present a member's statement to commemorate the 10 lives that were lost.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The House decided not to grant a member's statement at this time.

PETITIONS

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I have a petition here signed by members of my community of York South–Weston, entitled "Stop Ford's Education Cuts

"Whereas Doug Ford's new education scheme seeks to dramatically increase class sizes starting in grade 4;

"Whereas the changes will mean thousands fewer teachers and education workers and less help for every student;

"Whereas secondary students will now be forced to take at least four of their classes online, with as many as 35 students in each course;

"Whereas Ford's changes will rip over \$1 billion out of Ontario's education system by the end of the government's term; and

"Whereas kids in Ontario deserve more opportunities, not fewer;

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

"Demand that the government halt the cuts to classrooms and invest to strengthen public education in Ontario."

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

BEER AND WINE SALES

Mrs. Gila Martow: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government for the people was elected on a mandate to make life more affordable for Ontarians; and

"Whereas restricting sales to the LCBO limits consumer choice and makes it less convenient to purchase beer and wine; and

"Whereas the people of Ontario are responsible consumers and adults can be trusted to make responsible personal decisions;

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

"To make life better for Ontarians by expanding the sale of beer and wine to corner stores."

Of course, I affix my signature and give it to page Sanjayan.

DRIVER EDUCATION

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: This petition is titled “Protect Cyclists: Teach the Reach.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas hundreds of Ontario cyclists are injured every year in collisions with car doors; and

“Whereas the Dutch reach helps ensure people exiting a vehicle take a clear look for passing cyclists before opening their door; and

“Whereas teaching drivers the Dutch reach can help reduce injury and death while supplementing other measures, like separated bike lanes and vulnerable road user legislation; and

“Whereas state Legislatures in Illinois, Massachusetts and Washington and the UK Department for Transport have adopted the Dutch reach method in driver training;

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

“Pass Bill 89, the Teach the Reach Act, so that the Dutch reach is taught in drivers’ education in Ontario.”

I fully agree with it and will affix my signature.

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EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I have a big stack of petitions from students in my riding.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas students in Ontario pay some of the highest tuition fees in the country and carry the heaviest debt loads, even with the recently announced 10% reduction; and

“Whereas many students will now be forced to take on more loans rather than previously available non-repayable grants; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has failed to take action on the chronic underfunding of colleges and universities; and

“Whereas students must have an autonomous voice that is independent of administration and government to advocate on our behalf; and

“Whereas the proposed ‘Student Choice Initiative’ undermines students’ ability to take collective action;

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

“—provide more grants, not loans;

“—eliminate tuition fees for all students;

“—increase public funding for public education;

“—protect students’ independent voices; and

“—defend the right to organize.”

I support this petition. I will be signing it and asking Mirren to bring it to the table.

GASOLINE PRICES

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

“Whereas the government for the people was elected on the promise to put more money in people’s pockets; and

“Whereas high gas prices contribute greatly to the already high cost of living in Ontario; and

“Whereas Premier Ford campaigned on a promise to lower gas prices ... ;

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

“To move forward with a reduction in the gas tax to further lower the cost of gas in Ontario and put more money back in the pockets of the hard-working people of Ontario.”

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

AUTISM TREATMENT

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Shannon and Chris Lavoie, Laurie Zaldiner, Chantal Chartrand, Sean Staddon and everyone on the Northern Ontario Autism Alliance for collecting those petitions. They read as follows:

“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;”

They “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, will affix my name to it, and ask my good page Katherine to give it to the Clerk, and thank her for all of her work.

TAXATION

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

“Whereas the government for the people campaigned on a commitment to support northern Ontario; and

“Whereas the cost of living and doing business in the north is very high; and

“Whereas many must rely on air travel as the only means of accessing some communities;

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

“Move forward with a reduction in the aviation fuel tax to support the economic growth and development of northern Ontario.”

I'm very pleased to affix my signature and give it to page Ben, who we're all going to miss greatly.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: This petition is entitled “Don't Increase Class Sizes or Cancel Full-Day Kindergarten.”

“Whereas the vast majority of parents, students, and educators support smaller class sizes and the current model of full-day kindergarten and want the best education possible for the students of Ontario; and

“Whereas larger class sizes negatively impacts the quality of education; reduces access to teaching resources and significantly diminishes teacher-student interactions; and

“Whereas the impact of larger class sizes will be particularly detrimental to students who need additional support; and

“Whereas Ontario has an internationally recognized public education system that requires careful attention and the investment to ensure all of our students can succeed;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to commit to reducing class sizes, maintain the current model of full-day kindergarten, and make the necessary investments in public education to build the schools our students deserve.”

I support the petition, will be affixing my signature to it and giving it to page Erynn.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I rise to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas students in Ontario pay some of the highest tuition fees in the country and carry the heaviest debt loads, even with the recently announced 10% reduction; and

“Whereas many students will now be forced to take on more loans rather than previously available non-repayable grants; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has failed to take action on the chronic underfunding of colleges and universities; and

“Whereas students must have an autonomous voice that is independent of administration and government to advocate on our behalf; and

“Whereas the proposed ‘Student Choice Initiative’ undermines students’ ability to take collective action;

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

“—provide more grants, not loans;

“—eliminate tuition fees for all students;

“—increase public funding for public education;

“—protect students’ independent voices; and

“—defend the right to organize.”

This is presented by 130 Centennial College students, and I will sign it and give it to page Sanjayan.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mrs. Gila Martow: I have yet another petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas students living in York region attending York University’s Keele campus will be affected by the two-fared system from York Region Transit (YRT) and the TTC; and

“Whereas students will pay \$3.75 with a Presto card or \$4 cash for a ride on the YRT and have to transfer to the subway contracted under the TTC at Pioneer Village station and pay an additional \$3 with a Presto card or \$3.25 cash fare; and

“Whereas many students would have to walk more than 20 minutes to get to some of their classes to avoid paying additional fares;

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

“To remove the two-fared system and allow students who ride the YRT to transfer to the TTC without paying an additional fare, regardless of ... whether or not they use a Presto card.”

Of course, I affix my signature and give it to page Stella and wish her a happy Easter.

TUITION

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: My petition is “Support our Students: Stop Cuts to OSAP!”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario has the highest tuition rates in Canada, lowest per-student funding from the province and highest student debt, and the government’s changes will only make the situation worse;

“Whereas removing the interest-free six-month grace period means students will end up paying more, and are pressured to pay their loans even before finding a job or starting a career;

“Whereas the Conservatives’ decision to cancel grants and force students to take loans instead is another barrier to college and university;

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

“Direct the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities to reverse the recently announced OSAP cuts, protect the existing tuition grants and reinstate the six-month interest-free grace period after graduation.”

I agree with this petition and will be signing it and giving it to page Saniya to take to the Clerk.

FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Mr. Mike Harris: I have a great petition that I wholeheartedly support here today.

“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 (MNRF), 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.”

As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, I fully support this petition. I have affixed my signature and I’m passing it to page Elizabeth to bring to the table.

DRIVER EDUCATION

Ms. Marit Stiles: I’m proud to present the following petition on behalf of my constituent Corey Sullivan. It reads:

“Protect Cyclists: Teach the Reach.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas hundreds of Ontario cyclists are injured every year in collisions with car doors; and

“Whereas the Dutch reach helps ensure people exiting a vehicle take a clear look for passing cyclists before opening their door; and

“Whereas teaching drivers the Dutch reach can help reduce injury and death while supplementing other measures, like separated bike lanes and vulnerable road user legislation; and

“Whereas state Legislatures in Illinois, Massachusetts and Washington and the UK Department for Transport have adopted the Dutch reach method in driver training;

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

“Pass Bill 89, the Teach the Reach Act, so that the Dutch reach is taught in drivers’ education in Ontario.”

I’m very pleased to sign this petition and I’ll hand it over to page Virginia to table with the Clerks.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mrs. Gila Martow: I’ve yet another petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the government for the people was elected on a mandate to protect Ontarians’ jobs and improve conditions for job creators in our province; and

“Whereas we stood side by side with our federal partner and offered our full support throughout the USMCA negotiation process to make sure a deal got done; and

“Whereas, though a deal was reached, we remain concerned that the federal government’s concessions on

class 7 milk, access to our dairy market and remaining steel and aluminium tariffs could negatively impact Ontario workers and businesses; and

“Whereas our government is consulting with representatives from these affected industries to determine the impact of this deal; and

“Whereas the government made a promise to vigorously defend and advance Ontario’s economic interests, and make sure that we protect our economy, jobs and the people of Ontario;

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

“Continue to protect Ontario jobs by calling on the federal government to compensate Ontario dairy farmers for the negative impacts that result from USMCA concessions.”

I affix my signature and I give it to page Julien and wish him a happy Easter.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Sara Singh: I’m proud to present this petition on behalf of a wonderful volunteer named Gurdeep Singh, who has been collecting signatures around the province.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas education is a right, not a privilege;

“Whereas not everyone is ready to leave high school right after graduation and needs more time to develop and figure out what they want to do;

“Whereas many students in the past have benefited tremendously from the extra year in high school. Without the extra year, those students would have had a harder time to excel in the future. It is not fair to deny current students this opportunity;

“Whereas the best investment is to invest in our youth, as the youth is our future;

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

“Direct the Ministry of Education to allocate funds toward those students who take a victory lap in high school and to eliminate the 34-cap limit.”

I’m proud to affix my name to this petition and I’ll send this off with page Katie.

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

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should immediately provide Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre with the \$607,408 necessary to maintain its current level of family resource and residential/respite programs provided to London area families.

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

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It's a great honour to stand in this House today and put forward a motion that would help countless families in the London area. Today's motion requests funds for Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre, an organization in my riding of London North Centre.

Merrymount provides care and assistance to families going through difficult transitions and periods of crisis. They offer a wide range of services for around 8,000 families and 4,000 children in the London area each year. Merrymount focuses on early intervention services that give children and families a firm foundation so that they can cope with complicated emotions in a healthy way. They do so by providing around-the-clock care in a non-judgmental setting that helps families manage trauma.

By taking a proactive approach, Merrymount addresses early behavioural and emotional problems before they become deep-seated and require intensive intervention. This helps children avoid poor performance in school, violence and family breakdown. In doing so, Merrymount helps keep families together.

Any community would be lucky to have an organization like Merrymount, but their services in the London area are vitally important. London has one of the highest rates of child poverty in Ontario. One in four children in London live in poverty, Speaker, and that number is only going up. There has been a 5.3% increase in London's child poverty since 2005, which is 6.5% higher than the average rate in Ontario. For many families, Merrymount is the only place they can get the help they need.

Unfortunately, Speaker, Merrymount is experiencing a funding shortfall. Without support, Merrymount will have to scale back the services so many London families rely upon. That's why I've put forward this motion that provides Merrymount the funds they need to continue two of their programs: the crisis respite/residential program and the family resource program. Let me briefly discuss them both for the House.

Merrymount's respite/residential program provides care to children in situations where the family is experiencing problems that make them temporarily unable to provide appropriate child care. When a parent or caregiver experiences crisis, the respite/residential program is there to help. It provides children with healthy homemade food, clean clothing, and a comfortable and colourful bedroom. There are toys, movies and games onsite to help children feel like they're in a safe and loving home.

This program is a lifeline for those who need temporary assistance providing for their children. Janet, for instance, is a grandmother and the only caregiver for her grandson. She said, "Being a senior raising a child on my own has been challenging." But when Janet suffered a heart attack, Merrymount was there to give her support. They provided care for her grandson while she recovered. Janet said, "Without having the respite care, it would be very stressful, even unhealthy for me."

Jackie is another single parent in London who has benefited from Merrymount's services. They have helped her as she balances parenting with her mental health struggles. Jackie said that Merrymount allowed her to rest and attend counselling programs. "This program allows me to rejuvenate myself. Having a break from my daughter allows me to care for myself which in return helps me to be a better parent."

This program operates 18 beds for children, but Merrymount will have to close seven of these beds if they cannot obtain support. Speaker, we need to ensure that children facing crisis have those beds available when they need them the most.

This motion also requests funds for the family resource program. This program offers a variety of support-based and psycho-educational programs for parents and children. Their programs help strengthen the bond between parents and child by fostering understanding. They allow parents to discuss personal challenges and to learn to understand their child's behaviour. But without proper funding, the family resource program will lose around 4,200 hours of programming services.

Speaker, London-area families deserve a government that funds the programs and services that support them through times of crisis. Londoners rely on Merrymount for assistance, and their services are critical during a time of increased child poverty and long waits for mental health services.

Merrymount staff are able to address trauma and crisis in a way that promotes attachments between children and their parents or caregivers. They help mitigate the effects of trauma, build trust, and empower families by giving them the tools they need to stay together as a healthy family. Merrymount provides support for London families, and now it's time the government supported Merrymount.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I have to admit that I didn't know about the Merrymount centre until there were some news reports that came out in the winter that they were concerned about their funding going forward. I think it's quite clear that we have a lot of challenges here in Ontario. We're all concerned about the economy. The economy is what gives people an income. People pay taxes. The government collects the revenue. We all know that we have a terrible, terrible deficit and debt situation in Ontario where we're spending \$1 billion a month just on servicing the interest, at low interest rates, on our debt. We have to get things under control. We know that.

They are tough decisions, to decide between funding. We fund children's aid societies, we fund crisis centres, we fund youth and adolescent mental health capacities, and we know it's not enough. We know that the community also does a lot of fundraising. There's a foundation for Merrymount. People work very hard to support the organization and the good work they do. I look forward to maybe someday visiting because, as I said, I've never even heard of it, let alone visited it. I'm really happy that the

member has brought this to all of our attention so we can learn more and look for ways that we can offer support.

We know that we want to have strong communities. The government is there to support all the services and the good work they do. In the 2018-19 fiscal year, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and children and youth services provided over \$1.8 million to the organization to offer child and youth mental health and child welfare services in their community. Of this, nearly \$160,000 was dedicated to building family capacity and keeping parents and children together, which—just to mention, I have quite a few friends who are social workers at Metro children's aid and at Catholic Children's Aid. I know that there's a very big effort made to keep children with their families whenever possible and to provide the support that they need so that children can stay with their families. We know that, long-term, being with your family members is a much more positive quality of upbringing for the children. But not everybody has the background and the ability to provide their children with the nurturing, with the support—physical, mental and emotional—that all children deserve and should have in the province of Ontario.

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In addition to the \$160,000 dedicated to building family capacity, there's also over \$58 million that was provided to local children's aid societies, which offers a wide range of services to families and children. Obviously, our government is very resolute in supporting children and their families.

We know that there's discussion today about offering more support to our municipal police services as well as the OPP. It's a big concern, I think, to all of us in the House, the human trafficking of children, young adults and adults in the province of Ontario. Partly because of all the advances in electronics and the Internet and websites, the traffickers have a much easier time at finding a market for their product; that's how they see these children, youth and adults. They see them as just a commodity. They can get their commodity out there and get them on the market, and they move them around the province. We know that it's not enough to just offer support for victims; we have to do more to prevent so many people becoming victims.

We all have a job to do. It's a very multi-faceted job here representing our communities, representing the families and the youth in our communities, and ensuring that we're doing more on prevention in terms of safety and that everybody has the character and the strength to understand, before they get trafficked or abused or in a difficult situation—that they know, I want to remind people who are watching at home, that they should be aware of where our offices are and to come in, even if you're a child. Come in and tell us if you need help. We are there to offer our support whenever we can.

We know that the ministry is doing everything within a limited budget to support the children, youth and families in all of our communities, but of course, to talk to this specific private member's bill is asking us to do away with the process of application and funding. We all know that

we've been visited in our offices by people who are frustrated by how government works—whether it's slow, whether it's a family resource office, whether it's applying for your health card or for a birth certificate. But there's a process that has to be followed. It's not just about picking up a phone and saying, "Somebody made a mistake on the form," and changing it. You have to go, you have to get the form again, you have to fill out the form and start the whole process over.

We're all looking at efficiencies in all parts of the government, looking at ways to streamline, to cut red tape for businesses, for individuals, for families; to streamline the process for organizations to apply for their funding. If they were getting funding on a one-year basis, they weren't able to plan for the future. How can you sign a lease, Madam Speaker, if you only get one year of funding?

We know that there's a process. We know sometimes it's too slow. We know sometimes it's frustrating, and sometimes we feel it's not fair. But let's all work together and ensure that the process is vigorous, that the funding is going to where it's supposed to be going, and that there's accountability and sustainability.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I'd like to start off by saying what a pleasure it is to be here on Thursday afternoons to talk about private members' bills, and specifically to congratulate the member from London North Centre for bringing this very, very important bill forward to this House for consideration. I hope this government will support it, because there are so many things that are happening in all of our cities that we bring here to the Legislature that we know need attention.

The Merrymount support and crisis centre is one of these agencies that are saying that families in London are struggling. There are a lot of issues around family challenges, but Merrymount is there to guide them through them. There are so many things that they do overall to help the community. These two programs that are in jeopardy right now are, of course, the crisis respite program and the family resource program. They don't just do that; they do so much more. But these are the two things they need to complement the services that they offer, and so they've reached out to the community. They've let people know this is something that they need help with, and it's not something we can turn our backs on and ignore.

I know the member talked about a process. But I ask myself: What is the cost of these stickers? We've asked that. This can actually change people's lives. Cancelling the carbon, the energy program for that: That's their prerogative. But to prioritize things like a sticker on the gas station and making businesses pay \$10,000 because they won't follow those regulations really isn't what I want to see in this province.

I'd like to see the government spend their time and energy really looking at what's going on in London and the ask of the member from London North Centre. What he's asking for is short-term bridge funding to get this agency through a problem. I don't think they've ever come

to the government for funding. We know what's happening in society is that there are a lot of agencies that are asking citizens to donate to help their communities, and not everybody is equipped to do that. There are so many agencies out there now asking for that extra help, and Londoners are feeling very tight with what they can help with, and so it's really important that we understand the gravity of this situation.

One of the things that we can do is to help children in poverty. This government talks about helping people in their most vulnerable time. As we know, London has children in poverty—one in four. That is too much, and if it's happening in London, it's happening everywhere around this province. Early intervention is something that's so important.

Merrymount helps keep families together. Imagine your worst nightmare if you are a family: You're in crisis, and you need some help. You need to have this crisis respite to get yourself over some really hard times, and that isn't available because the beds are being cut from 18 by seven—that would be 11—so they don't have the extra seven beds, and CAS comes in and separates you from your child because you couldn't get that respite care and you have nobody else to help you. Those are real-life examples of what does happen to families. I hear about it in my constituency office all the time.

The two programs that we're talking about—it's a very small amount of money that makes such a huge difference in people's lives.

We have to remember that we need to put ourselves, sometimes, in places where other people might be to make sure that those things don't happen. If we don't want them to happen to our own communities, our own families, then we have to remember that we're the Legislature, and we have the authority and we have the will to stop that in London.

I hope this government will support this motion—and not just support, but then take action. That would mean a lot.

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

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I'm very happy to rise here today and speak on this motion introduced by the member for London North Centre.

Merrymount Children's Centre is a recognized and respected leader in crisis support and transitional services for children and families. They provide around-the-clock support and crisis care to the people who need it most. Speaker, I want to emphasize here that our government is committed to supporting the Merrymount centre. The work they are doing to strengthen their community is admirable, and we all applaud their efforts.

Merrymount's crisis residential/respite program provides short-term, 24-hour care for children at high risk during periods of transition, crisis and stress. This program protects children and ensures that they are able to have stability during a crisis.

Our government is committed to supporting our most vulnerable. That's why the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Health and

Long-Term Care provided over \$1.8 million to the centre in 2018-19 for children and youth mental health services and children's welfare services. It's why the Ministry of the Attorney General provided over \$466,000 in 2018-19 for the Supervised Access Program. This program provides safe and neutral visits and exchange services for children caught in the middle of disputes over custody and access. This is in addition to the over \$58 million we provided to local children's aid societies in 2018-19. It offers a full range of services for families and children. All of this is part of our government's commitment to protect what matters most for Ontarians.

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However, as the member should know, there is a process in place when it comes to receiving funding requests. The request is evaluated based on the current fiscal realities of the province. As the member knows, the previous Liberal finance minister was spending \$40 million a day more than they were taking in, every day. That was reckless and it was unsustainable. He left Ontario with a \$343-billion debt. Fortunately, we've started to clean up this fiscal mess so that we can protect what matters most: our hospitals, our schools and our public services.

We know that Merrymount centre has identified funding pressures and has made a request to the city of London for assistance. That process would see Merrymount identify their funding pressures and then make a proposal to their local planning table for consideration. If additional funding is available, Merrymount would have to demonstrate the need for additional funding in relation to other mental health priorities in their community. This is the process that is in place for organizations that experience undue or extraordinary pressures. Merrymount centre is free to draft a proposal and then go through the existing process.

This has nothing to do with the great work that Merrymount provides for their community. Their work to promote exclusiveness of children with special needs into licensed care settings through All Kids Belong is important work. Their community outreach to local schools and neighbourhood groups has made a positive impact throughout London and the wider community. Merrymount, like every community organization, has funding options available that they can undertake in order to be successful.

Our government and our Minister of Children, Community and Social Services are committed to working closely with community service providers and children's aid societies to make every dollar count. The approach we're taking is a comprehensive one based on solid evidence and good planning to meet everyone's needs. That's why I cannot support this motion today.

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

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: It's a real honour to be able to speak to this motion by my colleague the member for London North Centre.

I want to make the point to my colleagues across the aisle that Merrymount is a really good investment. It has a proven track record. We know that it manages these situations, which are so delicate, with care, with love and with compassion. I want to make the point off the top that it is not a question of what we do with kids in this kind of situation. The children's aid society and putting kids into care is absolutely not equivalent to what Merrymount does for kids.

Let's just talk about what happens in trauma for a moment, because I think it's really important to understand this. When kids have experienced trauma for any reason, whether it's because they've experienced something at home or whether it's because they are refugees and they've come to Canada and they've experienced trauma in a conflict situation, for whatever reason, trauma is something that has an enormous impact on their life. If it's not sensitively handled, it can cause enormous problems for the kids at school and down the line.

This is where we talk, with regard to racialized kids and, particularly, Black kids, about the school-to-prison pipeline. Let me explain to you how that works. It doesn't happen because teachers are cruel and don't care about kids; it often happens because teachers misunderstand what trauma is. You don't know what it is that's going to trigger a child's trauma. Sometimes it could be a certain smell or a loud noise or a phrase or something that's happening in the classroom, and the child can act out because of the trauma and not even understand themselves what's going on. The teacher sometimes misinterprets that as bad behaviour. When this starts to happen on an ongoing basis, and the child is punished for trauma, instead of trauma being something that's understood, you end up in a situation where the child starts to feel that they don't belong in school and they shouldn't be there. The older they get, if they've had this track record as a bad kid, they end up getting into trouble, and then you end up on a very problematic path.

We know that putting kids into care is not a good situation. A lot of kids in care end up in situations where they are, frankly, abused or where the trauma is exacerbated. The ideal situation is one that a place like Merrymount has, where the kids are kept together, where they're in a home-like situation they are loved and cared for while they are there, so that when their parents are ready to take care of them again, there's a seamless transition.

This is the kind of thing that saves the province an enormous amount of money down the line, because you end up with kids who know that they're cared for, who have a minimal amount of problems at school, in their social lives and down the line, and who don't end up in the criminal justice system or on the street or with long-standing mental health and addictions issues.

I beg you to please consider the value to the provincial purse of keeping Merrymount's programs going.

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

M^{me} France G  linas: It is a pleasure for me to speak in support of the motion for funding for Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre.

I represent a riding from northern Ontario where we could only wish that we had access to those services. Let me tell you what it looks like when you don't. Let's start with a family where a child develops some kind of mental health needs. There are some things that go on to all of us—and the child needs mental health support. The first thing they do is reach out to a primary care provider, a family physician or a nurse practitioner if they have one. Then they refer them to a service like Merrymount family support that provides counselling. Where I am, it's not the same support services.

The wait-list for children who need community-based mental health is 18 months. We expect that by the end of spring, we will be looking at more like a two-year wait-list to get your child to see somebody to help with their mental health.

What happens in between? The first thing that happens is that the family falls apart. They are desperate. They want to help their child, but they don't know what to do, Speaker. They don't know what's good for the child. One parent wants to treat it as bad behaviour and punish the child. The other one thinks, "No, maybe we should do"—and the first thing that happens during that 18-month wait is that the family breaks apart, because you want to do the best thing you can for that child, but you don't know what it is.

The second thing is that the child goes untreated. What happens when the child goes untreated? The sickness doesn't go away. It's like every other sickness: You need treatment to get better; you need access to care to get better. So the child will end up, at some point or another, in the emergency room of a hospital. The hospital will look at the child, and they will look at the situation of the family and say that it is not safe for this child to be released back into the community, and they will admit the child. This is not the place to provide good care.

The places to provide good care are agencies like Merrymount Family Support and Crisis Centre, who could do the warm hand-off; who could not only support the child but support the family; who have the beds for them for respite, so that you can work on the family and get them together again, so that they have the counsellors and the mental health workers who know how to properly get this child and this family back into recovery, back into health and functioning for now and for later.

All of this is at risk right now in London, for an amount of money that may look like a lot to you and I, but if you look at the budget of the government, it is a small amount of money that you invest upstream to give the right care at the right time to children and families.

1400

This will pay off many, many times over in other services that won't be needed. This is a wise investment. Let's make it that it's done.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member for London North Centre has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank my colleagues from Thornhill, London–Fanshawe, Beaches–East York and Nickel Belt for their comments.

I'd like to turn to the government benches and talk about a couple of things that have been mentioned. We heard the member from Thornhill mention that kids need to be looked after in terms of their physical, mental and emotional needs; and also, from the member from Mississauga–Lakeshore, that the government is committed to supporting those who are the most vulnerable. Therefore, this funding decision should be one that is easy to make.

As the member from Nickel Belt has said, this is up-stream investment. This is something that will save us in the long run. It makes good sense. It is money well invested.

Early intervention here is key. If we can address these needs in a proactive way, then families will stay together. Surely this government wants families to stay together.

I'd also like to think about the member from Beaches–East York, who mentioned that CAS is not the same as Merrymount—Merrymount does so much more—and that trauma is frequently misunderstood. Merrymount has a host of professionals who are well able to handle what these families are going through.

But most often, when we look at families who are going through these needs, they have to see a primary care practitioner, and then they get diagnosed, and then they are referred. Often, this length of time is something that should not be happening.

We also heard government members talking about streamlining processes and cutting red tape. Well, children are not red tape. Children deserve more from their government. Children deserve this investment, and quite frankly, they are worth every single penny.

I look forward to the government investing in children and not talking about a process whereby Merrymount needs to beg and scramble and ask for some other funding. They are worth it.

LOWER AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 POUR DES TAUX D'ASSURANCE-AUTOMOBILE PLUS BAS

Mr. Rakocevic moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 90, An Act to amend the Insurance Act with respect to Automobile Insurance Rates / Projet de loi 90, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les assurances à l'égard des taux d'assurance-automobile.

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

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Thank you again, Speaker. I would like to wish those who celebrate a happy Easter and a happy Passover.

This bill is better known as the Lower Automobile Insurance Rates Act, an apt name because, if passed, this bill will lower automobile insurance rates across Ontario and bring enhanced transparency to this industry that

Ontario's drivers have been overpaying for a long, long time.

If you want to drive in Ontario, you have to purchase auto insurance—it's the law—which means that you have to do business with these companies. But as you shop around for the best rate, you quickly find out that it's going to cost you a lot to get auto insurance. In fact, Ontario's drivers pay some of the highest auto insurance rates in the country, yet we don't have the most accidents per capita. Even worse, people living in places like Brampton, Scarborough and my lifelong home of Humber River–Black Creek easily pay almost double the rates of most other places.

All the while, the auto insurance industry racks up profits, quarter after quarter, while Ontario's drivers are gouged. They collect our premiums and invest that money, that cash flow, to make even more profits. But when it comes time for them to pay out a claim, they often delay payment or, even worse, refuse to pay at all.

These auto insurance companies apply to the government regulator and are entitled to make 11 cents on every dollar they invest, when setting premiums. Where else can you hope for this kind of profitability?

Over the past 25 years, under successive Conservative and Liberal governments, auto insurance companies have had a free ride. In 1988, their return on equity, defined as an insurer's after-tax income divided by their equity, set by the provincial regulator—FSCO—was 12.5%, or a profit of \$12.50 for every dollar they invested. At that time, the rate of interest on a 10-year government of Canada bond was 9.8%.

In 1996, this return was reduced to 12%, or a profit of \$12 for every dollar they invested, when interest rates on 10-year government of Canada bonds were 7.8%.

Today, the interest rate on these bonds is 2.1%, but auto insurance companies are granted a return on investment of 11% when setting rates.

In 2013, FSCO, the government regulator, retained Dr. Fred Lazar and Dr. Eli Prisman to examine what would be appropriate auto insurance profitability in light of such high premiums. Their important work in that report and in two subsequent reports commissioned by the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association revealed that Ontario drivers have overpaid an estimated \$4.5 billion in auto insurance premiums over the last five years.

Remember, these companies are guaranteed clients, because Ontario law states that we must pay them to drive. They take our premiums and invest the money, to make even more money. We have some of the lowest claims per capita in the entire country, and it has been estimated that we have overpaid these companies to the tune of \$1 billion a year.

According to calculations made by Drs. Lazar and Prisman, the return on equity from which auto insurance rates are approved should have more closely reflected 10-year government of Canada bonds, based upon the level of risk. This would have meant lower auto insurance rates for all Ontarians.

The former Liberal government and the regulator decided to ignore the recommendations, which would

have brought relief to Ontario's drivers. Even worse, rather than bring auto insurance premiums under control, insurance premiums continued to rise, and the Liberal government made concessions to the industry, allowing them to slash accident benefits and even increase the tort deductible so that injured claimants would receive even less money. Insurance companies said this would reduce premiums, yet rates went up.

The Liberal government agreed with auto insurance companies to set a maximum of \$3,500 in payout for treatment for accident victims claiming to have minor injuries, to reduce premiums. FSCO calculated that because of these reforms, in 2011 alone, auto insurance companies saved \$2 billion in accident payments. Yet rates went up.

The Liberal government reduced the maximum benefit payout for catastrophic injuries from \$2 million to \$1 million, and yet rates went up. Do you see a pattern?

When you take these companies at their word on how to reduce premiums, they simply wrestle away concessions that help them make even more money, and then raise premiums and come up with new concessions to demand. It's an unending cycle.

In his 2017 report on auto insurance in Ontario, David Marshall found that while Ontario had one of the lowest rates of accidents and fatalities, it also had the most expensive auto insurance premiums—55% higher than the Canadian average, 24% higher than in Alberta, and double that of Quebec. This is simply unacceptable.

Throughout the Liberal government's mismanagement of auto insurance, Ontario's NDP have been consistently fighting for fair auto insurance premiums. In 2012, Ontario's NDP revealed the postal code discrimination that we talk about so much today. I helped in this fight by holding local town halls, doing research to show that such costs were unjustified, and writing articles to local newspapers to spread awareness of this unjust practice.

That year, MPP Jagmeet Singh, now the leader of the federal NDP, put forward a private member's bill to prohibit insurers from using your postal code as a factor in determining your auto insurance rate, and also to increase auto insurance transparency in setting rates.

Of course, the Liberals and Conservatives both voted against it, saying it would raise rates in other places. To this very day, places like my lifelong home of Humber River-Black Creek, Brampton and other GTA postal codes overpay with the country's highest rates.

In 2013, the NDP wrestled a major concession from the Liberal government, who promised to reduce auto insurance premiums in the province by 15%. Not only did the Liberal government break this promise, later calling it a stretch goal, but premiums continued to rise.

Last year, the exceptional member from Brampton East, an NDP MPP, put forth a bill that would end postal code discrimination in the GTA, where it is primarily happening. When the Conservative government caught wind of this excellent bill, they tabled a Conservative private member's bill months and months before it was intended to be debated, just to scoop a press conference.

1410

Then, the government voted down the NDP private member's bill, saying that ending discrimination in some postal codes would make premiums go up elsewhere. So if they really believe that, why allow a Conservative member's PMB that, in title at least, seeks to end discrimination in auto insurance?

I'll tell you why. It's because it will not end postal code discrimination in auto insurance. The Conservative private member's bill, if it ever makes it to committee, third reading or royal assent, says it will end the use of postal codes as a primary factor in setting auto insurance rates. But as I demonstrated during the bill's debate, drivers are charged primarily on factors pertaining to driving experience, such as their years of insured coverage and claims history. As I said, the Conservative bill will not help fix postal code discrimination.

Even worse, the Conservative government introduced unprecedented concessions to the auto insurance industry in their budget last Thursday. As with most things with this government, details of their auto insurance plans are sketchy and concerning. But it is clear that these changes were literally written for them by the auto insurance industry itself. For instance, it appears that they will allow companies to provide skeletal coverage which would leave drivers completely stranded in a crash. In fact, such policies would likely resemble an overinflated secondary driver's permit, paid out to a private company, that would only provide protection to drivers by saving them from a ticket if pulled over by an officer.

But even worse, they will allow the auto insurance industry to use a person's credit history as a risk factor in setting rates. This would be catastrophic to Ontario's low-income families, many of whom already overpay because of their postal code. It's a truly shameful way to discriminate and punish drivers who can afford to pay the least.

This is the sad state of auto insurance in Ontario. We have been driven here by years of Liberal mismanagement, and today we sit at a crossroads in "park." On one road, the Conservative government road, are further massive concessions to the auto insurance industry, which uses the government of the time to put more money into their own pockets rather than pass on cost savings to drivers—yet another attack on Ontario families who are struggling to make ends meet. The second road is my road, and I urge you all to drive with me and support the Lower Automobile Insurance Rates Act.

The government regulator allows these auto insurance companies to seek excessively high profitability in setting their rates while Ontario drivers are gouged. This needs to change. The regulator allows these auto insurance companies to factor in excessive operating costs in setting their premiums. This includes marketing, commercials, even legal fees that these companies pay when fighting against the same drivers they collect premiums from when they are injured. The formula used by the regulator is more than 25 years old. It does not account for advances in technology and productivity.

The Lower Automobile Insurance Rates Act was drafted in consultation with Dr. Lazar, an economist from

the Schulich School of Business and an expert in the field. If passed, my bill will lower premiums for Ontario drivers. It will reduce the excessive return on investment that auto insurance companies seek when setting their rates. They should not seek sky-high profits on the backs of Ontario drivers. This bill will reduce auto insurance operating costs to a more reasonable level. And this bill will require auto insurance companies to provide more detailed information so the regulator can provide better oversight, such as a detailed breakdown of their corporate overhead costs; information related to salaries, bonuses and benefits paid out to their employees; as well as their legal, marketing and customer retention expenses, including commissions paid out.

Furthermore, the bill will require auto insurance companies to reveal details on premiums and claims, broken down to a postal code level, so we can finally get to the bottom of the excessive gouging of specific postal codes in Ontario—postal codes such as my riding of Humber River–Black Creek, as well as Brampton, Scarborough and more.

My bill, the Lower Automobile Insurance Rates Act, will reduce auto insurance premiums in Ontario, and I urge all members of provincial Parliament to support it. Dr. Fred Lazar has said of my bill that it would bring regulation of the automobile insurance industry into the 21st century and finally tilt the balance in favour of consumers, enhance transparency and reveal how our premiums are being spent, and that implementing these changes could reduce premiums in this province by \$1 billion a year.

The time for auto insurance company concessions is over. They have not bargained in good faith, and have made far too much money on the backs of Ontario drivers who have overpaid for far too long. Enough is enough. We need real change that respects Ontario's drivers.

All of you have a clear choice: Are you for excessive auto insurance premiums, or will you stand with me and fight for Ontario's drivers?

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

Mr. Doug Downey: This is a very interesting and very important area. We certainly have been talking a lot about it because it was in the budget. The private member's bill was filed before the budget came out, so some of the parts that he's raising have already been answered in Putting the Drivers First plan.

I just want to refer back—we did a survey, and we received 51,000 responses. That's a lot of responses. That's a ton. Here's what we heard. The survey wasn't even out for very long. It was an online survey done from January 8 to February 15. It was a fairly tight time frame, but the results are in. We collated them all. We looked at them all:

—68% of the people agreed that insurance providers should have more online tools available, like banks and other financial institutions;

—60% said shopping for and buying auto insurance is difficult and frustrating;

—55% said it was too difficult to tailor their auto insurance policy to meet their needs;

—54% reported that insurance policies are complicated and difficult to understand. I'm actually surprised that that's so low, at 54%, because they are difficult to understand; and

—53% said it takes too long to receive benefits after being injured in an accident.

Some of these things are items of passion that I heard the member opposite speak to. These are areas of frustration. The good news for drivers and the good news for the public is that we were already working on these things. As soon as we got elected, we started consultations. We started working with stakeholders and not just the insurance companies, as would be alleged, Madam Speaker. We've been working with everybody, whether it be victims' groups, service providers—everybody up and down the chain involved in auto insurance—so that we get a balanced program to offer more choice and convenience for drivers in Ontario.

I agree entirely with the member opposite—some of the things he said, in particular, about the botched program of the Liberals over several years. If you go back—and I did this in preparation for our budget. I went back to the previous years' budgets to see what the Liberals had actually put in their budgets and what they had committed to doing. It really wasn't very much, except reducing coverage in an attempt to reduce costs. But they weren't dealing with the structural challenges in auto insurance. We've taken a more holistic approach. We've taken a broader approach to it to take costs out of the system.

When the member opposite talks about the David Marshall report—that's, in fact, the first report that I read when I got appointed as PA of finance. I read David Marshall's report, and I was fascinated by some of his suggestions. You'll see a lot of his report reflected in our blueprint.

The member's private member's bill came just a little bit too early, because he started it with some of the right premise but then went in the wrong direction. I'm pleased to say, Madam Speaker, that our blueprint takes us in the right direction. It's things like the \$2-million catastrophic limit. The Liberals, in their brilliance, said, "We're going to reduce auto insurance by 15% by reducing coverage by 50%," and they still couldn't do it. They still couldn't hit the 15%. We've righted that wrong. We've moved it back up to \$2 million as the default. We're giving drivers choice, but we're making sure that they're protected.

We're also giving drivers choice in terms of the kind of product that they want that will be more tailored toward their need. That's different than the private member's bill in front of us that tries to run the insurance company for the insurance company. We have a different philosophy on whether we enable positive change or whether we step into the shoes of the company and tell them how to run their own business.

Madam Speaker, in speaking with reform activists and people who are regulatory in New Jersey, for instance—New Jersey had a real problem. Insurance companies were

fleeing the jurisdiction because of the structural and the product and the regulator. It was a mess. New Jersey was in a state of crisis. We've learned from that. We've learned from other jurisdictions, because the Liberals had us on this path that we were headed for a very, very bad space.

We've taken some of the advice and some of their learned experience, and we've put it into our plan. It's not reaching into the companies and telling them what kind of profit they can get, and it's not telling them how they should be running their business and putting our hand on the wheel of their machine.

1420

We're going to open up for choice. We're going to open up for more competition. We're going to make sure that things are moving in the proper direction.

You can hear it in the words, Madam Speaker, words like "rack up profits," as if "profits" is a dirty word. It's an approach.

We're constantly battling poor decisions that the Liberals made over the years. The only thing I can say is that the NDP voted for those budgets. So to stand up now and say that we got a win on the auto insurance and then nothing happened—all I can say is, fasten your seat belts—we're talking about auto; fasten your seat belts—because we're moving forward in a direction that is going to improve auto insurance for all these people.

That the government regulator needs to change was one of the propositions: "We need to change the regulator." Well, good news, more good news: It's in the budget. We are changing the regulator. We're moving to FSRA from FSCO.

FSCO is cumbersome. FSRA is a much more nimble and progressive regulator that leads by principle. The people working in FSRA are just fantastic. Due credit to the Liberals: Probably one of the best things they did was put FSRA in motion. It was already in motion when we got here; I'll give them credit for that. But we're taking advantage of that good decision, and we're making sure that auto insurance is being regulated in a different way, for the benefit of consumers.

I'll leave some time on the clock, as one of my other colleagues would also like to speak to this issue.

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

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I want to begin by thanking the member for Humber River–Black Creek for bringing this bill to the House. He has shown tremendous leadership on this file. This bill is a testament to his determination to make life better for everyday people in the riding of Humber River–Black Creek and beyond.

For far too long, insurance companies have been lining their pockets at the expense of everyday Ontarians. It is wrong, plain and simple. In my riding of York South–Weston, I regularly hear from constituents who are struggling to pay for their car insurance. With the cost of living continuing to rise, many people just cannot afford to shell out \$500-plus a month for insurance, a rate which, unfortunately, is far too familiar to many in my community.

Constituents often ask me what the government is doing to fix the broken auto insurance system, and the truth is, not nearly enough.

For 15 years, the previous Liberal government failed to bring about any substantial change to this file, and Ontarians are paying for it to this day. They failed to support the NDP's call to lower auto insurance rates—yet another broken promise by the Liberals, and another betrayal of the people of this province.

Now we have the Ford Conservatives in power, who are not making things any better for the people of York South–Weston. This shows a complete disregard for the hard-working people of this province. It is no surprise that the Ford Conservatives blocked an NDP bill that would have ended postal code discrimination. The bill that they put forward in its place falls far too short in bringing about any relief for the people of my riding, the GTA and across this great province.

We all know that the system just does not work, not for the people of York South–Weston and not for the rest of the province. "When it comes to driving, it is clear that Ontario's auto insurance system is broken—and drivers deserve better." These are the words of the current finance minister. It is all well and good to talk the talk, but what Ontarians need is action.

The Ford Conservatives boast that under their plan, if a driver agrees to a credit check, or to claim benefits through an insurance company's preferred provider of auto repair or health care services, drivers may get a discount from their insurers. Giving insurance companies even more leverage than they already have does nothing to help the drivers in this province. All this does is allow insurance companies to dictate who fixes your car after an accident, and where you go to receive treatment and rehabilitation. This gives drivers less choice and insurance companies more power.

And as if postal code discrimination was not bad enough, this government now wants to give insurance companies another avenue to discriminate: credit ratings

Ontarians deserve better, Madam Speaker, and that is precisely what this bill will deliver.

In 2013, the Financial Services Commission of Ontario commissioned Dr. Lazar and Dr. Prisman, professors at York University's Schulich School of Business, to determine what an appropriate return on equity would be for insurers, which would then, in turn, inform auto insurance premiums. The two professors were also commissioned by the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association two years later. In the report published by them, Madam Speaker, the estimate was that Ontarians overpaid auto insurance companies a total of \$5 billion.

Interjection.

Mr. Faisal Hassan: Billion with a B, yes. This figure amounts to 9.5% of auto insurance premiums paid from 2013 to 2018, money that Ontarians could have used to save for retirement, to help pay for their children's education, to pay their bills. For 15 long years, the previous Liberal government allowed this to happen under their watch, and now the Conservatives are picking up where they left off and only making things worse.

This bill will lower auto insurance rates by providing regulators with clear guidelines to be used to approve premium rates. By writing into law set thresholds for return on equity and total premiums, this bill will lower the cost of auto insurance for everyday Ontarians and leave more money in their pockets for things that matter.

In this age of immense technological advancement, this bill also mandates that insurers provide the Financial Services Commission of Ontario with data on total auto insurance premiums and payouts in each postal code every year, hence ensuring that decisions on auto insurance premiums are data-driven and transparent.

Madam Speaker, this bill is the comprehensive bill Ontarians need and have been waiting for, for too long. I call on the members on the opposite side of the House to support this bill and finally bring about real change for the drivers of this province.

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

Mrs. Nina Tangri: I'd like to thank the member from Humber River–Black Creek for bringing this private member's bill forward, because it allows my esteemed colleagues and I to really look and educate him and the other members on what auto insurance is really about.

We know and we all agree that, for years, the previous Liberal government let the auto insurance situation in Ontario get out of control. We were elected on a promise to ensure that insurance rates are affordable and sustainable for Ontarians, and that's what we are committed to do. But blatantly attacking businesses is not the way to do it. Our government is committed to making Ontario open for business, not driving away business and jobs.

As the Minister of Finance said in the budget last week, our government is making transformative changes in the province's auto insurance system, changes that drivers are looking for. And if I may say, Madam Speaker—I quote—we will give “drivers more options when deciding which insurance coverage suits their needs and gives them more control over their rates. We will allow insurance companies to offer drivers discounts and a variety of options not previously available.

“In addition, we will introduce a driver care card, which will streamline access to care by providing important information that will make the claims process easier to navigate.

“And we will adopt a ‘care, not cash’” approach, a “default clause to ensure that a driver's auto insurance coverage will pay for treatment instead of costly legal fees. It will also provide for an improved early treatment system, and a return to the default benefit limit of up to \$2 million”—from the \$1 million it is today—“for those who are catastrophically injured in an accident.”

I'm just going to talk a little bit about the driver care card. Today, when someone has an accident, they are assigned an adjuster. That adjuster helps them navigate the system to get the care they need, to get the vehicle fixed, and it can sometimes be a lengthy, cumbersome process, especially if you were hurt in an accident. The driver care card will really help those people navigate the system, to

be able to go to a provider very quickly and, hopefully, get better faster.

1430

Over the winter, our government received well over 50,000 responses from Ontarians to our auto insurance survey. What we found was that Ontarians believed that insurance policies are too difficult to understand and that they couldn't tailor the policy to fit their specific needs. In my past life, not too long ago, I was an insurance broker, so I understood this completely when trying to educate our clients on what coverages they have and what options they have to increase their benefits, whether to take collision or not to take collision, and what the implications are. It is a very difficult policy to understand.

Rather than do pretty much nothing, as the previous government did, or attack businesses, as the opposition wants to do today, we are doing things differently and doing things right by putting drivers first.

We talk about what the previous Liberal government brought in. Why did they bring in the insurance policies that we have today? Because the former NDP member from Brampton East told the government at the time that in order to get support from the NDP, they had to do something about auto insurance. Then, they came up with this crazy number of 15%—a number that the Premier at the time said was a stretch goal. It was not only a stretch goal; it was impossible. And who was to get that 15%? The people in Brampton? Absolutely not. I can tell you from experience and fact that many people in Brampton, even with those deductions that they were saying they were going to make, actually had an increase in premiums. It was extremely inequitable—a very poor policy that we had to explain to our clients when they were getting a lot less coverage for a lot more premium.

What we're doing: We're putting drivers first. We're lowering costs through increased consumer choice and competition in the insurance market. Based on what the member from Humber River–Black Creek wants to do—it will drive insurance companies away. When we have less insurance companies, there's less competition, which means there's less chance of the premiums going down.

We are working with FSRA and the newly established Serious Fraud Office to develop a fraud reduction strategy and modernized data analytics to detect fraud, and new rules on unfair or deceptive acts and practices. Fraud is a serious problem in the auto insurance industry. Until we can find ways to combat fraud, insurance premiums cannot go down.

We're increasing accessibility and affordability by offering drivers more choice in terms of discounts and coverage. When people have more choice of what coverage they wish to have, and if they're experienced, they can actually get more discounts.

My time is almost up, but I wanted to talk a lot more about how we can bring insurance premiums down.

I will not be supporting this private member's bill, and I encourage everyone in this House not to support it, as well.

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

Mr. Gurratan Singh: I rise today in support of this legislation to bring down auto insurance rates, something that's truly hurting Ontarians across our province.

I want to start, though, by talking a little bit about Tom Rakocevic, from Humber River–Black Creek. He has been a tireless advocate on this issue for the past 10 years.

Interjections.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: He needs a round of applause.

He is so committed to his community. I've been to two town halls in his community. We always have crowds there of individuals—close to 200 people—who come by to hear and communicate and express their frustration on this issue. He was organizing before being elected, writing letters, writing articles. That is the kind of representative you need in your community. We're honoured to have him as part of the NDP.

I'm here today to talk about why this bill is so important and, more than anything, contextualize it in our greater context of the history of fighting for auto insurance reform and fairness in Ontario.

I remember first dealing with the issue of auto insurance in 2011, when I was knocking on doors alongside my brother during the 2011 provincial campaign. I remember that at that time, as we'd go door to door, we'd meet individuals who would talk to us about auto insurance. There was this deep, deep sense of injustice in their hearts when they would talk about it. They'd say that they were paying more for auto insurance than for the mortgage of their home. They would say these things, and they'd communicate—and this was the first time we were hearing this in a political context, and it really moved us. It was the foundation for the earlier work that my brother, Jagmeet Singh, the former MPP for Bramalea–Gore–Malton, did in this House. He understood that the crux of what we're facing here is an issue of fairness, an issue of discrimination, an issue where certain communities in Ontario, because of their postal code, purely because of where they live, are being charged more. Same record, same driver, same car: You put them in Brampton, they'll pay one rate; you put them in another community, and sometimes we'll see rates drop by as much as 50%.

I was doing some research as I walked in here and earlier on this issue. I remember, recently, I pulled up an article from the Guardian from 2014. It talks about insurance in America. The headline of this article was, "Are Auto Insurance Companies Red-lining Poor, Urban Drivers?" What they found is that there is a direct correlation between racialized communities, low economic communities and the rate of car insurance that they paid. They found, in Detroit, that people from Detroit would pay as much as \$1,200 more a year than other parts of America for car insurance, despite the fact that their record was clear. They had had no problems.

Now what we're seeing—this issue of redlining—is effectively the crux of what we're talking about right here. There are a lot of issues in auto insurance. There are a lot of problems. One of the major issues we know is this issue of discrimination in terms of your postal code. We've seen that this is an issue across North America. We've seen that

this is an issue of fairness and an issue of justice. So when we look at this context and the history we've seen in Ontario, we see that my brother put this issue on the map. He started talking about it. We pushed the previous Liberal government, and they agreed to a 15% reduction—an agreement, a promise, that they broke, that they lied to Ontarians about. But if we look at it further—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Sorry to interrupt the member, but the member will withdraw.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Withdraw.

Further, when we look at what happened subsequent to that, he put forth legislation in 2012 to end postal code discrimination, and the Conservatives and the Liberals together voted down this legislation. So they have a history here, the other side. The Conservative government has a history of not fighting for Ontarians and not putting Ontarians first. Instead, the result is that the cost of car insurance is going up and up.

Now, if we take this to the current context, what do we see? The Conservative track record, since getting elected: They have, since getting elected, already increased rates to car insurance. They have approved those increases to rates. They have voted down my private member's bill that I put forward to stop this act of postal code discrimination, and they put forward their own bill, which is clearly a huge loophole bill. I call it the loophole bill, because within it—they have lawyers on their side. There are Conservative lawyers. I implore you: Ask them. I'm a lawyer and, as a lawyer, when I read this piece of legislation put forth by the Conservative members about ending postal code discrimination, the use of the word "primarily" is not defined, the use of the word "primarily" is not clear, and it will be a huge loophole. They will not be able to enforce that usage.

So what we see again is the Conservatives and the Liberals—we're seeing the same old story over and over again. They're actually not putting forth policies to reduce car insurance rates and actually not putting forth real, tangible legislation that will help Ontario drivers.

What do we see put forth instead? A budget that relies on this private member's bill, a budget that actually now opens up the doors—or keeps the doors open, I should say, rather, for postal code discrimination, but now opens up the doors to potential socio-economic discrimination because of the inclusion of credit history as a risk factor. This is going to hurt drivers further. This is going to put people who are already in precarious situations in further precarious situations.

Ontarians deserve better. We deserve the kind of legislation being put forth by the member from Humber River–Black Creek. We deserve legislation that will put drivers first.

I implore everyone to support this bill, support this legislation, and let's finally bring further fairness to Ontario's drivers and to our auto insurance system.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member for Humber River–Black Creek has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I want to thank the members from Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte, York South—

Weston, Mississauga–Streetsville and Brampton East for their responses.

I also want to recommend that the member from Mississauga–Streetsville drop by the Schulich School of Business, and she might benefit and learn something from the economist and expert who helped draft this legislation before us today.

1440

Today marks the second time this Conservative government will have voted against auto insurance reform that would have put consumers in the driver's seat. First, they voted against eliminating postal code discrimination in the GTA; now, today, they will be voting against the Lower Automobile Insurance Rates Act. Today they will be voting to continue auto insurance company gouging. Today they will be voting to maintain a lack of transparency in auto insurance.

Instead, they will be following the failed Liberal path on auto insurance. Not only will they be making major concessions to the auto insurance industry; they appear to be submitting legislation in fact drafted by the auto insurance industry itself—legislation that will not fix the problems, but give the auto insurance industry more tools to further discriminate against Ontario drivers, including credit ratings. Shame.

Time has told us that premiums will only continue to rise, no matter what concessions you make to the industry, unless we take a hard stand against it. Rest assured, the fight to stand up for Ontario's drivers is not over.

This Conservative government has chosen a side, and it is with the auto insurance industry, for which they act as a mouthpiece in this House itself. Ontario's NDP and I will be standing for Ontario's drivers.

TEACH THE REACH ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE LA MÉTHODE D'OUVERTURE PIVOT

Ms. Stiles moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 89, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to ensure the Dutch reach method is included in driver education programs / *Projet de loi 89, Loi modifiant le Code de la route pour assurer l'intégration de la méthode d'ouverture pivot dans les programmes de conduite automobile.*

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: It is a great pleasure today to bring forward this legislation for second reading, with the hope that we can make a small but important change here in Ontario.

Before I begin, I thought I would share with you some of my personal motivation for this bill.

I've been an on-again, off-again cyclist over the years. Certainly, since the many years that I've lived in the city of Toronto—about 20 years now—I've had too many bikes stolen to count and I've had a few falls along the

way, and frankly, that has made me a bit of a nervous cyclist.

I'm also a mom, and it makes me incredibly happy and proud that my two daughters use their bikes to get to school, ride for pleasure and feel safe enough to do that in this big city. The truth is, though, that every time they head out, I'm nervous—and I expect that's like a lot of parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles and other caregivers in this city and many others—because there's a lot that's not within their control. You can teach them how to ride safely, but you are relying on, hoping, that others are looking out for them too.

The truth is that while we have made some great strides across this province, many towns and cities are still not very bike friendly, which is a shame because cycling is such an important mode of active transportation, and so enjoyable. It's good for our hearts, it's good for our bodies, it's good for our souls—

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Good for the environment.

Ms. Marit Stiles: And it's good for the environment, my colleague reminds me.

That's why I was so excited a few years ago when a friend shared a little video with me about the Dutch reach. It talked about how a small change in the way a driver or a passenger opens a door can dramatically reduce incidents of dooring of cyclists.

When we talk about dooring, what do we mean? I have to say, sadly, that many cyclists know very well what it means to be doored. It's not something that anyone wants to have happen, whether you're the cyclist or the driver. Basically, it's when somebody knocks you when they open the door of their car and you are knocked off your bike or over the door or, unfortunately, sometimes into traffic. It can cause severe and even deadly injuries.

The Dutch reach helps avoid that. It's a way of exiting a vehicle whereby the person opens the door using the hand farthest from the door, forcing them to shift their upper body in such a way that they can see if a cyclist is approaching. So really, you're opening the door with the opposite hand that you would normally open it with, whether you're on the passenger side or driver's side.

This small change in behaviour can mean the difference between a cyclist safely passing a parked car or being doored, either crashing head on into that door or, as I mentioned earlier, being pushed into traffic.

As its name suggests, this method of exiting vehicles has been taught to drivers in the Netherlands since at least the 1970s. The Dutch reach has recently been adopted in state Legislatures in Massachusetts and Illinois. In the UK, the reach will be incorporated into the next edition of the Department for Transport's official Highway Code driver's manual.

The Teach the Reach Act aims to add the Dutch reach method to driver's training courses that are licensed by the Ministry of Transportation, which is why we're here, and to include it in driver's licensing exams where that's appropriate. And as I said early on, it is a relatively small and simple change to the law, but one that will go a long way toward preventing injury and loss of life on Ontario's busy roads.

The Teach the Reach Act will see the Dutch reach method enshrined in driver's education, making sure that the next generation of drivers is equipped with the knowledge to prevent this dooring of cyclists when they exit their vehicles.

I want to take a moment to thank some of the folks who have lent their support already to this legislation, including Share the Road—particularly executive director Jamie Stuckless for supporting this legislation, collecting petition signatures in support and for joining me at the press conference when I announced I would be introducing this bill. She has been incredibly helpful and, as many here will know, is a tireless advocate for safer cycling.

I was also honoured to be joined by Teresa Di Felice from the Canadian Automobile Association at the launch of this legislation. CAA is a huge proponent of teaching the reach, and, like us, they know that driver's education alone won't be enough to shift behaviour but must be combined with a robust public outreach campaign. That's something else that I would hope the government will be interested in. But in the meantime, I am just so thankful for the public education plan that is under way by the CAA and by Share the Road.

I also want to acknowledge the support of Jared Kolb and Cycle Toronto and also of several of my colleagues, particularly the MPP for University–Rosedale and the MPP for Spadina–Fort York. The MPP for Spadina–Fort York actually brought this issue, when he was a school board trustee at the Toronto District School Board, to the city of Toronto a few years ago. On average, over the last number of years here in the city of Toronto, we've seen between 150 and 200 cyclists doored, and that is probably a conservative estimate. We don't collect that data normally, and that's unfortunate, but we do know that that conservative estimate seems in keeping certainly with the experience of many, many people who contact you if you post, as I did, on Facebook and ask, "Anybody been doored?"

MPP Glover, as a trustee, succeeded in getting the city of Toronto public works committee to agree to develop a comprehensive report on dooring and on the potential to adopt a Dutch reach campaign and had a lot of input into my decision to bring this bill forward.

Madam Speaker, I want to make it clear that teaching the Dutch reach method is just one way that our provincial Legislature can make roads safer for the thousands of Ontarians who cycle each and every day. We need real funding for active transportation infrastructure and to work in concert with municipal governments to get it built.

Supporting Bill 62, the Protecting Vulnerable Road Users Act, which was sponsored by my colleague, as I mentioned earlier, the MPP for University–Rosedale, is another way we can help ensure that lives are protected on Ontario roads. Under Bill 62, penalties would apply to all driving offences under the Highway Traffic Act that result in the death or serious injury of a vulnerable road user. It includes community service, licence suspension, driver re-education, and also requires a culpable motorist to attend court for sentencing and to hear victim impact statements.

Let's be clear: When we talk about vulnerable road users, we're not just talking about cyclists—though, obviously, we are talking about cyclists—we are also talking about people who use mobility devices like walkers or wheelchairs.

My riding of Davenport is home to a lot of cyclists, like a lot of urban communities. Bikes are the primary mode of transportation for a lot of my constituents. But we know that cycling is growing in places large and small here in Ontario. For fitness and recreation, more people say they would cycle more often if they felt safer. It makes sense. By teaching the Dutch reach, we can get more people going where they're going on bikes, and more safely.

1450

In the context of a Legislature that I think is so often deeply divided on major issues, this is a really small and common-sense measure, and I'm hopeful that we'll have the support of both sides of the House.

I was thrilled to see so many government and opposition members at the bike summit this year. Cycling is not, and should not be, a political or a partisan issue, and cycling safety is something that all of us—cyclists, drivers, pedestrians—agree is essential.

MPPs from both sides of this House have made tremendous inroads in cycling support and safety—the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka and the member for Algoma–Manitoulin and the cycling caucus. I appreciate the input that I've received from everyone on both sides of the House who have contacted me and, also, the hundreds of folks who signed petitions giving their support to this bill.

I also want to thank the many, many people who've sent emails explaining a little bit about their own personal experiences, either as drivers or as cyclists, and lending their support.

Again, this is really just a small thing that we can all be proud of, and it's timely—I also wanted to mention that—because, if we act now, we might be able to get this into the next edition of the driver's handbook. That's why I think it's so important that we pass this legislation today.

I urge the members of this assembly to join together to take this little, small step or, maybe, a little roll forward in the right direction by supporting this bill and ensuring that all new drivers in Ontario will learn this simple skill to prevent injuries to cyclists.

Thank you very much in advance for your support.

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

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: This morning, I forgot to wish someone a happy birthday, and that would be my wife, Sofiya. To Sofiya: I wish you a very happy birthday. I hope I'm not going to be in trouble this evening when I get home. I hope I made it, everyone.

Protecting the people of this great province is our duty and obligation. Our government was elected on a promise to keep Ontarians safe and to put this province back on track. Today, I have the opportunity to engage in the debate regarding Bill 89. Our government for the people's number one priority is keeping the people of Ontario safe, whether it be at home, at work or during their commute.

As a father of four children, I'm always concerned with their safety and the safety of our future generations. After a long winter, we are finally getting some good biking weather. More and more people will be using their bikes, including my children. My daughters, Noor and Mariam, who are aged 11 and nine, love to bike. Sometimes when they are biking, it's hard for them to anticipate whether a car door will open or not. If drivers and passengers use the Dutch reach method, cyclists, like my daughters, will be able to ride safely without getting hurt.

Not looking or paying attention to your surroundings can cost a life, and we see that from time to time. The cost of one life for a small mistake is one too many.

Our government for the people supports the intent of this bill. I personally support these measures as a concerned parent, citizen and member. I appreciate my colleague across the aisle's interest in improving safety and the effectiveness of our transportation system. Safety is an issue we must work on together, regardless of where we sit in this House. Our goal as legislators is to ensure that we safeguard the people we represent.

Bill 89 is a good pedal towards safety, and I'm definitely going to be supporting this bill.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: It's an honour to support the member for Davenport's bill today to teach the Dutch reach method in driver education courses. The Dutch reach means that we are taught to use our non-typical hand—if you're a driver, your right hand—to reach for our car door so we automatically look behind us before we open the door.

As a cyclist, I understand the benefits of cycling: It's fast and efficient, it has loads of health benefits, it reduces car congestion, it's affordable and it's environmentally friendly. But what cycling isn't is very safe. Every cyclist, including myself, experiences near misses and collisions with cars on our busy roads. One of the biggest threats to being a cyclist is being doored.

As a transit critic, I've had the honour of working with many people who advocate for safe roads for all, including emergency room nurses at Toronto Western, Friends and Families for Safe Streets, Cycle TO, Bike Law, Share the Road and the Ontario Good Roads Association. These people have shared their own grim stories of being cyclists, as well as those of friends and people they've treated in hospital—people with long-lasting injuries like chronic pain, spinal damage, broken legs and arms, and lost teeth that cost thousands of dollars to replace.

What is so heartbreaking is that these injuries are 100% preventable. As a province, we should be doing everything we can to reduce preventable injuries and deaths on the road to zero. We can move forward with that goal today by voting yes to teaching the Dutch reach to new drivers so we can keep cyclists safe.

In the future, Ontario should move forward with additional measures to make our roads some of the safest in the world. That could include things like properly tracking dooring collisions, which we don't currently do; passing a vulnerable road users law so that drivers who are

breaking the law and injure or kill a vulnerable road user have tougher penalties; properly funding cycling infrastructure so that cyclists can bike in protected lanes; and introducing lower speed limits in heavily urbanized areas as well as photo radar near schools to reduce speeding, because at the end of the day, it is speeding that kills.

I believe Ontario should have the safest roads in the world. This bill, the Dutch reach, is an important step in our progress to achieve that goal. Thank you to the member for Davenport for introducing this bill. I fully support it.

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

Mrs. Robin Martin: I'm pleased to rise on Bill 89, the Teach the Reach Act.

Generally, I think that it's very important that all of us, especially those of us who live in densely populated areas like the city of Toronto, work hard to be more conscious of the people around us, how we use our shared spaces and how we impact each other.

As my children would probably confirm, I am constantly advising them—maybe nagging them—that they should be aware of the people around them when they're using sidewalks and streets and things like that. Don't just stop somewhere where no one is anticipating you're going to stop, because you can have a real impact on other people. I think that's common courtesy, and I think we should all be careful and solicitous about the people around us and try to do our best to live together.

The broader issue of road safety, I think, is an important issue and one that I can see from a number of different perspectives. As you know, my riding is Eglinton–Lawrence. It's a riding right in the centre of the city of Toronto. You may not know, but many times I hop on my bike and I ride from Yonge and Lawrence down to Yonge and Bloor, sometimes right down to Princess Margaret hospital or something like that. It sometimes does feel a little dangerous, I have to admit. But I just do my best to keep an eye on what's going on around me.

I'm lucky. I live so close to the centre of the city that I can do that. I can also choose to take transit. I can also choose to drive. But I'm lucky to have the opportunity, I think, to be able to cycle as well. And I do love cycling. My husband and I do a lot of cycling trips. I think it's a great thing to do.

Sometimes the roads, especially in a city, don't feel that safe. I've heard also a number of tragic stories of people who have had cycling accidents. I've heard of a lot of kidneys that have been severely damaged because a door came out and hit them just at that spot as they were trying to get over the door to save themselves. And you do hear of people being killed, which is terrible.

I also am a mother. I have children who cycle. I worry about them, and my husband, every time he goes out to cycle, which he does practically every weekend when the weather is decent. So I agree with the member from Davenport that it's something to be concerned about. We're all concerned about the safety of our loved ones.

We all want to make sure that we share the road in a responsible way.

Certainly, it's one of the fears going through the mind of every cyclist riding in this city, that someone might open a door—and you're constantly on the lookout—and, of course, of every parent who has a child or loved one.

1500

Dooring can cause serious injury, and it's something we absolutely should be teaching drivers—and passengers, for that matter—to prevent. That's why the ministry's current driver handbook references a method of opening the driver's side door of a parked vehicle with the right hand, a procedure known as the Dutch reach, and also why Ontario drivers' schools are required to reference that material in the official driver's handbook.

Speaker, safety really has never been a partisan issue. I think there's enough value in continuing to review this legislation to make sure we are doing all we can to support safe road use by all of us, and so I will be supporting this legislation in voting on it today. I want to thank you, Speaker, and I encourage all my colleagues to do the same.

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: I'm absolutely thrilled to be able to speak to this bill by my colleague the member for Davenport. I am both a cyclist and a driver. I cycle to Queen's Park from Beaches–East York every chance I get, all year round if I can, but I'm so afraid to ride on the road that I don't take the most direct route. I'll ride along the lake until I get to a road that has a separated bike lane, and then another road that has a separated bike lane. It probably doubles my time, but I feel safer.

We've lived in Beaches–East York now for 26 years, and as my kids were growing up and wanting to have more freedom, and given that the transit from Beaches–East York isn't always terribly reliable, they took to cycling. The number of times they came home with terrible stories about almost having been hit, almost having been doored—my heart is in my mouth because now they still live in and cycle around the city; they just don't tell me about it. I just keep praying that they come home safely every day.

I know as a driver, as well, nobody wants to be responsible for having opened a door into somebody and flung them into traffic. I know people who have had that horrible experience, and it's terrifying. People have had near-misses and terrible injuries, and so anything that we can do to help people become more aware of each other and of vulnerable users is a good thing. We all know that we have to shoulder-check before we change lanes, and this is simply another way of teaching the body to become more aware so that never are we just unaware and opening a door and finding that—oh, my goodness—we've caused somebody serious injury.

I also want to mention that the founder of Share the Road is a former member of provincial Parliament, the member for Burlington, who founded it after her husband, who was an OPP sergeant, was killed by a car as he trained for a triathlon near Milton. I know that Eleanor McMahon would be incredibly grateful for the fact that we in the Legislature would pass this here today.

I just want to say again how important this is, in so many ways. It's a no-brainer just to teach somebody to do that, to make sure that their body knows always to look and to save so many lives and make cycling so much safer for all of us who want to do it.

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

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I'm happy to rise and speak on this bill, the Teach the Reach Act. What a great name. Creating a safe, shared road space is important, and it's an important topic for my community members in Etobicoke–Lakeshore and indeed for many urban centres across Toronto.

Our government's number one priority is keeping people in Ontario safe, whether it be at home, at work or during their commute. I'm sure that this sentiment is echoed by the member for Davenport and all members of this Legislature. After all, safety, as we've all mentioned, is a non-partisan issue.

To the people watching, Bill 89 would require Ontario's written driver's test to include the concept of a Dutch reach. This technique is a way for drivers to exit their cars, particularly when exiting onto a busy street. When using the Dutch reach, drivers would reach across their body with their right hand to open their car door, which ensures they shoulder-check behind them. This gives drivers the opportunity to see a cyclist coming if one is zipping down the street. We often see this in downtown Toronto and in our communities: cars coming down, bikes driving past and a door opening. And finally, you see in taxicabs a little sticker that says, "Watch before you open the door."

The member from Davenport mentioned the member from Spadina–Fort York. I recall I was actually at that committee when he brought his door. He actually brought a car door to that committee. We sat by that door and practiced this during the committee meeting. It made a lot of sense to everybody sitting in that room. It's a simple gesture. We just have to think. It's just that extra time before you open that door that could really save a life or prevent an injury.

In my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, we have dedicated cycling lanes. They were just recently installed along Lake Shore Boulevard. They connect two parts of the waterfront trail along Lake Ontario. When cities install cycling infrastructure, it is so important to emphasize safety to all road users. Frankly, when it comes to safety in a collision between a driver in a car and a cyclist on a bike, the driver is going to win every time. That's why all road users—drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, everyone—needs to be alert and watchful when navigating busy streets.

Everyone needs to obey the rules of the road, and that includes stopping at stop signs and signalling at intersections, staying in your lane of traffic and respecting posted speed limits. I know that together, all of us, no matter how we get from point A to point B, can all make our roads safer for everyone. I'm happy to support this bill.

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

Ms. Bhutila Karpoche: It's a pleasure to rise in this House on behalf of the residents of Parkdale–High Park to speak to a bill that I know is important to my constituents. I would like to thank the member from Davenport for introducing this bill.

Many in my community are cyclists. They are very concerned about road safety. I'd like to give a special shout-out to Cycle Toronto groups in wards 13 and 14—or, rather, Ward 4 Bikes now. This bill is so important, and—

Interruption.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Sorry, can you stop the clock? I'm having a very difficult time following debate because of the noise in the under-gallery. If I could invite the folks in the background to allow us to be able to continue debate. Thank you.

I apologize to the member. Please continue.

Ms. Bhutila Karpoche: Thank you, Speaker.

As I was saying, this bill is so important and yet so simple because, as has already been mentioned, no cyclist should fear for their safety when on the road. And for the drivers, no one really wants to make the mistake of opening their door and seriously injuring a passing cyclist—or worse, lead to something more serious than that. By adding this Dutch reach to driver training and testing, we can protect cyclists. I really hope that this is something that will be passed in time to be incorporated into the driver's handbook.

Speaker, as many of you in this House know, my big passion is public health, and in public health we're always talking about early intervention and prevention as the best way to approach any problem. This is the kind of very simple bill that takes the approach of early intervention, which we know in the long run will save lives. And it all starts with education and training.

Imagine: We can train an entire, new generation and all future drivers in this province the “teach the reach” method, simply using your far hand to open the door. It will come so naturally to everybody who will be new drivers; as natural as when you try and use your seat belt once you sit in the car. I think that the responsibility for road safety is on all of us, because roads are for all modes of transportation, and so road safety should be a priority for all of us.

Especially considering that now we are trying to move towards more sustainable modes of transportation, I know that there is going to be an uptake in cycling. We've certainly seen that in my riding and we know that it's increased in Toronto and in Ontario overall in the last five years, and so more and more people and families will be commuting using the bike.

I'm very proud to support my colleague. I thank her for bringing this bill forward and I look forward to having the Dutch reach—teach the reach—be part of driver education in this province.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm very pleased to rise today and add my comments to what was put forth by the member from Davenport. We're discussing An Act to amend the

Highway Traffic Act to ensure the Dutch reach method is included in driver education programs.

1510

I have to plead a bit of ignorance. I didn't know what the Dutch reach method was, but it totally makes sense, and I think that once we spread the word—and that's what we're doing here today. We're here to do a bit of advocacy work, discuss and debate it, to ensure that people in our communities know about this. It's not enough to just put it in driver's ed. I believe it's already in the handbook, but there's a lot of people in our communities who drive cars and ride bikes who aren't going to be taking driver's ed. They already have their licences, and it's something for them to think about.

The member from Parkdale–High Park said it just needs to become more natural. We call it “dooring.” When you open up a door and a cyclist is coming close by your car, they can hit that door. The same can be true for even a car. Sometimes the car lanes are so narrow that you can open your door suddenly after you've parked and a car can come by, and that's not a good scenario. I know people whom that's happened to.

It's dangerous for the cyclist, but it's also dangerous for passengers. It's not just the driver who has to do it. I haven't heard anybody mention that the passenger in the backseat also has to be aware and cognizant and careful when they're opening the door. We should have a reaching method to reach over and always use our right hand to open the car door, which forces us to swivel, look behind us and see if there's a cyclist, a car, a truck or something coming by, that could be very dangerous for everybody involved.

We are here to discuss whether or not, though, it should somehow be part of legislation. I think it's something that certainly people should be aware of, but sometimes when we have laws for every little thing, people stop thinking for themselves. There's something that we bring up every now and then called common sense. I think this is one of those common-sense things and it's something that maybe we should have a ribbon campaign that we put in cars, maybe some people want to print up stickers to put somewhere. We want to ensure that people are thinking for themselves, but we're here to give them a bit of a nudge and force them to address the issue.

Of course, I'm going to be remembering this. I might even do that and put a little ribbon. I know I remind myself of things sometimes with a little elastic on my windshield or something like that, something that I have to—not on my windshield, on my indicator in the car. I think we want to get those coloured ribbons, coloured elastics, put them in our cars, remind ourselves to reach over with our right hand and look behind us. Let's all stay safe.

Happy Easter and happy Passover this weekend. Please, everybody, be safe on our roads. Cyclists are coming out; it's springtime.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I recognize the member for—hmm—Toronto–Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Oh, how soon we forget, Speaker. How soon we forget.

I want to thank the member from Davenport for bringing this forward. Really, it's great of you. Like the member for Davenport, I have many cyclists in my riding—in fact, from the conversation that's been happening this afternoon, many of us have large cycling populations in our ridings, and we understand the safety issue. We know that protecting people is something that will expand cycling possibilities, and frankly, what's been brought forward is very simple, very inexpensive, but could, as part of the suite of other issues, make a real difference in the lives of those who cycle to and from work, to and from school, to and from the movies, whatever people choose.

But simply making sure that everyone who gets in a car—that every driver is educated to reach around when they open their door and is looking back to see if someone's coming could make a big difference. Clearly, there are huge benefits to cycling. There are benefits in terms of keeping people physically fit. It's very straightforward. It raises your heart rate, it's good cardio, and as a way of increasing your disposable income as opposed to using a car, it's great. You avoid all kinds of costs, and it means that people have the money to spend on many other things.

More broadly, the more cycling you have, the cleaner the air is going to be. If you, in fact, displace the burning of gasoline, you're contributing to the fight against climate change. The government of Ontario says 38% of our greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation. It's a big chunk. The more people get out of their cars and onto bicycles, transit, walking, the better chance we have of limiting the increase in temperature that we are going to face in this province and globally. In fact, last October, the United Nations climate panel, the IPCC, specifically mentioned cycling as a substantial piece of any respectable and effective climate strategy because of all those benefits: the clean air, keeping people healthy, low cost and lack of emissions.

That alone would be worthwhile in supporting this bill, because if we are going to get people out on the road, they have to know that they are going to be safe. I'm dealing right now with a constituent who was doored about three months ago and she had to leave her job. She's still in recovery. She's getting extensive therapy. She was very unlucky. It was a substantial crash and a substantial injury. That's not the kind of thing you want to have happen to people. People should be able to safely go out and do the right thing in terms of the environment, the climate and their own personal health without having to risk this.

I think the big bonus—and it's noted by the member from Davenport—is that there is a re-publication coming up of the driver's education guide. With very little or virtually no cost at all, we can start changing the way people deal with this issue for years to come. It's very, very efficient, very, very effective and extraordinarily useful in adding to that suite of measures necessary to make cycling more acceptable and more enjoyable for everyone.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member for Davenport has two minutes to reply.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I want to thank all of the folks who spoke just now: the member for Burlington west, the

member for University–Rosedale, the member for Eglinton–Lawrence, the member for Beaches–East York—who also mentioned the former member for Burlington, who has actually expressed her support for this bill as well—the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, and the members for Toronto–Danforth, Parkdale–High Park and Thornhill. Thank you so much for your thoughtful comments on this legislation today. I feel like there is support in the room and I want to thank you in advance for that support.

I also want to make a mention of some other folks who have done incredible work and, in fact, initially brought forward the Protecting Vulnerable Road Users Act, which are the former member for Parkdale–High Park, Cheri DiNovo, and the current MPP for Waterloo. Thank you very much for the work you did on that important legislation.

I just want to wrap up by saying that I really do appreciate the support for this very small measure and I hope that we can use this as an opportunity to actually have an important conversation about cycling safety and road safety. I think the way to do that is to make sure this actually gets to committee, if it gets passed. I would hope that we can actually have an opportunity—all of us—to talk more about the issue, to raise awareness among our constituents about why it's so important, because I think that will benefit everyone in the province. So thank you very much.

Just one final little moment, as I have 30 seconds left: I figure that I've got very few opportunities to say something for my children. I'm going to say, "Put your helmets on."

On that note, thank you very much again, Madam Speaker, and thank you to everybody for your support. I think this can go a long way to potentially making it a habit for many new drivers.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): We will deal first with ballot item number 61, standing in the name of Mr. Kernaghan. Mr. Kernaghan has moved private member's notice of motion number 43. 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 opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

LOWER AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 POUR DES TAUX D'ASSURANCE-AUTOMOBILE PLUS BAS

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Rakocevic has moved second reading of Bill 90, An Act

to amend the Insurance Act with respect to Automobile Insurance Rates. 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 nays have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

TEACH THE REACH ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE LA MÉTHODE D'OUVERTURE PIVOT

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Ms. Stiles has moved second reading of Bill 89, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act to ensure the Dutch reach method is included in driver education programs. 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. Marit Stiles: To the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Is the majority in favour of this bill being referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly? Agreed.

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Call in the members. There will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1520 to 1525.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All members will please take their seats.

Mr. Kernaghan has moved private member's notice of motion number 43. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Glover, Chris	Singh, Gurratan
Arthur, Ian	Harden, Joel	Singh, Sara
Bell, Jessica	Hassan, Faisal	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Berns-McGown, Rima	Karpoche, Bhutla	Stiles, Marit
Bisson, Gilles	Kernaghan, Terence	Tabuns, Peter
Bourgouin, Guy	Mamakwa, Sol	Taylor, Monique
Burch, Jeff	Mantha, Michael	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	Miller, Paul	West, Jamie
Gates, Wayne	Morrison, Suze	Yarde, Kevin
Gélinas, France	Rakocevic, Tom	

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Anand, Deepak	Hogarth, Christine	Phillips, Rod
Baber, Roman	Jones, Sylvia	Piccini, David
Babikian, Aris	Kanapathi, Logan	Rasheed, Kaleed
Bailey, Robert	Karahalios, Belinda	Roberts, Jeremy

Barrett, Toby	Ke, Vincent	Romano, Ross
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Khanjin, Andrea	Sabawy, Sheref
Bouma, Will	Kramp, Daryl	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Calandra, Paul	Lecce, Stephen	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Martin, Robin	Skelly, Donna
Cho, Stan	Martow, Gila	Smith, Dave
Clark, Steve	McDonnell, Jim	Surma, Kinga
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Downey, Doug	McNaughton, Monte	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dunlop, Jill	Miller, Norman	Thompson, Lisa M.
Elliott, Christine	Nicholls, Rick	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fee, Amy	Oosterhoff, Sam	Wai, Daisy
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Walker, Bill
Ghamari, Goldie	Park, Lindsey	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Parsa, Michael	
Harris, Mike	Pettapiece, Randy	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 29; the nays are 58.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I declare the motion lost.

Motion negated.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The doors will be opened for 30 seconds so that members can leave.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The House will come to order. The member for Hamilton Mountain will come to order. All members will come to order.

I have been advised by the Clerks that it is actually quite disruptive for me to call the House to order while they are counting a vote. But I would remind all members that it is very challenging for the Clerks to effectively keep track of the vote with these kinds of shenanigans.

The doors have been closed. All members will please take their seats.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): A reminder: the fact that I am not interrupting the vote to call members to order; I would encourage them all to call themselves to order.

1530

LOWER AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 POUR DES TAUX D'ASSURANCE-AUTOMOBILE PLUS BAS

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Rakocevic has moved second reading of Bill 90, An Act to amend the Insurance Act with respect to Automobile Insurance Rates. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Glover, Chris	Rakocevic, Tom
Arthur, Ian	Harden, Joel	Singh, Gurratan
Bell, Jessica	Hassan, Faisal	Singh, Sara
Berns-McGown, Rima	Hatfield, Percy	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Bisson, Gilles	Karpoche, Bhutla	Stiles, Marit

Bourgoin, Guy	Kernaghan, Terence	Tabuns, Peter
Burch, Jeff	Mamakwa, Sol	Taylor, Monique
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	Vanthof, John
Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul	West, Jamie
Gélinas, France	Morrison, Suze	Yarde, Kevin

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Anand, Deepak	Hogarth, Christine	Phillips, Rod
Baber, Roman	Jones, Sylvia	Piccini, David
Babikian, Aris	Kanapathi, Logan	Rasheed, Kaleed
Bailey, Robert	Karahaliós, Belinda	Roberts, Jeremy
Barrett, Toby	Ke, Vincent	Romano, Ross
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Khanjin, Andrea	Sabawy, Sheref
Bouma, Will	Kramp, Daryl	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Calandra, Paul	Lecce, Stephen	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Martin, Robin	Skelly, Donna
Cho, Stan	Martow, Gila	Smith, Dave
Clark, Steve	McDonell, Jim	Surma, Kinga
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Downey, Doug	McNaughton, Monte	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dunlop, Jill	Miller, Norman	Thompson, Lisa M.
Elliott, Christine	Nicholls, Rick	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fee, Amy	Oosterhoff, Sam	Wai, Daisy
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Walker, Bill
Ghamari, Goldie	Park, Lindsey	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Parsa, Michael	
Harris, Mike	Pettapiece, Randy	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 30; the nays are 58.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negatived.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECTING WHAT MATTERS MOST ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2019

LOI DE 2019 POUR PROTÉGER L'ESSENTIEL (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 17, 2019, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 100, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes / Projet de loi 100, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter, à modifier ou à abroger diverses lois.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Order, please. Mr. Singh of Brampton East has the floor.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Will all members who are choosing to leave please do so quietly? We have a debate happening. Thank you.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Order in the House, please.

I recognize the member from Brampton East.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Despite living in the same home with them, he still missed them dearly. Both his parents were new Canadians. They wanted to provide the best they could for him. But life is expensive, so to make ends meet, both parents worked really long hours. His father and mother both started work before this young man went to school and they both arrived back home just an hour or two before his time to sleep. His parents would often work six days a week. All this young man wanted was to see his parents, talk to them, laugh with them, be a family with them. But his parents literally could not afford it.

I think about this conversation often, and it reminds me of how we failed him and so many others like him, because, if we truly are all one, then this young man's pain is my pain and his loneliness is mine as well. More than anything, if we hope to build a better world, we must commit to creating a government that empowers us all and put in place the policies that keep life affordable and parents can afford to put food on the table and spend time with their kids. Government can be a force of good and create more justice and fairness in this world—a world where we have better health care, stronger education, affordable lives. We can create a community that gives people the resources they need so they can be their best selves, a society that lifts us all up.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Stop the clock, please. I apologize to the member. Could the side conversations cease or relocate so that we are able to hear the debate, please. Thank you.

I apologize to the member from Brampton East. Please continue.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: We can create a community that gives people the resources they need so they can be their best selves, a society that lifts us all up. This is a future I want to see and this is the future that I'm committed to work for, because a government must be and should be a force for sarbat da bhala, for the betterment of all.

But in this struggle, if we want to improve the world, we also must improve ourselves. We must look deep of ourselves and find that strength and that positivity to pull from, to motivate us to push forward on what sometimes feels like a hopeless task. It's easy to feel defeated. When you see things getting tough and every day it gets harder, it's hard to push back. I sometimes feel that we live in a day and age where it's cool to be negative, that pessimism is trendy. And in a world where our lives are increasingly exposed on the one hand, and on the other hand people can strike through the cover of being online, it's so easy to criticize others, to call each other out, to tear each other down. But in those times, I steel myself in these words:

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who

errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause.”

This quote has guided my life, has motivated me, and I always turn to it when I make any big decision. Any time it was all on the line and there were more naysayers than yes, at all those junctures, I turned to this quote, and after contemplating it, I always felt resolved to take the risk. I tried to find something within me that would give me that motivation, and I would always try something that was daring to risk it all for the cause of something that was good. I knew in the end that I would be one “who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

We must dare greatly. Now, more than ever, we must dream bigger, hope higher and work harder, because if we don't, we may not see tomorrow. When it is hard to keep my hopes up, I remember the words spoken by my mother and often invoked by my brother, another lesson: to have rising spirits in the face of adversity, *chardi khala*; that as we stare the dangers facing the world dead in the eye—the threat of environmental devastation, of poverty, of insecurity, of human rights abuses, the rise of right-wing populism and more—we must proclaim our strength in the face of adversity. Let us all embrace *Invictus*—“Under the bludgeonings of chance / My head is bloody, but unbowed”—and more, to not only be unconquerable, unbowed and unafraid, but to face the punishments of the scroll with love in our hearts and hope in our eyes.

This world cannot afford our despair if we want to create change and push back against those who tell us that poverty is inevitable and acceptable, that the human race is destined to have inequity, that our differences make us backwards and barbaric, that human activity is not hurting this environment, if we want to stand against the politics that would dog-whistle to those who relish when we are divided and rejoice when we fight each other. When we reject this negativity with love, then we are truly happy warriors. We battle for good.

We all must become agents of change. We must fight for what is right. To do that can be scary, but I say to you: Be bold. Be brave. Battle within the arena, because humanity, the world, yourself, deserve no less. But understand that we cannot do this alone, that we are a collective, that we are one, and we need community to achieve greatness.

So search for those who would join you in this impossible task. Find your Rebel Alliance in combatting the Empire. Just as we arrived here because of the support of others, so too will we reach our destination in the same way. Surround yourselves with those who are committed to the same cause, the noble pursuit of a better world, and let this be the foundation of all your relationships, from your friends to your partner to your work. Join with others in striving for what is good, and together let's build something wondrous. Together let's imagine in our mind's eye

something beautiful and amazing. Let us create this wonder together.

1540

When I was young, my mother would talk to me about her upbringing. She grew up in a house that teetered on the brink of poverty in a nation that was marked by inequity. She had a constant feeling of not having enough to go between her and her siblings. This lack of resources in her house was often a source of stress that stays with her, even today. Hearing her and how she grew up, and reflecting on my own life, the tough times that my family has gone through have given me a glimpse as to what a stressful and precarious situation can be like. More, it makes me want no one else to face this kind of tension, where scarcity drives people to desperation. I would often reflect on what a world would look like when people had access to the resources they needed to succeed.

When I draw inspiration from this kind of world, by looking to my traditions, to my roots and to my teachings, I contemplate the idea of *Begampura*: a city without sadness, a city where residents didn't feel anxious, or even fearful, because there was no suffering, a city that was peaceful and safe and steady and stable, because in this city there were no first- and second-class citizens; all were equal, and people were free, not shackled by debt or poverty.

I would imagine how blissful this shining city could be, full of schools and universities providing the best education the world has seen, education that was universally available and free, a city full of scholars. It had hospitals full of compassionate doctors and healers who served all, a city where everyone had opportunity and people didn't just have access to good-paying jobs; this was a city that provided its residents with the support and resources they needed so they could be entrepreneurial and innovative.

This was a city that was connected and easy to get around, with amazing transit and bike lanes. This was a city where people were happy, because life was affordable and people could buy homes, a wondrous and beautiful city, tall and strong, filled with peoples, cultures and religions from across this world who added to the diversity and beauty of this place, a city where residents were a loving community of courageous citizens, joined together with a collective purpose to help each other rise, a people who understood their oneness.

This is the dream that I wish to build together, and this is a dream that is far too vast, far too beautiful to be contained in just one city. This is a vision that we must share for the world, so I ask you all to take up this call, to understand the great work that is before us and to recognize the role we play in creating this good. Let us join together in uplifting each other and helping those who are marginalized. Let's celebrate together our liberty, our justice and fairness, and create something beautiful.

Let me end by remembering the words of our good friend Jack, who inspired us all to be better: “My friends, love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear. Optimism is better than despair. So let us be loving, hopeful and optimistic. And we'll change the world.”

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

M^{me} Gila Martow: Ce ne sont pas que nous qui sommes excités à propos de ce budget. La Société Économique de l'Ontario a dit ceci dans un communiqué de presse :

« Ce budget répond à nos attentes pour un développement économique équilibré dans nos régions. Il démontre que le gouvernement Ford est à l'écoute des besoins qui ont été exprimés par les entrepreneurs et entreprises francophones, lors de la tournée de la ministre des Affaires francophones Mulroney. Par ailleurs, l'annonce d'un volet économique dans le Programme d'appui à la francophonie ontarienne, PAFO, est saluée par la SÉO. Ceci va nous permettre, avec notre partenaire du développement économique social et coopératif, le Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario, de structurer un espace économique francophone et bilingue compétitif, productif et innovateur.

« À la SÉO, l'employabilité est notre deuxième secteur d'activité. Nous avons un projet en petite enfance avec le RDÉE Canada et nous applaudissons l'engagement du gouvernement de créer jusqu'à 30 000 places de garderie dans les écoles avec 1 milliard de dollars pour les cinq prochaines années. C'est un coup de pouce significatif à la création de nouveaux emplois, y compris pour les nouveaux arrivants. Pour nous, ce budget offre de nouvelles avenues de collaboration avec le gouvernement Ford. »

Merci beaucoup, madame la Présidente.

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

Ms. Suze Morrison: It's certainly a pleasure to have an opportunity to sit in the House and listen to inaugural speeches from our members. It's always such a pleasure to learn so much about the history of our colleagues and the stories and the places they come from. You get to learn so much about their childhoods and what brought them into politics.

To the member: I want to say that your story was touching. It's always wonderful to hear people who have overcome adversity to get to where they are today, because you bring richer experiences into this House and into debate. I often tell people that when we're in this House, at our core we're storytellers, because we go out into our communities and we listen to the concerns of our constituents. We marry that with our own stories, with our own histories, and we bring those stories into this House and we apply them to policy. We're able to say that this is how a government policy is going to affect my constituents, because of these stories that I carry.

It was an absolute honour to listen to your story. It's an absolute pleasure to serve next to you in our caucus. I really am so grateful for the perspective and the voice you bring into this House. Again, like Jack said, let us be loving and hopeful and optimistic, and we'll change the world. I think together we can certainly do that. Thank you—meegwetch—for all that you do.

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

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I rise to make comment on the maiden speech of the member from Brampton East. I can compare my young life—my younger life, not my young life—certainly to what the member from Brampton East has said in the last little while. I certainly didn't have the upbringing—I was born in this country—but I can look back at my childhood. I'm old enough—I know this is hard to believe—to remember the first television that ever came to my neck of the woods. My grandfather had it.

My parents worked hard. They didn't have a lot of money. As the three older children, we use to sit around a coal stove to keep warm in the wintertime, and run upstairs and jump into bed and get under the covers. That's how we went to bed at night.

We did have a hard time. Like I said, my mum and dad worked hard. Dad milked cows at that time, and mum was raising the kids. But there were certain times in our life when a disaster would hit either us or our neighbours—a barn fire or something like that. People of the community would come together and they would help us or help whoever was going through this disaster.

I remember when Hurricane Hazel went through our area. It blew barns down, blew silos down and made a lot of destruction. Everybody got together, and we jumped in and we helped each other out. I can see that happening in our society right now. I know there are issues that are happening around the world. Certainly, we've had issues in Ontario. But I do believe that Toronto is a great city and I do believe that they understand that if they pull together, if we look at each other as equals, some of these problems that the member spoke of can be solved. I look forward to that day.

I want to thank the member for his speech. It was very inspirational.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: The member for Brampton East, it was a pleasure to listen to your inaugural speech. It was telling to hear that your parents immigrated to Canada, just like so many people—everyone except for First Nations—immigrated to Canada. That story of immigrating and building a life here is part of the Canadian dream, and it's part of the dream of Toronto, as well.

1550

It does make me think about this budget and what this means to people who are seeking asylum, who are refugees, who want a chance for a better life, who are fleeing war, who are fleeing violence and have arrived on this land called Canada. It makes me think about the drastic cuts to Legal Aid Ontario and the elimination of funding for legal services to immigrants and refugees.

In my riding of University–Rosedale, we have a wonderful legal clinic called the Kensington Bellwoods legal clinic, made up of very hard-working people who do everything they can to provide legal services. They provide legal services to people like your parents, member for Brampton East, and I hope we can provide this dream to people who are coming to Canada now. Thank you for reminding us.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member from Brampton East for his two-minute reply.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: I'd like to thank the members from Thornhill, Perth–Wellington, University–Rosedale and Toronto Centre for your kind words.

As I wrote my inaugural, the idea behind it was that—the story of my family and who we are is something I definitely wanted to share. But more than anything, it was the motivations of why we are here, because I think purpose is something that drives us all as members who come into this House. I think that we must remind ourselves of what our greater purpose is.

More so, the ultimate goal of what I wanted to communicate was to say that our purposes are united and our purposes are one, because ultimately we all are one. I know it's a weird and awkward thing to think about, especially in a context where there is so much adversity and there can be so much negativity. But if we seek to uplift ourselves in this world and everyone who is within it, then I really, truly think that the search and pursuit of oneness must be foundational to our purpose. By seeking oneness, we can ensure that the actions that we take are not motivated by our selfish nature, are not motivated by our lower selves and are not motivated by that which we seek to glorify but instead by that which we wish to serve.

In the Sikh tradition, we call a leader a mukh sewadar. A sewadar is one who serves, and a mukh sewadar is the one who serves the most. As we enter this hall, I think this is something that we should all try to epitomize. We should all be servants. We should seek to serve those who are less fortunate, seek to serve those who are in need and seek to serve those who require support. As government, our role should be to serve, and to serve is to provide—provide health care, provide education, provide the best sort of transit this world has seen. That is why if we ground ourselves in this purpose, then I think we will truly elevate ourselves and elevate the world together.

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

Mr. Stephen Lecce: I'm very proud to rise in this House to speak about an exciting announcement made last Thursday in the Legislature by the Minister of Finance with respect to our budget, budget 2019, a plan to protect what matters most to the people of this province.

Madam Speaker, I just want to spend a bit of time, if I may, to contextualize where we came from in the province of Ontario. We inherited a rather difficult economic landscape. When we came to power on June 8 we realized that, quite demonstrably, the Liberal government was spending \$40 million more than per day than we had. For anyone who has a child, for any young person in the province watching, for a parent at home and those in this House—and certainly, my family, my parents, raised me, and I know the next generation is being raised, on a value of living within one's means. That is not a Conservative value. I would submit that that is not a value system that is unique to any one party. I would argue, Speaker, that it is a conviction that is, really, a Canadian value: to live

within one means, to save for a rainy day, to invest in one's future.

When our young people—the youth, the future of our province, the future of our country—are indebted by levels that are unseen certainly in the Western world and unseen in the industrialized world—no province or state, no subnational government on earth is looking at the debt levels that this province has. It really reminds me of the moral imperative of why we are here: to make the tough but necessary decisions to get this province on track, to reorient our future, where young people are not spending thousands of their hard-earned tax dollars every year simply to pay for interest on the debt.

Madam Speaker, I think where we came from is indicative of where we're going as a government. I think it's important for people at home to realize the challenges the government faces, notwithstanding that we are absolutely resolved, with every level of confidence within our heart and mind, to get this right and to unleash the potential of our province.

But when the fourth-largest line item—the fourth-largest line item—in the budget is to service interest on debt, it only underscores the importance and the need for change. In June, the people of this province reflected, with great sobriety, on the choices before them, and they chose a government, they chose a Premier and a team that was going to get down to work to return to balance, and do it responsibly while protecting what matters most to the people of this province.

In King–Vaughan, and really, I would argue, right across the province, in every region of this province—north, south, east, west, urban, rural—all of us wanted a government that actually focused on the singular priority of many people in this province, which is ensuring that they have a chance of succeeding, creating an opportunity in society where, if you work hard, you can get ahead.

Madam Speaker, when you reflect on 15 years of having the largest subnational debt in the world, when you reflect on the fact that we spend \$40 million more per day than we have, when you reflect on the fact that the fourth-largest line item is interest on debt, and that the trajectory will only get worse and compound over time, when you start to think of the choice our children and the next generation will have to make, a choice between service reductions and tax hikes, either proposition is unacceptable to me, and I'd hope to all members of this Legislature.

We were elected in June on a mandate of change, and the budget that we brought forth in in this legislation, that the Minister of Finances has brought forward, is very much focused on two dual objections, complementary as they are. The first is to create jobs and create the conditions for private-sector job growth in the province. The second is to protect the social services that are so consequential to the quality of life of our families and our seniors in the province of Ontario.

I'm very proud that this budget is the first time in a long time, 15 consequent years, we can say that there are no new tax increases presented and burdened on the people of this province. And let the record be clear: Should the

people in their solemn judgment have made a different choice, this budget would have been inevitably littered with higher tax hikes on workers, on families and on small businesses in the province.

So, Madam Speaker, we're proud that this blueprint, this plan for prosperity, is putting Ontario back on track when it comes to getting our fiscal house in order, but also making sure that there is a compassion in the government of Ontario, making sure that there is a strong element of compassion in the decisions we make.

Allow me to enumerate a few of those policies, using them as proof points of examples of investments that we think are going to make a difference for folks in Toronto, in Brampton, in Scarborough, in Barrie, in every region of the province, that they're actually going to help put money back in their pockets.

Culturally, there's a different mentality that has taken hold within the government of Ontario. The greatest cultural change, I would argue, is that we believe that you—and through you, Speaker, I mean the people; certainly maybe not the member from Oshawa—all residents watching, perhaps, would prefer money in their pockets and not being wasted and squandered by a politician in Ottawa or a bureaucrat here at Queen's Park. That is the fundamental difference between the choices that people made, and I think it's very defensible that as a Conservative Party, as a movement in this country and in this province, we believe our default bias is to put money back into the pockets of workers, of parents and of seniors. That is a fundamental contrast.

We don't believe that one style fits all child care, for example. We don't believe in just a state-run system. We believe in empowering parents to have the choices which they ought to be making about their children's future. We believe in putting money in their pockets. Which is a wonderful segue to our child care tax credit, an initiative that we realized, when we looked at the economic costs facing families in the province, that for so many parents, urban and rural—it's not an issue that is challenging just folks within the cities. Even in rural communities, increasingly, access to choice, access to child care alone, is a difficulty in rural parts of the province, and the costs of child care are so expensive.

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In this budget, realizing that we can't fix all the things that both New Democrats and probably Conservatives would cite are problematic with the former government and the challenges they left future generations, we're going to help tackle the issue of child care and making that affordable for young people and for their parents in the province. By doing so, an average family in the province of Ontario will be saving north of \$1,200. That's going to save over 300,000 families money in their pockets. That is a good thing for the people of this province. That number rises, obviously, and changes based on age.

Another aspect of compassion, another aspect of ensuring that the most vulnerable within society are always cared for, that no child is left behind within this plan, is, for children with severe disability, over \$8,250 will be

returned to their parents' pockets so they can help with the increasing costs of child care for their children.

I think that is another proof point that debunks a narrative on our government that is convenient for the left: that we're not making the requisite investments in those young people and the future of the province. We're doing that with a child care plan that gives choice, that creates tens of thousands of spaces in the province, that incentivizes the private sector to be part of the solution. And we're protecting all-day junior kindergarten, as the Minister of Education has committed to in the past.

We are making investments in education. We would accept the premise, as the members opposite would often remind us, that the great equalizer when it comes to opportunity, when it comes to education outcomes, when it comes to job prospects, is to have a decent, quality education. We agree. We agree with the premise so much that we decided in this budget to go above and beyond what the former government invested in education by initiating a \$700-million net investment in education in the province of Ontario. I think, while that type of investment may be—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Order.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: While \$700 million may be worthy of a laugh for the members opposite, I think it should unify members of this House that we're making the investments necessary to say to parents, to say to children, to say to students that we're going to make education a priority.

After you look at the system that was inherited, where more money was being spent and, conversely, we had fewer students passing their math tests, the metrics—which is maybe not nomenclature often invoked by members opposite. When you look at metrics, using measurement as an indicator for policy, as an indicator for investment, we think that students in grade 5 math should be able to perform and pass the EQAO test. Again, that's not a partisan statement. That's not meant to drive a wedge. It's meant to actually bring people together to say that we have to agree with problem definition, and too many students in the province are not reaching their full potential. So we're adding investment.

Madam Speaker, it's not just about investments in education; it's also a recognition—an issue that I thought would bring us together—a realization that many of the schools, the physical infrastructure, the mortar and brick that surrounds our children, is not at a level of repair that is acceptable. The Minister of Education, the Minister of Finance and the Premier himself have made a determination to invest upwards of \$13 billion in capital improvements to build new schools—not to close 600, as the former government did quite proudly—and to refurbish existing schools in every single one of our ridings across Ontario. That is a proof point of supporting a modern education system. It's a proof point of ensuring that kids are able to learn in facilities that enable them to reach their potential.

Madam Speaker, if I can be slightly tangential in the context of education—I'm sitting with the parliamentary assistant for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities—I cannot be remiss to remind that when those students go through the journey of learning, they finish their apprenticeship from elementary school to high school and they contemplate going to college, for example, or university or skilled trades, I want to make sure, and we want to make sure as a government, that education is affordable, it's accessible for every single young person as they go into post-secondary.

We have every interest in ensuring that we have a knowledge economy in the province of Ontario, that we retain our competitive advantage of having one of the most—we literally have one of the most educated workforces in the OECD. The way we do that, again, for the first time in 15 years—like no new taxes. For the first time in 15 years, we're actually cutting tuition in the province of Ontario by 10%, which will put, on average, for a student at York University, U of T or Western, around \$900 to \$1,100 of savings in their pocket. That applies for college students as well—hundreds of dollars back in the pockets of young people and their families. And that's where it belongs. Going back to the cultural point, that's where it belongs.

We believe empowering people to make decisions to spend their own money is much more effective as a model than to permit a bureaucrat or a politician to spend it for them. I just don't trust them. I don't care who the government is, what party or what part of the rainbow might be in power that day, federal or provincial. The bottom line is, I prefer individuals—moms and dads, parents, small business owners, folks in the gallery—to spend their own money. Ultimately, the Premier and the government of Ontario feel very strongly about that.

Madam Speaker, we all have our own stories when it comes to accessing health care. We believe in public health care in the province of Ontario. We believe in ensuring that the system is sustainable for the next generation. In this budget we increased health care spending by over \$384 million. I think it is important to note that we have brought over \$300 million—nearly \$400 million—in net investment in health care in the province of Ontario. This is obviously built upon the fact that north of 60 hospitals—many are new, many are being rebuilt themselves, but 60 capital improvements. In effect, what that means, Madam Speaker, as you will know, is that we are refurbishing and building new hospitals in every region of this province. That again reflects the province, the Minister of Health, the former patients' ombudsperson and of course the Deputy Premier of the province. It reflects her personal mandate to get the health care system back on track, to make it accessible, but ultimately to eliminate hallway health care, which is an inherited legacy under the former Liberal government.

I remember 2015-16, when there were 1,200 nurses fired from the front lines of health care, and that had a very perverse impact on quality within our hospitals. Sometimes you think, "Well, what were they spending their

money on?" Obviously, we know of the waste that was noted in the Auditor General's report. We know of the FAO's concerns with respect to spending, and through parliamentary scrutiny across party lines, we came to appreciate that we've got to raise the bar when it comes to advancing a health care system that works for an increasingly aging population. That's why we're putting more money into the system: to get this right. But it's not just about having better hospitals; it's about providing home care, providing health care within people's homes, making it not just about convenience but improving the quality of life.

After years of neglect of making that program—home and community care—work for families, the province, the minister and the Premier have dedicated, again, over a quarter of a billion dollars—\$267 million, to be precise—to home and community care in this budget.

Long-term care is an issue that has created great anxieties for many of us. My grandmother, God bless her at the tender age of 94 today, but many years ago we had to make a tough decision: to move her from her assisted-living apartment into a long-term-care centre. Many of her friends, many of her peers and friends who live in her current long-term-care centre in the city of Vaughan have confided that they waited years to get on the list. The long-term-care operators in my riding have told me—and I say this not facetiously but, rather, sombrely—that many individuals will, regrettably, pass away before they actually get placed on the wait-list. There are 30,000 seniors in the province of Ontario today—not even keeping in mind that the trajectory of age compounds this problem over time, but today there are 30,000 seniors waiting. That is unacceptable, Madam Speaker. The minister, in one of her first acts, funded over 6,000 long-term-care beds in the province of Ontario. And to realize our objective of 15,000 long-term care beds over four years—30,000 over the coming years—we are investing \$1.75 billion over the next five years to build long-term-care beds in every region of the province of Ontario.

Compassion is at the heart of this budget, and that is why when we realized that so many seniors in the province—if I could build upon that point—don't have access to dental care, we made a commitment in our campaign. We said we were going to provide for low-income seniors in the province, which amounts to roughly 300,000, to be precise, across Ontario: give them access to free dental care. Madam Speaker, that is the right thing to do. It was a commitment we made, and we're following through on it, not in year 4 of our mandate; we're starting in our first budget, budget 2019, to support our most vulnerable in our country.

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Madam Speaker, we are also taking action to reduce gridlock. The productivity cost of gridlock is out of control. The board of trade of Toronto suggested billions of dollars in lost productivity because we cannot get product to market. In addition, we cannot get individuals to work or their kids to school. That creates a real challenge for many of us who are living in and around the

GTHA, but also in Ottawa, also in London and in communities across Ontario that need those investments.

I'm proud to serve and to be present for the historic, transformative announcement, the largest investment in public infrastructure to build subways, not in Ontario's history, but in the history of this country. That is leadership. It is leadership to get people moving, it is leadership to reduce gridlock, and ultimately it is leadership to help improve the economic prospects of the GTHA and every region in which we're investing. And so, Madam Speaker, \$28.5 billion in subway expansion, in addition to uploading—not downloading, but uploading—the TTC's responsibilities so we have a more macro lens of planning when it comes to transit. Because we realize that transit has no boundaries and that ultimately we need to have a seamless system that works for the commuter, and we're doing that. We're doing that quite demonstrably with a nearly \$30-billion investment in subway expansion in Ontario.

Madam Speaker, I want to also note that part of compassion is also not indebting the next generation. I believe there's a moral imperative before this Legislature. Some members opposite seem to disagree with the premise of living within one's means today so that the next generation is not left worse off than this current generation. We have a duty as legislators to find ways to deliver the services that are so vital to families, to seniors and to young people in the province without leaving a fiscal burden on our children and grandchildren. That is something that I didn't think would be driven by ideology; apparently so. But I think, Madam Speaker, for us, for this government and for the Premier of the province, the decision point we make, the guiding light for us, is to ensure the next generation is set up to succeed.

New investments in education, affordable college and university, making our transit system work for commuters, and, ultimately, providing compassion to the most vulnerable in our society: This is a plan that is helping the people of this province. I'm very proud of the Minister of Finance and the Premier for revealing a plan that's going to help restore the economic potential of our province without raising taxes.

Madam Speaker, thank you so much.

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

Ms. Suze Morrison: I would like to respond to a few of the comments that the member from King–Vaughan made.

First and foremost, earlier on in his remarks he talked about how we have a choice before us, he said, tax hikes or service cuts, and either is unacceptable. I would argue that there is a choice here. Cutting services is not what families want or need. And when you talk about making that choice on behalf of workers and on behalf of families, quite frankly, if you cared about workers, you wouldn't have cut the minimum wage. If you cared about workers, you wouldn't be going to war against the unions and the workers that are part of them. If you cared about families, you wouldn't be slashing and hacking our education

system and our health care system, and you would have put together a proposal for a child care plan that actually delivers child care spaces in a not-for-profit, affordable model.

With this tax cut that you're talking about, at the top end a family might expect to get \$1,200 back on their taxes for that. How am I supposed to take \$1,200 of tax credit back into my riding of Toronto Centre, where the average daycare cost can be up to \$2,000 per month, not per year? That's not even going to cover one month's worth of child care in Toronto Centre, where it's becoming more affordable for people to quit their jobs, if they are minimum wage earners, and stay home and take care of their kids than it is to put their kids in child care. What am I supposed to tell my constituents in Toronto Centre? What are they going to do with a \$1,200 tax credit?

The other comment the member made right at the very end was that—I almost laughed at this—compassion is at the heart of this budget. Compassion is not at the heart of your budget. Cruelty is at the heart of your budget. This budget is not one that is for people living in poverty. It lines the pockets of the richest among us. It slashes the services that the rest of us rely on. You should be ashamed.

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

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I'm proud to speak in support of this budget introduced by the Minister of Finance. Our government is working day and night to make life easier and more affordable. Our plan includes \$26 billion over six years in much-needed relief in Ontario for families, individuals and businesses.

On child care, like the member from King–Vaughan said, not one size fits all. Our new child care tax credit will help low- and middle-income families with up to 75% of their child care costs. It will provide up to \$6,000 per child for day care, home-based care or camps. It will let parents choose the type of care that works best for them.

We are ending hallway health care with \$17 billion over the next decade to increase capacity at our hospitals and \$3.8 billion over the next 10 years to finally develop a modern mental health system that works.

Starting this summer, we will invest \$90 million for dental care for low-income seniors, and 15,000 new long-term-care beds will come online in the next five years.

We've committed almost \$30 billion for rapid transit in the GTA. This is the single-largest capital contribution to new subway extensions in Ontario's history. We also introduced the largest increase in GO Transit service in five years. We are supporting municipal transit priorities, like the LRT in my own riding of Mississauga–Lakeshore.

I urge all members to support this bill.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: It's a pleasure to rise in the House to spend a few minutes talking about this budget. The Conservatives have one angle about how this budget matters to a lot of people. But when I read this budget, what I see is a budget that is protecting special interests

with tax cuts for the wealthy, and it's ignoring the people who are struggling: kids, seniors, people who are low-income and people who are marginalized. I don't see this budget helping these people in a meaningful way at all.

I'm very concerned about this government's decision to cut a billion dollars from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. I fear what this will mean for kids in care and I fear what this will mean for people who are on social assistance who don't want to be on social assistance. Low-income mothers don't want to be on social assistance. People who have been injured on the job and can no longer easily work or get access to a job don't want to be on social assistance. I fear that this budget will mean their life, which is already hard, is going to get a little bit harder.

I'm also very concerned about this government's decision to slash legal aid by 30%. We do have an excellent legal aid community in our riding, the Kensington-Bellwoods legal clinic. They work very hard to stop people from being reconvicted. They help people who have moved to this country and need help accessing asylum and legal support. Those kinds of supports help people who are struggling get ahead in life.

When this government creates a budget that hurts our most marginalized, it hurts them and it hurts the rest of society because it's not a budget that is kind and lifts people up. It's a budget that is cruel.

I am committing to working with my community of University-Rosedale—the parents, the people who access our hospitals, the kids, the people who access our social services—to stand up and fight back and make sure this government is a one-term government.

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

Mr. Deepak Anand: It's always a pleasure to speak but more pleasure to speak on a Thursday afternoon. We're talking about Bill 100. This important legislation focuses on what matters most to the people of Ontario, as we're providing service but we're doing it in a responsible manner while balancing the budget. That's most important.

Madam Speaker, with highway enhancement plans, investment in infrastructure and health care, the government of Ontario is focused on putting the people first. We're putting Ontario back on a path to a balanced budget. Why? So that we can protect the core services that matter most, and that includes transit. We're making improvements to GO Transit and the TTC. We're actually investing \$28 billion in infrastructure. The Minister of Transportation has recently announced that our government is investing \$1.3 billion to rebuild and restore highways across the province. Speaking of which, from Creditview Road, which is part of Streetsville, to Milton, we are actually putting six new lanes. We are improving the highway.

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It's not only the highways; we are actually making sensible investments in the film and television industry. The film and television industry is also receiving support.

We are actually starting a minister's panel that will help ensure the industry can truly maximize benefits.

Something that is very close to my heart is the dental program. In 2015, there were 61,000 hospital emergency visits for dental problems, and that cost us \$31 million. So we are actually investing \$90 million so that we can avoid these costs.

Madam Speaker, I am looking forward to everybody supporting us on this responsible budget.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member from King-Vaughan for his two-minute reply.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: I want to thank the member from Mississauga-Malton, the member from Mississauga-Lakeshore, and note the member's comments from Toronto Centre—pardon me, the member opposite's comments earlier.

There is a great debate in the Legislature today in the context of what is compassionate. I believe not indebting the next generation because politicians find it convenient to spend money they do not have. The easiest thing a politician can do is write a cheque. If you find value, if you find currency in, if you believe that there is a great sense of political advantage to spending money we do not have, then, with great respect, Madam Speaker, through you to those who accept that conviction, the people of Ontario said they do not agree. To be fair, that was also I think rather demonstrably manifest for the people of Alberta as well. I think across the country there is a realization that you can't outspend your means. The Prime Minister of this country, if I may just go a bit more macro, has a deficit that my niece, born under his administration, if you will—she will have to endure deficits until the 2050s.

If spending money you don't have is a virtue, then all the power to the member opposite. But it is not; it is not. What is a virtue is living within one's means. What is a virtue is ensuring that you protect the services that actually are so consequential to their quality of life and to the prosperity of the people of this province. That is exactly what the Minister of Finance is doing in this budget.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The House will come to order, including the government House leader.

Further debate?

Mr. Chris Glover: It's my pleasure and honour to rise in the House today to give my inaugural speech.

I would like to welcome to the House my parents, Len and Gwen Glover; my friends and supporters Tina Sahay, Sarita Sahay, Maritza Guzman, Janet Rodriguez, Lynn Manning, Kenneth Ross, Richard Miller, Kate Wallis, Gary Pieters, Peter Holt, Varla Abrams, Ushnish Sengupta, Heather Vickers-Wong, Ann Kennedy, Richard Wang, Tim Rourke, Aleks Ivovic, Percy Segal, and Laurie Green; and, from my office, Nancy Trendoff, Benna Whahedi and Pranav Bakaraju. Thank you so much for joining us today.

I'd like to begin my remarks with a land acknowledgement. We are gathered today on the traditional territories

of the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinabek and the Mississaugas of the New Credit. I'd like to acknowledge the ongoing and continued presence of First Nations and Métis people on this land.

I would just like to start with a bit of history. Not too far east from my riding, on the lakeshore, when they were building the Harris water treatment plant about 100 years ago, they came across some footprints in the clay that were 11,000 years old. It was a man and a woman and a child. Those footprints came from some of the very first human inhabitants in this part of the world, after the ice had receded from the glaciers. For 11,000 years, the First Nations people have maintained this land. There are two elders who are friends of mine, Duke Redbird and Dr. Bob Phillips, and they constantly remind us that in First Nations beliefs, nobody owns the land, we never really own the land; we are only caretakers of the land for the next generation. I think it's a bit of wisdom that we need to keep in mind in this House in all the decisions that we make.

I'd also like to say, for the last 10 years I've been teaching a course at York University on the history and economics of Ontario. I'm going to incorporate the lessons I've learned from studying that history into my remarks today.

First of all, I'll start with looking at the NDP and its role in the Legislature and in the governance of this province. The NDP is known as the social conscience of this country. What I'm going to argue today is that the good social policies that have been advocated and championed by the NDP and their progressive predecessors create a more robust and inclusive democracy, a more robust public education system, more robust public colleges and universities, more robust public health care and public services; that what are usually considered social policies are actually good economic policies. My fear is that this government starting to tear down these social policies is actually going to have a long-term negative impact on our economy.

I'll begin with a lesson about ideology. We keep hearing from this government that they want to make the government smaller, that they want to keep money in taxpayers' pockets, and I can understand the need for that. There is certainly a need, to be certain, that our services in this government are provided as efficiently as possible. But we don't want to undermine the services that are the foundation of our society and of our economy.

I'll give you a couple of historical examples. This government seems to be under the ideology that's expressed by Milton Friedman, who was a right-wing economist. He said that the role of government is to provide a level playing field, and he stops at that. He says that that is primarily the role of government. I would argue that the role of government is much greater and that the problem with his metaphor is that he didn't take it far enough; he didn't think about it deeply enough.

I'll give you an example. If the role of government is just to maintain a level playing field—companies are out on that field, playing in the economy. What ends up happening, what has happened historically—I'll give you an example from 400 years ago in this very land when this

province was actually considered part of—well, at least for the French—the colony of New France. At that time, the Company of One Hundred Associates had a charter to run the colony of New France. The Company of One Hundred Associates was only interested in bringing men, mainly, to the settlements in Montreal and Quebec, because they wanted the men, in the spring, to get in their canoes—the voyageurs and the coureurs de bois—and canoe in and get furs and bring them back. They weren't interested in having women here, because if there were women, then the men would be more reluctant to get in the canoes in the spring. The king saw that the colony was not developing in the way that he had hoped because it was under the control of this company, which was only looking after its own interests. So he changed the charter and he started to send in—if you remember from your history lessons—les filles du roi, the king's daughters, so that the men would have somebody to marry. They started to settle down, they started to build farms, and that was the beginning of that colony.

Another example from history of where the market and companies by themselves do not create a strong economy, a strong society, was in the early 1800s in Upper Canada, the predecessor here in Ontario. At that time, the government was controlled by the Lieutenant Governor, who was appointed by the king, and then he appointed the executive council. There was a Legislative Assembly that was elected, and they could recommend things to the executive council, but they didn't actually have any power. The Family Compact were the ones who controlled the executive council. They were all local businessmen, mostly centred here in Toronto, and they were looking after their own interests. They didn't want to pay taxes. They didn't want to pay taxes to build roads across the province. They didn't want to pay taxes to build schools. What ended up happening was, they were actually choking economic growth, because the farmers in southwestern Ontario and the farmers in eastern Ontario and the areas north of Toronto didn't have roads to get their wheat to the mill and then their wheat to market. So they were struggling; they were really struggling.

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In the 1830s, their anger boiled up until it led to the rebellion. It was led by William Lyon Mackenzie. William Lyon Mackenzie led the rebellion in 1837. Even though the rebellion was put down, it scared the British, and they were afraid that they were going to lose their colony, just like they'd lost the United States. So, in 1848, they granted this colony, the predecessor to Ontario, responsible government and democracy.

The outcome of that was a huge surge in economic growth. If you look at the history of this colony from 1848 to 1871, roads and railroads were built across the colony so that the farmers could get their goods to market. There were schools built. Only 15% to 20% of children were getting schooling in 1848. By 1871, 80% of children were getting at least some schooling in this province.

What happened was, when you had democracy, when you expanded the ring of power, then you actually expanded the economy.

I want to go back to that metaphor for a moment, that level playing field. Milton Friedman said the role of government is just to maintain a level playing field. We've seen from the example of New France and the example of the Family Compact that that doesn't work. I would argue that the first role of government is to protect the field. If the field is the environment, then we are absolutely dependent upon maintaining this environment, maintaining the field for the next generation. We are the caretakers of the environment.

Last year, global warming led to a record number of forest fires in this province: 1,325. A tornado ripped through Ottawa. The Ontario Environmental Commissioner calculated that the damage from global warming last year was \$1.2 billion for Ontario, which is \$350 per person. The government's response was to fire the Environmental Commissioner, and then to cancel the cap-and-trade system.

I get the arguments about cap-and-trade. Nobody wants to pay an extra four cents a litre on their gas. I'm a driver as well, so I don't want to pay that. But on the other hand, that four cents a litre is going into economic stimulus, because the biggest economic opportunity over the next 50 years is going to be the transition of our economy from a fossil-fuel-dependent economy to a renewable-energy economy. We need to be at the forefront of that. We need to make sure that the electric cars are being built here, the solar panels are being built here, that the technology is being developed here.

My fear is that the actions that this government has taken—the cancellation of the cap-and-trade system, the cancellation of the electric car rebate and the cutting of the solar panel supports—are actually going to have long-term economic impacts.

I'll give you an example. The electric car rebate—I'm from Oshawa, and my parents are from Oshawa. We come from a family that worked at General Motors. We are really saddened to see the potential demise of General Motors in a year. But General Motors is looking for a place to build electric cars, and they're not going to be building electric cars in Ontario because it's not a friendly market for electric cars.

There was another company that was looking to build electric cars in Windsor. They're not going to be locating in Windsor, because that rebate has been taken away. We're actually cutting ourselves off from the next generation of car-making opportunities.

I want to go back. So I talked about the environment, the level playing field. The main role of government is to protect the environment, and in doing so, we can actually stimulate our economy and prepare ourselves for the next generation of economic growth.

The other thing about that field, if we take that metaphor a bit further, is that the game on the field is not a war of all against all. It's actually a team, and we are fielding a team. We want to give our team as many competitive advantages as we can. We want to make sure that they're well-educated, they're healthy and they've got the best equipment or whatever else we can give them to make sure that they do well.

This is where I've seen, historically, we've done some really good things. Even the Conservative Party, historically, has done some really good things. I'll talk about Ontario Hydro. It was created in 1906 by Adam Beck, who was a Conservative MPP in this very House. He fought tooth and nail, even against his own Conservative Party, to get this thing built. But in 1900, hydroelectricity cost 10 cents a kilowatt hour. After it was nationalized by Adam Beck, Ontario Hydro set the rate at four cents a kilowatt hour and it stayed at four cents a kilowatt hour until 1995. It was a great competitive advantage.

Adam Beck did it partly because he owned a small cigar box manufacturing company in Cambridge, and he wanted this competitive advantage. He wanted low-cost electricity not only for his business but for all manufactures and for the people of Ontario. It worked really well. Then in 1995, Mike Harris came in, and he started to break up and privatize Ontario Hydro, and then the Liberals finished that off. Now we're paying somewhere between 16 and 25 cents a kilowatt hour, and our electricity costs are a competitive disadvantage for us.

Other competitive advantages, or disadvantages: the roads—it's just like how in Upper Canada they needed to build roads. When Harris built the 427, he sold it off to a private interest.

Interjection.

Mr. Chris Glover: Sorry, the 407; thank you.

When he built the 407, he sold it off, and so now you have to pay a toll on it. It's a disadvantage not only for the workers who have to drive on it every day and pay every day, but it's also a disadvantage for the companies that need to move their goods across the 407, because they have a surcharge on the transportation. It would have been much better if it was a public service, a public road.

Health care: In 1965, it was introduced. It was introduced as a social policy. People thought everybody should have the right to go to a doctor. What ended up happening: It was an incredible economic competitive advantage for us. We pay on average \$5,000 per capita on health care. That's what we spend in Canada. In the United States, where they have a privatized health care system, they pay \$10,000—twice as much. Almost double the percentage of their GDP is spent on health care, and yet we live longer, our babies are born healthier and we have more years of healthy living. So public health care is absolutely a competitive advantage.

Public education is also a competitive advantage. I will go back in history a little bit here. When the people were fighting for democracy in the early 1800s, they were also fighting for public education, because they knew that if the people were going to govern themselves, they needed to be educated. With the growth of public education in the late 1800s—in 1848 it really start to expand. They needed teachers, and they didn't have a lot of money to pay teachers. The people who ended up teaching were young women, because they didn't have to pay them as much as the men. The men had other economic opportunities. They could go cut bush. They could work on a farm. The women were willing to work for less.

What ended up happening was that women got educated. Within 20 years, in 1871, we had our first female doctor in Ontario, Emily Stowe. She and her daughter, who was also a doctor, were some of the leaders of the suffragette movement that eventually got women the right to vote in 1917. So the expansion of public education also created a more inclusive education system and a more inclusive economy for people, and a more inclusive democracy.

My concern about this government is that it is—and I'll go back to the Harris government. They launched an attack on public education. They said they wanted to create a crisis in our public education system. They underfunded our public schools by \$1.2 billion, and then they created what would have been, if it fully rolled out, a \$700-million tax cut for private schools.

This government is also undermining our public education system. They have decided that they will increase class sizes in high schools by 20%, which means a 20% reduction in the number of teachers in the building; one in five teachers will be gone.

They're also going to be delivering four out of 30 credits online. We don't know if those teachers will be in the building, but if they're not in the building, that means another one in four teachers will be out of the building, so in total we could end up with one in three teaching positions in our current high schools out of the schools. That would devastate our system. How could they possibly deliver sports, clubs or music programs with so few teachers on staff? My fear is also that the government may be intending to privatize the delivery of those online courses.

Any attack on our public education system is an attack on our long-term economic ability to compete in the world.

I would say that one of our competitive advantages in Canada is our inclusivity. In my riding, I was recently touring the office of Expedia. I was talking to the executive who was touring me around. He said, "Canada's greatest competitive advantage is our inclusivity, our celebration of diversity, because we can bring people from anywhere in the world, and they want to come here. They don't worry about it because we are such a multicultural, multiracial, multilinguistic society here." The challenge is that this government is sidelining some people, and this is one of my biggest concerns.

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I'm going to go back in history about sidelining, about bringing more people into the sphere of power. I want to go back to talk about workers first. Workers were sidelined from our democracy. Even though they had the power to vote, they were really sidelined from our democracy until 1937. In 1937, there was a strike in Oshawa. The workers in Oshawa were unionizing, and the Conservative government of the time—Mitch Hepburn was the Premier—he got a gang of goons assembled here. They were called Hepburn's Hussars, and they were going to march on Oshawa and they were going to beat up the strikers and possibly kill some of them.

Some of the cabinet ministers in Hepburn's government refused to go along with it. They actually stepped down from their cabinet posts. Eventually, Hepburn had to abandon that plan and the workers were allowed to unionize. After the Second World War, the number of workers who were unionized continued to expand. And as it expanded in the 1960s and 1970s, we had unparalleled economic growth. We had the creation of a large middle class in this province. It was a period of unparalleled economic growth—often 6% to 7% per year in GDP growth in the 1960s and 1970s. That was because workers actually had the right to unionize, to fight for fair wages, to fight for their share of the economic pie that they were actually creating.

Groups that have been sidelined today are still racialized and Indigenous communities. I mentioned that men with a certain amount of property were allowed to vote for the first time in 1848. In 1917, women got the right to vote. In 1955, the final restrictions on racialized and religious groups were removed and all people got the right to vote. In 1960, status First Nations people got the right to vote. Yet this government is taking actions that are further restricting them. They have taken the term "reconciliation" out of the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation. They've combined the ministries of anti-racism and corrections, which speaks to the very racist type of stereotyping that racialized communities have been fighting against for decades.

I'm almost finished. I just want to finish with a request to the members opposite, to the Conservative members. Our economy, our society, grows stronger with every expansion of our democracy. When we have a stronger democracy, a stronger society, we have a more prosperous economy. Some of the actions that this government is taking are undermining all of those things. But there was one action that this government took on September 12, 2018, which was with—oh, I'm going to have to tell it in my final wrap-up. I'll finish then. Thank you.

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

Mr. Dave Smith: I would like to thank the member from Spadina-Fort York, because in the 10 months or so that I've known him, I've found him to be a very thoughtful representative of his riding. He comes with a different perspective on a number of things than I do, but I appreciate the fact that when he comes and he's speaking, he's speaking from the heart.

He talked about a number of different things in his speech. One of them I'm going to touch on right now is from Milton Friedman: The role of government is to provide a level playing field. He made the comment that he felt that it should go beyond that. I agree with him in principle that we're here to do what is right for our people, but I believe that Milton Friedman actually had it correct, that the role of government is to provide a level playing field, a level playing field for everyone in Ontario. I'd like to think that's the approach we're taking as we move forward.

He also mentioned when the government was first formed in Ontario, in Upper Canada, in 1871. He talked

about how the economy expanded significantly during that period of time, and he attributed it to democracy working. I, again, will agree 100% with him. I think it was a very astute statement. I'd like to point out, though, that government at that point was very small and nimble and able to react to what the needs of the citizens were at the time very, very quickly. Big government slows things down and makes it more difficult for the people in our province. Smaller government is more reactive. I think that's partially why the economy expanded as much as it did.

When he talked about health care, that it is an advantage for all of us, I agree wholeheartedly with that. That's why we are doing what we're doing with health care.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the remarks made by my colleague the member from Spadina–Fort York. That was a very wide-ranging, very thoughtful speech, not just an inaugural speech. He gives good speeches on a regular basis. But I appreciate the opportunity to hear him set out the analysis of what it takes to actually build a society, build an economy and build lives for people that are fulfilling and, as much as can be possible, pleasant.

It's very fitting that he's made this inaugural speech today as we debate the government's budget bill. Just as the Family Compact stifled Ontario's economy, stifled Ontario's society when it, with its iron grip, made sure that Ontario was not serving the vast majority of its population, again we have a government led by a millionaire and indebted to and beholden to millionaires in this province. This is a government that continues that whole tradition of making sure that rich people get looked after.

When I listened to the member from King–Vaughan talking about how this is a government that puts money into the pockets of workers, I only have to look back a few months to this government blocking the increase in minimum wage—simple as that. If you're on the side of working people, you don't block their raise and you don't just throw them a little tax cut sop that doesn't make up for what you did to cut their income. The fight in this province, in this land, now for literally centuries, has been a fight on the part of common, working people to live better lives and the fight on the part of those who are privileged and wealthy to make sure that the money and power stays in their hands. This budget reflects that entirely.

One of my colleagues said earlier that this is a cruel budget, and she was right. It is a cruel budget. It is a budget of austerity and a budget that increases inequality—

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

Mr. Paul Calandra: I'm going to resist the temptation to follow up on the remarks from the member for Toronto–Danforth, because this is an inaugural speech for the member. I know he's given a lot of good speeches and I appreciate that. I will say this: He brings a lot of passion to the debate; he understands what this place can be for. It can be a place of anger, we can heckle back and forth, we

fight often, but the whole point that we do that is to make our province better and I understand that the member, although we disagree on a lot of things—I appreciate the perspective that he brings. I know his family must be very proud of him for being elected here today.

I have a constituent who has opened up a business in Liberty Village and has already commented on the great work that you are doing. So I do congratulate you on that.

I must say, I too was very disappointed when Bob Rae built the 407 and then decided to put a toll on it. I was just a young person at the time but I couldn't understand why Bob Rae put the toll on the 407, but it was because the province was so indebted that they couldn't afford to build the road. That's why the toll was put on the 407.

I was really happy to hear about the rebellion because—you know what?—it started after a night of drinking in a bar in Stouffville. That's when the rebellion started. So I appreciate that he talked about that.

He also talked about women getting the right to vote. Colleagues, a Conservative government brought that in. It was a Conservative government that extended the right to vote for our First Nations. It was a Conservative government, under Diefenbaker, that brought in the Bill of Rights—the first time that Canadians were protected. It was a Conservative government that appointed the first Black cabinet minister. It was a Conservative government, a Conservative Party, that had the first Chinese Canadian elected. It was a Progressive Conservative government, under Mike Harris, that brought more land under the protection of our natural heritage than any other government in history—in fact, all other governments in Ontario history, so we're very proud.

I congratulate you on a wonderful maiden speech, and I look forward to many more debates like this.

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The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member for—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Oh, I beg your pardon. Further questions and comments? I recognize the member for Parkdale–High Park.

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Thank you, Speaker. I was looking forward to the opportunity to comment on the member from Spadina–Fort York's inaugural speech. I'd like to congratulate him on his inaugural speech, but also for winning Spadina–Fort York in a very convincing victory.

In his speech, he laid out very well how, historically, Conservative governments have actually been bad for the people of Ontario. Under Conservative governments, we have seen privatization and seen cuts to social programs that the people of Ontario rely on. We have seen the province worse off when it comes to increased poverty rates.

We have also seen things like, for example, under the Harris government, social assistance being cut by 27% overnight. So many of the actions that were taken under that government we still, as a province, have not recovered from. Now we are seeing a government that is putting

forward a budget that is going to take away even more services that people rely on.

As the member from Toronto–Danforth mentioned, what this is going to result in is greater inequality, greater oppression, in our province. This is not the province that we want to build.

Ontario is one of the richest provinces in the country. We can do so much better. We certainly deserve a government that puts forward the needs of the people and reflects the priorities of the people in the budget.

I have to say that, despite all of the back and forth, we are still, at the end of the day, seeing a budget where the Conservative government is actually spending more than the Liberals, and yet cutting more services. So, please don't talk about fiscal responsibility and all of that on your end, because at the end of the day—

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

I return to the member from Spadina–Fort York, and this time I mean it.

Mr. Chris Glover: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'd like to thank the members from Peterborough–Kawartha, Toronto–Danforth, Markham–Stouffville and Parkdale–High Park for commenting on my speech.

In response to the comment about how big government slows things down: The governments, the economies, of Germany, Sweden, Norway and Finland have been consistently the fastest-growing, most stable economies, and they have large governments. They have zero tuition fees for their post-secondary students; they have robust public health care systems and public education systems; and it hasn't slowed them down.

California has the cap-and-trade system. While they've been under the cap-and-trade system, they've gone from the 10th-largest economy in the world to the fifth-largest economy in the world. So the cap-and-trade system hasn't slowed them down either. In fact, it has been an impetus for further growth, and a preparation for that environmental economy of the future—actually, not the future, but of today.

I'd also like to point out that although it was a Conservative government that passed the bill, it was women who fought for the right to vote. It was their success; it was their achievement. I think we need to remember that all the time, that every time there's a fight against discrimination, it's the people who are discriminated against who ultimately lead that fight and make us aware.

Finally, the other thing about this is, I've been talking about how racialized and Indigenous communities are often sidelined by this government and by previous governments, and we need to bring them in.

Students: In this budget, the government just cut \$700 million in student financial aid. Our post-secondary students in Ontario are the most indebted in the country, and that puts them on the sidelines. They're not able to play on the field because of that debt. I think that's an economic drag on all of us.

Just before I was going—I mentioned September 12, 2018. The most important thing is that we protect our

democracy. On September 12, 2018, this government voted in Bill 31, to suspend the charter rights—

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

Further debate?

Mr. Dave Smith: We're talking about the budget. We've had 15 years where Ontario's debt has increased significantly. When we're elected in here, we try to do what is in the best interests of the people of Ontario. What we saw over the last 15 years was probably a group who came forward with the best of intentions, but as they were in office for a number of years, it changed so that it was more about being re-elected and how they could do things to get more votes. They saw the debt swell significantly because they weren't really interested in tomorrow; they were just interested in today.

With the first budget that the Progressive Conservative government has put forward in 15 years, we're addressing that and we're trying to change that whole thought process so that we're looking at today and at tomorrow. There was an ad a number of years ago for a company, and that was their motto—"Investing for today and looking forward into the future for tomorrow." That's what we're doing.

There are five planks to this budget: restoring trust and accountability; reducing the debt and deficit; being open for business and open for jobs in Ontario; putting people first; and, probably the most important part of this budget, protecting what matters the most to the people of Ontario.

Let me start with reducing the debt and the deficit. On June 7, when we were elected, the projected deficit for the past fiscal year was \$15 billion. We took some measures, we made some changes throughout the year and we brought that deficit down to \$11.7 billion.

We recognize that there are a lot of services that the people of Ontario are expecting to receive. We can't remove that deficit all in one year. We're taking a responsible approach to it, one that provides the services for the people of Ontario that they expect, but does it in a way that also helps to reduce the total amount of money that Ontario borrows. We're bringing that deficit number down to just slightly more than \$10 billion in the first year. It's still a large number, but we're reducing the amount of money that we're borrowing each year as we move forward. We're charting a responsible path back to a balanced budget, and we should be balanced by the 2023-24 fiscal year. We're going to be creating jobs all throughout this time. We're making sure that the critical public services are there for the people.

In terms of restoring trust and accountability, the Premier and the Minister of Finance are doing something that has never been done before in this province. They've set milestones in the budget that we have to meet, and if we don't meet them, they will pay a financial penalty for it. It's the first time, ever, that the finance minister and the Premier have said, "Our salaries are on the line if we don't deliver." That's a significant thing. So 10% of their salary would be paid back. To put that in perspective, in the four years of the previous government, the Premier of the time would have paid \$75,000 in penalties, and \$40,000 in

penalties would have been paid by the finance minister—\$115,000 would have been paid back for not keeping their word. Our finance minister and our Premier are saying to the people of Ontario, “I have given you my word, and my word is valuable. It’s worth 10% of my salary if I don’t keep it. I will pay back to the province that much money.” They are standing behind what they’re doing. That restores trust and accountability. They are personally accountable for what’s going to happen in this province.

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In terms of being open for business, we have an Ontario Job Creation Investment Incentive in this budget. Now, the NDP wants to turn this as something to say that we’re giving tax breaks to the rich, we’re giving tax breaks to business. What we’re doing is, we’re saying to these businesses, “If you reinvest in Ontario, if you take money out of your pocket and you create jobs in Ontario, we admire that, and we’re going to change the tax system so that the money you spend to create jobs to help our economy—we’re going to give you credit on that.” We’re doing it through something called “capital cost allocation.” It’s an accounting term. What it means is that when you buy that component for your factory, when you buy that piece of equipment that your employees are going to use, rather than amortizing the cost over 20 years, you can do it in a shorter period of time. You’re going to be able to take that tax break in two years instead of 20 years.

Anyone in business knows that cash is king. It’s fine to show a profit by doing that amortization, but if you don’t have the money in your pocket to buy those items, you can’t do it.

We’re giving industry, we’re giving business, we’re giving employers the ability now that, when they invest in their company to create jobs—and the key there is to create jobs—they will be able to claim the money that they just spent to help employees. They’re able to claim that, and that will help create jobs. That will bring higher-paying jobs, because the companies that are investing this way are investing in technology, in advanced manufacturing, in things that are higher-paying jobs, that are career-path jobs, not just minimum wage jobs. That’s how you build the economy. You do that by creating an environment for businesses to hire people.

One of the things that I heard consistently in the round table discussions that we did prior to the budget was, “Don’t take away the temporary foreign workers. We can’t find people to come and do some of these jobs.” We’re reinvesting in that. We’re launching a pilot initiative to bring highly skilled immigrants to smaller communities. We have a number of companies that can’t find people to do those jobs. We’re making sure that they have the ability to do that.

We’re investing more in skilled trades. At the moment, we have 150,000 jobs open in skilled trades, and we don’t have people to do those jobs. For more than a generation, our high school system has had a focus on people going to university. Colleges and the skilled trades were treated as a poor second cousin, as something that you had to settle for if you weren’t smart enough. We’re changing that

thought process, because skilled labour is very important to the economy in Ontario. It’s very important to keep the engine of Ontario moving forward.

We have 150,000 openings, and we do not have people to fill those jobs. We’re going to change that. We’re putting more of a focus on skilled trades. We’re promoting it so that students coming in in grade 9 will see the benefit of it.

Speaker, I pay more per hour for my plumber than I do for my lawyer. A plumber can come out as a full plumber in an apprenticeship after four years. Most lawyers spend eight years at university.

We can get the economy moving. We can build on it through skilled trades. It’s incumbent upon us to do it, and that is what we’re doing with this budget.

We’re putting people first in this budget. We’re adopting a Digital First strategy to make sure that the services we’re providing in government are available 24/7 for the people of Ontario.

We’re no longer in the 1970s. Most of the systems that were put in place in Ontario are paper-based, and it follows along the same concept as what we had in the 1970s and the 1980s. We’re now in 2019. The majority of people who use the services of the government have things like cellphones; they have computers; they’re plugged in. They do things on the Internet. Yet most of our systems are paper-based, and they require you to go into an office someplace. It’s not as convenient. We’re bringing government into the 21st century so that it is convenient for people, so that people have the ability to get the things they need from us when they want it, the way that they want it, in an effective way. We’re treating adults as adults, and we’re bringing government into the service industry. We have to be there to serve the people of Ontario. We’re not serving the people of Ontario if we’re not providing them with the choice and the ability to do the things that they want to do, in the manner that they want to do it. We’re seeing a change in that.

We’re also providing tax relief for families where they need it the most. When a loved one passes away, right now in Ontario, you have to move quickly to file the taxes on it. Your mind is not on filing their estate papers. Your thought process is not, “What do I do for the government?” Your thought process is on, “I’ve lost a loved one. I’m grieving.” We’re changing that time frame. We’re extending it significantly so that you have the time to grieve, so that you have the time to spend with your family, and you’re not stuck thinking, “What do I have to do for the government because my loved one has just passed away?” It’s a more compassionate approach to it.

We’re also eliminating the tax side of it for estates that are \$50,000 or less. For some people, \$50,000 is a great deal of money; for some people, \$50,000 is not a great deal of money. For those for whom it’s not a great deal of money, I understand that. Those are the wealthy in this province. But the lower-income families, those who are grieving, who need more time as well to grieve—those who don’t have those financial assets—they’re now not being penalized when a loved one passes away. There will

be no taxes on the first \$50,000 of an estate. That helps that transition for those lower-income families.

We're protecting what matters most, Madam Speaker. We're committing up to \$1 billion over the next five years to create 30,000 child care spaces in schools, approximately 10,000 child care spaces in new schools—10,000 spaces in new schools. We're investing in education. We're showing the people of Ontario that we value education. We understand that child care is something that is very important to you. Not only are we putting 10,000 new child care spaces in, but they are in new schools. That means we're investing in new schools. It means that we're putting money back into the education system.

We're also introducing a new dental program for low-income seniors—those who lack benefits. We know that dental health helps your overall health. We're investing \$90 million in that so that our seniors will have dental care. Now, there are critics who are coming forward and saying, "You're spending \$90 million there. Why?" Healthy dental means better health for the individual. If you can't eat healthy food, you're not healthy. It takes its toll on you. We're making sure that our seniors who need that extra help have that so that they can live longer, more productive lives, so that they can spend more time with their loved ones as well and so that it's quality time with them.

These are things that we're doing, Madam Speaker, that make a big difference for the average person in Ontario.

The last thing I'd like to point out is that we're making home ownership and renting more affordable for the people of Ontario by increasing the housing supply. I'm going to speak specifically to my area of Peterborough–Kawartha. In the investment in affordable housing in Ontario through the budget, once it's passed, we're investing \$776,000 in my region alone on that.

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In the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative: care for the homeless, investing to help them; \$3,380,000 will be invested in that in my area.

In the Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative, \$1.2 million is going to be invested in Peterborough–Kawartha for that.

In the Home for Good project, \$983,000 will be invested in Peterborough–Kawartha for that. These are investments that we're making in Ontario. These were specific investments in Peterborough–Kawartha.

I'm proud to support this budget, Madam Speaker. I think everyone in this House should be proud to support this budget, and I'm hopeful that everyone will vote in favour of it.

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

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Rock, paper, scissors. The member for Timiskaming–Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: It's Thursday afternoon, and after five weeks, I think we're all a bit quick on the draw.

I would like to offer my comment to the member from Peterborough–Kawartha. I disagree with him on many fundamentals, but I appreciate the tenor of his speech. He laid out the issues from his perspective quite succinctly.

There's a couple of issues I would like to elaborate on. Regarding the NDP's position on accelerated capital cost allowance, we're in favour. We've always been in favour of accelerated capital cost allowance. What we weren't in favour of, and aren't in favour of—and obviously something happened because you dropped it as across-the-board corporate tax cuts. Those are two different things. A general corporate tax cut does not necessarily bring jobs; an accelerated capital cost allowance does. That's not rocket science.

As a farmer, I know how it works. We use it. Right? So, when the member from Peterborough–Kawartha said that the NDP is opposed to that, that's not factual. We have never been opposed to accelerated capital cost allowance. We have always been, and will always be, opposed to across-the-board corporate tax cuts.

One thing I will agree with the member on is, creating jobs in this province isn't currently our problem; filling them is. We have, in my riding specifically, good, high-paying, high-value jobs going unfilled. I will agree with the member—I thought the member said we needed more immigration, and we do.

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

Mr. Vincent Ke: It is my honour to rise and speak on Bill 100, Protecting What Matters Most Act (Budget Measures), 2019. I want to thank the Minister of Finance for tabling this legislation, our first budget by this government for the people into the House.

In my riding of Don Valley North, one issue that we encounter is public transit. Residents of the greater Toronto area need new public transit built now. Toronto's subway is 20 years behind. Toronto has only 76 kilometres of subway while Chicago has 360 kilometres. Even the city of Mexico has over 200 kilometres.

Our government is working with the city of Toronto to upload the subway system to be our responsibility. We will ensure subways are built where they are needed.

Last week, I was so thrilled to see that the Premier unveiled a transit system plan for the 21st century. Our government will build four new heavy rail projects in the greater Toronto area. One of them is named Ontario Line, which the Premier highlighted this morning in the House. This line will address the capacity issues on the downtown portion of Line 1. Ontario Line will provide downtown commuters another way home on the TTC.

Speaker, let's pass Bill 100 to get public commuters moving.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'm proud to be speaking on this budget bill again. I was reflecting on the comments made by the member for Danforth earlier about how the struggle throughout time is often a struggle of ordinary people, of working people, fighting for better lives and for greater rights against the wealthy and the powerful, who are struggling to maintain what they already have.

That lens seems appropriate, given this budget. This government says that it is introducing no new taxes, but

really, it's important to remember that this government is cutting taxes on the wealthy. This government says it's looking at protecting what matters most, but what I see in this budget is an interest in boozing and branding, and less about doing what's important to the services and supporting the services that we really need—services like public education, like investing in hospitals so we can stop hallway medicine, and by investing in important services like Toronto Public Health.

While we were sitting here, we just found out once again, on the day before a long weekend, that this government is cutting, and Toronto Public Health will be seeing a cut of \$1 billion, which means that diseases like measles, dental screenings for kids, having a citywide response to issues like SARS—we are going to be less able to tackle those important issues.

I don't think that is a budget that will help people. I think it is a budget that will mean people will be left behind. I urge this government to move forward and look at programs and introduce a budget that will lift everybody up.

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

Mr. Will Bouma: It's an honour to rise and speak to the comments of my friend from Peterborough–Kawartha. He hit the nail on the head: We're working on skilled labour, we're working on skilled trades, we're working on service. More than so many governments before us, we are a government of the working people. Contrary to what we hear as complaints from the party that styles themselves as the party for the working person, I think we've hit that nail on the head.

We understand simple things like just giving a longer time to file estate taxes when you pass away, and especially for those people who are on the lower end, with estates of less than \$50,000. We're investing in new schools. We're keeping those things going. We're investing in education and health care because we know how and understand how to protect what's most important to the people of Ontario.

It was so good to hear the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane speak well of the accelerated capital cost allowance and knowing what that means to small business people in the province of Ontario. Even though I'm sure he'll have difficulty voting in favour of the budget, I appreciate his support on those things.

I have to finish, though, Madam Speaker, with just a few words about the PTSD day that got slipped into the budget bill; I guess that makes it an omnibus bill. It's very special to me to be able to recognize our first responders, our victims of crime, those who have suffered multiple small traumas, who carry those things all throughout their system that come out in various ways and cause so much psychological damage. The fact that we can acknowledge a special day of the year is so important to me, and I'd like to thank the Minister of Finance for putting that in there.

Thank you for allowing me to say a few words.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member for Peterborough–Kawartha for his two-minute reply.

Mr. Dave Smith: I'd like to thank the members from Timiskaming–Cochrane, Don Valley North, University–Rosedale and, of course, Brantford–Brant.

Madam Speaker, I think we've done an excellent job with this budget. I thank the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane for his comments on capital cost allocation. It's a great tool that's in there.

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I'd like to touch on a couple of other things specifically from this budget for my riding. Through the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund, the township of Douro-Dummer will receive over \$92,000. The township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen will receive \$72,000. The township of North Kawartha will receive \$53,000. The township of Selwyn will receive \$179,000. The municipality of Trent Lakes will receive almost \$87,000. The county of Peterborough itself, as a county entity, will receive \$497,000. The city of Peterborough, through the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund, will receive \$2,105,000. That's an investment in our communities.

Our government is investing in the people in my riding, and I greatly appreciate that. This is a budget that we should be proud of. This is a budget that protects what's most important to the people of Ontario. This is a budget that builds Ontario back up and gets us back to being the engine of this great country. I'm very, very proud of it.

I'm especially proud of the accountability that the Premier and the Minister of Finance are putting in. They're putting their money where their mouth is and guaranteeing the people of Ontario that we will deliver.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: I wish I could say it was a pleasure to speak to this budget. Obviously, it's a wonderful opportunity here to respond, but I'm still coming down off the shock of the news that a billion dollars is going to be cut from Toronto Public Health. I'll get to that later.

Here we are on Thursday afternoon. It's about 5:20. We've been sitting for many weeks—five weeks, I believe—and we're about to break for the long weekend. Just, I don't know, an hour ago, we received this very alarming news. I can tell you, my constituents will not be sleeping well tonight when they hear about these cuts.

Anyways, I want to refer to something that the member who just spoke mentioned, which is that this government's bill is going to, in his words, “build Ontario back up.” Well, I want to say, I think this budget tears Ontario back down again.

It is extraordinary, the nature of the cuts that we are seeing. I think what's most extraordinary—I was recently speaking to the media outside about what the impact of those public health cuts could be, and in my conversation one of the reporters said, “Isn't this the way that we used to fund things before?” “Before what?” “Before Walkerton, before SARS?” “Yes, that's correct.”

I just want to reflect a little on that. Honestly, I was going to talk about education for 20 minutes, but I'm going to talk about public health first, because I'm digesting it, and I think people who are watching right now might also

just be hearing about this. So it's very important that we share what we know, especially at this late hour; and then I'm going to talk a little bit about something near and dear to my heart, which is, of course, education funding.

As I mentioned, just moments ago—and this is important because this document, this bill and all these papers we've gotten so far never mentioned this; they never actually mention it. There are so many things that are not in this bill, and that's something else the media noted: We get these big papers, and yet the devil is in the details. The ball is really dropping right now for a lot of sectors out there that are getting very, very bad news. It's very, very unfortunate.

What we just learned, moments ago, really, is that this government is sliding under the door at the last minute, and they haven't even put out a release yet with information about a \$1-billion cut from Toronto Public Health. I should add that they're also looking at cuts, as we already know, to public health units across this province.

Interjections.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I know it's probably hard for you to hear, Madam Speaker, because there's a lot of chatter going on. I'm sure it's difficult for you to hear that.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Stop the clock.

To the member from Davenport: Some members in the room do have quiet voices, you among them.

I am having difficulty hearing her over the equally quiet but still competing conversations that are happening at the same time. We're in the home stretch, and I would like to be able to give my undivided attention to the speaker who has the floor. I look forward to questions and comments.

I return to the member.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Toronto public board of health has been told that Toronto Public Health is being cut by \$1 billion over the next years. That's about \$100 million, at least, a year. We're not really sure of the details, because the government hasn't actually provided any details other than what was already provided to Toronto Public Health.

What we do know is that Toronto Public Health covers some very important services, including:

- vaccines for children;
- infectious disease control;
- inspection of restaurants for hygiene—so, food quality;
- testing for water safety;
- sexual health clinics. One of my closest friends is a nurse practitioner in the Toronto Public Health sexual health clinics, and I can assure you that the work she does is extraordinarily important. It literally saves lives;
- harm reduction and monitoring of the opioid crisis;
- Healthy Babies Healthy Children programs such as the newborn screening program, welfare checkups for high-risk children.

I'm also familiar, having been a school board trustee before, of the work they do in student nutrition and how important that is, with many children coming to school without any food, having no breakfast and no lunch. Sometimes that's the only food they will get all day.

What's really important about the way that public health has been funded over the last bunch of years is that it has changed: We have had this acknowledgement by the province that the province should share in the cost of supporting public health, that that is an important role for the province to play to ensure that public health is protected. Ultimately, we know that the best way to prevent the hallway medicine we talk a lot about in this House is through prevention, and that is what public health is all about.

What's really disturbing and what we're hearing coming out now from some of the communication staff in the minister's office, as they're trying to manage what might be a bit of a crisis, is, "Don't worry about it. This is just about streamlining. This is about shifting cost-sharing funding." Let's think about that for a minute, and let's think about why it is that we came to this place, why it is that Ontario participates in this, and why public health matters so much.

I mentioned it early on, but I want to mention it again: the SARS outbreak; the people who were sick and died at Walkerton. That's why public health matters. It was the previous Conservative government of Mike Harris where we saw some of these things emerge, and that's when everybody said, "Yes, this matters. We have to invest now. We have to invest in prevention. These programs are important." We all said it.

We have measles outbreaks happening around the world, and we're going to cut from vaccination programs? How are we even having this conversation? It's like something out of the Victorian era. It's absurd. We know better than this.

What we know is that cuts to public health are cuts to front-line health care, the folks who are often dealing with the most vulnerable, whether it's children or elderly or homeless people—but ultimately, all of us. We all benefit from public health services.

It will make people less safe and less healthy if we make these cuts; you can guarantee it. This is not fearmongering. This is a fact. The first time there's an outbreak—I say this, and I really hope the government will change their minds about this, because I honestly can't imagine any government wanting to have to wear this. Why would you want to wear that? Next time there's a measles outbreak, who are they going to blame? Come on.

1730

There's no coincidence that they are shutting so many public health units completely, because what that means is fewer medical officers of health. We know that medical officers of health have been the heroes, the folks who were the first ones to speak up about SARS, to take the actions that were going to actually save lives, to speak out about West Nile. Frankly, those heroes are not afraid to speak up if they don't like what they're seeing. I think there's no coincidence that the government is shutting public health units and reducing the numbers of medical officers of health across this province. It's astonishing.

We know that investing in public health units is crucial. Now we know that the Premier and this government are

going to drag us backwards, because it's clearly backwards. This is really quite shocking and, frankly, cruel.

It's funny. I have here a little note that I had acquired about what the impact of consolidation of public health units would be. I have to admit, we hadn't even completely comprehended what the impact would be when we received this. But I'm going to go through it, because this impacts not just Toronto—although right now, we are looking at a particularly brutal cut for Toronto Public Health—but it will also impact the other remaining public health units, because the government's budget is reducing public health units across this province from 35 to 10—10 public health units for the entire province of Ontario. That was part 1.

In part 2, as we know, they're going to hit those 10 remaining public health units with massive cuts. They call it a "shifting of the relationship." What a nice way to put it. Did they ask the city of Toronto? Did they ask any Ontarians about shifting public health responsibility back onto municipalities entirely? What is that?

Let's look a little bit more at what public health units do. We know that many of them are separate from the municipal structure, and that they're represented by autonomous boards of health, which is critical. Some public health units operate under the administration of regional governments. We know that, too. A few public health units operate under a municipal administrative structure—for example, the Toronto Public Health unit.

Public health units and the medical officers of health receive their authority through the Health Protection and Promotion Act, which came out in 1990, which is the main health legislation on public health programs and services. They're mandated, per that provincial legislation—let's be clear; it's provincial legislation—to deliver public health services on many of the issues that I just mentioned. But let's go through them again.

Immunizations: Ensuring that children are up to date for their mandated school vaccines is pretty important. I don't know. It's pretty important.

Vaccine storage: Ensuring that doctors and other health care providers are properly storing vaccines at their office or clinic seems pretty essential. You'd want to know that your vaccines are being stored properly, so that they can be actually effective.

Food safety, like restaurant inspections for hygiene practices: I'm sure many, many members here today eat out once in a while—more than we should, maybe, sometimes. We like to know that those restaurants have been inspected and that we're not going to get sick, right?

Health promotion: That's really important, right? That's the stuff where we try very hard to educate on tobacco use and alcohol misuse, that sort of thing. Addiction, gambling addiction—I don't know—these things.

These are all areas that public health units are responsible for, Madam Speaker.

Water quality: a big one, right? I'll take a moment here to take a sip of my water. By the way, it's not from this building, because this building has lead in it, in the pipes—but nonetheless. There are many parts of this province

right now where you can't get clean drinking water, I'll remind everyone. With this legislation and these cuts, there will be more places where you won't really feel quite as confident drinking the water.

Sexual health: like establishing community clinics to provide treatment and education regarding a sexually transmitted infection.

Water safety: by ensuring that public water is safe to drink, as I've just mentioned.

Infection control practices: by conducting an investigation following a complaint of health hazards at a school or a daycare centre. You want to know that your child is going to go to a daycare, despite what this government is doing to, I suspect, child care in this province, but you want to know that they're going to go to a place that is going to be safe, and that if there is some kind of an outbreak, that is going to be treated seriously—in our schools as well. I know I was always reassured when I got that little piece of information, that letter from the public health unit, that if there was an outbreak of something in our school, I would know immediately that there was something going on. Luckily, my kids were vaccinated, thank goodness, because I could feel comfortable that they would probably be okay—not everyone.

Oral health: like dental screening for low-income children and outbreak management—again, management of outbreaks such as measles or salmonella, diseases that can kill you. I'm not exaggerating, saying that this is like life or death, these cuts.

I'm going to tie up what I was saying about public health for a minute. Although I have to say I'm still digesting what this means.

I appreciate that the members opposite are being quite quiet today while I was talking, because I'm starting to lose my voice in here, Speaker. So I appreciate your help with that.

I want to talk for a few more minutes, in the remaining time that I have, about education, because we've heard the government say repeatedly this week in question period and in comments about the budget that they're actually increasing education funding. Well, let's look at that. We know that the Liberals underfunded education for many years. Despite that and failing to address the really flawed funding formula that the previous government, Conservatives, put in place, we still have an actually world-class education system. That's because we have excellent teachers. Despite what this government will tell you, we have the best teachers. We have awesome teachers, we have great students and our school boards really do care. That's been my experience. The people who work in our school system really, really care. All of our education workers are absolutely the best, I would say, in the country, and possibly in the world. We are very fortunate.

When this government tries to exploit some of the inadequacies of our public education system, I worry about why. I worry about the motivation, because we all know that the system needs to be better, but cutting teachers out of classrooms seems like the wrong direction. That's what this government has announced, by increasing

the number of students that will be in each of our classes, by adding these, I think, very frightening mandatory online courses, which no research supports at all—no research. This is going to undermine our education system. There's no way this doesn't affect graduation rates. There's no way this doesn't affect student outcomes.

Myself and other members in the caucus and the official opposition and the leader today asked a number of questions to the Minister of Health and the Premier about those cuts that are not laid out clearly in this budget but will be reflected in the Grants for Student Needs and other things that are coming out in coming weeks.

Teachers are receiving notices of redundancy now. I actually have received a call last night from a teacher from the Halton board who received her notice of redundancy yesterday, along with 150—I think it was something like that; I'm losing track because there are so many teachers at the elementary level, K to 8, who received notices yesterday. I had a few minutes this morning, so I decided to give her a call. I will not lie; she was in tears, as has been every other teacher I've spoken with over the last week, as they've been receiving these notices. Whether or not it was them or somebody else they work with, they're very, very upset.

1740

They're getting these notices during the day at school. They receive the notice, and then they have to go back into the classroom—

Interjection.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I just want to add, Madam Speaker—because the member over there from Thornhill is yelling at me, so I'm going to respond to her. There are some boards that receive those notices, but I can assure you that Halton has never received them before, because it's a growth board. So why are they getting them? Their administrators are being very clear about what is happening: It's because of this government's announcements and cuts, okay? Yes, I absolutely understand that every year there are shifts and changes in population. That is not what is happening here.

We have now a teacher like this—and I'm going to refer again to the teacher in Halton I spoke to this morning. She lives in Burlington and she's a grade 6 teacher.

Interjection.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: She's a grade 6 teacher; she lives in Burlington. It took years before she could get a space in teachers' college and then get hired, because there are so few places; it's already very competitive. She's now losing her position completely. This is a teacher who spends \$180 of her own money every summer to do additional qualification courses in math, so that she can become a math specialist. She will not be teaching in our schools next year. That's a fact; that's not rhetoric. That's what we're hearing from teacher after teacher after teacher.

That's why this budget and this bill matter so much, and I really hope the government will change direction.

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

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: This budget is designed to help get Ontario back on track. It is designed to stop the bleeding of Ontario taxpayers' money.

We are investing in education and investing in health care, but we have to make sure that our systems are sustainable. We have a budget which will reduce the deficit from \$15 billion to \$12.5 billion, with a projection to close that gap in the coming four years.

We have a budget which will encourage businesses to invest. We are opening Ontario to business again, with a strong message to investors: You are welcomed.

The old Chinese saying is, "Don't give me a fish. Teach me how to catch a fish." We need to think about our students who will soon be in need of a job. Not only does it help to add more jobs, but more employment in Ontario and more business means more tax revenue.

This budget is going to protect what matters most to us: our education, our health and our businesses.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: It was a bit upsetting, hearing the member for Davenport's comments about the scope of the impact of the \$1-billion cut to Toronto Public Health, and the consolidation of public health programs across Ontario.

I think it is 101. It's 101 that it is cheaper to help keep people healthy than to treat people who are sick. It's cheaper, and it's morally the right thing to do.

It's also cheaper to catch disease early than to catch it late, or when it's too late. I think that makes a lot of sense. When I hear about this Conservative government choosing to cut public health, I'm very concerned, because it means that preventative programs that keep people healthy will be reduced or potentially eliminated—programs like vaccines for children, and infectious disease control. We do not want another outbreak of SARS in Toronto, and we certainly don't want to have a disorganized or an inadequate response to an outbreak like SARS in Toronto.

It's inspecting restaurants for hygiene. These are things that Toronto Public Health does: testing for water safety; sexual health clinics; harm reduction; monitoring the opioid crisis; and the Healthy Babies Healthy Children screening program, which my children went through, to detect if your newborn baby can hear properly. If you can detect that issue early, it means you can set that small child up to learn how to speak, because you know they have a hearing problem. That's prevention, and that makes a lot of sense not only from an economic point of view, but from a moral and an ethical point of view and from the point of view of improving people's lives.

I urge this government to return funding to Toronto Public Health and public health programs all across Ontario because it makes sense, not just economically, but for people's lives.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: We're speaking today on the budget bill.

I first want to wish everybody a happy Easter, a joyous time with their family and friends, and a happy Passover, since it's our last chance before the holiday tomorrow.

The holiday of Passover is the Jews from Egypt escaping Egypt and going to Israel. Before that happened, a man named Joseph, an Israelite, went to Egypt and he got a reputation for interpreting dreams. The pharaoh had some nightmares and asked Joseph to interpret them. Joseph was brought up, and Joseph said:

Seven years of bumper crops are on their way,
 Years of plenty, endless wheat and tons of hay.
 Your farms will boom. There won't be room
 To store the surplus food you grow.
 After that, the future doesn't look so bright.
 Egypt's luck will change completely overnight
 And famine's hand will grip the land
 With food an all-time low.
 Noble Speaker, there is no doubt
 What that dream was all about.
 All the things the King saw in his pajamas
 Were a long-range forecast for his farmers.
 And I'm sure it has crossed your mind
 What they had to find
 Was a man to lead them through the famine
 With a flair for economic planning.
 And that man was Joseph.

Well, Ontario is in debt, we're running deficits, and we had to find such a man, and we did: the former mayor of North Bay, the MPP for Nipissing, and our very own finance minister, Vic Fedeli.

We are very proud of our budget. We are moving Ontario forward. We are going to start cutting down on the deficits. We're going to eliminate the deficit and balance the budget in five years. That's our goal. We're going to bring prosperity to Ontario. We need to manage our risks. We need to manage that we have food for the future and we have the economics, we have the money in the bank so that we can have prosperity and sustainability.

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

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Here we are on a Thursday afternoon before the Easter long weekend, and the government has decided to quietly announce that they're cutting \$1 billion from Toronto Public Health.

If the Conservative members of this government are so proud of their budget, why do they have to do things quietly? Why is it not explicitly stated in the budget—the cuts they're making to Toronto Public Health, and the cuts they're making everywhere?

Speaker, the government has to understand that cuts have real consequences. If Toronto Public Health is getting a cut of \$1 billion, does the government understand what that means on the ground? Without public health, people would be dying, daily, by the thousands, of infectious diseases, unsafe food, contaminated water, toxic workplaces. Women and children would be dying in childbirth. Half of the members in this House would not

be alive without public health—that's right—because the mortality rate would be high; life expectancy would be low. None of you would be vaccinated. That's the reality. That's what the cuts will translate to at the end of the day.

Do you not remember when the SARS outbreak happened here in Toronto, and how it paralyzed the city? How can you be open for business and hurt things that are going to impact economic activity? You can't do anything if there's an outbreak. You can't do anything if people are dying on the streets.

Speaker, it is very important that this government understand that public health is one of the pillars, a foundational piece of how we as human beings live in a community as part of a population. This cut is going to be devastating for Ontario.

1750

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member from Davenport for her two-minute response.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the comments of my colleagues. I would disagree with some. I want to follow up on the excellent comments by the members from University–Rosedale and from Parkdale–High Park.

The member from Parkdale–High Park just said that cuts have consequences. I can't think of a more clear way of putting it. That's excellent. Yes, they do, and the members opposite were kind of guffawing at her comment about people dying on the streets. This morning, I learned that yet another resident of my riding died on the street of an opioid overdose. Yes, they are literally dying on the streets, and nothing this government is doing is going to change that, that's for sure, because it's only going to worse before it gets better, and that is really, really unfortunate.

We've seen repeatedly by this government these—it's about priorities, Madam Speaker. It's really ultimately about priorities, and to say that none of us would be here without public health I think is absolutely true. Goodness, I've met people who have suffered from diseases pre-vaccination and visited parts of the world where they don't have access the same way to the kinds of prevention that we have here. We found this with Walkerton and SARS. I was around for that, and we saw that then, that we really are only just a tiny hair, like a little bit away, a step away from a really significant health impact, a crisis and people dying.

We know what needs to be done to prevent that, and the idea that we wouldn't do everything in our power to prevent disease and death and sickness is absolutely astounding. I would really, again, urge the members opposite to reconsider, speak to your Premier and reverse these very unfortunate changes.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I guess I have to say that I'm the last speaker and I'm honoured that people are sticking around. Maybe they don't have anywhere better to be—I have no idea—or maybe our whips are doing their proper job.

We're talking about basically balancing the budget in a responsible way, and I think that's the theme going forward. We recognize in government that it's a lot more work and a lot more responsibility than the few years I spent in opposition, that really the province is—we're walking that fine line between gaining a strong footing and a strong economy and preserving all of the institutions and things we count on and we expect, and maybe we shouldn't expect. Maybe we should understand how precarious things are, but we want to maintain a strong public health care system, a strong public education system and also ensure that we have clean air, clean water and a good infrastructure for future generations going forward.

We can't continue to spend \$40 million a day more than we're taking in in revenue, which is what the Liberals had left us with. We can't continue to spend a billion dollars and growing on interest on the debt at low interest rates. Imagine if the interest rates went up, what kind of situation we would be in. We have to tackle that debt burden. We cannot continue on this irresponsible path.

Yes, it's difficult. You have to make priorities. There's a lot of things that I think we would all like to see more money spent on quicker, building subways and infrastructure and things much faster, but we have to budget ourselves and we have to figure out how to pay for the things that are important to grow the economy, and it's that economy that's going to fund us for generations going forward.

We want to ensure that we can get the budget balanced by the year 2023-24 with no new tax increases. I think that's the hallmark of this budget. We understand there's only one taxpayer. In decades past, it was easy to say that if people are paying 10%—it's hard for us to imagine that—income tax, “Well, what's the big deal? We'll charge them 11% and that gives us millions and billions of dollars more to spend.” Well, if they're paying 11%, why not make it 12%? We reach a certain point where there's a certain level of taxation where people who are quite honest in paying their taxes all of a sudden say, “I can't survive,” and they look for ways to either hide their income or not have to pay the taxes by investing their money elsewhere.

We are going to move forward and we're going to pass this budget—I really hope we're going to see the support and pass this budget—so that we can move Ontario forward for future generations, who are counting on us. We promised during the campaign—we had, I believe, 79 campaign promises that we've totalled up, and we have already fulfilled 39 of those campaign promises. I think that's quite historic. I think we should give ourselves a pat on the back for that. We're working on 12 more.

We are working at breakneck speed, in some ways, but I think that it's a crisis. It's really an emergency here—our economy, the debt load and the deficit—and we need to move fast. We need to be flexible and nimble. We're going to have to get ourselves on the right track but always keep an open mind and always be watching everything in case we have to make quick changes.

I know from a lot of business owners, from a lot of professionals, that they feel that they're spending far too much time just filling out forms, just applying for things, just figuring out how the system works. They feel like they finally have things organized, and then they're getting letters in the mail from different government agencies, causing them more grief and anxiety and sleepless nights from just filling out the forms, as I mentioned. Let's all work together to ensure that we are going to have that fiscal sustainability, going forward.

First of all, we're delivering \$26 billion in relief through consumer-friendly measures such as eliminating \$3 billion in tax increases planned or imposed by the previous government and cancelling the cap-and-trade carbon tax, which amounted to about \$10 billion. We also have what we're calling the LIFT tax credit. It's the Low-income Individuals and Families Tax Credit. It's relief of over \$2 billion.

We're helping families with child care expenses. As somebody who had four children, that was always challenging, working part-time and managing to pay for child care and summer camps and schools and things like that. We have—we're calling it CARE. CARE stands for the Childcare Access and Relief from Expenses tax credit. That's totalling over \$2 billion. I think that there's a lot of support in a lot of our communities from families with young children, but not just the families with young children; the grandparents, the aunts and uncles, because they were all sometimes chipping in with their time and their money to help out with the child care expenses as well.

In Thornhill, we have a lot of child care places that have been struggling because of what they felt were unfair rules that made it very difficult for them to accept siblings of children who were already in their care. They're so happy. I get so many messages from them. And I'm happy for them. I tell them, “You don't have to thank me; you have to thank your organizations and the advocacy work that they did on behalf of your child care place—that they got the message out to the people who needed to hear it the most.”

We introduced the Ontario Job Creation Investment Incentive, which resulted in almost \$4 billion in corporate income tax relief, delivering early on the government's commitment to cut corporate taxes. We increased funding of almost \$4 billion for electricity price relief. I really hope that, going forward, businesses are going to be able to invest in Ontario and not be scared away with the high electricity prices that we heard from so many businesses in the years past.

In my few seconds left, I'm just going to mention that we're investing heavily in transit and traffic infrastructure. The Yonge Street expansion up to Richmond Hill is eagerly awaited in my riding of Thornhill. I'm looking forward to those shovels going in the ground. I'm looking forward to hosting some big celebrations; I'll pay for the cake. We should all celebrate. I'm looking forward to riding on that subway with my friends, with my neighbours and their children. I hope we can get things rolling in the province of Ontario and have prosperity.

Once again, Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): It being 6 o'clock, I hope that everyone who recognizes

Easter or Passover has a happy Easter or a happy Passover, and that everyone has a safe time away from this Legislature.

This House stands adjourned until 10:30 on Monday, April 29, 2019.

The House adjourned at 1800.

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Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Parm (PC)	Milton	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor—Tecumseh	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hillier, Randy (IND)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Solicitor General / Solliciteuse générale
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Orléans	
Lecce, Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (PC)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)	Ajax	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Piccini, David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa- Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (IND)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakubuski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Wayne Gates
Stan Cho, Jill Dunlop
Wayne Gates, Michael Gravelle
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

Chair / Président: Stephen Crawford
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeremy Roberts
Ian Arthur, Stephen Crawford
Doug Downey, Sol Mamakwa
David Piccini, Kaleed Rasheed
Jeremy Roberts, Sandy Shaw
Donna Skelly
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
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Julia Douglas

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
John Fraser, Joel Harden
Belinda Karahalios, Robin Martin
Sheref Sabawy, Nina Tangri
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie