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Jeudi
3 juin 2021

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 3 June 2021

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 3 juin 2021

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Good morning. Let us pray.

Prayers/Prières.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PERSIAN HERITAGE MONTH
ACT, 2021

LOI DE 2021 SUR LE MOIS
DU PATRIMOINE PERSE

Mr. Parsa moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 271, An Act to proclaim the month of March as Persian Heritage Month / Projet de loi 271, Loi proclamant le mois de mars Mois du patrimoine perse.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member to lead off the debate.

Mr. Michael Parsa: Good morning, Speaker. Thank you very much.

Remarks in Farsi.

That, in Farsi, means “thank you.”

Once again, it’s a real honour for me to rise today and speak to my private member’s bill, An Act to proclaim the month of March as Persian Heritage Month. As I’ve said before, this bill is a particularly special one for me because, as many of my colleagues already know, I’m a very proud Canadian of Persian descent, as are thousands of others here in Ontario. In fact, over 150,000 of them call this great province home, and every single one of them has contributed and continues to contribute to our social, economic and cultural fabric.

Many of them came to Canada decades ago, and just like my family, they wanted to build a better life and a brighter future for themselves and their families. Persians were welcomed with open arms by communities in every corner of our country, who gave them the opportunities they needed in order to have a fresh start. Those opportunities allowed all of us to build a life where values such as democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of thought and religion were not only respected, but were also enshrined in our laws. Persian families took advantage of it. They worked hard to provide for their families and do everything they could for themselves and their children—which included Ontario’s world-class education system and academic institutions. They learned the skills they needed to grow and prosper in their new home. Because of the many opportunities being provided here, the community has grown to love and uphold the way of life

here in Ontario. It is a way of life which puts kindness, inclusivity and tolerance of others above everything else.

Speaker, you don’t have to look far to find an example of Persians practising those values with their fellow Ontarians.

A few weeks ago, my colleague the member for Willowdale rose in this House to speak to my bill and brought up the fact that in his community, Korean Canadians, and Persian Canadians have developed a strong bond that gets stronger and stronger by the day. He spoke about the two cultures’ shared values of discipline, respect for seniors, taking care of those who are important to them, and always working hard and playing by the rules. That day, he and other members, including myself, also spoke about the many incredible dishes that you will find in the Persian cuisines. What stood out to me the most was a comparison that the member for Willowdale made between simple dishes, one in particular, tahdig—which I will refer to later on—which is found in both the Korean and Persian cuisines. I’ve always known this as tahdig. The member from Willowdale referred to this as nurungji. It’s the crispy part left at the bottom of the pot after you’ve cooked rice. And although I was very happy to hear my colleague say he thought Persians do the version better than Koreans, it’s what he said afterward that really meant a lot to me. He said, “It is a food that unites us in Willowdale”—much like everything else that unites all of us everywhere.

There is so much that unites us right here in Ontario. Sometimes it is food, as my colleague said, but sometimes it is also the values that our communities share that bring us closer together.

I have said this many times in the past, both in committee and right here in this House: We are one of the few places in the world where we celebrate our differences and, in fact, in many cases it’s what brings us closer together. That doesn’t happen in other parts of the world. Usually, differences separate and divide people, but not in Canada—not in the greatest province in the greatest country in the world.

Just as Canadians of Korean descent did, Persians of Canadian descent came here to make a better life for themselves and their families. Together, with Canadians from all corners of the world, they have helped build our communities from coast to coast to coast, and they help us continue to grow and flourish every day.

As I said earlier, you don’t have to look far to find examples of Persians living in harmony with their fellow Ontarians. You will find them in King–Vaughan. You will find them in Ottawa Centre. You will find them in

London–Fanshawe. You will find them in Mississauga East–Cooksville. And of course, you will find them in Willowdale.

Across our province, Canadians of Persian descent share much in common with their fellow Ontarians. Regardless of where we live, we have a common goal: our shared desire to continue to make our province—our country—the best place in the world to live.

Just as with Ontario Day, which is a celebration of our way of life and the people who make this province so great—it is my sincere wish that the month of March become a celebration of people of Persian descent, who do so much to contribute to our province’s success.

As I’ve said before, anywhere you look, you will find a Persian Canadian in this province who has accomplished something incredible for themselves, their family and, of course, our province. Like the millions of other people who call this province home, they play a vital role in our success. Just think of the countless small businesses in our communities that are owned by people of Persian descent—restaurants, medical clinics, apparel shops, personal care services, auto shops, bookstores and grocery stores, just to name a few. Think of the incredible contributions that Persians make every day to Ontario’s well-being by serving in our health care sector, long-term care, law, education, government, trades, infrastructure—the list goes on.

Speaker, I’m very proud of the fact that we now have two Persian Canadians representing the Ontario Legislature right here in the province of Ontario.

Countless Persians are a living testament to the opportunities that Ontario holds for all who call it home. You may not know their names, but they are vital to our communities, and their contributions to our province should be celebrated and recognized.

0910

However, there are also Persians who have made better-known contributions to Ontario and to the world. One of them is Payam Akhavan. He’s a Harvard law graduate, an international lawyer, a former professor at McGill University, a senior fellow at Massey College at the University of Toronto, a member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague in the Netherlands and, most importantly, he’s an Ontarian. Payam Akhavan has dedicated his life to fighting for the protection of human rights in Ontario, in Canada, in Iran and everywhere around the world. He was the first legal adviser to the prosecutor’s office at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, and he also served with the United Nations in Bosnia, Cambodia, Guatemala and Rwanda.

Most recently, in May, he was named as a senior adviser to Global Affairs Canada on the shooting down of flight PS752 in January of last year. That attack took the lives of 55 Canadian citizens and 30 permanent residents. Although this tragedy will remain a painful moment in the memories of all Canadians, in particular those of Persian descent, it brought us much closer together as a community, and it led us to rely on each other during a time of

grief. Persian families across Canada and right here in Ontario were surrounded by messages of compassion and support from all over the province, all over the country and all over the world. Although justice for the victims has yet to be found, those families will never forget the friends, neighbours and strangers who came to their support at a very painful time.

Speaker, it’s incredibly important for us to recognize Persian Heritage Month, because it’s important to recognize the tragic things that have happened to Canadians of Persian descent just as much as we celebrate and recognize all the happy moments. It’s as the famous Persian poet Rumi, one of my favourites, once said about grief:

Sorrow prepares you for joy,
It violently sweeps everything out of your house,
So that new joy can find space to enter.
It shakes the yellow leaves from the bough of your heart,
So that fresh, green leaves can grow in their place.

Speaker, that was a difficult time for many Persian families here in Ontario, and I know that these last 15 months or so have not been easy either. At a very difficult time for our community, for all Canadians, I was a witness to where we received the love and outpouring of support from every corner of this province and every corner of this country—including members of this caucus, from every single side, who came up to me, sent me messages, sent me emails, called me to convey their support for our community. I want to thank, in particular, all my colleagues in this chamber for all of your support, because our community truly appreciates it.

As Rumi said—again, I love quoting Rumi because he is my favourite—the time will come when yellow leaves are replaced by green ones. And right now, for Ontario, during this pandemic, that bright light at the end of the tunnel is our green leaves.

Speaker, I want to thank the thousands of front-line health care workers who are administering doses of the COVID-19 vaccine at record speeds. We’re closer than ever to safely reopening our province and once again getting back to our normal lives. We’re seeing case numbers decline steadily, and thanks to our heroes and our heroes’ efforts, lives are being saved.

Speaker, just as they contributed to Ontario’s success prior to the pandemic, Canadians of Persian descent are now fighting on the front lines for all of us. You can find them working in essential services and in the health care sector, or in their grocery stores, where they’re keeping our shelves stocked and doing their part to serve all of us. Their commitment and sacrifice has earned them the right to have their heritage recognized by our province. We know that will never be enough to thank them for all the challenges they have endured during this global pandemic, as others have, but by recognizing Persian Heritage Month, we can take the first of many steps in the right direction.

Speaker, I would like to conclude my remarks today by circling back to why bringing this bill forward has been so important to me and why it would mean so much to all Persians in Ontario. When many Persian immigrants, like my own family, first came to this country, we came with very little, and even less knowledge of the culture and the language. But despite those obstacles, Persians worked hard, as others do, to provide for their families and to find their place here in Ontario. They made sacrifices so they could take advantage of the boundless opportunities that Ontario has to offer, and now they're giving back to this province in every way imaginable.

Persians are our friends, our neighbours and our co-workers—certainly, for those of you I have the pleasure of serving with. They're truck drivers who maintain our supply chains. They are our nurses and PSWs caring for others. They are small business owners, students, writers and skilled trades workers and those in the arts, culture and academia. But most importantly, they're part of everything that is great about Ontario, and they contribute to its success every single day. Much like myself, they will always be grateful for the sacrifices that their families made in order to give them a better life here, and they will always be grateful for the country and the province that made it all possible for them in the first place.

On that note, I would like to end with another short poem by Rumi, which follows the theme of positivity and improvement of the previous one I recited:

When you go through a hard period,
 When everything seems to oppose you,
 When you feel you cannot even bear one more minute,
 Never give up!
 Because it is the time and place that the course will
 divert!

I want to thank you, Speaker. I want to thank all my colleagues for listening to me this morning, and I want to remind all of you to please go into your local businesses and support them, especially the small businesses. If you have Persian restaurants in your riding, drop in and try the delicious food. In particular, try the kebabs. They're absolutely delicious. If you want to, tell them I sent you. I promise you, if you try the food, you won't be disappointed.

There's also a major festival here in Toronto called the Tirgan Festival. Hundreds of thousands of people attend this festival every year. Of course, we couldn't have it last year, but we're looking forward to the next opportunity. It showcases the beautiful Iranian heritage, Persian heritage, the arts, the culture, the delicious foods. I encourage all my colleagues here in the House: At the very next opportunity you get, please go and support us. The Persian community is incredibly friendly, warm and hospitable, and they would enjoy your company very much.

Once again, I thank each and every one of you for the opportunity, and I look forward to celebrating Persian Heritage Month with all of you at the next opportunity.

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

Mr. Gurratan Singh: I want to begin with saying—and correct me if my pronunciation is incorrect—halet chetore? Because—

Interjections.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Yes, you can give me a round of applause for that. I don't mind.

The really interesting thing, when we start learning about cultures and we start learning about their connections, this might be—for the member opposite, I want to congratulate this bill he brought forward. This is a moment when we can realize the bridges we build.

I am Punjabi, and as a Punjabi, I am from a land called “Panjāb.” In Farsi, my understanding is “panj” is five, just like in Punjabi, and “āb” is water. We call Punjab “Panjāb” because it is the land of five rivers. There are a lot of commonalities, actually, between Punjabis and Farsi people. We both say words like:

Remarks in Punjabi.

We both have a love of paneer, I believe. We have a lot of connections across the board. Even if you look at it historically, there is a root there—we have a root language that we share. We have a lot of commonalities because of that.

The member opposite talked about Rumi. I share a love for Rumi. One of my favourite poems—and as a Sikh, we believe in reincarnation. I read this poem by Rumi all the time and just look at that beautiful cross-cultural inspiration—how this poem always brought me inspiration:

I died as mineral and became a plant,
 I died as plant and rose to animal,
 I died as animal and I was human,
 Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?

0920

It's a poem that I still think about and I still reflect on, as a Sikh on my own spiritual journey and experience to see the inspiration that I can draw from minds across the world. One of the most beautiful, poetic and spiritual minds in the world, I would say, was Rumi—and the knowledge that he shared with the world.

Something interesting that I reflect on—I'm opening up a little bit of the eccentric things that I like. I love the equinoxes, and I love the solstices. Every single year, my wife knows that when it's the summer solstice or the winter solstice or the spring equinox or the fall equinox, we're spending the whole day outside and we're celebrating.

It was only recently, actually, that I realized—because I was invited to an event—that Nowruz, an event and a festival that is celebrated across the Persian community, across Iran, across that region as a whole, is a day to celebrate the spring equinox, which is my favourite day of the year. It's my favourite day of the year because it's that day when we turn the corner, when lightness is greater than darkness, when our days are more bright than they are dark. Every day from then onwards just gets brighter and

brighter and more hopeful. When I realized this connection between the spring equinox and Nowruz—my own ignorance—I am so excited now to join in celebrating Nowruz every year, because it's such a beautiful way of bringing this joy and positivity moving forward.

When we talk about the positives and the amazing contributions of the Persian community, it's important, as the member opposite acknowledged, to also take into account the tragedies.

I think all of Canada—we were all rocked by the tragic, tragic loss of our Persian sisters and brothers in the plane crash that happened. It's something that I know is still a point of pain for the community. There are still a lot of unanswered questions, and it's a point of sadness. I think that's why, as Canadians, we have an obligation—when we talk about standing in support alongside the variety of diverse communities, we have to be with them in the good times and the tough times. As Ontarians and Canadians, we have an obligation to ensure that we are supportive of our Persian sisters and brothers in their pursuit of answers for this very tragic and terrible circumstance.

We also need to reflect on the amazing contributions of the Persian community to not just Ontario, not just Canada, but the entire world.

My first interactions with folks from the community were actually in university. My brother befriended a good friend of his at the time, Mehran Rughbari.

Interjection.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: I'm getting a nod, because it sounds like that's a very Persian name. It was through his experiences that I got to learn more about the history, the human rights injustices, the pursuit for social justice—something that I think is really clear when you talk to people of Persian descent now. There is, I find, such a big focus on social justice, such a big focus on fighting for what's right, standing against injustice, not being afraid to voice opposition to things that are wrong. I saw that a lot in my interactions with Mehran, and it's something that I find every time I connect with people from the Farsi community—this deep passion for social justice. I think that's something that is inspirational for us all.

As we reflect on this amazing opportunity, it's so important that we look at this as an opportunity to celebrate our brothers and sisters in the Persian community. I think every single Ontarian, every single Canadian, should be supporting this month to learn more about this dynamic and diverse part of our province. Ultimately, I'm hopeful that this is legislation that goes from province to province and across Canada, because all of Canada needs to know about the dynamic and amazing contributions of our Persian community to not just Canada, not just Ontario, but the entire world.

With that, I want to once again thank the member for bringing forward this piece of legislation. I look forward to its passage.

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

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Madam Speaker, it's an honour to rise here today and speak to this bill.

I'd like to thank the member from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill for his very eloquent speech. I do agree with him that everyone should try kebabs, especially Persian kebab. It goes very well with a tahdig and grilled tomatoes. That's one of the secrets to a good kebab: a good, solid, grilled tomato beside it.

I want to talk a little bit about my story and how I came to Canada with my family. I know that I spoke about this back when I first got elected and when I first came here and had my inaugural speech. I think it shares the experience that a lot of Persians have had—because I think it's great that we're celebrating and recognizing our shared cultural background, but one of the biggest things that unites Persians here in Canada, I believe, is our love for democracy and our respect for democracy. A lot of us came here—my parents included—to get away from an oppressive regime, to get away from a dictatorship, to get away from an illegitimate government that murders its own people, that sentences political prisoners to death, a government that hangs homosexuals, a government that murders Persians from different faiths. They will persecute Baha'is, for example, or, a lot of times, refugees seeking asylum in Iran from countries surrounding Iran that might not be as safe. They're persecuted, as well, and not treated humanely.

One of the biggest commonalities that a lot of Persians here share is wanting to come to a country that is democratic, wanting to come to a country that is safe, wanting to come to a country where they can be whoever they want to be, where they can wear whatever they want to wear. In Iran, the hijab is mandatory. It wasn't mandatory prior to the revolution. Prior to the revolution, women could wear whatever they wanted to wear. They could wear the burka if they wanted to. They could wear a hijab if they wanted to; they could wear a head scarf; or they could wear nothing.

It's always a pleasure to see the pictures in old family albums from the 1960s and 1970s. The quality isn't the greatest, but there's something really magical about holding an old photograph in your hand and seeing these almost magical scenes from what a pre-revolutionary Iran looked like, what a country that was not being terrorized by an Islamic regime looked like. People were free. You have photos of people on beaches. Some women were wearing bikinis, and others were fully covered. Everyone had the freedom to live how they wanted to live, and they had the freedom to choose. I think that's what's so special about Canada, and that's what a lot of Persians who have come here have done—they have the freedom to choose who they want to be, what they want to wear, what religion they want to practise. They can choose what profession they wish to have.

When my parents came here and I was a year old, they had two suitcases and \$50 to their name. If someone had told my dad 35 years ago that one day his first-born daughter would be the first female Iranian politician to be elected in Canada, he probably would have just shaken his head and said, "No way." But here I am, and I think that's a testament—

Applause.

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Thank you.

To me, that's a testament to the opportunities we have here in Canada, and it's a testament to the fact that if you work hard and you play by the rules and you're committed to giving back and serving your country, you can succeed.

That's part of the reason I got involved in politics, as well—I wanted to give back to this country in the best way that I can. It's such an honour to be here. Every day that I come in and I'm in this chamber and I look around, it's just—I still haven't gotten used to it after three years. It's so humbling.

That's one of the biggest contributions, I think, a lot of Persians have made here—a commitment to integrating within our Canadian society. I think it's wonderful that we have so many different people from all over the world here, and we all share our cultures. I think that's something really special about Canada, because I feel like we don't really see that in other countries as much. If I want to go out and have pho, or if I want to go out and have Ethiopian food, or if I want to go have a burger or Mexican or Italian or Brazilian barbecue—obviously, this is all pre-COVID-19. There's Greek food—I love Greek food—and shawarma. It's very common here, and people don't have a second thought about it—“All right, what do you want to have tonight?” I think that's a blessing in disguise, because we have the opportunity to be exposed to so many various cultures and so much diversity, and I think that's what really makes us strong.

There's actually a lot of diversity within the Persian community, as well—and I'm really glad that we're referring to it as Persian Heritage Month, because there are two things that unite Persians: one is soccer, and the other is Googoosh. Googoosh is a very famous singer. Everyone knows who she is—from the 1970s, pre-revolutionary. But some of the diversity is diversity of languages. Different parts of Iran have not just different dialects, but languages. There are also a lot of different faiths. We have Persians who are Baha'i, Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Zoroastrian, Buddhist—you name it. So that's another thing about our culture.

Although we might be from different regions or sometimes have different dialects or different religions, there are a lot of things that unite us. The member was speaking about our celebrations—Tirgan is one—and I know the member opposite was speaking about Nowruz. Nowruz is another one, as well. These are celebrations that are thousands of years old. They span back to at least 3,000 years, to the Zoroastrian times. It's really nice that we have these huge cultural celebrations that everyone can celebrate, regardless of their religion—because it's not a religious celebration; it's a cultural one, which I think is even more powerful, because it's part of our shared identity, and it makes us stronger as a community around the world.

With that, Madam Speaker, I want to just wrap up by saying it's an honour to stand here and speak to this bill. I'm happy to support it, and I think it's great that we're recognizing the contributions of so many Persians here and in Ontario.

I also want to take an opportunity to thank the Persian community for everything they have done, for their continued contributions to Canada.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at one of the numerous celebrations when COVID-19 is over.

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

Mr. Parsa has moved third reading of Bill 271, An Act to proclaim the month of March as Persian Heritage Month.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Orders of the day?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: No further business.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 10:15.

The House recessed from 0934 to 1015.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Housing is a human right. Everyone in Ontario deserves a place to call home. People should be able to rent without the constant threat of eviction or bank-breaking, above-guideline rent increases, and purchasing a home should not be out of reach for hard-working families. Young professionals should be able to purchase a home in the community they were raised in. No one should ever find themselves without shelter.

Housing costs in my riding have skyrocketed. First-time homebuyers are unable to get a foot in the market, with homes going for hundreds of thousands of dollars over asking price. The vacancy rate in Windsor-Essex is low, and rent prices have vastly increased over the last few years, leaving many renters without any options.

Affordable housing and assisted living spaces have become challenging to find, with need far outstripping availability and wait-lists ballooning. There are currently over 5,000 households waiting for housing in the city of Windsor alone.

This government must fill the vacancies on the Landlord and Tenant Board to stop the delays that prevent Ontario renters and landlords from getting justice on critical issues, from poor living conditions to problematic tenants, renovictions, racism and discrimination. We need more affordable housing units across Windsor and the province to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness—and provide the money needed to properly

renovate and repair the backlog of community housing that are in desperate need of work.

As I said, Speaker, everyone in Ontario deserves a place to call home.

COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Etobicoke–Lakeshore is the home of the Ontario Food Terminal, which is the largest wholesale fruit and produce distribution centre in Canada and one of the biggest in North America.

Due to the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, full of variants of concern, our government launched a mobile vaccination site to vaccinate employees and food supply workers at the Ontario Food Terminal. For one week in May, Unity Health, community health partners and the provincial government held a crucial vaccination site. Almost 7,000 food and food supply essential workers were vaccinated at this site to help stop the spread of this deadly virus.

I would like to thank our essential front-line workers at the Ontario Food Terminal and our local food producers throughout the community of Etobicoke–Lakeshore for their hard work and dedication throughout the pandemic.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Minister Jones and Minister Hardeman for assisting me in supporting this vaccination clinic in my riding.

Furthermore, these pop-up clinics would not be possible without our health care heroes and volunteers, those who are helping keep us all healthy and safe during such unprecedented times.

I want to encourage everyone to get vaccinated.

For those in my riding of south Etobicoke, our amazing community health partners are hosting a pop-up clinic today at the Fashion Institute of Humber College, from 1 to 8 p.m. That's at the corner of Kipling and Lakeshore. Please, if you have not received your first dose, stop by and get vaccinated today.

Have an amazing summer, get vaccinated, look after one another, and stay safe.

JANE BIGELOW

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: This week, London lost a woman whose dynamism, principles and commitment to social justice knew no bounds. Jane Bigelow, London's first female mayor, was an environmentalist, a staunch feminist, a supporter of the arts and libraries, a defender of the disadvantaged, and a proud New Democrat.

Long before London's bike lanes, Jane was an avid cyclist and was often seen riding her bike to city hall. Fittingly, part of the trail system she helped establish has been named in her honour.

Known for taking a stand, Jane once famously refused a request from the office of Queen Elizabeth to wear a hat for the royal visit. When asked about it later, she cheekily replied, "Well, I don't always pay attention to instructions and that was one I chose to ignore."

Her children, Ann and David, remember her as a trailblazer, a visionary, someone who was well ahead of her time. I couldn't agree more.

I was lucky to have received great advice from Jane, and I will always be so thankful for her kind words and support.

Jane was driven by doing what was right, championing the underdog, and challenging the status quo and inequity. She was tough as nails, passionate and principled. She helped so many, and she will be missed by all.

On behalf of the members from London–Fanshawe and London West and the entire ONDP caucus together, I'd like to send deepest condolences to Ann, Joanne, David and David, Ian and Ryan.

Rest in peace, Jane.

1020

GIRMALLA PERSAUD

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: I'm pleased to rise in the House this morning to recognize an outstanding community leader from my riding of Scarborough–Rouge Park. Girmalla Persaud is a leader who recently celebrated her 35-year anniversary as the executive director of the Malvern Family Resource Centre.

Girmalla started the Malvern Family Resource Centre with two employees in a rented space. Her hard work for 35 years was rewarded with a state-of-the-art facility with over 65 staff operating and servicing thousands of residents in Scarborough.

Girmalla has been a strong pillar of support for the group, helping grow the organization in tandem with the community, and developing an agency with a reputation of integrity and well-known quality programs and a staff roster of qualified and dedicated personnel.

Even with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Malvern Family Resource Centre recently launched a unique program in Scarborough: an urban farm, creating space for 15 new farmers in my riding of Scarborough–Rouge Park.

For all these years, Girmalla has been there for her community on a daily basis.

I am proud to be representing a riding that has dedicated community leaders like Girmalla.

Thank you, Girmalla, for your service and for being a role model for the next generation.

SIKH GENOCIDE

Mr. Gurratan Singh: In June 1984, as Sikhs across Punjab attended gurdwaras to commemorate the sacrifice of our fifth guru, the Indian government launched a military invasion into the Harmandir Sahib complex and more than 40 others gurdwaras across Punjab. Under a complete media blackout, countless Sikhs were murdered.

Imagine if you heard that Mecca was being attacked by an army during Eid, or that the Vatican was being invaded during Christmas. That is precisely what the Indian government did to the Sikh community.

The Harmandir Sahib, known as the Golden Temple, is one of our most central Sikh institutions, and the Indian government chose to invade this sacred place when it was at its fullest. But that was the point. The Indian government wanted to break the spirit of the Sikh people, to teach us a lesson for standing up for our rights and the rights of other oppressed people. But despite the untold number of Sikhs murdered by the Indian government, they could never break our indomitable spirit.

That's why today, 37 years later, Sikh workers, farmers and activists, alongside other oppressed communities, are once again raising their voice, fighting for their rights, standing against unjust farm bills. We will never stop fighting for justice, we will never forget the Sikh genocide, and we will never forget 1984.

MOIS DE SENSIBILISATION À LA SLA

M^{me} Lucille Collard: J'aimerais prendre un moment ce matin pour souligner que juin est le Mois de la sensibilisation à la SLA. « SLA » signifie sclérose latérale amyotrophique et est également connue sous le nom de maladie de Lou Gehrig.

Dans ma circonscription d'Ottawa–Vanier, nous avons perdu un représentant communautaire à cette maladie. Pendant plus de deux décennies, Mauril Bélanger a farouchement représenté Ottawa–Vanier en tant que député fédéral. Il était, entre autres, un ardent défenseur des droits des Franco-Ontariens. Il a servi notre communauté avec passion et avec le plus grand dévouement jusqu'à la toute fin de sa vie et est entré dans l'histoire lorsqu'il a utilisé un générateur de voix à la Chambre des communes pour présenter son projet de loi.

La SLA est une terrible maladie pour laquelle il n'y a pas de cure. C'est pourquoi la recherche est impérative. Le 20 juin aura lieu la Marche pour mettre fin à la SLA, pour amasser des fonds pour la recherche et pour apporter des services de soutien aux personnes et aux familles vivant avec la maladie. En ce Mois de sensibilisation à la SLA, mes pensées sont avec tous ceux que nous avons perdus à cause de cette maladie et tous ceux qui continuent d'être touchés.

I would like to conclude my remarks this morning by wishing everyone working at the Ontario Legislature a really nice summer.

COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: Our vaccination rollout numbers reached record numbers in Ontario. We have administered over nine million vaccine doses, with over a million of those doses in just eight days. This week, we will be approaching 75% of the adult population having received at least one dose.

In the last two weeks, three pop-up vaccine clinics opened in Mississauga: one at the Canadian Coptic Centre, CCC, thanks to Father Angelos, our historic community leader, and his team; one at the Muslim Association of Canada, MAC; and the third at the Muslim Neighbour

Nexus, MNN. These pop-up clinics help us encourage and promote vaccination to different cultural and ethnic communities. Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to say that the pop-up clinics in Mississauga were very successful.

As Peel was a hot spot, we needed multi-level strategies to accelerate our vaccination levels, mass vaccination clinics, pharmacies and pop-up clinics. Mr. Speaker, we did it. As supply from the federal government has increased, we have been able to ramp up our vaccination levels to where they should have been since the beginning. We have seen our case numbers significantly decrease, from a shocking around 1,000 cases per day to a more manageable 168 cases yesterday.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank each and every one of our front-line workers: doctors, pharmacists, nurses, paramedics.

Also, I want to thank the constituents in Mississauga—Erin Mills for their patience during these hard times.

ADDICTION SERVICES

Miss Monique Taylor: On Monday, the Ontario Construction Consortium launched a campaign to draw attention to the opioid addiction and overdose crisis in our province. They're raising the alarm because workers in the construction industry are being hit hard by this public health emergency. According to the Ontario Drug Policy Research Network's latest report, there was a 60% increase in overdose deaths in 2020 compared to 2019. That means that 2,500 Ontarians died in 2020 due to overdoses. Of the victims who were employed, 30% of them were construction workers. That's a very alarming number.

This public health crisis has impacted so many families in this province, and they are demanding action from this government. But this government seems intent on ignoring this crisis. Why else would they have stopped the work of Ontario's Opioid Emergency Task Force, which has not met since 2018? In 2019, this government even reduced the number of overdose prevention sites in Ontario.

When I speak with experts and advocates about the overdose crisis, they all tell me the same things: We need more consumption and treatment sites, more harm reduction and safe supply initiatives, and better supportive housing. Overall, experts agree that we need action, not continued indifference, from this government.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mrs. Daisy Wai: I rise today to express my appreciation to the staff, nurses and PSWs serving in Ontario's long-term-care homes.

Yesterday, my husband visited my mother-in-law in person at her long-term-care home. She is healthy and happy. Prior to the pandemic, we almost lost her to pneumonia. During this difficult time, she received the care she needed and recovered from her illness because of the care from the long-term-care home. She was also fully protected and cared for during the pandemic.

Speaker, I just want to say that it had not been easy for us not seeing our mother, especially during the pandemic time, but we understood the importance of not spreading the virus to our mother and other seniors. We see that we have been arranged with online meetings and window visits during this tough time.

The love and care for our mother during this difficult time is a big relief for us—because we know that she is being cared for.

Too often, we focus on the negative events that have occurred in long-term care during the course of the pandemic, but we must also acknowledge and appreciate all that was done by many long-term-care homes. We thank all of them for their love and support.

1030

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Mr. Deepak Anand: Mr. Speaker, as you know, I have a daughter in grade 10, Suvidhi Anand, who was looking forward to going back to school. Yesterday, I had to face her and let her know that this was one of the toughest decisions we have ever made.

I know how tough COVID-19 has been on our youth for the last 14 months.

Here, we all thank the parents and the teachers across Ontario for keeping our kids safe and engaged.

Above all, I want to thank the students for their patience, hard work and resilience.

Due to the presence of the highly transmissible, deadlier, unpredictable Delta variant, we need to be extremely cautious. Yesterday morning, Peel region's medical officer, Dr. Loh, said that the Delta variant would be the dominant variant by the end of this month. We need to protect the health and well-being of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, this will also help the province to ensure that other activities vital to kids' mental health, such as day camps, outdoor pools and sports training, can go forward during step 1 of the reopening.

I want to say congratulations to the graduating class of 2021. I'm also happy to share that our graduating students can have outdoor COVID-19-safe celebrations of their important milestone.

I'm confident that with more teachers and children fully vaccinated, we will have a happy, active and new-normal summer, and a safe return to schools this September.

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

I understand the Leader of the Opposition has a point of order.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to move a motion regarding the immediate passage of Bill 248, the COVID-19 Public Inquiry Act, to make sure Ontarians get the answers and accountability they deserve, and that we take the steps necessary to protect us from future pandemics.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Leader of the Opposition is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to move a motion regarding the immediate passage of Bill

248, the COVID-19 Public Inquiry Act. Agreed? I heard a no.

COVID-19 DEATHS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Leader of the Opposition has another point of order.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I seek unanimous consent for the House to observe a moment of silence for the 266 Ontarians who have succumbed to COVID-19 since May 19.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Leader of the Opposition is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to observe a moment's silence for the 266 Ontarians who have succumbed to COVID-19 since May 19. Agreed?

Members will please rise.

The House observed a moment's silence.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. Members will please take their seats.

QUESTION PERIOD

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My first question this morning is for the Premier.

Yesterday, the Premier rejected advice from teachers, school boards, pediatricians and from his own science table—yet again—and he kept schools closed but promised outdoor graduation ceremonies literally for every single grade. But schools have said they can't deliver that. In fact, principals say that the Premier's plan is "not practical," it is "not possible," it is "unrealistic and disrespectful."

Is there anyone in our schools, in our children's hospitals or anywhere who actually approves of this Premier's scheme?

Hon. Doug Ford: I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question.

When Dr. Brown, head of the science table, came out and said that we're going to have an increase of 6% to 11%—that equals 2,000 to 4,000 new cases. The Leader of the Opposition may not think that's too much to create spread and create another fourth wave. The difference between myself and the Leader of the Opposition is that I don't want a fourth wave. The Leader of the Opposition wants us to keep going and going and going; I don't. I want to make sure we protect our kids.

As for the doctors, Dr. Peter Jüni—I'm going to quote him: "Ontario, unlike other places in the world, did a relatively good job. If you compare to the UK, our way of cohorting, our way of masking kids is much, much better."

We have Dr. Jüni. We have Dr. Brooks Fallis. We have Dr. Foster. We have Dr. Fisman. So we have a lot of doctors who are saying this is not safe, and I couldn't get a consensus.

But we're going to make sure we have a great end of June, a great July and a great August for the kids and the rest of Ontarians.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This Premier, at every stage of this pandemic, has refused to listen to the expert advice.

In fact, the Premier made a big show of asking teachers and principals and pediatricians and experts about school reopening, and all agreed to put our children first. Instead, the Premier has done the exact opposite, as he has done all the way along.

Alex Munter, the CEO of CHEO, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, said this: "Ontario kids have been out of school longer than children almost anywhere else in the world. I am overwhelmed by sadness about all this. It feels like we adults have let our children down."

Why did the Premier ignore the advice of every single person he asked and decide once again not to put our kids first?

Hon. Doug Ford: We're making sure that the spread of the deadly B1617 variant, better known as the Indian variant, doesn't spread. Dr. Loh said that it's going to be the predominant variant in July—and we want to do that to the people of Peel after what we went through out there?

This all goes to root cause: The root cause is because we have porous borders. We have 134,000 people crossing our land borders—not even including our two big international airports, Pearson and now Buffalo is one of our international airports—because thousands of people are walking across the border. In one week alone—the ones we caught, by the way, and I'm sure there's triple that—over 400 cases of these variants came into Ontario, in just the last week, every single week.

So I'm not going to chance it. I'm going to make sure we protect the kids.

Like the Leader of the Opposition—in my next question, I'll rattle off 15 doctors who all say, "Thank goodness he didn't open up the schools."

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This Premier continues to seek advice and then ignore it, and it's the families of Ontario who pay the price. He ignored the advice to make our schools safe so that kids could engage in education. He ignored the advice to make our students a priority in response to this COVID-19 pandemic. He literally ignored the serious warnings about the likelihood of the third wave. Even as he now points to the fear of variants spreading in our schools, he now says that we can open up the economy faster.

Speaker, what is going on over there? The variants are going to spread in schools, but they're not going to spread in shopping malls, they're not going to spread in big box stores?

Hon. Doug Ford: I can tell you that we're focused on making sure we move forward until the kids can go to camp, the kids can go join sports teams, the kids can have a great summer. The Leader of the Opposition doesn't

worry about the kids; she worries about politics. That's what this is all about. She doesn't have a worry in the world. Sitting in the bleachers, throwing sniper shots, she has done absolutely nothing during the pandemic while every Ontarian is working their back off.

1040

Thank goodness we have the best health care workers in the entire world, and thank goodness we've gone in the right direction. There's a reason why the cases have come down: because of the great plan that we put forward, because of the great health care workers making sure that people are getting their first and second doses. And it's just amazing how they've performed, Mr. Speaker. When you're looking at numbers of anywhere from 140,000 up to as high as 190,000 vaccinations every single day, they're the heroes. They're the ones that are making things happen, and I'm just very, very grateful for all their support helping Team Ontario.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This is the first time this Premier has actually shown up to the field in a long time, never mind—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): You can't make reference to the absence of any member, today or retrospectively.

Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Absolutely. My question is actually to the Premier. Look, Ontario is the only province in our entire country that does not have our kids back in schools. The failure in this, the failure in not getting our kids back to school points to, I think, the need very clearly for a thorough and independent investigation of Ontario's response to COVID-19.

We know that it wasn't just schools. This government ignored warnings and marched us right into the third wave. They left front-line essential heroes literally on their own when it came to paid sick days, when it came to urgency of vaccinations; 4,000 seniors lost their lives in long-term care from COVID-19 but also from neglect and from dehydration.

We, the official opposition, have called for a full public inquiry. Will the Ford government establish one so this never happens again?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I think I've answered this on a number of occasions. Of course, the Premier was, in fact, the first leader to initiate a commission with respect to our long-term care. We've had a report from the Auditor General, Mr. Speaker.

But I think, as you're hearing today, the Leader of the Opposition would like to fly the "Mission Accomplished" banner. We're not there yet, Mr. Speaker. There's still a lot of work that needs to be done to get us through this pandemic. And yes, while over close to 9.5 million Ontarians have received a vaccination—that is really, really good news—while the numbers are starting to come

down, unlike the Leader of the Opposition, we know that there is still work to do. What we're going to do is we're going to focus on that work. We're going to focus on getting our economy back on track so it is the leading economy, like it was prior to the pandemic, Mr. Speaker. We'll let the Leader of the Opposition talk about things that really aren't important to the people of Ontario right now. What's important to the people of Ontario is getting through this pandemic and getting our economy back on track and keeping people safe.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The legislative session that's coming to a close today started on February 16, literally days after the science table warned this Premier of the dire consequences of rushing the reopening of the economy. But this Premier ignored that advice, and of course, as predicted, the third wave arrived in March. By April, the science table was pleading for paid sick days and the closure of non-essential businesses, and what did the government do? They padlocked playgrounds instead.

Anthony Dale of the Ontario Hospital Association said this on February 12: "An exhausted, overextended hospital sector is likely going to have to deal with a (third) pandemic wave...."

"The consequences of, and responsibility for" that "rests with the government of Ontario."

Will this government start taking responsibility today and launch a public inquiry so everyone in Ontario can learn exactly what happened to make sure that it can never happen again?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I'll tell you what we did: We knew that when we came into government in 2018 that there were a number of things that had to be done to improve the health care system in the province of Ontario. We inherited a system that could do 5,000 tests a day. We increased that to 75,000 tests. We inherited one of the lowest ICU capacities in North America. We knew we had to do better, and that's why we started increasing ICU capacity before the pandemic, during the pandemic, and we'll continue to do that after the pandemic is behind us.

We knew we had to do work on long-term care because under the Liberals—they built 600 long-term-care beds during their time in office. That's why we are building 30,000 additional long-term-care beds. We knew we needed new nurses. That's why we're adding 2,000 new nurses. We knew we needed additional PSWs. That's why we're adding 27,000 PSWs.

We knew that we had to do what the previous Liberal government didn't do, and that's put Ontario back on the right track. That is why before the pandemic, our economy was leading North America, and after it, it will again.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the people of Ontario have lived through over a year of absolute tragedy: 8,798 people and counting lost their lives to COVID-19; almost 4,000 seniors lost their lives to COVID-19, perished in long-term-care homes from the virus and from dehydration and neglect; 1,638 people and counting lost their

lives just in the third wave alone, which we know the government brought upon us.

Schools are shuttered. Youth are suffering from depression. Parents are beside themselves because their kids are lonely, they're depressed, they have anxiety, they're isolated. Businesses have gone bankrupt, and dreams have been shattered.

The Ford government made choices. Many of those choices made this crisis worse. Many of those choices were literally against the advice of experts. This cannot happen again.

So will this Premier acknowledge that people deserve answers, that there are actually lessons to be learned about Ontario's response to COVID-19, and agree to a full public independent judicial inquiry today?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, Mr. Speaker, there you go—the Leader of the Opposition wanting to declare victory when we know that there is still a lot of work left to be done in the province of Ontario.

It is true that over 9.5 million Ontarians have received their first, and many more are starting to get their second dose. That is true, but there is still a lot of work left to be done. That's why we've made critical investments in health care. That's why we've made critical investments in long-term care. That is why we are continuing to make investments in transit and transportation. We know that as we emerge from the pandemic, we want a strong and vibrant economy. That's why the Minister of Education has ensured that we have had the safest schools in North America. There is a lot of work left to be done to get us beyond the pandemic.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Hon. Paul Calandra: There will be a lot of work to be done to ensure that our economy returns to the strongest in North America, that we see the incredible amount of jobs we had before the pandemic.

So while the Leader of the Opposition wants to cast stones on the people of the province of Ontario, we'll work to make the province of Ontario the best that it possibly can be.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock, please.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I realize that this is the last day, or is expected to be the last day, of this spring sitting of the Legislature, and I know members have a great deal of energy and passion that they wish to expend this morning. I want to allow a fulsome debate, but it's getting a little noisy in here—let's put it that way. I'm going to have to start calling you to order and, if necessary, warning you and, of course, the next steps that follow if it continues. Thank you.

Please start the clock.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Premier. I want to sincerely thank the Premier for joining us today.

Speaker, a story in the Toronto Star this week quotes one of the Premier's insiders ruminating on a cabinet shuffle and noting that the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister of Infrastructure, the natural resources minister and the environment minister are all on the chopping block, and going on to note, "We can find candidates to replace them in 15 minutes."

Can the Premier provide more details on why he has lost confidence in his team of all-stars?

Hon. Doug Ford: As I've always said since the day I got into politics, don't believe everything you read in the news—and I apologize to our great media, because we do have great media. But in saying that, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, I've been in politics for some 30-odd years, and I've never seen a better team—I've never seen a better group of ministers, a better caucus anywhere. I'll put our team up against any federal, provincial, municipal team out there. We have a great team. And I can tell you one thing: They've done an incredible job in turning the mess around that we inherited from the Liberal-NDP government that destroyed our province for 15 years.

1050

We are leading North America in job creation and economic development. We've done a great job throughout this pandemic, from the beginning of this pandemic right up to today. We're going to get people back to having a great summer because of the great leadership, first of all, of the front-line health care workers and the doctors, and the people of Ontario, and our great caucus and cabinet.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: It's not clear who the Premier is consulting nowadays. Maybe I should be directing these questions to Arthur, a new superstar among the ministers of the Premier's cabinet. It seems like the Premier wants to blame everyone but himself for his government's disastrous decisions. He used to call his team all-stars, and Lord knows, they have been doing a lot work, working overtime, to protect the king. Now he's telling them that they could all be replaced in 15 minutes, a snap of a finger.

Speaker, has the Premier considered taking any personal responsibility, or is it everybody's fault but his own?

Interjections.

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

Hon. Doug Ford: Only the member for Essex—the temporary member, because we're going to change that next election; we know we're going to, and he knows it too—but anyway, only the member for Essex would take a shot at an 11-year-old little kid, who has more integrity in his baby toe than he has in his whole body. As a matter of fact, I'd bring him down here—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): All right, I'm going to caution the Premier on his language.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Essex, come to order.

Mr. John Fraser: Middle school called.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Ottawa South, come to order.

Premier, please conclude your response.

Hon. Doug Ford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, as I was saying, we're doing everything we can to make sure that we turn the corner on this pandemic. We've thrown billions and billions of dollars at supporting our front-line health care workers; our education system, over \$2 billion. We've just announced another \$31 million for mental health, for education. It doesn't matter what political stripe, all of us want to get out of this. And we're going to get out of this. I just wish I'd had more constructive ideas from the opposition. There are no ideas. All it is criticize, criticize, and—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Essex, again, you can't make reference to the absence of a member. Take a look around. There's a reason.

The next question.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is for the Minister of Health. Speaker, my constituents are concerned about the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on children's mental health. Back in March of last year, our government unveiled a revolutionary plan to provide Ontarians of all ages with comprehensive and connected mental health and addiction supports. This plan was called the Roadmap to Wellness.

I know the Deputy Premier and the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions haven't stopped working on this plan, because they know how important it is for every Ontarian, Speaker, to have access to the support they need. Would the minister please update this House on our government's progress with implementing this road map?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you very much to the member from Whitby for that important question and for the great work you're doing in your wonderful riding, which I also know very well. So thank you.

Speaker, our Roadmap to Wellness is moving us in the right direction towards building a comprehensive and connected mental health and addictions system that works for all Ontarians. We understand that COVID-19 has placed an exceptional burden on all Ontarians, but especially on our children and youth, which is why, as part of our road map, this week we announced over \$31 million to help improve access to specialized mental health treatments, decrease wait-lists and wait times, and support the mental health and well-being of our province's most vulnerable children and youth by addressing the increased demand for services as a result of COVID-19. This investment is just another example of how our government is supporting the mental wellness of children and youth across the province.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: Back to the minister: I think I speak for everyone in this House when I say we all know that COVID-19 has taken its toll on our children and youth, which is why it's welcome news to hear our government is taking concrete action to make it easier for children, youth and their families to access the mental health supports they need.

Would the minister please tell this House how our investment in expanding mental health services for children and youth will ensure they receive the appropriate care they need in a timely manner, in the right setting, and improve their outcomes?

Hon. Christine Elliott: With this \$31-million investment, we're funding targeted initiatives in intensive mental health supports and services for children and youth with complex mental health needs, including \$20 million for an across-the-board 5% increase for all core mental health and addictions services, as well as select Indigenous and underfunded specialized services:

—\$3.5 million for the Step Up Step Down live-in treatment program;

—\$2.7 million at four new youth wellness hubs in Guelph, Renfrew, Timmins and Windsor;

—\$2.1 million in annualized funding to support a new virtual walk-in counselling program;

—\$2 million for a new program to help children and youth who require additional one-on-one intensive treatment to transition in or out of specialized live-in treatment programs, secure crisis units and/or hospital; and

—\$1 million dollars to maintain child and youth tele-mental health service fields.

Now, and going forward, we are working to fill the urgent gaps to make sure that children and youth receive the core mental health services that they need.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. John Vanthof: My question is to the Premier. We've met with members of the Sienna Woodbridge Vista family council. They've been fighting for their family members to have adequate air conditioning for over a year. As we all know, in heat waves, rooms can become sweltering. We all know that. We were promised that this would be fixed, yet we are told that the Minister of Long-Term Care no longer even answers their emails. We were promised—the people of Ontario, the families of Ontario—that they would no longer have to swelter in those rooms, that this was an issue that the Premier was going to take head-on. Where? Where is that air conditioning?

Hon. Doug Ford: Thank you for the question. Ironically enough, I have a weekly update with the minister on where we're going with air conditioning. I always look at 100%; right now, we're at 83%. There are a lot of these older homes that need to get upgraded and make sure they put a transformer in there. But 100% of them have cooling areas, which is a big, big step forward compared to the disaster we were left with the Liberal-NDP government for 15 years, that wouldn't even touch the air conditioning. And we put tens of millions of dollars in to help these homes.

But we're 83% there. I am confident that we're going to hit the 100% to have cooling in every single room. We get updated every single week, and we aren't going to stop until we get 100%.

But I can tell you one thing, Mr. Speaker: The folks in long-term care are 1,000 times better off now with air conditioning than they were under the Liberal-NDP government for 15 years, sweltering. Again, I've got to thank the reporter from CBC for bringing this to the attention. What a great job she did. We acted on it immediately.

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

Mr. John Vanthof: I appreciate the response from the Premier. Eighty-three per cent in cooling areas, but we all know that many of the people in long-term care don't get to the cooling area. We know that. They're in their room.

Now, in his answer, he said 100% in a few months. Is that 100% in every room, or 100% in the cooling areas? Because Premier, words matter. And when people are in their room and they can't leave—and you know it and I know it, because my mom was in one of those rooms—

Hon. Doug Ford: So was my mother-in-law.

Mr. John Vanthof: I know that, and I respect that. They need to know: Is there going to be air conditioning in every room, in every long-term-care home, as you just stated now? Because this weekend, it's going to be 30 degrees in Timiskaming. That's what I heard you say, Premier. Is that the case?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Aren't you supposed to speak through the Chair?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The members will please take their seats. I'll remind members to make their comments through the Chair.

The Premier to reply.

Hon. Doug Ford: Again, thanks to the great work of the minister, and thanks to the great work of Infrastructure Ontario, we have been working through every single home, individual homes, one by one by one and making sure—and by the way, all the mechanics are different in almost every single home. We're bringing in transformers. We're going to make sure they have the proper electrical power so that every single home—in every single room and all the cooling areas—is going to be right up to date.

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In saying that, Mr. Speaker, some of these homes are very old and aged, but the brand new homes that we're building—by the way, 30,000 beds we're going to be creating, 15,000 by the first five years and another 15,000 by the second—are going to be state of the art. In the older homes, we're doing everything we can to make sure we put the capital into those homes until people can have a nice, cool summer.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Mr. Roman Baber: My question is to the Minister of Health.

Ontarians aren't just looking for an end to the lockdown; they're looking for the lifting of all public health restrictions. We will not agree to a new normal.

Stage 3 of the government's reopening framework imposes limitations on gatherings, retail and religious services. Unlike Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, Ontario's opening framework does not provide for a full lifting of all public health restrictions. It appears that this government is unwilling to give up control.

My question to the Minister of Health: Why does Ontario's reopening framework not include the lifting of all public health restrictions? And unless it is the intention of this government to never go back to normal, then what is the precise metric for the lifting of all public health restrictions?

Hon. Christine Elliott: We're not lifting all public health restrictions because we're trying to save lives. That's what this is all about: saving lives. That has been our priority from the beginning of this pandemic. That is why you will note that today we have 870 new COVID-19 cases. That is the reason why we have to be very careful and very cautious—because the variants are still out there. The Delta variant, which came from India, is out there. We have to be very cautious and very careful as we reopen, so that we don't go into a fourth wave and lose more people. That is why we're doing it—because we have to be very careful, and because the federal government isn't doing their part by making sure that we close our borders to make sure that these variants don't continue to come in.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): And the supplementary question?

Mr. Roman Baber: My follow-up is to the Premier.

Everything this government has done thus far has been a disaster. Long-term care, harshest and longest lockdown in the world, schools closed, and devastated main streets are just the latest—cannabis; the ongoing disaster in autism; the Ontario Line streetcar and its own carbon tax; the \$1.6-billion teacher fund and the fight on class sizes; municipal cuts; Taverner and Dean French appointments; Bill 66 greenbelt, and the exclusivity on Bill 108; astonishing structural deficit with nothing to show for it; Moody's downgrade and the Avista deal failing; Scarborough Grace Hospital and the London injection site; no reduction on energy bills or insurance rates; defective stickers and licence plates you can't see.

My question to the Premier: Why wait a year for the voters to fire him? Why not resign today?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Take a breath.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of heritage, come to order.

Government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I appreciate that question.

Look, we heard from this member yesterday, or two days ago, who suggested that the work he does doesn't matter, the votes he cast don't matter. It's all about Instagram for him.

I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, what matters to the people of the province of Ontario and the members here is when Bill 262, Convenience Store Week Act, was passed by the

member for Willowdale; when Bill 250, Recovery Month Act, was passed by the member for Don Valley North; when Bill 246, the Safer School Buses Act, was passed by the member for Kitchener–Conestoga—Bill 228, Keeping Polystyrene Out of Ontario's Lakes and Rivers Act, by the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka; Bill 217, Filipino Heritage Month Act, by the member for Scarborough Southwest; Bill 173, Ontario Day Act, by the member for Oak Ridges–Aurora–Richmond Hill; Bill 152, Occupational Safety and Health Day Act, by the member for Burlington; Bill 112, Lupus Awareness Day Act, by the member from Markham–Unionville; Bill 104, Tamil Genocide Education Week Act, by the member from Scarborough–Rouge Park.

Awaiting royal assent today, Bill 255, on sickle cell disease awareness; Bill 230, Front-Line and Essential Service Worker Week Act; Bill 271, Persian Heritage Month Act; Bill 157, COPD—

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

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is to the Solicitor General.

Speaker, we know that stricter border measures stop the spread of COVID-19. This reality is backed up by hard evidence and data. All the cases that we have in Ontario can be traced back to an origin outside of Ontario.

Speaker, only a few weeks ago, the first cases of the Indian variant were detected here in Ontario. Can the Solicitor General tell the House more about how this variant has spread and why it's important to keep up restrictions to stop the entry of these variants at our borders?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you to the member from Whitby for raising this important issue. It has been an ongoing and serious concern of our government. We have consistently called on the federal government to enhance the safeguards at our border.

Many of the new variants spread quickly, such as the B1617 variant, also dubbed Delta by the World Health Organization. This variant was first detected in Ontario on April 23. I spoke about it yesterday, but let's be clear: The numbers are even higher. As of yesterday, Ontario is up to 439 known positive cases of the B1617. For example, Dr. Lawrence Loh said that the B1617 variant could displace and overtake the current dominant B117 in Peel region within one month.

We know these variants spread quickly. There are more than 24 other variants currently discovered in the world that have yet to be detected in Ontario. The federal government needs to step up and do their job and protect our borders.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: We're all aware of how the original COVID-19 virus got here: It was through travel. We know that every variant of concern that filled our ICUs came

from outside of Ontario. Yet some would have us believe that only a few infected travellers is nothing to worry about, suggesting that travel accounts for less than 2% of cases here in Ontario.

Here on this side of the House, we have raised this issue more than two dozen times during question period these last few weeks, yet there have been crickets from the opposition.

Can the Solicitor General reaffirm our government's commitment to standing up for Ontarians when it comes to the border?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you to the member from Whitby. If the opposition aren't going to ask these questions, then we need to make sure the public understands exactly what is at risk. I'm happy to stand and answer any questions about it.

Our government has taken decisive action, and not just when it comes to the borders. In the last seven days—one week—we have vaccinated almost one million people, which is why it's so important that we are setting records for the number and speed of vaccinations. Even with one dose of the vaccine, we know we most likely won't be seeing you in the ICU. The data demonstrates that those who have received even just one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine are extremely unlikely to require critical care. That's why, if you haven't received a vaccination yet, please take the time to get one.

The federal government needs to do their job, finally step up and take action on our border, and give everyone an opportunity to get their vaccinations.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: My question is to the Premier.

Today, federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh will call for specific actions from the federal government to bring some justice, some peace, for Indigenous peoples hurting after the discovery of the remains of the 215 children in Kamloops. This is a confirmation of what survivors knew, Mr. Speaker. Actions are what are needed now; otherwise, reconciliation is just a word.

Will the provincial government join the calls here, now, for the federal government to drop its legal challenge against First Nations youth and join the calls to the federal government to drop its legal battle with the survivors of St. Anne's residential school?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I appreciate the question from the member. Of course, all week he has been focused on this, and not just this week—perhaps a bad choice of words. Since he was elected, and I'm sure well before, he has been focused on improving his community and leading us down the path of reconciliation.

We have to do everything we possibly can to ensure that we do better when it comes to reconciliation. I think there are a number of steps that both the federal government and the provincial government working with the federal

government can do to ensure that we move this quicker than we have.

The member often has talked about the need to improve conditions on reserves. We have to do that. We have to make sure that all of these boil-water advisories are lifted. We have to ensure that economic opportunity is abundant in the north and on the reserves.

But really, this week the focus is on what we found in the horrific circumstances in Kamloops. He has my absolute word and the word of this Premier and this government that we will do all that we can to do better and to make sure that the funds are there to ensure that we do a search, that we make sure that the families are treated with respect and that First Nations are part of that.

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Back to the Premier: This week, I was glad to hear the government House leader, in his response earlier, say that he was concerned that the issue of our stolen Indigenous children would be forgotten in the news cycle. That's why we need more than flags lowered and the holiday. We need action.

Will the government commit today to implementing the truth and reconciliation calls to action, specifically numbers 71 to 76, relating to our stolen children? And will they commit today to provide resources for communities to find and return our children?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Well, look, I'll reiterate it again. I hope that I've been very clear this week of the importance to do just that. So if there is, again, any confusion around our commitment to ensure that we work with First Nations on something that is led by First Nations, to ensure that we do all that we can to investigate, to ensure that the resources are there—not only to just investigate but, I think, to work with the First Nations community to repatriate and to deal respectfully with whatever it is that we may find.

What we saw in Kamloops is horrific. I think we all agree on that. That's the first step. The second step is to work with our First Nations in Ontario and across the country to make sure that whatever we find is dealt with in a respectful manner in the way that the First Nations want it to be dealt with, that it's led by First Nations and not by a provincial government. I can guarantee the member opposite that we will work very closely with him and Aboriginal leaders across this country to do just that. We won't let this die just because of the news cycle. He has my word on that, and the word of the Premier and Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

EDUCATION

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the Premier.

Two weeks ago, when the Premier announced the reopening framework, there wasn't a word about schools. He had a plan for patios; no plan for schools. And then, after a week of radio silence, he issued a 36-hour ultimatum to build consensus. That's an interesting way to

build consensus. Largely, he got it. The COVID-19 science table, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health, the Ontario Children's Health Coalition, CHEO and SickKids all said that schools could be opened safely.

Fast-forward to this week: Our patios are going to open. Our kids? They will have to wait until September.

Speaker, through you, can the Premier explain why he had no plan for schools in the reopening framework and why, once again, he's ignoring his own experts?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Education.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Thank you to the member opposite for the question.

Our aim, as to the announcement made yesterday, is to protect the summer for families, to ensure that children in the immediate term are able to access camps and opportunities and recreation and things that they have been denied over the past year. It's to ensure we do not put at risk the progress we have made as a province, and to allow kids to return in September to a more stable and more normal school year.

I will note, though, the irony of the position of both opposition parties. In one breath, they take the position that schools should have regionally opened on Monday. In the same breath, they declare schools are unsafe. How can both be true? How could the members opposite be advocates for getting kids back to "unsafe" schools?

The Chief Medical Officer of Health has been absolutely consistent on school safety. The Premier has been consistent and clear on why we've taken this action, given the emergence of this variant that originated in India. Our action is to protect our kids and our families, and to bring some recovery to the province so that everyone in Ontario can benefit this summer and in September.

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

Mr. John Fraser: The only thing that's consistent is, the Premier will do the opposite of what experts recommend.

What the Premier doesn't get and has never gotten is that schools are a pillar of our economy. They allow families to have two incomes, sometimes one income. They support full participation in the workforce, which, by the way, is great for the economy. Bill Davis got it. Dalton McGuinty got it. Kathleen Wynne got it. This Premier doesn't get it.

He says he has a plan for schools this fall. Families and educators—well, yes, they heard that last summer. Our kids need a plan to safely reopen schools in the fall. So far, there's no evidence of that. And we don't need another eleventh-hour, back-of-the-envelope plan like we saw last summer.

So Speaker, through you: Since schools are so important to families and to our economy, when can students, educators and their families expect to see this robust plan the Premier mentioned for return to school this fall?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: As we announced and confirmed yesterday, as part of our plan for September, every student 12 and up in this province who wants a vaccine will receive both doses by the end of September. That is also true for every education staff member in the province. We are one of the first provinces in the nation to accelerate preferential access to those workers for that purpose.

Mr. Speaker, we announced \$1.6 billion, the same allocation as this year for next year, although the difference is that this is entirely provincial dollars.

Of course, we know with vaccines that the world will be—we hope—much better and much safer in the context of our schools and our communities.

Speaker, we also have been clear on mental health funding—a four-time increase; a learning recovery plan, with \$85 million specifically targeting reading and mathematics, which we've seen regressions in at home and abroad in learning.

Ventilation: When it comes to the improvements and the legacy for next year, 95% of schools have improved their ventilation. In Toronto, for example, 97% improved filter quality and frequency; and 72% of all schools in this province have recommissioned their HVAC systems as a consequence of our investment. That is nation-leading.

We're going to continue to invest, follow the best advice to keep families safe in this province, and get our recovery on track.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is for the government House leader.

Throughout this sitting, the opposition has been consistently skeptical of our ability to hold safe, modified, in-person sittings of the Legislature. But here we are wrapping up our 13th sitting week. The NDP and the Liberals didn't want the House to come back and wanted to have a Zoom-only Parliament.

Speaker, would the government House leader please explain how this government was able to so effectively continue in-person sittings to advance our agenda of protecting the people and businesses of this province?

Hon. Paul Calandra: It's a very important question from the member for Whitby, and I really thank him.

He is quite correct: The opposition consistently wanted us not to return in person and were advocating for Zoom Parliaments. But the Premier gave me one mandate when COVID-19 started: He said, "You have to ensure, as House leader, that we have an accountable Parliament, that the opposition is still able to do their job." And although they wanted to be home, colleagues, we said, "No, we have to have an accountable Parliament." That's why we made so many modifications, whether it was cohorting, whether it was voting in a safe fashion in the lobbies, whether it was the investments that were made with respect to committee rooms to allow them to be hybrid.

But really, colleagues, the credit goes to the Clerk and to the people who work in this place, who made this place the safest place in North America so that we could do our

jobs and the people could hold us accountable. I am so proud of what this Parliament has accomplished, and I really thank the Speaker and the Clerk and his team for allowing this to happen.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: Back to the government House leader: Earlier this year, the NDP accused the government House leader of being aggressively bipartisan. On this side of the House, I think we wear that as a badge of honour.

Can the minister please tell this House how the government has worked across party lines to strengthen our democratic institutions?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I must admit, Speaker—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for York Centre, come to order. The opposition, come to order.

Government House leader, please reply.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I was shocked when the opposition House leader debated against changes that we were making to committees and suggested that I was being too bipartisan. She opened up her statement by saying the government House leader is being hyper-bipartisan.

Mr. Speaker, here is what we have done: We've added time for private members' bills, to allow us to catch up for the lost time during the pandemic. We've introduced mechanisms for additional debate and new forms of debate. We implemented mechanisms for additional committee meeting time. We created, and effectively used, take-note debates to draw attention to matters of provincial significance. We secured cross-party support for the recognition of the importance of line 5. We unanimously passed a motion to construct a Holocaust memorial on the grounds of Queen's Park. We virtually eliminated the use of time allocation. We accelerated the estimates committee process to ensure accountability and oversight. We worked across party lines to appoint the first Poet Laureate of Ontario. We appointed Dr. Kieran Moore as the Chief Medical Officer of Health. And by the end of today, we hope to have passed 27 bills—13 government bills and 17 private members' bills.

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HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier. For 14 months, health care workers have been on the front line as this pandemic tore through our province. It was these workers who cared for our loved ones as they battled COVID-19. It was these mostly women workers who put their own lives at risk repeatedly over the last 14 months in order to keep us all healthy and safe.

Unions representing these workers have been clear: "Ontario health care staff have bravely stepped up to provide care during the pandemic, at great personal cost. As inflation begins to soar, their incomes are being cut in real terms, while police, fire, and other male-dominated

essential workforces are exempted." In fact, some of them had their salaries go up.

Speaker, how can this Premier call health care workers heroes, then suppress their wages, refuse them fair pay and full-time hours, rip up their collective bargaining rights and force many of them to live in poverty? Will the Premier treat these heroes like the heroes they are and repeal Bill 124 now?

Interjections.

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

Government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Of course, we can say that they're heroes because they are heroes, because they have helped lead us through this pandemic better than virtually any other place in the world. It is these heroes who have led to—I believe it's over 9.5 million vaccines in people's arms, Mr. Speaker. It is why we are going to make dramatic investments to increase the number of PSWs by over 27,000. It's why we're adding 2,000 nurses to the system as well.

Bill 124 of course ensures that our front-line health care workers can see increases as they advance up through the pay scale. We wanted to ensure that. But Mr. Speaker, I guess unlike the opposition, we know that they're heroes. That's why we're making important investments in the health care sector: so that we can have even more of these heroes working to get us not only through this pandemic, but to make our health care system the best in the world.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Windsor West for a supplementary.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I'll remind the government House leader again that it is these workers, these heroes, these women whose wages you have suppressed and their rights that you have trampled on—their collective bargaining rights. It's these workers you have refused paid sick days and full-time jobs. It's these workers, so don't pat yourself on the back for what you're doing.

Speaker, the government is now offering signing bonuses of up to \$75,000 to Canadian nurses working in the US to get them to relocate to Canada. Here's a news flash for the government side of the House: Canadians have left and continue to leave to work in the US because this government and the Liberals before them refused to provide stable hours, fair pay, permanent paid sick days. Nurses have said for years that they need full-time hours and a fair wage. If the work conditions don't permanently change for nurses, no signing bonus is going to stop them from leaving the field.

So instead of looking for short-term solutions, will the Premier agree to thank our front-line nurses, show them the respect they need and repeal Bill 124?

Interjections.

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

Government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: We're not patting ourselves on the back. What we're doing is getting the work done for our front-line health care workers, Mr. Speaker.

It is very interesting to hear the opposition. Of course, colleagues, we all know that between 2011 and 2014, the opposition had the opportunity to put an end to what was then a disastrous Liberal government. What did they choose to do? They kept them in power. Did they talk about long-term care? No. Did they talk about transit and transportation? No. Did they talk about subways? No. Did they talk about improving health care? No. Did they talk about wages for our PSWs? No. Did they work on hiring new nurses? No. Did they work on hiring new PSWs? No.

What did they do? They settled for a stretch goal on auto insurance. It is what the NDP do: They talk a big game, but when they have the opportunity to accomplish something, they accomplish nothing. It is why the people of the province of Ontario have never but one time given them the opportunity to serve in government, and I dare say they will never have the opportunity again.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: My question is to the Premier. The FAO reported this week that most of the 20,000 child care spaces created were from the previous Liberal government. The current government only managed to create 900 spaces in 2019, before pandemic spending became the priority.

A key takeaway from this pandemic is the essential role of child care and its key role in making economic growth possible. The recession we are in is driven by the secession. Without child care investments, we will not get women into the province's workforce. In fact, women lag men by 15% in terms of pre-pandemic employment.

Speaker, we will not grow out of the pandemic recession if we go back to this government's 2019 child care investments. The economy cannot grow if we do not have affordable child care available. The FAO says it will take this government until 2027 to create the 9,000 child care spots that they promised.

Will the Premier commit to doing better, with \$10-a-day daycare, as the federal government has offered?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Education.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Mr. Speaker, what the FAO confirmed is that 20,800 spaces are on track to be built. We are well on track by 2023-24 to meet our commitment of 30,000. It's why we expended \$1 billion over five years to do it.

In fact, part of that plan—if you even look at what happened in the broader market, last year alone, 16,000 net new spaces were created in the province of Ontario because we created the conditions for operators to grow. In fact, it's not just about supporting the operators; it's about supporting the parent. The government and the opposition parties had a choice in the last budget to stand with families to support the CARE tax credit, which provides 300,000 parents with up to 75% of eligible expenses. They opted to oppose that measure. In the most recent budget, we topped it up again: now 90%, saving on

average, per child, \$1,500. That's going to make an incremental difference.

In the context of the federal government's \$10-a-day program, we are working with them. To date, the federal Liberals contribute a whopping 3% of the child care budget. They must do much more, and we're going to negotiate in the best interests of families to provide the flexibility and affordability that parents deserve.

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

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: The world has turned to embrace “womenomics,” and it is leaving outdated models behind. It certainly doesn't sound like this government comprehends the times that we are in. This is the worst economic crisis in the last 100 years, and partisanship doesn't apply.

Speaker, online learning and the lack of child care leads to reduced labour force participation rates, mainly for women. Looking at the numbers, the pandemic has borne this out and effectively changed the child care debate from, “We cannot afford to invest in child care” to “We cannot afford not to invest in child care.” It is an economic imperative.

A \$1 investment in child care yields \$1.50 or even \$2 in economic return, growing our labour force participation, increasing our GDP and increasing overall revenues to the province. Child care investments will boost employment, improve wages and make our businesses more competitive, all while creating better outcomes for our children and our families.

Speaker, which side of history will this Premier be on?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: We know what the track record of the Liberal Party is. Their legacy is closing 600 schools in the province of Ontario, the most expensive child care program in Canada, and the cost of living rising at a dramatic rate, undermining the interests of middle-class and working families in the province of Ontario. That is their legacy.

Ours is one of improving flexibility and affordability, and building new schools. I am proud that our government has expended literally well over \$2 billion to build new schools in this province, which is going to be critical for rural, suburban and urban centres in the province. We have supported the creation of 16,000 net new spaces last year alone in child care. We acknowledge the price and the cost of child care for working parents, a regrettable legacy of the former Liberal government, which is why we've introduced a child care tax credit targeting parents with affordability—with \$1,500 per child.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to be on the side of working people by making child care more affordable and building new schools in this province.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Gurratan Singh: My question is to the Premier. Three years ago, the Conservative government voted down my bill, which would have actually lowered car insurance rates. The Conservative government said that they would act on their own to lower rates, but guess what?

Three years later, just like the Liberal government before them, every single year the Conservative government has been in power, they've allowed billion-dollar insurance companies to increase their rates for Ontario drivers—despite the fact that over the past year we have been in a pandemic, there are far fewer cars on the road and our roads are safer than ever before.

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Now, I want to be very clear: Car insurance rates only go up when the Conservative government allows them to go up. So my question to the Premier is this: Why is he letting billion-dollar car insurance companies rip off Ontarians, and why won't he use his power today to mandate lower car insurance rates for drivers across Ontario?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply on behalf of the government, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, Mr. Speaker, it's a strange question coming from this member and the NDP. Now, I can appreciate he wasn't elected in 2011 when the NDP held the balance of power in this place and their only requirement to keep the then Liberal government, which they agree was a disaster, in power was that they do something on auto insurance. Now, in 2011, that auto insurance rate went up. Did the NDP throw the Liberals out? No. In 2012, auto insurance went up. What did they do?

Interjection: Kept them.

Hon. Paul Calandra: They kept them in power. In 2013, it went up. What did they do? They kept them in power, because they agreed that all that needed to happen was a stretch goal, because that's all that mattered.

Mr. Speaker, we understand how important it is to make things more affordable for the people of the province of Ontario. That is why we are working so hard to increase affordability for people: bringing taxes down, ensuring that we have a vibrant economy. On every measure, the NDP have voted against that. We'll continue to work for Ontario taxpayers.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question? The member for Brampton North.

Mr. Kevin Yarde: My question is to the Premier. As the auto insurance critic, I've been working and fighting, trying to make sure that this government works with me to lower auto insurance. Many times in this Legislature, I talked about how high auto insurance is in Brampton and Brampton North. We pay some of the highest auto insurance in the entire country.

I've written to the Premier and I've written to the Minister of Finance asking them to help to lower auto insurance and make life more affordable for Ontarians. However, sadly, Mr. Speaker, I have heard nothing from this government. The government cannot sit back idly and do nothing. I've talked to taxi drivers; I've talked to truck drivers. They've also said that they can't continue their business because auto insurance rates are too high. The Premier said—and the member mentioned it as well—three years ago that they would lower auto insurance, but they have not lowered auto insurance. Insurance rates continue to go through the roof.

Now, the member opposite says that it's a stretch dream, a stretch goal to lower auto insurance. I want to ask the government: Why have they not been able to lower auto insurance for the people of Ontario and give them a break, which they need right now?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I'm glad the member opposite agrees how ridiculous accepting a stretch goal is to reduce auto insurance rates. What's even more ridiculous is that member and his party accepted that as a condition of keeping the Liberals in power between 2011 and 2014. I am glad that he agrees that that is ridiculous, Mr. Speaker. It is absolutely ridiculous.

This is a government that has actually brought down auto insurance rates, modestly. More work needs to be done, Mr. Speaker. But here is the good news: We are continuing to make life more affordable for the people of the province of Ontario, cutting taxes; as the Minister of Education just talked about, making daycare more affordable. Even more great news for the people of Brampton: Because of the hard work of our members in Brampton, they're getting a new hospital there. There is better transit and transportation and GO train services. There is so much happening for the people of Brampton, in spite of the lack of work done by the NDP members.

Our two members in Brampton have done so much for the people of Brampton. The future looks good for the people of Brampton, but more importantly, for all Ontarians, because of the hard work that this government is doing.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Stephen Blais: Mr. Speaker, the Long-Term Care Development Program, which is administered by Infrastructure Ontario, is offering 23 acres of surplus government land for the building of new long-term-care facilities. In an earnings call, it's reported that representatives from Sienna said the program "would benefit Sienna's properties, and we have submitted our applications for the program. In our view, the ... Long-Term Care Development Program would make many projects financially feasible." The open market period for this program closed on January 27, and four months later, no winner has been disclosed.

Now, according to public disclosures, the MPP for Oakville, who is also the parliamentary assistant for infrastructure, has private holdings in both Sienna and Chartwell. Mr. Speaker, the public has an interest in knowing what, if any, role the parliamentary assistant is playing in the selection process, given his personal financial interests in the for-profit long-term-care sector. Can the Premier assure Ontarians that the parliamentary assistant has had no role in the creation of the program, taken part in discussions about the program or been involved in the selection—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply? The government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, first and foremost, let me just say this: I know the member for Oakville has

proactively reported everything to the Integrity Commissioner, as all members should do, full stop. This member knows that that has been the case.

I'll tell you what the member for Oakville has done. He has worked very hard to bring increased infrastructure to the people of Oakville after a decade and a half of darkness from the previous Liberal government. He is a key member of this team. He has helped us restore balance to our fiscal situation in this province, to cut taxes.

But this member for Ottawa–Vanier, in his short period of time here, what has he accomplished? Let's remember that this is the man who was in charge of building a rapid transit system in Ottawa that didn't work, was over budget. We will take no lessons from this particular member who, in his very short time here, has focused on what he thinks are other people's shortfalls as opposed to working for the people of his riding. I will stand beside the member for Oakville, who has done such tremendous work for his riding, any day.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our question period this morning.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa South has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Education concerning schools. This matter will be debated on Tuesday, September 14, 2021, following private members' public business.

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Mr. John Fraser: Point of order.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Speaker, as it's the end of the session, I think it's really important for us to say thanks to the Clerk, the Sergeant-at-Arms and everyone who works in this assembly for keeping us safe, keeping us organized, making this House work as well as it has, despite the answers from the other side. I just think we need to say thanks, and it's an opportunity for us to do that right now.

Applause.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I would like to ask for the indulgence of the House for a moment.

In my first year as Speaker, I ended our spring sitting with a message of thanks to the incredibly talented staff of the assembly and also acknowledged the hard work of all members on behalf of their constituents. Last year, as we are all well aware, the spring sitting ended a little bit differently, with much uncertainty of what the coming months would bring. We knew not what was to come, but we were united in our faith in the people of Ontario.

We are once again at the conclusion of yet another spring sitting, entering what appears to be the final year of

this Parliament. I once again want to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who has worked so diligently to ensure we can meet safely here in the chamber. Whether working here in the building or remotely, the staff at the Legislative Assembly have continued to uphold the values of integrity, inclusiveness, collaboration and excellence in their dedication to serving Ontario's Parliament.

There have been many challenging issues brought before the House in the last year, and I want to thank each of you, the members, for your passion and perseverance in public service as we work together to build a brighter future for all the people of Ontario. While we cannot know with certainty what the future may hold, it's very encouraging to see the people of Ontario continuing to come together, though at a distance, to get vaccinated and do their part to help us return to the activities we have missed so much in the last year: gathering with family and friends, going out to our favourite local restaurants and shops, attending concerts and events and, yes, even going to a Leafs game—and with the Leafs, there's always next year.

I know that each of us is looking forward to returning to our ridings and continuing to work hard on behalf of our constituents through the summer months, as we always do. I look forward to what we can accomplish in the year ahead, in full knowledge that the resilience, compassion, patience, courage and gratitude that have brought us thus far will only multiply as we rebuild our province and together work to make Ontario fairer, stronger and more prosperous than ever before.

Keep well, stay safe and take care. Thank you very much.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader on a point of order.

1140

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you, sir. I do appreciate that and all of the words coming from both sides. Let me just as well add my voice of thanks to all of the hard work that the Speaker and the Clerk and his team have done. I think that the province of Ontario and the way the Legislature has run has really been an example for all Legislatures across this country and, in fact, across North America. I think we should all—and I know we are—be very, very proud of the incredible work that has allowed us to continue to be here.

I do take my job as being a bridge-builder very seriously, so I do want to thank the opposition House leader, the whip and their entire team. They have done a great job, as has the House leader for the Liberal Party, the Green Party, and even my good friend the member for York Center, who I don't often agree with—in fact, I probably never agree with, but he has done a good job.

I will say this: This has been a very challenging and difficult time, but I would say that the people of the province of Ontario have seen the best of what Parliament can offer on both sides of the House, and the people of the province of Ontario should be very proud, if they can be, of the members of provincial Parliament who work on their behalf on both sides of the House. We've agreed

when we've needed to agree, but when we have disagreed, it has been very passionate and vigorous debate and it has always been done respectfully. Thank you to all members for doing that.

I wonder if I might, Mr. Speaker—I'm not sure if I overstep my bounds—ask the ushers to join us on the floor so that we can give them thanks for all of the hard work that they have done. I know the page program hasn't been in effect for a number of months, but the ushers are always behind the scenes, doing a tremendous amount of work for us, and I wonder if I might ask them to join us on the floor, if you would agree, sir, so that we might also thank them for their hard work.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is there unanimous consent of the House to allow the ushers to come forward so we can thank them? Agreed? Agreed.

I'll invite the ushers to come forward.

Applause.

Hon. Paul Calandra: May I just say one last thing?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sure. The government House leader, one last thing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I do hope that these temporary measures that we have put in place will be over in September and that we can have a full return to all members back in this chamber with the galleries full, and that we can make these masks a thing of the past in September. Have a happy and safe summer, everybody.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Timiskaming–Cochrane, I think on the same point of order.

Mr. John Vanthof: I appreciate the opportunity, and I appreciate all the words that have been said and I'm not going to repeat them. But I would also like to thank the people who we never see: the security people who ask me those six questions every morning; the people who disinfect; my favourite, the people in the cafeteria—I'm a big fan of the cafeteria. Those are the people of Ontario, and they're an example of the people we all serve.

We don't always agree, and I will accept the government House leader: Sometimes he is a bridge-builder—sometimes it's a Bailey bridge and sometimes it's one of those moat bridges. But we all have a purpose to serve, and

I think we all are doing it to the best of our abilities. Each and every Ontarian, it's our job to serve them, and I think we're all trying to do our best.

Thank you very much for being our referee and, thank you, everyone, for putting up with us.

DEFERRED VOTES

SUPPORTING RECOVERY AND COMPETITIVENESS ACT, 2021

LOI DE 2021 SUR LE SOUTIEN À LA RELANCE ET À LA COMPÉTITIVITÉ

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 276, An Act to enact and amend various Acts /
Projet de loi 276, Loi édictant et modifiant diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We now have a deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 276, An Act to enact and amend various Acts. The bells will ring for 30 minutes, during which time members may cast their votes.

I'll ask the Clerks to please prepare the lobbies.

The division bells rang from 1145 to 1215.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 276, An Act to enact and amend various Acts, has been held.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 36; the nays are 18.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There being no further business at this time, this House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1216 to 1300.

Report continues in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.
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 Quioc Lim, William Short,
Peter Sibenik, William Wong
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 (IND)	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	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	
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. (NBP)	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, Rod (PC)	Ajax	
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	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'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	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
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

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Donna Skelly
Teresa J. Armstrong, Toby Barrett
Lorne Coe, Rudy Cuzzetto
Randy Hillier, Jane McKenna
Judith Monteith-Farrell, Michael Parsa
Randy Pettapiece, Donna Skelly
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

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

Chair / Président: Amarjot Sandhu
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeremy Roberts
Ian Arthur, Stan Cho
Catherine Fife, Mitzie Hunter
Logan Kanapathi, Sol Mamakwa
David Piccini, Jeremy Roberts
Amarjot Sandhu, Dave Smith
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Julia Douglas

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Présidente: Goldie Ghamari
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Mike Schreiner
Jill Andrew, Robert Bailey
Guy Bourgouin, Stephen Crawford
Goldie Ghamari, Chris Glover
Mike Harris, Sheref Sabawy
Amarjot Sandhu, Mike Schreiner
Daisy Wai
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: Gilles Bisson
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian
Aris Babikian, Gilles Bisson
Will Bouma, Lorne Coe
Wayne Gates, Robin Martin
Norman Miller, Rick Nicholls
Billy Pang, Amanda Simard
Marit Stiles
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Julia Douglas

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Daryl Kramp
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lucille Collard
Will Bouma, Lucille Collard
Parm Gill, Daryl Kramp
Natalia Kusendova, Suze Morrison
Lindsey Park, Gurratan Singh
Nina Tangri, Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Kevin Yarde
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Président: Kaleed Rasheed
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vijay Thanigasalam
Rima Berns-McGown, Michael Coteau
Faisal Hassan, Logan Kanapathi
Michael Mantha, Jim McDonell
Christina Maria Mitas, Sam Oosterhoff
Kaleed Rasheed, Donna Skelly
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

Chair / Président: Taras Natyshak
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: France Gélinas
Deepak Anand, Toby Barrett
Jessica Bell, Stephen Blais
Stephen Crawford, Rudy Cuzzetto
France Gélinas, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Taras Natyshak
Michael Parsa
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Président: Logan Kanapathi
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Fraser
Will Bouma, John Fraser
Logan Kanapathi, Vincent Ke
Laura Mae Lindo, Paul Miller
Billy Pang, Jeremy Roberts
Dave Smith, Daisy Wai
Jamie West
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale

Chair / Président: Deepak Anand
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Bhutila Karpoche
Deepak Anand, Aris Babikian
Jeff Burch, Amy Fee
Michael Gravelle, Joel Harden
Mike Harris, Christine Hogarth
Belinda C. Karahalios, Bhutila Karpoche
Natalia Kusendova
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tanzima Khan

Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight / Comité spécial de la surveillance de la gestion des situations d'urgence

Chair / Président: Daryl Kramp
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Tom Rakocevic
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
John Fraser, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Robin Martin
Sam Oosterhoff, Lindsey Park
Tom Rakocevic, Sara Singh
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell