

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

No. 173B

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

N° 173B

1st Session
42nd Parliament

Wednesday
8 July 2020

1^{re} session
42^e législature

Mercredi
8 juillet 2020

Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
Greffier : Todd Decker

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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



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Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
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Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

ISSN 1180-2987

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 8 July 2020 / Mercredi 8 juillet 2020

Rebuilding Consumer Confidence Act, 2020, Bill 159, Ms. Thompson / Loi de 2020 visant à rétablir la confiance chez les consommateurs, projet de loi 159, Mme Thompson

Mr. Stephen Blais	8529
Hon. Paul Calandra.....	8531
Mr. Tom Rakocevic.....	8531
Hon. Paul Calandra.....	8531
Mr. Tom Rakocevic.....	8531
Hon. Paul Calandra.....	8532
Mr. Tom Rakocevic.....	8532
Hon. Paul Calandra.....	8532
Mr. Tom Rakocevic.....	8532
Mrs. Daisy Wai.....	8532
Third reading debate adjourned	8534

Time allocation

Ms. Andrea Khanjin	8534
Ms. Peggy Sattler.....	8535
Hon. Paul Calandra.....	8537
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	8545
Vote deferred.....	8546

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 8 July 2020

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 8 juillet 2020

Report continued from volume A.

REBUILDING CONSUMER
CONFIDENCE ACT, 2020
LOI DE 2020 VISANT À RÉTABLIR
LA CONFIANCE CHEZ
LES CONSOMMATEURS

Continuation of debate on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 159, An Act to amend various statutes in respect of consumer protection / Projet de loi 159, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne la protection du consommateur.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Mr. Stephen Blais: It's been said that a house is made of bricks and beams, but a home is made of hopes and dreams. In Ontario, those bricks and beams are laid by 300,000 men and women across the province who toil in the extreme heat of the summer and the bitter depths of the Canadian winters to build the homes and communities that define so much of our lives.

Residential construction contributes over \$50 billion to Ontario's economy and is critical to the economic vitality of our communities. Too often, discussion about the new home warranty program and consumer protection for new homeowners devolves into an attack against an entire industry and the hundreds of thousands of people who work within it. That is not and should not be the point. We need a regulatory and warranty regime that gives consumers confidence that putting their entire financial future into a single purchase is a risk worth taking. That confidence isn't achieved by continually attacking the men and women who build the communities we call home.

Building a new home, for many, is the fulfilment of a long-held dream. It's a moment of pride that often gives homeowners a new sense of confidence and accomplishment. But sometimes things go wrong. Sometimes people make a mistake. Sometimes elements of your new home don't turn out the way they should. And when your whole life and future, your hopes and your dreams, are wrapped up in that home, when all of your financial security and that of your family is wrapped up in those bricks and beams, these mistakes, of course, can be shattering. Your entire family's future could be ruined because someone had a bad day.

Your house is the most complicated and surely the most expensive product any of us will ever buy. A thousand

different things can go wrong during construction—a piece of insulation can be forgotten; an opening might not be properly sealed; an inspector may have missed something on their all-too-infrequent visits. How could so much money, so much of your future be tied up in something that has so many different ways of going wrong? And how can Ontarians have any confidence that their whole future won't be put at risk when they take the home ownership plunge?

Strong regulatory measures to ensure homes are built to a high and continually evolving standard and a warranty that protects consumers against all those seemingly small little problems that could turn your hopes and dreams into a nightmare—those are exactly the guiding principles articulated by Justice Douglas Cunningham three and a half years ago when he submitted his final report to the government of the day. Let me quote the report for a moment:

“A program intended to support the building of high-quality homes and deliver new home warranty protection for consumers has four essential functions:

- “1. Making rules about mandatory warranty protections;
- “2. Administering the warranty program;
- “3. Adjudicating disputes about those roles; and,
- “4. Regulating builders and vendors.”

Bill 159 could have sent a clear message that we can promote the protection of the public interest by prioritizing consumer protections. The minister this afternoon said that she wants to show Ontarians that the government has their back. Having their back would have meant clear and transparent options for mandatory warranty protections. Having their back would have enshrined consumer rights when purchasing a new home into legislation. Having their back would articulate fair dispute-resolution options that ensure that new home owners have a voice in the outcome.

Bill 159 could have effectively and substantively dealt with all four of Justice Cunningham's pillars. Unfortunately, Bill 159 only truly addresses one of them. By finally moving forward with the Home Construction Regulatory Authority, by finally eliminating the inherent conflict that exists by having one body responsible for all four of those pillars, the government is taking one step in the right direction, but that one step isn't enough.

I'm going to talk about the pillars for a moment. Making rules for mandatory warranty protections: Let's remember for a minute that participating in Ontario's new home warranty program is not optional. New home owners have no choice. They have no choice but to participate and

they have no choice in warranty providers. New home owners are obligated to pay thousands of dollars to a government-controlled monopoly.

That point is interesting because I always thought that Conservatives hated government-controlled monopolies. We always hear about how prices and options could be so much better if only the government didn't control so many different things. But for the guarantee that the biggest, most expensive, most important purchase of your life won't turn out to be a lemon, they're happy to take all the options off the table. Bill 159 explicitly rejects the consideration of providing consumer choice.

Given that the government does not want to provide consumer choice and rejects the option of providing a competitive model, one would hope that the government would then be clearer about their expectations of what a new home warranty program should provide. Bill 159 provides no guidance on what minimum consumer protections for Ontario residents are when buying a new home. If Bill 159 were about providing strong consumer protection for new home owners, it would have rights and guarantees that are explicit and are codified. It wouldn't rely solely on the board of directors or cabinet to establish the rights and expectations of new home ownership. Essentially, it comes down to the government saying, "Trust us."

We know, Mr. Speaker, that this government in particular enjoys executive power. Ruling by fiat instead of through legislation is the word of the day. The fundamental rights and guarantees provided to new home owners should not be completely subjective and made in the opaque nature of cabinet confidences and board meetings. There was an opportunity in Bill 159 to articulate a basic set of rights and expectations that would make it clearer that consumer protection is the priority. Unfortunately, those are not included in the bill.

This brings us to the administration of the warranty program. Anyone who has ever dealt with Tarion, whether it be a homebuyer, whether it be a home builder or whether it be an elected official trying to help a constituent, knows that it can be difficult, and I think I'm being generous in my description. With all due respect to everyone who works at Tarion, it has gone mad with red tape. By "MAD," some owners refer to that as "Maximum Administrative Delay." While that characterization can be debated, it's clear to everyone that decisions are not made fast enough and that rationales for those decisions are not clear and consistent. As a homeowner, there is no clarity in the process that determines if a certain defect in your home is in fact a warrantable issue.

1750

How can it be that neither the builder nor the purchaser has clarity about what is and what is not covered by the warranty? Think about it. The provider and the purchaser—neither one of them has clarity as to what is and is not provided by the warranty. Moreover, there is no fixed or realistic process or timeline to have a warranty claim assessed, let alone dealt with and resolved. There needs to be clear, concise and precise guidance from the government about what is and what is not a warrantable issue.

Furthermore, there needs to be a clear and transparent process for evaluating if a particular problem within a home meets that standard and a process and timeline for having it resolved. None of that is in this bill. If this was a priority for the government, there would be some semblance of it in the legislation. Again, the government is essentially saying, "Trust us."

Questions about what is or is not a warrantable issue can persist for months and, in some cases, for years. Inspections are booked, homeowners take time off work and nobody shows up; or the builder shows up to the address to solve the problem and the homeowner won't let them in. There's certainly fault to go all around, but it stems from the lack of clarity about what is or is not a warrantable issue and the roles and responsibilities of all involved in getting that issue resolved.

This brings us to the last pillar, Mr. Speaker: dispute resolution. The government tries to begin to fix this in Bill 159, but it doesn't actually get the job done. When there is a dispute in the warranty process—and let's recall that this is a government-mandated, no-choice warranty from a government-owned monopoly. When there is a dispute about warrantable coverage, homeowners can end up at the Licence Appeal Tribunal. To some, this might sound like this is a resolution process, but in reality, it's a completely one-sided exercise that places average Ontarians against Bay Street lawyers. And the expense of taking time off work and hiring lawyers of their own is often prohibitive to many homeowners.

Furthermore, the members with the Licence Appeal Tribunal are not subject matter experts in home construction. They go from dealing with impounding cars and alcohol and cannabis licensing to making determinations as to whether that problem is going to have a detrimental financial impact for you and your family for the rest of your lives.

While Bill 159 opens the door to the possibility of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, it does not offer any insights into the government's thinking on what those options are or the processes they'll follow. In some jurisdictions, the mandatory mediation process has been established. This could have been included in the bill; it's not.

Under Justice Cunningham's proposal, a homeowner would be required to deal with the warranty provider. Homeowners would be provided with reasonable access to an independent party who can review a claim and provide external validation of a decision made by the warranty provider. Cunningham wrote, "Having access to a body of decisions of an adjudicative body on warranty claims can support consistency in the interpretation and application of the warranty legislation."

Mr. Speaker, Justice Cunningham has approximately five pages of recommendations for an improved dispute resolution process that puts consumers first, ensuring that home builders are also protected by having a consistent interpretation of the warranty legislation. But Bill 159 includes two lines about the possibility of a voluntary dispute resolution process to be determined solely by the

warranty provider. Five pages of specific, thoughtful, expert advice is translated by this government into one sentence, leaving the process to be determined later by the government, effectively saying, “Trust us.”

Mr. Speaker, when it comes down to the most expensive purchase of our lives, when it comes down to the entire financial security of our family, trusting this government just isn't good enough. For that reason, we will not be supporting the bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Since I'm here, Mr. Speaker, why not?

The member was referencing a report, I think, while he was giving his comments—a report that was from 2016. I believe there was about two years left on the Liberal government at that time, so I'm just wondering if the honourable member could explain to this House why the government at the time did not act on the report that he was referencing.

Mr. Stephen Blais: In 2016, I was the city councillor for a ward called Cumberland in the city of Ottawa, one of the fastest-growing communities in the city, where thousands of homes are built every four-year cycle. I dealt with hundreds of new home owners who had serious and long-lasting issues with Tarion, including many who provided deputations to the committee; all of whom reject the ideas that are in this legislation. So if the government was truly committed to consumer protection, they would have listened to some of those deputations and enacted different regulations.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: It's interesting that we're talking about people's lives being ruined, and this Liberal member gets up and has the audacity to look over and make a fundraising pitch to the building industry. That's how he started his not-quite 20 minutes.

So I'd like to ask a question, since Liberals received just as much money from the development industry as Conservatives: (1) What's it like talking out of both sides of his mouth; and (2) what's it like getting all that money?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Excuse me. Before we start, I would ask the member to withdraw that comment.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I will withdraw that comment.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you. To the member from Orléans for a response.

Mr. Stephen Blais: I'm proud to have worked with both homebuyers and builders to resolve any number of disputes about new home construction, whether it be at the possession stage or in the pre-construction stage. I don't believe in judging anyone based on where they work or what type of company they own.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I do appreciate the fact that the member was a city councillor at the time. So I wonder if he would agree with me, then, that the fact that the McGuinty government and the Wynne government that

followed did not fulfill some of the recommendations that he was so eager to talk about—if he would agree with me, then, that that was a complete failing of that government and is one of the reasons why the people of Ontario threw them out of office and left them with only seven seats.

Mr. Stephen Blais: I would agree with the House leader that Bill 159 is a complete failing of consumer protection for new home owners, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Some would argue that ground zero for Tarion failure is Cardinal Creek Village, which happens to be in the riding of his predecessor, the former MGCS minister, and his riding now. That minister was not able to help the people there, either through proper legislation or as the MPP. Interestingly enough, the developer of Cardinal Creek is a friend and donor of that member.

So I'm interested to know, since he says he works for both sides—those were his own words—how do you help both the builder and the people whose lives are being ruined by your friend?

Mr. Stephen Blais: I appreciate that the NDP tried to crash a public meeting during the federal election to prop up their candidate, and it was not successful because they only got 14% of the vote in Orléans. But I don't think they truly appreciate exactly everything that happened in Cardinal Creek. Certainly, there are horror stories, and the Bellefeuilles, as an example, is a horror story. Marcel and Julie are good friends of mine for much longer than this process, and what they've gone through is absolutely horrible.

But to say that Marie-France wasn't able to achieve anything, I believe, is an exaggeration. Many homeowners had their issues dealt with. There are several that are still outstanding, and clearly more work needs to be done, which is why we would support a more comprehensive change to the warranty program—a comprehensive change that is not proposed in Bill 159.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I find myself confused by the member opposite. He was a municipal councillor. He's pleading the Fifth on all of the sins of the previous government before he was elected. He referenced in his comments a report from 2016, which had a lot of important things that he would like to see done. He doesn't want to take any responsibility for the fact that the Liberal government—what they did before he was here. So I'm wondering if in his time as a municipal councillor he made any deputations to his predecessor with respect to the 2016 report, and why he feels that the Liberal government that was in power before he was elected ignored him at the time as a municipal councillor, and if he feels that that's the type of representation that a government at the time should give a municipal councillor with serious issues, or if that's what the people of Orléans can look forward to—a representative who doesn't get anything done for his people.

1800

Mr. Stephen Blais: I would say, Mr. Speaker, that I worked very closely with the previous member to address

a number of concerns in Cardinal Creek and other parts of Orléans, both with the new home warranty program and other areas of provincial and municipal intersection.

I would ask the House leader why he hasn't accepted the deputations of any number of presenters to the committee about why Bill 159 simply doesn't protect consumers.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: In the member's experience as a city councillor now—councillors have quite a large amount of power when it comes to development, so he presided over Cardinal Creek as a city councillor at the time. We find major structural defects—in fact, the Bellefeuille family that you claim to be your friends had to have their entire basement floor pile-driven to be literally remade once more. This all happened under your watch as a city councillor. We have municipal inspectors. We have all sorts of provisions that could have protected these families. What did you do as a city councillor directly to help these families so they wouldn't be hundreds of thousands of dollars in arrears?

Mr. Stephen Blais: Well, I used my association with home builders to convince them to raise building permit fees so that we could hire more inspectors, to be more proactive in the building inspection process. That demonstrates the value of having relationships with all sides in a dispute.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions?

Hon. Paul Calandra: That was quite the remarkable answer there. When asked what the member did to help homeowners—he increased the cost to homeowners but did nothing to actually help them, which is really a classic Liberal way of dealing with things: Raise taxes and then do nothing.

But again, Mr. Speaker, I will take him at his word that before he was elected he didn't have any role to play, and that's fine. Because he referenced the 2016 report so often, I'm wondering if he could highlight for me why he believed that the Liberal government at the time, before he was elected—which he takes no responsibility for, but still decided to run as a member of that party—if he could share with the House what his beliefs are on why they did not proceed with the recommendations that he's so passionate about today.

Mr. Stephen Blais: I believe in having a strong regulatory model that is continuously improving, to ensure that homes are built to the highest standard in Canada, and I believe in having a strong warranty program to ensure that new home owners who are putting their entire future on the line by investing in Ontario and investing in a new home are properly protected. And I would happily support any legislation that did both of those things. Bill 159 doesn't.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: The former government—the Liberal government, when it comes to the people who care a lot about home warranties, they said it was a ballot box

issue. When they said that, they meant they were getting rid of the Liberals. So, essentially, we're in the mess that the Liberals made, all of us in this House—you, too, even.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Please address the Speaker.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I apologize—through you, Speaker: Since we're all swimming in the Liberal mess, and this legislation very much resembles what the Liberals were proposing, what exactly is so offensive about it, for you to now change your mind and not support it?

Mr. Stephen Blais: I appreciate that in this year's by-election, consumer protection for new home owners was a ballot box issue. I was very proud to receive over 55% of the vote, seeing a double-digit decline in votes for both the Conservatives and the New Democratic Party. And of course, new home communities are an important part of Orléans—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. Further debate?

Mrs. Daisy Wai: I rise to support Bill 159, Rebuilding Consumer Confidence Act, 2020, on the occasion of its third reading. As one of the committee members on the Standing Committee on General Government, regarding Bill 159, I listened intently at the public hearings as the public submitted their comments to the committee. My heart went out to them as they shared the challenges they experienced in dealing with Tarion.

Buying a house is an important milestone in our lives. The excitement of owning a house and making it your dream home is one of the biggest accomplishments in our lives. I can understand the disappointment it brings when they experience serious defects in the home. It is shocking for them to realize their life savings are at stake.

Their experience in going after Tarion has been a nightmare which has affected their emotional health and physical health. Their disputes with Tarion are stressful and frustrating. Consumers expressed their distrust of Tarion. I share all these concerns, and I'm sorry for what they have had to go through. Our government understands these challenges and frustrations. This is why our government introduced Bill 159, to rebuild consumer confidence.

I would like to take this opportunity to respond to the member from Humber River–Black Creek. I appreciate your persistence and your devotion, your commitment. Since 2009, you have been committed to speak up and be the forerunner of the homeowners who have suffered from all this.

But as you mentioned as well, these were done in the previous government. A lot of the people coming for the presentations, for the submissions, were expressing what they have gone through during the previous government that has left them with such challenges and painful times. Even when you mentioned that Tarion is very weak—it was in 2017. That was even before our government took over. When we took over—that is why we see the importance of rebuilding consumer confidence, and that's why we do what we're doing right now.

I would like to very quickly say about Bill 159 that it really extensively covers a lot of things, not just home building and Tarion. It covers the following:

- Ontario New Home Warranties Plan Act;
- New Home Construction Licensing Act;
- Consumer Protection Act;
- Condominium Act;
- Condominium Management Services Act;
- Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act;
- Retirement Homes Act;
- Safety and Consumer Statutes Administration Act;
- Technical Standards and Safety Act;
- Ticket Sales Act.

We are building all these to support the rebuilding of consumer confidence. As you can see, Bill 159 covers extensively to rebuild consumer confidence—but with the limited time that I have, I will respond just based on what we have concerned with Tarion. I would like to clarify a few things with that. Some of us have already mentioned it, but I still want to reiterate it so that everybody understands what our government has done and achieved, just based on our concerns with Tarion.

Bill 159 is an enabling piece of legislation. That means, if passed, it will establish a separate regulator for new home builders and vendors, the Home Construction Regulatory Authority, HCRA, under the New Home Construction Licensing Act. The HCRA will hold Tarion to account—so we are not just supporting Tarion. This is what our previous government has done. We are doing all we can to hold Tarion to account. The responsibility has been removed from Tarion, but we have given it to HCRA to restructure the Ontario Builder Directory into a credible resource that consumers will have confidence in.

1810

Now, Bill 159 will also enhance the administrative authority model, restore confidence in the condominium sector, and improve transparency for purchasers of tickets to events in Ontario.

Tarion's dispute resolution process is one of the main conflicts of interest pointed out by the judge in the 2017 Tarion review. The public found Tarion has too much power and autonomy behind closed doors. Tarion also holds power and the purse strings on payouts. They found that Justice Cunningham laid out a well-thought-out framework. When disputes arise with the warranty authority, the matter will be referred to independent dispute resolution, and the appointed mediator or arbitrator would be able to hire an independent expert to ascertain the facts around the claim, and have costs borne by the authority.

Our government understands all these as well. We understand these concerns. Ontarians who are looking to buy a new home need to trust that, when there is a new home, the warranty program is there to protect them. Actually, we've done a lot of work to overhaul the Ontario new home warranty and protection program in a way that protects the interests of new home buyers, and we took the time to get it right. What we have heard during our committee meetings with the presenters are incidents from what they have experienced through the previous government, but our government has done a lot of work to make it right. We conducted extensive consultations with consumers and various stakeholders about the current Ontario

new home warranty and protection program and heard about the need to make it more responsive to the needs of the consumers.

The new home warranty program was neglected by the previous government. Our government implements improvements that will result in real change for the consumers. These include:

- establishing a mandate for Tarion to promote the resolution of claims as soon as reasonably possible;
- providing Tarion with the ability to use a range of processes to assist in resolving disputes between consumers and vendors or builders. I heard a lot during the committee that disputes are not resolved and they did not respond to them but now, our government is doing a lot of work for this;
- enabling the government to prescribe adjudicative bodies other than the Licence Appeal Tribunal to resolve disputes between homeowners and Tarion over warranties and protections claims;
- giving Tarion an explicit, legislated mandate to promote properly built new houses;
- requiring Tarion to consider the history of people who may be acting through or hiding behind applicants or registrants to build or sell new homes.

We have done a lot. These are some of the things that I can list.

Now, through Bill 159, we are removing part of Tarion's mandates that have them overseeing the Ontario Builder Directory, giving that authority to the new regulator, Home Construction Regulatory Authority. We will hold HCRA to a high standard ensure this is one of the first priorities it does—to fix the directory, to make better information available for homeowners or potential homeowners.

In response to public concerns that Tarion holds the purse strings on payouts, the government would rather focus on the warranty program. Basically, it is important for us to note that an increase in payouts does not mean that it is good for homeowners; what it means is that the builders are not fixing the problems. We want them to fix the problems instead. Builders have to fulfill their commitment of the warranty. We introduce regulations for builders to fix the problems. In 2018, over 380,000 homes were under warranty; only 1,501 homeowners, which is 0.39%, were not able to get the builder to resolve their claims. So we really have done a lot of work.

Consumers are looking to the government to fulfill the direction from Justice Cunningham's report in 2016. As we mentioned just now, it was brought to us in 2016. Nothing much has been done, but since our government came in, we have done this, and we have also responded to the Auditor General's recommendations in 2019.

Just now, our colleagues mentioned, and I would like to mention again—I'm happy to report that 32 of 37 of Justice Cunningham's recommendations were implemented. In fact, three of the remaining five do not apply as they would only be possible under a multi-provider insurance model, while the remaining two require further con-

sideration by the government, including a recommendation on illegal building. Illegal building will be dealt with through HCRA and Tarion's revised mandates.

As for the Auditor General's recommendations of 2019, we ensured that the recommendations are implemented. They submitted 32 recommendations. Out of that, 25 of the 32 are directed for Tarion to implement. The remaining seven are for MGCS—three are for them—and four are for HCRA.

Where do they stand with those 25? As of June 15, 2020, Tarion had completed 11 of the Auditor General's recommendations—two more since spring. Eight more will be done by the end of 2020, and six will be done in 2021. This means that by the end of 2020, 76% of the Auditor General's recommendations will be completed. So don't say that we have not done anything; we have been on top of them, and we have been managing them.

We also have improved the board governance. The minister of MGCS has issued a minister's order for Tarion to change their bylaws to reflect that no one group can form a majority on the board. This was sent in November 2019. Tarion has fully complied with the minister's order, and the board size has been reduced from 16 to 12. The current Tarion board composition is, as my colleagues said, one third minister appointments, one third Tarion appointments and one third builder appointments from the OHBA.

Interjection.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: My deputy House leader has given me a note asking me to suggest that I move the adjournment of the debate.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Ms. Wai has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Interjection: On division.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Carried on division.

Third reading debate adjourned.

1820

TIME ALLOCATION

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I move that, pursuant to standing order 50 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 167, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts, the order of the House dated February 18, 2020, referring the bill to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly be discharged, and the bill be ordered for third reading; and

That when the order for third reading of the bill is called, one hour shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, with 20 minutes apportioned to the government, 20 minutes to Her Majesty's loyal opposition, 10 minutes to the independent Liberal members as a group and 10 minutes to the Green Party independent member; and

At the end of this time, the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Ms. Khanjin has moved government order number 83. Further debate?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I just wanted to quickly provide a few remarks in terms of motion 83—just to thank everyone in this Legislature for all the work they are doing, and just the importance of being able to act swiftly when it comes to our government and really put the priorities of Ontarians ahead of our own. I know it's time that we'd like to spend with our families, but I think it's important that we are in this Legislature and we're showing Ontarians that we're ready to get to work.

I just wanted to provide those brief remarks, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm pleased to rise, as the deputy House leader for the official opposition, to speak to the motion that is before us today, which is a time allocation motion to basically lift the Legislative Assembly off of the docket of the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, which is where it had been sent when it was debated here for second reading, and to bring it back to the House for third reading.

Speaker, I have to say that we were quite interested to see this motion come forward, because we had wondered what had happened with the Legislative Assembly Act. Back in the days when there used to be government House leader meetings and the government House leader used to inform the opposition and the independents about the business that was going to be conducted, the government House leader had talked about the possibility of using the Legislative Assembly Act as one of the first bills that would go through a virtual committee process. This was when we were in the midst of the pandemic and there had been unanimous agreement about the importance of getting committees going again, but recognizing that we had to be structuring committees in a new way. So the government House leader said, "Let's bring the Legislative Assembly Act forward. That's the kind of a non-contentious bill that could be considered in a virtual committee hearing, so let's think about that." And we thought, "Yes, that's a great idea."

Speaker, the government House leader will know that when this bill was debated on February 18, the official opposition expressed our support for the bill. We expressed our support right from the outset, because we recognize the need to have clarity in the rules that govern the functioning of this chamber. Modernizing the Legislative Assembly Act, making the kinds of housekeeping amendments that are proposed in the Legislative Assembly Act are important to enable us to fulfill our obligation as legislators to come to this assembly and to speak on behalf of the people we represent. During the debate on second reading of this bill, we said to the government that

the amendments that are laid out in this bill are constructive and will help us function better as a Legislature.

It's interesting; when you look at the debate on second reading that happened on February 18, in a question from the deputy government House leader to the government House leader about the bill, the government House leader said—sorry, I'll backtrack. The question from the deputy House leader was, "How is this going to modernize our current parliamentary proceedings, and how is this going to help us progress as a Legislature?" The government House leader said, "I fully suspect that there might be other things that we might find in here that we might want to take a look at in committee...." So the government House leader, at the time, acknowledged the importance of taking this bill to committee to get the kind of input that is helpful to understanding if legislation can be strengthened.

I know the official opposition House leader at the time, in February, when the bill was debated at second reading, also pointed out that the committee process would be helpful to receive input on the bill.

The Legislative Assembly Act is not a piece of legislation that comes before the Legislature very often, and there may be parliamentary experts who have some helpful suggestions to make, who may want to weigh in on a bill before committee.

That was the general agreement: "Yes, this is a good bill, but any bill can be strengthened, and it's always helpful to take legislation to committee and get public input to help us improve the way that we do things in this place." But this time allocation motion changes the direction that was set out back on February 18, when this bill was debated at second reading. It eliminates that committee process, and it moves the bill to third reading.

One of our big concerns is that when the original discussion took place about moving the Legislative Assembly Act to committee so that we could work out the kinks of the technology for committee hearings—that discussion took place, and yet we saw the government decide to not move the Legislative Assembly Act to committee. Instead, they decided to move four very contentious pieces of legislation through the committee process, and we've seen what the result of that is.

This week, Bill 161—the changes to the Legal Aid Act—was moved to committee instead of the Legislative Assembly Act. Lots of people went to committee and gave lots of great input about how to strengthen that bill, and the government ignored that.

The transit bill, Bill 171, went to committee instead of the Legislative Assembly Act. Again, that bill came back with virtually no amendments to reflect the input that was heard, and it has now been passed by this Legislature.

Just today, we saw Bill 175, another bill that went to committee instead of the Legislative Assembly Act—many, many deputants went to committee and spoke about their significant concerns about the way that bill was opening up our home and community care system to privatization. And yet no amendments were made to

reflect the input that was provided, and that bill has now been passed by this Legislature.

1830

This government has made choices about the types of legislation that it has chosen to send to committee. We have learned a lot about a virtual committee process. I think it probably would have been helpful to have had this bill as a test case, but we didn't do that. Instead, we are now debating moving this bill forward for third reading.

We have concerns about the use of time allocation to move this bill through at this point in the proceedings of the Legislature. Time allocation historically has been used for very contentious issues where there isn't consensus. This is an example, as I said, where there is consensus. There was a lot of consensus that was expressed right upfront during second reading debate. We said that we were supportive of the bill, we wanted to see it go to committee, we wanted to see these changes made so that we can work better as an assembly. Yet the government chose not to send it to committee, and they've chosen to use the heavy hand of time allocation to get it to third reading.

We know that time allocation has historically been used by Legislatures to replace the kind of negotiation and consultation and working across the aisle that really is the hallmark of an effective, healthy democracy. We have seen so many examples of this government just showing complete disrespect for those kinds of healthy, democratic processes of reaching across the aisle to engage the official opposition in a discussion about priorities and how we can move legislation through. We recognize that the government was elected as government and has a right to see its agenda moved through the legislative process, but it's not a one-way street; we were all elected. We were all elected to come to this place and try to make better for the people that we represent, and that requires consultation and collaboration.

Speaker, I have talked about this on several occasions in this Legislature—about the fact that our responsibility as MPPs, as legislators, is particularly important during a state of emergency. Our obligation to work across the aisle and to try to come to some agreement about what issues we should be looking at is even more important when there is a declaration of emergency that gives the government extraordinary power. With that extraordinary power also comes extraordinary responsibility, and this government has continued to just throw up its hands and say that they don't feel that kind of responsibility to engage with the official opposition, to engage with the independents and to work across the aisle to move issues through—issues that are very important to the people that we represent.

Even though we expressed our full support for the legislation when it was debated at second reading and we will support it at third reading, we do not support the decision to allocate time on this bill. We would have loved to have had a discussion with the government House leader, maybe at a government House leader meeting, when the government could share the business for the following week. But we didn't have the opportunity to

have that kind of discussion because this government House leader is just not interested in having any kind of collaborative approach to working in this chamber.

I also wanted to make a comment about the legislation itself. I think that consideration of the bill itself—the change that’s proposed in the bill around the oath of office—is particularly relevant in the context that we are now experiencing with anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism. There is a change in the act that allows staff who identify as Indigenous or non-citizens to opt out of taking the required oath of affirmation to the crown prior to undertaking employment at the assembly. This is a very important step forward for this Legislature in the way that we respect the staff who work in this place.

I do want to give a shout-out to all the staff who work so hard to keep our Legislature functioning, who have been here throughout this pandemic as we have met on these special sitting days and who have contributed so much to the democratic process in Ontario.

It’s interesting that this legislation takes a step forward in allowing Indigenous people to opt out of the oath of affirmation to the crown prior to their employment at the Legislative Assembly, but at the same time, this chamber has taken a huge step backwards in terms of bringing God Save the Queen to this place the first Monday of every month. My colleague the member for Kiiwetinoong has spoken very poignantly about the pain he feels when he hears that song because of the legacy of colonialism, the brutality, the violence that was experienced by Indigenous people in this country.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Order, please.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: So it’s quite striking, Speaker, that on the one hand, we’re going to be dealing with legislation that moves us further along the path of reconciliation, but on the other hand, we saw standing order changes introduced that take us backwards on the path of reconciliation. In fact, at the same time that we had the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calling for education of citizens to raise awareness of the violence that was inflicted—state-led violence, state-led genocide—on Indigenous communities, they’re bringing God Save the Queen into this chamber. Not only does it do nothing to educate citizens on the reality of the harm and trauma that Indigenous communities experience, but it really glorifies the violence that was perpetrated against Indigenous communities in this country by the crown.

If this bill had gone to committee, maybe we would have had input about other changes that could be made to make the Legislative Assembly more welcoming, more accepting of Indigenous people who work here, non-citizens who work here, anybody. This is the people’s House, so we want to make sure that this House is as reflective and representative of the population that we collectively serve.

1840

As I said, we’re not going to be supporting the time allocation motion. We do not think that this is an appropriate use of an instrument to move this legislation forward

when the government knows that we were already supportive of the bill. We had expressed our support for sending the bill to committee, and instead the government decided to ignore the conversations that we had and decided to send other bills to committee without giving us any kind of advance notice or seeking input from us about the committee process.

I know that the government House leader will claim that there was only so much capacity for bills to be at committee at the same time. Yes, that is absolutely true, but the government House leader had complete control over which bills were going to be at committee at the time. They chose not to send this bill to committee.

With that, Speaker, I will conclude my remarks. But I will once again just encourage the government House leader to recognize the value of working across the aisle, of engaging with all members of the assembly, of helping us collectively to do better jobs as MPPs, to have opportunities to represent our constituents in a more meaningful way, and to give us advance notice of the business that’s going to be discussed by this Legislature. All of those would be very helpful, not just to us as individuals, but to the people of this province, the people who sent us to this Legislative Assembly. They deserve representatives who are going to be able to engage fully in the debate process, and sometimes that is not easy to do when you have bills called for debate without any opportunity to prepare in advance. That is doing a disservice to our constituents, a disservice to the people of this province and a disservice to democracy.

I hope we’ll have a House leaders’ meeting so that we can collaborate, work across the aisle and get moving on the issues that really are the priorities for people in this province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Interesting comments. The deputy House leader of the official opposition has been sad all day today with respect to my treatment of her and the official opposition. I apologize, Mr. Speaker, for that, but—

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Excuse me. We have a point of order. I recognize the member from London–Fanshawe.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I would like the House leader to please refrain from that kind of exaggeration. This afternoon he was making whiny sounds and rubbing his eyes—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): That is not a point of order. I appreciate that.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you. I will return to the government House leader for further debate.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you, sir. As I said, they were upset that somehow they had been treated poorly by my office and by me and my deputy House leader with

respect to the business of the House. For that, I do apologize.

Of course, we have an agenda to fulfill in this place, Mr. Speaker. We have very important issues that we have to fulfill as a government. The people elected us to move forward with the agenda items, whether it's COVID-19 or the other things that have been on the order paper.

The member talks about this bill specifically. The bill has been on the order paper since February. I think it was introduced in February; I could be wrong on that. No, actually I think I'm right, Mr. Speaker. I think it was February that it was introduced, and in that time, my office has not received one letter, one email, one call, one comment, one suggestion, nothing—not from people outside of this place, not from people in other Legislatures, not from members of the official opposition, not from the independent members, no one.

We heard in the initial debate on this bill that all parties in this Legislature supported the changes that were introduced in this bill. So given the fact that all parties support the bill, all parties spoke in favour of the bill, the fact that's been on the order paper for months and that the opposition and none of the independents, or nobody, frankly, has expressed an interest in making any changes to the very thoughtful changes that were brought forward—they were changes that I know the previous government before us had contemplated but were unable to find time on the legislative agenda to accommodate—we thought it important to modernize the Legislative Assembly Act, and given the support that we received from all parties at the time of second reading, we thought it was important now to move forward with this.

The member's speech, itself, really speaks to the weakness of the member's own argument and everything that the member talked about. The member talked about how supportive of this bill, she and her colleagues are. They're so supportive of the bill but they want to do what the NDP do best: nothing. That's what they do best. They want to drag things out, make it slower, calm things down, because for them, accomplishing nothing is a badge of honour.

Well, that's not what we're sent here to do. We're sent here to get things done for the people of the province of Ontario and that's what we're doing—especially on a bill that receives unanimous support of all members of the House and that, for months, has received not one indication that anything needed to be changed on that bill.

So Mr. Speaker, it makes all the sense in the world for us to pull that bill, bring it into this House and to get it passed at third reading. I would ask for unanimous consent to do it right now, but I guarantee you if I did that, the opposition, who supports the bill, would say, "No."

The member opposite talked about not being invited to House leaders' meetings. Let's again talk about that because it is a very important function of what we do here. Ultimately, as House leaders, we meet, we talk about the business ahead; it's done as a courtesy. It's not done as a rule on any of the standing orders—that we have to sit down and tell them of the business ahead—but it's done as a courtesy, and you accept in doing that courtesy that,

when you talk about things, the issues that you talk about will remain in confidence.

Now, given what we've gone through over the last number of months on COVID-19, we have opened up in a way that I don't think any other government has done in the history of this province, and at the same time, as I've said on a number of occasions, the opposition has worked with us, whether it's the official opposition or the independents. They've worked with us very closely to ensure that we were able to address the very important needs of the people of this province during the COVID-19 pandemic. That is why we were able to pass bills through this House with the unanimous support of all of the colleagues in this place. We were able to pass everything, which included a budget in March, which included the extension of the state of emergency, which included important legislation on labour.

We were able to do a lot of things that were important at the time, where we were working, of course, with our federal colleagues to make sure that we addressed the issues surrounding COVID-19, whether it was on health care, whether it was on small, medium and large enterprises, job creators, our education system. We did that with the co-operation of everybody.

In order to accomplish that, that necessitated a lot of different things. We changed the way voting was done in this place, so that people could come into the Legislature and vote in a different fashion, because I didn't think it was appropriate that the House leaders should decide who should get their vote, who should be in this House and who should be voting on something that's important to them. So we changed the voting procedure so that everybody could exercise their right to vote.

As the member said, we brought committees back, and we have been successful at doing committees online, using technology that allows people to participate across the province, from their home, from the offices in the Legislature. And initially—the member is absolutely right—we said maybe we could try the Legislative Assembly Act as our first test. She's 100% right on that. But the decision was then made that, as opposed to dealing with the bill, we had a very important consultation that needed to take place at the Standing Committee on Finance—a consultation that has generated over 220 presenters at this point in very important areas such as tourism, culture and heritage. So we decided to move forward with the consultation in advance of the bill.

1850

Why would we do that, Mr. Speaker? Well, because a bill has a lot of different issues that come with it. I'm sure that the honourable member will appreciate that there are amendments that come forward on a bill, and the technology might not necessarily, at the beginning, be something that we could be used to—that we could make sure that it was done in an appropriate fashion. So we brought forward the consultation first. Then we were very clear that we wanted to bring other pieces of legislation that were important to the agenda of the government forward and to get those back into the House. So we opened up the committee processes to that.

The member talks about the committees. We've had a lot of committees on the bills that we've brought forward—a lot of committees—but not one of those committees has been oversubscribed. We changed the process of committees in this place so that we could hear from more people. Do you know who objected to that, Mr. Speaker? The NDP. They didn't want to hear from more people. They wanted to use an old system: "Let's hear from one person at a time." We would have had to have said to the over 120 people who wanted to present at the tourism study, "We're only going to pick 40 of you because the NDP want to go one day at a time." They actually didn't even want to go one day at a time, colleagues, because, as you will remember, they wanted a study across all sectors of the economy to be done in 28 days so that they could go on an early vacation. We said, "No, we need to take 21 days on one study alone, on the tourism study." We said to the people who were coming online and wanted to present to the committee, "We're going to hear from all 120 of you." And we did that.

The Standing Committee on Finance, not just the members on my side, but all members in this House, sat on Zoom meetings, which were expertly done by the officials in this Legislature, who deserve—I've said it a million times—a huge round of applause for the work that they did to make this technology work in a way that surpassed anybody else. But we did that, and we brought other bills forward, and not one of those bills was oversubscribed. In fact, many of the hearings ended early because people had had the opportunity to have their say.

So the legislative process worked, where you introduce a bill, bring it to committee, and then you hear from people who have opinions on the bills that you bring forward. In our instance, following new rules, we didn't have to turn away one person. We were able to hear from every single person who wanted to present on one of the bills. On any of the bills that we brought forward, we were able to hear from them, Mr. Speaker. I think that is an extraordinary testament not only to all of the members who served on those committees on both sides of the House—because they spent hours of time doing this—but it's a testament to how quickly this Legislature was able to respond and make sure that we could get on to the business of governing in a post-COVID-19 world.

This morning, the opposition was talking about people going back into long-term-care homes. They want the province to go back to normal. They want the rest of the province to go back to normal—but, typical NDP, not the jobs that they're doing. They want everybody else to work, but they want to go home. They want to take some time off and chill out a little bit and relax. "Let's put off all the issues that are important to the people of the province of Ontario until September—maybe October depending on if we get a late summer—maybe they'll go till then." That's what they come forward with, Mr. Speaker. And we said no. We're not going to tell people that we're moving into stage 2 or we're moving into stage 3, but the Legislature is going to be stuck in stage zero, if the NDP have their

way. That's not the way we govern, and that's not what the people of this province expect from the people who elect them.

We have been consistently clear on this—that we were going to move very quickly, as soon as we possibly could, to restore a normal legislative process so that we could deal with things, whether it's on the economy, whether it's on regulations to move the economy faster, whether it's building roads, bridges, transportation, highways, hospitals—we wanted to move that forward. We didn't think that this is the right time to hold things back. They're opposed to that; I understand. I understand that they're opposed to our transit expansions in Toronto, into York region and into Mississauga. I get it; they're opposed to that. Fine, you can be opposed to that, but the government is going to move forward with that agenda.

They are opposed—although they voted in favour of the things that we did in our budget in March. They voted in favour, and I congratulate them for that. I thank them for that. But now, apparently, they were opposed to it. They just voted—I'm not sure why. They were confused and, I guess, voted in favour of it but didn't mean to. But the reality is, we're going to continue to move forward.

Again, I strayed really far from what I was talking about, the House leaders' meetings. Now, part of the House leaders' meetings, colleagues—and I'm sure those of you who don't sit in the House leaders' meetings; I didn't before I became a House leader—is that there has to be an understanding, especially in a time of pandemic. To be clear, Mr. Speaker, the government took the extraordinary step of presenting proposed legislation to the opposition and to the independents before it was introduced in this House. We took the extraordinary step of doing that since March. We said, "This is what we want to include in the budget. This is what we want to do. What do you think? Do you have changes? Let's work together. Let's get it done." On the budget, we did it, it passed—wonderful.

For a couple of other pieces of legislation, they didn't like some things. They wanted some wording changed. They wanted other things to be taken out of it. We did that, Mr. Speaker. We pulled it out, we worked with them and we introduced it, and we got unanimous consent. I'm assuming that as this House worked with unanimous consent for so many months, it did so with the knowledge that the bills that the NDP, the opposition, were voting on—that they had the full knowledge of what it is they were voting on. So I'm confused now, to hear the deputy House leader of the opposition suggest that we're not working with them, we're not co-operating. So what the heck is it that they were voting on for the last four months in this place, when they all unanimously stood up to vote and support us? Did the House leader not tell them what it was that they were voting on? If that's the case, then I feel sorry for the people who voted for them, because I'm sure they would at least hope—we saw that today. They voted against a bill before they even had a chance to read it or to even open it up. Before they even heard the title, they were voting against it.

To get back to the House leaders' meetings: This went on for months. Look, as a government with a majority, we don't necessarily have to do that. We don't have to share or make amendments to bills before they're introduced in this House. We don't have to do that. But given the importance of the situation that was going on, we thought it was important to do. We spent hours—hours—on the telephone, hours in meetings on Zoom, in our offices in a socially distant manner, when the pandemic first started back in March, and we got a lot of this done.

But as it became a little further on, then you saw the creeping hand of politics starting to enter into it. On a bill that was a very important bill that was being proposed by the government, we thought we would proceed in the exact same fashion. To be clear, Mr. Speaker, when you present something to the members opposite in a House leaders' meeting and you ask and assume that it will remain confidential until presented in this House and you ask for changes in advance so that the final presentation in this House could continue in the unanimous consent fashion that we had had for many weeks—I think you would agree with me that, given how we had been working since March, it would be a reasonable expectation that that would continue.

But did it? No. What did they do? They went to the media. They released the bill. They released copies of the bill. They broke confidence that the government had showed in them, and then they fundraised on it. To make matters worse, they fundraised on COVID-19—not once, but twice—on a particular bill that we were supposed to still be negotiating about to make changes. It's outrageous. You do not do that.

1900

So do we continue to have House leaders' meetings with the opposition? Yes. Is the official opposition invited at this point? No, because they broke the confidence. They broke the faith that was incumbent on—not only during COVID-19, but this entire time.

Now, to be clear, Mr. Speaker—because I don't talk to the deputy opposition House leader, because I don't have faith that things will remain in confidence—I still reach out to the critics and tell them what's coming up. I don't want them to lose the opportunity to speak on items. I don't think that there is anything in legislation that causes me—I was very happy today that we had the opposition critic with respect to consumer protection be able to come up.

But make no mistake about it: I absolutely do not trust that the NDP, when asked to hold something in confidence, will hold something in confidence. So how will this House proceed? This House will continue to proceed in a co-operative fashion, as best as we possibly can, by going directly to the opposition critics and letting them know what is coming forward.

Mr. Speaker, when you do the worst thing that you can expect from an opposition, to break the confidence and go to the press and release details of a bill that we're negotiating on when we've been working under a co-operative mandate for months, I'm just uncertain how the leader of

the official opposition or the deputy House leader of the official opposition can expect—and it's not only me as the government House leader, but imagine the disrespect to the two independents, to the Liberal House leader and to the leader of the Green Party, who are still in negotiations with us on this bill that they leaked. It's not just disrespect to the government; it's disrespect to everybody else who was participating in trying to make this bill, presumably, better. They had no regard for that.

The opposition are not upset that they did that and they irritated the government House leader. Fine. They're not upset that they disrespected how we have been operating in COVID-19 since March. Fine. They're not upset, apparently, that they disrespected the independents, the leader of the Green Party and the Liberal Party. Fine. Well, when proceeding in that fashion, we will do what we think is important and we will protect the legislative process here, because I believe Parliament is important.

One of the most important parts of Parliament is parliamentary privilege. When we work together as House leaders who represent—I ask my colleagues, “Do you mind if I share items of a bill?” To be clear, Mr. Speaker, before I shared it with my own caucus, I shared it with them. I assume that the deputy opposition House leader and her House leader did the same thing. I assume that she asked her colleagues, “I'm going to share, I'm going to talk to the House leader about a bill before you get the opportunity to see it,” as did, I'm sure, the Liberals, the Green and the other—well, the other independents had no opportunity to ask anybody, because they're independent.

You see it today, when we introduced a bill. Bills are embargoed and held behind here. The minister rises and introduces his bill, and the ushers or pages come out and give everybody copies of the bill. That's parliamentary tradition, but in COVID-19 we thought we would do it in a different fashion. I apologize to my colleagues, because I had to break faith with them by sharing important pieces of information on legislation with the opposition before them. And it was they who broke the faith of this place. It was they who broke parliamentary tradition. It is they who hurt the privileges of all of the members of this place.

Perhaps there's a time when the official opposition can show that they can be trusted again to maintain confidences. Perhaps we can continue to work together. But to be very clear, Mr. Speaker, the deputy House leader of the opposition can get up in this place and can complain for months. What she did and what her colleagues did is unforgivable. It's unforgivable to all of the members of this place who believe that parliamentary privilege is important. It's absolutely unforgivable.

Given that, of course we are not going to allow them to participate in meetings so that they understand or see what is coming forward in advance of that. They will see; every morning when I rise in this place, they will know what is going to be debated. Now, I apologize to the members opposite if they're not prepared to debate everything that's on the order paper. I know my members are. They're always prepared to talk about anything. They're always ready to do a very good job—and they do a good job.

They've been doing a great job, as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker. They work very, very hard; they're doing a very good job. For that, I'm really proud to be in this caucus.

The member opposite talked about some of the good things in the bill. She talked about the oath and how we are making some changes to the oath which are important. I will admit, Mr. Speaker, I had to be deeply briefed on the changes to the oath and the impacts that that would have. I had concerns, but after having discussed it further, I was comfortable with the changes that were being made. I appreciate that the members opposite appreciate that.

But then we went into God Save the Queen, didn't we, colleagues? We talked about God Save the Queen. Now, it's awkward and ironic, given that the symbol of the crown lays at the front of the Legislature—the mace, which is the crown, which gives this place its authority, Mr. Speaker. You sit on the Speaker's chair. We bow to you as a symbol of the traditions.

I understand and appreciate 100% that not every monarch who has governed over Canada has been a monarch that we would entirely be proud of. The things that they have done, we haven't always shared pride in, just as there have been people who sat in that Premier's chair who have done things that we've not been proud of. But the reality is that this monarch has been highlighted by many as being the monarch who started reconciliation in this country, who has done more—perhaps even more than us, as elected officials—to move forward on the path of reconciliation.

I am proud of the fact that we sing both of Canada's official anthems in this place. But to suggest that because we sing both of Canada's official anthems that we pay respect for the traditions that are important to us without overlooking the things in our history that we're not proud of, Mr. Speaker—to suggest that somehow that ends reconciliation is just absolutely wrong. It's wrong, and again, it shows disrespect for this place. It shows disrespect for the traditions.

When we take the oath of office, we swear allegiance to Her Majesty, her heirs and successors. And do you know what, Mr. Speaker? I will defend, and will continue to defend every second of the day, the members who don't want to stand and sing that anthem. I will defend them.

Interjection.

Hon. Paul Calandra: The one member from Toronto—I'm not sure what the riding is; St. Paul's—laughs; that's funny. Well, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you something. I sat in a federal Parliament that had 40 separatist members, Bloc Québécois members. And do you know what? They didn't appreciate the singing of O Canada. In fact, they wanted to separate and get out of this country. They wanted nothing to do with it. Every question they asked for the seven years that I had the honour and privilege of serving in the federal Parliament was about how they could remove themselves from Canada.

Miss Monique Taylor: Why did you leave?

Hon. Paul Calandra: The member from Hamilton Mountain thinks it's funny. Why did I leave? Well, because I was defeated. Another great thing about elections

and Parliament: We live in a place where you can actually win and you can lose and get tossed out. And guess what? I was tossed out because people lost trust in me, but they put me back in because they knew that I could do the job for them. So that's why I left, to the member for Hamilton Mountain.

1910

I sat in a Parliament with 40 Bloc Québécois members who wanted to leave this country. Do you know what they did, Mr. Speaker? They didn't sing O Canada; they left the chamber and waited outside of the chamber. There would be some people who wouldn't like that, but do you know what? It's their right to do that, just as it is of any of the members in this place who don't want to sing God Save the Queen, who don't want to sing O Canada. I will defend them. In fact, the first morning we were scheduled to sing O Canada, I actually went on radio, on CFRB in this city, and defended the right of three of the NDP members who wanted to abstain from singing that anthem. I went on the radio and said that it's their right to do so and they should do that. And I won't change my mind on that.

The fact that we sing one of our two official anthems is not reflective of how we as a Legislature will work and will continue to work. It's not reflective, I hope—the fact that the member sings an anthem or is—and really, is not forced to be in a room. Nobody is forced to be here at any point. Nobody is locked—well, I guess we are kind of locked in at certain points, but nobody is forced to come in here and sing one of Canada's two official anthems. They can sit it out. Nobody is forced.

In the British Parliament, there are members who don't like to swear allegiance to the Queen. Do you know what they do? They don't swear allegiance to the Queen and they don't take their seats in Parliament. They're still paid as members of Parliament; they still represent people in their communities and their ridings. They're given the privileges of members, but they don't take their seat in the House because they refuse to swear allegiance to the Queen. And do you know what? It's their right to do that, Mr. Speaker. They can do that.

We will fight for those people who want to do that. I might not agree; I might not agree with you. In fact, I don't. I don't agree at all. But I will support, as I have done, any member who wants to have a different opinion on that. At the same time, I will respect and fight for the things that have made this such a great province and such a great country.

They can talk it down all they want, Mr. Speaker. They can talk down the province; they can talk down the country. But the reality is, regardless of what you think of who's in power and of who governs, and so on and so forth, we've made a pretty good country—I think you would all agree with me: the best country in the world in which to live. We have the best province in the country in which to live. And we have accomplished that together.

We don't agree. We rarely agree on things. But despite those disagreements, we have been able to do something that is the envy of the entire world. Do you know how we

do it? Because we fight for the things that we believe in, Mr. Speaker. That's how we do it.

I encourage the honourable member to continue to fight for the things that she believes in, and we will as well. We will as well, not only just because we were elected to do so and because that's the mandate that we feel the people of the province have given us; we will continue to do that because that's what's in our hearts to do, just as I would suggest that that's in the hearts of the opposition.

There's virtually nothing that the opposition ever talks about that I agree with—virtually nothing. But that's not to suggest that they don't do good work. They do good work. The fact that I don't like what they talk about is inconsequential to the fact that they still do good work. But what I will not do, Mr. Speaker, is disrespect this place. I've been there. I had to apologize to Parliament for disrespecting it. I will never go back to that place, and I will defend all of these members' rights to get in this place and debate.

When the deputy opposition House leader gets up in this chamber day after day over the last number of weeks and complains that she is not brought in on what the debates are, what we're talking about, I can only say to her that we will continue to do our best to work with them if they will begin to show some respect for this place, some respect for the traditions and some respect for the members of Parliament who came here and who sacrificed as much over the last four months as did all Ontarians. Let's remember that.

People send us here, they pay us to come here—and then for months we told members they couldn't come here. That was important because we were fighting a pandemic. We made a decision as to how many should come in. But that is a sacrifice to every single one of these people, every single member on both sides of the House, who want to have their voices and their opinions heard by their people, by the people who elect them. They make a huge sacrifice in saying, "I won't come in." We did that for months. For months we asked people not to come to this place so a small, select number of us could move forward.

But for months we tried to find ways that we could work together so that more members could come into this place, and now that's what we're doing. Our democracy continues on and it's very strong. We're seeing results that are literally the envy of North America when it comes to COVID-19. I think there were maybe 100—I don't know what the numbers were today, and it's inconsequential what the numbers were today, because we're seeing a really, really good trend. It's coming down, Mr. Speaker.

Now, you might not like everything that we've done over the last number of months, but the fact is, again, the people in the province of Ontario, this Legislature, all of the members of this Legislature stepped up to the plate and did what they had to do to make sure the government continued on, that the Legislature continued on, that the people in their ridings continued to be represented, that our health care needs were being met, that the economy was still moving forward, that we represented small, medium and large enterprises, that those restaurants that were

dying to have patios open so they could bring more money in and get people back to work—we did that.

That was one of the things that came out of the Standing Committee on Finance. We heard it from those people. The same committee that the member opposite didn't want to start was responsible for major changes that happened in this House, whether it was the opening up of patios, whether it was the rent protections for commercial rent evictions. Some of the debate that we heard here—not only just in the standing committees, but some of the debate that we heard here—is what helped facilitate some of the discussions we had with the federal government which helped them provide support in a number of areas. We've said it over and over again—we've thanked the federal government for the work that they have done. While we focused on the health care of the people of the province of Ontario, they focused on the direct support to people so that people could pay their daily bills, Mr. Speaker, and it has worked very well.

On this bill here, again, Mr. Speaker, it is important—it's an important bill. It's a piece of legislation that has been waiting for years to be updated. The member opposite agrees with the bill. She agrees with it. I'm not sure how the House, how the people who work here, how the next group of people who get the honour of serving in this place after the next election—how we do a service to them by delaying yet again on something that we all support.

We're going to move forward with this bill. There are important changes not only to the oath, but important changes to human resources, to modernize. Some parts of the act haven't been changed since the 1970s. I know 100% that if we presented a bill in this House today and said we're going to move employment standards back to 1975, the opposition would rightfully say no. They would rightfully say no. And if employment standards in this province were at 1975, they would be presenting a bill and asking for unanimous consent to modernize them, Mr. Speaker. That's what this bill does. It moves us forward.

It's not a partisan bill. It's not something that we're going to go into our ridings and say, "Oh, look, I changed the Legislative Assembly Act. I'm going to send out a mailing to the people in my community. They're going to be really excited by the changes to the Legislative Assembly Act." No, Mr. Speaker. We don't do it for ourselves. We don't do it for the government. We don't do it for the members opposite. In reality, this is for the people that follow us in this place.

As the member for Hamilton Mountain rightly points out, our time is limited. Eventually, we either move on, or we retire, or the people retire us, as they did to me, federally, in 2015. I appreciate that many of the members opposite would probably like to see me retire much sooner than the next election, and that's fine. I'm going to do my best to make sure that the people don't retire me then, Mr. Speaker, but I want to have satisfaction in knowing that if the people do retire me, the next person to occupy this seat, no matter what party they are, will have a modern, updated Legislative Assembly Act that will protect them and the people that work for them. We will accomplish that by doing this.

1920

But again, not to belabour it too much, you can't really not talk again about how this Legislature has worked over the last couple of weeks—the last three or four weeks, in particular. We have done hundreds of hours of committee hearings. We have had hundreds of witnesses—I don't even know how many, but hundreds and hundreds of witnesses. Members have been in their offices on Zoom, working around the clock. All members on all sides of the House have been working around the clock to move forward on legislation or to oppose legislation, get it back in this House and debate it, and this at a time when the federal Parliament only today issued a financial statement—only today; we did it in March. All of us have been working constantly.

I look at that as a badge of honour, Mr. Speaker. This place, the second-biggest Legislature in the country, when you consider the House of Commons, one of the biggest in North America—we didn't close up shop. I think it's a testament to all of us that we stayed here and continued to do work, continued to debate, continued to have question period. That's not what we're seeing across the country. It's certainly not what we're seeing in Ottawa. So I'm very proud of what we've done.

I ask the opposition to help us pass this bill. That you don't like the other things that we brought forward—that's fine; I don't expect you to like the things. I'm grateful for the support that you've given us for months. I think I've expressed that often in this place. I'm very grateful for the support that they have given us, and all members have given us. I've expressed that often.

But they should be under no illusion that this government is ever going to give up on its mandate before the next election. We have important things that we want to do, and as convenient as it would be for the opposition to have us stop and do nothing, that's not convenient for the people of the province of Ontario who are relying on us to get things done. They're relying on us.

I go into my riding and I see the success. I credit the Standing Committee on Finance for this; I truly do—all members on it, because you all heard this on the standing committee. I don't know which members opposite have been on that, but I know a number of them have been on it on both sides. I was watching, and I know that the deputy House leader was on; in fact, most of you in here have subbed in or out.

We heard quite often from a lot of you—some from the opposition, all parties—that we had to get patios opened up as quickly as we possibly could. That is something that came out of the Standing Committee on Finance, and the government moved quickly on it. It's not something we're going around and saying, "Oh, well, look, we allowed you to open up your patio." No, it's something that the people in your communities—when you went out on your patios and you had breakfast or you had a drink or a coffee on your patio, I hope that you are proud of the fact you got it done. That's good news for your community.

You might not like what we did for commercial rent, the eviction freeze that we put in place, but it's something

that came out of the Standing Committee on Finance. You might not like the way it was structured, you might not like how the federal government put it together and our participation in it, you might have wanted it to be longer, you might have wanted more resources to be put in it—but out of that Standing Committee on Finance, a committee that you did not want to happen, we were able to accomplish that.

In closing, I would really ask the opposition—and I hope that they would, on this particular bill, recognize how important it is that we just move it forward. Let's do what previous Legislatures have not been able to do since 1975 and let's get the bill done. I think we can do that, especially on a bill that we all agree on.

As I said, if I thought that I could ask for unanimous consent to pass it right now, I would. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I will seek unanimous consent to pass the bill at all stages now.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to pass Bill 167. Is it the pleasure of the House? Agreed? I heard a no.

Back to the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you, Speaker. I thought it was important to at least try. Do you know why? Because it's reflective of what we have had to undertake and how impressive I think it has been that the government has been able to get unanimous consent for months on many things.

Here's a bill that the opposition supports, that they agree with and want passed. We had the opportunity to do it, and they said no. So imagine how challenging a bill that they support, that they want passed, that they think is important, that they speak positively about, that they have sent not one piece of correspondence about—given the opportunity to move it from the agenda after four years of sitting in idle, they said no.

I want people to think about that for a second. Think about that for a second. Imagine, colleagues. If you can't accomplish this with this opposition, imagine how hard it has been to get them to support unanimous consent on the budget. Imagine, unanimous consent on a budget. I am proud of the fact—I've said it a million times. I'll probably repeat this until I'm thrown out of this place or retire: The NDP voted for a Progressive Conservative budget. That is awesome, and we did it by working together, and we got unanimous consent to do it in record fashion. But for some reason, updating employment standards and other things that are important to them, that they agree with—no, they don't want to do that.

Important labour legislation to protect people: unanimous consent, passed in an hour—maybe a little bit longer, an hour and 20 minutes. We got unanimous consent to do it. State of emergency: The member opposite talks about how important the state of emergency is, and to their credit, we were able to work on it and get it passed a number of times through unanimous consent.

But as I said, then, all of a sudden, the NDP and the opposition start to change, and you see it reflected in the daily question period and how it unfolds. But I thought,

let's give it another chance. That's why I asked for unanimous consent. I thought that maybe the last couple of days and what we've seen in the last couple of weeks—maybe there was just a misunderstanding. Maybe there were just some hurt feelings. Maybe they had changed their mind—so let me bring forward a piece of legislation that this entire House agrees with, that we all think is a great piece of legislation, long overdue and praised in the member's own speech.

What happened? Colleagues, what happened? I'll tell you what happened. They said no. I can't help but laugh. It's remarkable. It is absolutely remarkable. So then the member sends across the laurels: "We can work together. Let's work together." But if you can't work together on the easy stuff, how the heck do you expect to work together on the difficult stuff?

Now, here is the rub of it all: You don't have to work with us on the hard stuff. In fact, it's not your job to work with us often; it's your job to point out the things that are wrong with what we're doing and to fight for it. So good for you for doing that. That's awesome. But to be very clear—and I know the member for Windsor is upset; I think she called me [*inaudible*] or something like that, colleagues. But it's okay. I respect the place, Mr. Speaker. I do. It's okay. We've often seen this from the opposition. They start to get frustrated and they start to go low, but that's okay. We'll keep it high over here because we're doing important work for the people of the province of Ontario.

1930

But why would I ask for unanimous consent? Again, just to highlight not even the amazing work of all legislators, but of this particular team here—that we were able to get things done for months by working together.

No matter what the deputy House leader of the opposition says, the reality is, I'm quite proud of the fact that we did what we said we would do. We worked together for months in a fashion that respected this place, in a fashion that respected the people who sent us here, and we got the job done on behalf of the people. Now we're moving into a different era where we have different ideas on how we get the economy rolling.

I want to just give a quick shout-out again to a couple of important places in my riding. I said it the first time—Frank's barber shop is doing incredible work. This is a guy who has been part of our community for a very, very long time. He could retire but he decided not to. He's going to keep up and he's going to keep working.

The Duchess of Markham is a very popular restaurant in Markham. Paul there has done an incredible job—a great patio. He's doing great work, and I want to congratulate him for doing that.

Mayor Scarpitti, Mayor Lovatt and the councillors in both of my communities, in my hometown, are doing really important work. I've heard from them on the fact that we allow council meetings to take place over Zoom communications or other types of media like that, and that has really opened up different opportunities for them. I've heard from one of my mayors that they're getting more

people participating from the community than they ever have because of some of the changes that this Legislature made. That's really, really good news.

The Main Street Bakehouse in my riding—Oliver Belo and his family waited patiently to get it back open and serving the community, doing really good work.

Red Bulb coffee in my community—exceptional. These are people who work every day. They're up at 6 o'clock in the morning. They're serving the people of my community. They do it very well. They were anxious. They wanted to get going, but they understood how important it was that we do it in a way that is safe for the people they serve. They don't do it because they want to follow the rules; they do it because they want to keep the people they serve protected and safe.

To my kids' teachers, who—I'm reminded that they have kids of their own, and they're trying to teach our kids online during this pandemic, and have done a great job. I still feel bad for my daughter, who virtually graduated grade 8. A child waits a long time to get to graduation, and a parent even longer, just to see and be proud of their kids. A lot of people had to forgo that this year, but they understood. We've seen these signs show up on the lawn congratulating kids. Ontario has come through in a way—all of us have come through in a way that I don't think any of us could have ever expected. As I said, there is always positive that comes out of difficult times.

This has been one of the most difficult and challenging times in the province's history, and what has come out of it has been inspirational for a lot of people: communities coming together, working across party lines to get things done for the people of Ontario for months. For four months, a provincial Conservative government working closely with a federal Liberal government, an NDP government in British Columbia working closely with a provincial Conservative government here—we haven't cared. We work together; we get the job done. We've worked across party lines when we could here in this place. We've done it for four months and we got the job done for the people of Ontario, and I'm proud of that.

I'm also proud of the fact that now we're starting to debate things, to get the economy going, that we have disagreements, and that we're in a Legislature that is still meeting so that we can debate the things that we disagree on in a respectful fashion. Whilst I disagree with the member opposite, I will always agree with her and her colleagues and their right to oppose the things that they disagree with. But I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, it will not stop me, it will not stop my colleagues, it will not stop this Premier, from doing what we have to do to move the province forward.

I certainly hope that the members opposite will reconsider and give some thought to moving this bill that we all support out of committee, getting it passed and opening up more room on committees so that we can debate other things that are important to the people of Ontario, as opposed to congratulating ourselves on a bill that we all agree on, Mr. Speaker.

I'm not sure that the people of the province pay us to come here and congratulate ourselves on a bill. I can't

even imagine what a committee would look like on this: “Oh, good work. You’ve done a great job. Oh, it’s a good bill.” We’d just go back and forth congratulating ourselves on how good it was and so on and so forth. It’s not what we were sent here to do. We get it done, Mr. Speaker, because it’s important to the people of the province of Ontario.

I hope that the members opposite—they have some time left on the clock. I hope that they will rise in their place and ask for unanimous consent, after a little bit of reflection, to pass the bill at all stages. If they do that, I want to assure the deputy House leader that I will support a motion that comes from her, in the spirit of co-operation, to pass this bill at all stages at this time. I really do want to work together and, as I said, I hope she will seize on the spirit of openness that I’m offering—the hand of friendship that I am offering across the aisle, colleagues—and now after some reflection, put forward a motion that I eagerly anticipate and am hopeful will come that allows us to pass this bill at all stages. We can get it to the Lieutenant Governor tomorrow and get royal assent, colleagues, and the Legislature, the individuals who serve it, the people who help make this place a great place, will be given the protection that this bill—so long overdue—provides them.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield the floor to anybody else who might like to add a few words.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I just want to say a few brief things.

The House leader—I was trying to look for some commonalities. I thought, “How can I find something in common, that maybe we could find common ground on?” I was looking up his parliamentary record, and he was an insurance broker and so was I. I thought to myself, “That’s probably as far as we go”—him and me being an insurance broker; that’s about the commonest thing we probably have.

But when I heard him debate this thing, he said some pretty strong things: “Things are unforgivable,” that they’re never going to forgive us; then “reaching out across the aisle” and “if we do this, then we can be friends.” It’s hard to understand how to interpret those kinds of messages.

I understand we all have a job to do here and there are times when we’re probably going to get along better than others. I’ve been on the House leaders’ team for quite awhile. I’ve worked with different parties, like the Liberal Party, and I’ve worked with the opposition as the House leader with other members who were also on the House leaders’ team, and then this new House leader—and it’s a whole different experience.

I have to say I will still try to find common ground with the House leader and, some day, I’m hoping that we will—I’m not even hoping; I’m looking for some professional courtesy when it comes to presentations around what they’re going to bring to the Legislature, like even a unanimous consent. We used to talk about that prior to giving unanimous consents.

In his debate, he said things were unforgivable and—across the line, everything that he has come to decide is

what he’s using as the stick for everything. Unanimous consents could be something that he could consider in the future talking about with people, so we could agree. I want to find some common ground at some point to move forward. I hope he is capable of moving forward so that we can work and use a democratic process to better what we do here.

Our members: I have to say, I am so proud—extremely proud—of the work that we do. Everyone here has good intent when we bring our bills and debates to this Legislature. My colleagues are extremely thoughtful. They work really hard. They probably work too hard. We all work too hard. During the pandemic, we’ve all put extra time in. It’s been a lot of work. We thought we worked hard before, but now we’re virtually always 24/7. We can be accessing the public on Zoom etc.

1940

To say things like, we didn’t really want to work—that’s not necessarily correct or accurate. We all want to be here to do our job, bar none. When we have a bill like the time allocation bill—that gives us an opportunity to speak about it. Yes, you may want to rush it through; your time allocation is your tool to rush it through. I remember MPP Yakabuski—if you look it up on the Internet, and you look up what time allocation is, it’s a guillotine for a government. He used to always say, “Here comes down the guillotine,” when we had time allocation from the Liberal Party.

We used to be congenial in this place. I hope at some point there can be that relationship going forward. At times, we all say and maybe do things that somebody takes the wrong way or whatever, but usually, if you recognize it, you make amends, right?

Again, I say that in Bill 167, the Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, there are things here, of course, that we can support. The House leader took some time to debate it, and gave some history and some of the thoughts he had, and that’s great. I’m only going to take a few moments to speak to it.

I have to say that the changes in here are going to probably further what we do here. It’s good to see that we were able to work collaboratively together. It would have been interesting if we had used this as a pilot project, to be the first one to committee. That would have been a good test case. That didn’t happen. We moved on; we moved forward. That’s, I think, the piece that we have to remember: When something happens and it doesn’t go quite the way we want, you reflect on it, you move on, and maybe you make it better going forward, if that’s possible. You don’t dwell on the past constantly about what happened months ago. You try to push forward. In the spirit of this bill, it is something that’s going to move us forward in the Legislative Assembly Act, so that’s a good thing.

We are here right now—the time is 7:43. We’re all here working. No one is complaining. To say that some people want to work and some people don’t, it’s not really clear or genuine. I could look up all kinds of Hansard things that somebody said about working together and making things up, but it doesn’t help the situation.

I hope that, going forward—there's another two weeks in the Legislature; but then again, maybe that will change, because the emergency order is being extended until July 24. The last day here, from my understanding, is July 22, but maybe the government will change its mind. That's okay with us. You have a right to do that. We all want to come to work and represent the people that we've been elected by.

I have to say, there was one day I went onto the Ontario Legislature website, and I thought, "Maybe they posted what we are going to discuss tomorrow." Of course, it wasn't there. It said "to be determined" or "not applicable" or "to be advised." I thought, "Okay, I get it. You don't want to let us know." The House leader is going to go around the House leaders' team to make a point and go to the critic to let them know that the bill is going to be coming up so they can prepare. That's the point he was making, and he said it. That's fine.

But then when the public wants to know what's coming up so they can prepare their day, so they can prioritize, it would be helpful for them, if no one else. I thought about that. I thought, "I'm looking for me, because it's my job to figure out what to debate"—and yes, you've only got so many bills in the Legislature right now and we can prepare for all of them. It's doable, and we all have been. But the public should know what we are going to talk about the next day. They should know what our work is going to be in the Legislature, so they can tune in if they like. That is something I'd like the government to understand and consider—that with what you're doing here because of the

unforgivable act, you're also disparaging what the public is seeing and being able to participate in on a timely basis.

Anyway, I'll leave it at that. I think the clock has run out on the government side so I'll sit down and conclude my debate with that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? Further debate?

Ms. Khanjin has moved government notice of motion number 83, relating to the allocation of time on Bill 167, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I've received a note from the chief government whip: "Pursuant to standing order 38, I respectfully request that the vote on government notice of motion number 83 be deferred until deferred votes on Monday, July 13, 2020."

Vote deferred.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Orders of the day? I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: No further business.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): There being no further business, this House is adjourned until Monday, July 13, 2020, at 10:15 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1947.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott
Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker
Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Valerie Quioic Lim, William Short
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Arthur, Ian (NDP)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Baber, Roman (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Stan (PC)	Willowdale	
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues / Ministre associée déléguée au dossier de l'Enfance et à la Condition féminine Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
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 / Solliciteure générale
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda C. (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	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries / ministre des Industries du patrimoine, du sport, du tourisme et de la culture
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 Labour, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
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	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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	
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 Finance / Ministre des Finances
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, Hon. / L'hon. Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction / Ministre associé délégué au dossier des Petites Entreprises et de la Réduction des formalités administratives Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Infrastructure
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (LIB)	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 Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Associate Minister of Transportation (GTA) / Ministre associée des Transports (RGT) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
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 Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
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	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Walker, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Associate Minister of Energy / Ministre associé de l'Énergie Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakubski, 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 the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs

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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
Lorne Coe, Wayne Gates
Randy Hillier, Andrea Khanjin
Jane McKenna, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Michael Parsa, Randy Pettapiece
Kaleed Rasheed, Peter Tabuns
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeremy Roberts
Ian Arthur, Stephen Blais
Stan Cho, Stephen Crawford
Catherine Fife, Randy Hillier
Mitzie Hunter, Andrea Khanjin
Laura Mae Lindo, Sol Mamakwa
David Piccini
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Julia Douglas

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Présidente: Goldie Ghamari
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Daryl Kramp
Robert Bailey, Jessica Bell
Goldie Ghamari, Chris Glover
Mike Harris, Daryl Kramp
Sheref Sabawy, Amarjot Sandhu
Mike Schreiner, Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens
Daisy Wai
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Will Bouma, Lorne Coe
Rudy Cuzzetto, Robin Martin
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls
Billy Pang, Amanda Simard
Marit Stiles, Nina Tangri
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Roman Baber, Will Bouma
Lucille Collard, Parm Gill
Natalia Kusendova, Suze Morrison
Lindsey Park, Gurratan Singh
Nina Tangri, Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
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Faisal Hassan, Logan Kanapathi
Jim McDonnell, Christina Maria Mitas
Sam Oosterhoff, Kaleed Rasheed
Sara Singh, Donna Skelly
Vijay Thanigasalam
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permanent des comptes publics**

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Toby Barrett, Stan Cho
Stephen Crawford, Catherine Fife
John Fraser, France Gélinas
Christine Hogarth, Norman Miller
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Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi
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Deepak Anand, Toby Barrett
Stephen Blais, Will Bouma
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**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian
Aris Babikian, Jeff Burch
Amy Fee, Michael Gravelle
Joel Harden, Mike Harris
Christine Hogarth, Belinda C. Karahalios
Terence Kernaghan, Natalia Kusendova
Robin Martin
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell