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18 août 2022

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 18 August 2022

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 18 août 2022

Report continued from volume B.

PLAN TO BUILD ACT
(BUDGET MEASURES), 2022
LOI DE 2022 POUR FAVORISER
LE DÉVELOPPEMENT
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

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

Bill 2, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes / Projet de loi 2, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Questions?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I want to congratulate the member on his election and welcome him to the chamber as a new member. I just wanted to ask him: He's talking about his prior experiences in the medical profession and in science, which is very interesting. I just wanted to ask him—you talked a little bit about what inspired you within your field to run as an elected official too, but how has that helped you in your community, as well, being a newly elected official?

Mr. Ted Hsu: Well, maybe I could talk about some of the other experiences that helped me. For the last few years, I've done a lot of coaching of robotics teams, from Lego robotics in my basement to high school robotics. I love working with the kids. I love trying to teach them something which I think will be very important in their future careers, but also in the economy.

Now, I said I coach robotics, but these robotics teams also involve things like communication, teamwork, co-operation, treating your opponents with respect, business planning, and also managing a team, dividing up tasks. These are not easy things to do, but technology, by itself, doesn't really get realized by itself. We need to have people who know how to work together, who know how to use technology, to bring it to fruition, to make it something that benefits all of society. This is what I've seen in coaching FIRST robotics teams, and it's something that I really like to instill in young people, this idea of how you get from technology to something that makes a difference in society.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Questions?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Thank you very much for your presentation. I really appreciated your analogy of the Premier being the captain of a ship. I can't help but thinking let's hope that he's not like the captain of the Costa

Concordia, because the analogy is apt. That captain denied that they had hit a rock, tried to deflate the urgency they were facing, and people really lost their lives.

You're from Kingston. I know there's the Queen's School of Medicine there, that health care is very important to your constituents and to the people there. Why do you think this government, including this Premier, has ignored the warnings coming from Ontario nurses, coming from professionals in the health care system, to the point where we are facing people losing their lives, given the crisis that we're facing in health care?

Mr. Ted Hsu: Thank you very much for the question. First of all, I think we have to admit that the Premier was elected to be the Premier of this province. He is the captain of the ship. My job as a member of the opposition is to put the pressure on him, keep him accountable. He is the person who's going to lead the government and make this decision.

But I also know that going door to door for the last two years, receiving all the correspondence that comes into my office, just meeting people on the street and asking them what their experience is, that this information that we're in a health care crisis has been around for a long time. Starting in the middle of the pandemic, it was pretty clear that—now, I know there were weaknesses in the health care system before the pandemic, but they really started to explode during the pandemic, coming out of the pandemic, when people started thinking about quitting and retiring or taking leaves or being absent because of COVID. We could see the cracks, and I've heard about them just by talking to people and going door to door. I was talking to thousands of people.

My advice to the Premier would be to listen to the caucus. Listen to your caucus. Get your caucus to go out and do some more door-knocking, because there's going to be other problems that are going to come up. I think it's really important to get out there and listen to people so that you can react in advance.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Questions?

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Thank you to the member from Kingston and the Islands. Congratulations on your election as well.

I just want to say, yes, I agree with you about teamwork. Yes, we do need teamwork, and that's why, in fact, our government—I just want you to realize that we have done a lot of plans. We listened to the people. That's why so many of us were elected this time as well.

But I also want you to be aware—perhaps you do not know that the former Liberal government missed eight of their last 14 financial reporting periods, and they really did

not have a plan. Well, we have been listening and we have a plan. The Liberals, in 15 years, did not have any plan to build housing. They did not have any plan for infrastructure. Unfortunately, that's why we have all these concerns with hospitals as well. We are working on it. This is why we are doing this plan, and this budget is reflecting the plan that we have.

I just want you to see that. Why will you not be supporting this plan?

Mr. Ted Hsu: Thank you for the question. I also congratulate the member opposite for her election in June.

In my speech, my advice to the Premier was to look ahead because that's where the problems are. That's where we're going to find the solutions to the problem. It's unfortunate that the question from the honourable member seemed like she was looking backwards. What I would suggest is that she and her party and the Premier, who is the captain of the ship, please continue to look forward. Don't look backwards. Don't try to rewrite history. Look forward. Find the solutions. Work with all the rest of us. There are experts out there. There are people with experience to share. There are people who know how to implement solutions because they know how government works. Let's look forward. Let's try to solve problems and achieve something for the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Questions?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I just really want to thank the member from Kingston and the Islands and my esteemed colleague for really laying out a framework for proaction and action.

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I'm wondering if he can go deeper into his analogy of the ship and the Premier as captain of the ship, and the turning and the importance of starting early when it comes to things like planning for energy and getting ready for the winter ahead. I just thought your insights into that and your experience were illuminating for this assembly, so if the member could please expand on his ideas.

Mr. Ted Hsu: There's a contrast between what I hear when I go door to door and people tell me their stories, their life situation—and I want to do something today, tomorrow, yesterday. But I know that housing takes time to build. Housing can take years to plan and build. Power plants and transmission lines take years of time to build. The transition that we're trying to make from burning fossil fuels to renewable energy and storage takes time. If we have to use nuclear energy, that takes a lot of time. One of the main problems with nuclear energy is that it takes a lot of time to build.

That's why, for me, and for all the people I talk to who are in trouble, who are suffering, who are asking for help—they need us to think ahead, because a lot of the important answers take time to implement.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There's time for one last, quick question.

Ms. Lise Vaugeois: Member for Kingston and the Islands, thank you for what you had to share with us, and thank you for emphasizing the common good, really at the forefront of your speech.

You talked about taking from the treasury and giving it to people in cars. I wonder if you could explain a little bit more so that we really understand what is going on in terms of the priorities of this government.

Mr. Ted Hsu: In the time that I have, let me just say that I believe that the 5% increase in the ODSP is unconscionable.

The money was taken from the treasury. It was given to people in licence plate rebates, toll reductions—you know, you have to have a car and you have to be able to drive a car to do that, but if you're on ODSP, you don't have a car. So it just doesn't seem fair to me. I don't have much time to say that, but let me just leave it at that. The people who benefited from that money weren't the people who most needed the help.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: It is a privilege to rise in the House today and speak to our government's budget bill, a plan to build Ontario. Let me begin by saying what an absolute honour and privilege it is to start my second term in office as we begin the work of the 43rd Parliament. I want to thank the voters in Mississauga Centre for putting their trust in me once again and electing me as their representative, to be their voice in this house of democracy. It is a very humbling responsibility, which I take very seriously. I pledge to my constituents—those who voted for me and those who have not—to wake up each morning and go to work with vigour, courage, resilience and an exemplary work ethic to advocate for issues important to the people and families of Mississauga Centre.

Let me also say that the people of Ontario spoke loudly and clearly when, on June 2, they voted in a resounding majority Progressive Conservative government, increasing our seat count from 76 in the first term to 83 in the second. Voters across the province—from Windsor to Essex to Prescott and Russell to Brampton and, of course, Mississauga—sent a clear message defining what kind of government they want to lead this province.

Ontarians want a government that builds critical infrastructure like roads, highways, subways, schools, homes, hospitals and long-term care. They want a government that reduces red tape and creates conditions for businesses to thrive. They want a government which is rebuilding Ontario's economy by supporting good-paying manufacturing jobs and growing our skilled trades workforce. They want a government with a plan to stay open by hiring more nurses and health care workers. They want a government that is working for workers. They want a government which is keeping costs down and ensuring life is affordable, keeping money in their pockets, not in the government's pockets. Finally, they want a government which will say yes to building Ontario for the people.

Speaker, that is exactly what the people of Ontario got when they elected us to lead the province for another four years under the steadfast leadership of Premier Ford.

I also want to take a moment to acknowledge my hard-working campaign team and my incredible family: Victoria, Manjil, Beberg, Sebastian, Harris, Bamini, Urooj, Joanna, Barbara, Kamil, Dawood, Shirley, Peter, Andy

and Cecylia. Politics is a team sport, and I could not have done this without you.

Speaker, this budget is undoubtedly one of the most robust and aspiring in our province's history, but primarily it is our government rising to the occasion and setting out a new path in rebuilding Ontario after the daunting challenges of recent years. This plan not only aims to build a stronger Ontario for workers, families and businesses, but also asserts a key priority within our government: keeping Ontarians safe and healthy while ensuring economic growth and prosperity.

Ontario's capital plan budget sets out a total of \$158.8 billion in supports over the next 10 years and includes \$20 billion this fiscal year. This plan ensures vital infrastructure supports for highways, transit development, hospitals and other critical assets that can and will build a stronger and more prosperous Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, with my time today I would like to outline what this budget is doing for our health care system. Over the past few decades, the lack of spending and investment within our health care system, and frankly years of frozen hospital budgets courtesy of our Liberal friends, have made the system vulnerable to the arrival of the pandemic. Like the Premier has said many times, never again will we be caught in such a situation, and that is why we are putting our money where our mouth is.

This budget will allocate more than \$40 billion in hospital infrastructure funding over the next 10 years, including \$27 billion in capital funding. This is an unprecedented \$10-billion increase over the commitment made in last year's budget. A substantial portion of this investment is going directly to my community, to Mississauga's Trillium Health Partners to finance its expansion and modernization.

Through this multi-billion-dollar investment, our government is building a new state-of-the-art Mississauga hospital and expanding the Queensway Health Centre in Etobicoke. This modernized Mississauga hospital is anticipated to add up to 26 brand new operating rooms and over 350 new hospital beds to become one of the largest emergency departments in Ontario. In fact, this historic investment will improve health care for patients and families in the Peel region, Etobicoke and in the surrounding communities by adding beds, reducing wait times, hiring more staff and creating new facilities for patients and families to receive the highest quality of care they expect and deserve.

I would be remiss not to also mention the Peel Memorial Hospital expansion in Brampton, thereby giving the people of Brampton a second full-service in-patient 24/7 state-of-the-art hospital, as well as a cancer centre, something they have been advocating for very loudly for years and something that our government is very proud to deliver for the people of Brampton.

This expansion will allow for the establishment of an emergency department and meet the needs of one of Ontario's fastest-expanding municipalities. Speaker, let me just say that I am so proud to welcome new members

from Brampton to this side of the House, where they rightfully belong.

I would also like to take a moment to congratulate Dr. Frank Martino from William Osler Health System on his recent appointment as president and CEO. I am certain that the staff and patients of Etobicoke General, Brampton Civic and Peel Memorial will be served well with him at the helm.

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Monsieur le Président, ces investissements augmenteront non seulement la capacité des hôpitaux, mais permettront également de construire de nouveaux établissements de soins de santé et de renouveler les hôpitaux et les centres de santé communautaire existants, ce qui permettra aux ressources de santé nécessaires de continuer de protéger les Ontariens et Ontariennes de toute la province.

Mr. Speaker, without a doubt, this government is building a robust and resilient health care system by investing \$300 million this fiscal year as part of the province's Surgical Recovery Strategy, which brings the total investment to roughly \$880 million since the start of the pandemic. The surgical recovery program will increase scheduled surgery procedures and diagnostic imaging services, focusing on the areas with the most significant reduction in service due to the pandemic. Not only that, but the strategy will also provide funding to hospitals for innovative solutions to address local needs and increase surgery across Ontario, and also support over 150,000 additional hours of MRI and CT diagnostic imaging scans.

I would like to pivot now to discuss what this budget provides for the mental health and well-being of Ontarians, a concern I am sure many of us across the province have been faced with, or have known someone who has struggled with. We have relied on Ontario's courageous first responders and nurses more than ever since the pandemic began. We understand how much it has affected them, and our responsibility and duty is to ensure they have access to high-quality mental health care. That is why the government of Ontario is investing \$1 million to support planning for Runnymede Healthcare Centre's first responders post-pandemic stress injury rehabilitation centre in Toronto and Peel region.

Cela profitera aux premiers intervenants de toute la province, y compris les pompiers, les ambulanciers paramédicaux, les infirmières et infirmiers, et les policiers.

Le nouveau centre disposera de deux nouvelles installations offrant un programme complet de réadaptation en santé mentale pour les premiers intervenants souffrant de stress ou de traumatisme lié au travail, comme une blessure de stress post-traumatique. Des évaluations, une thérapie intense, des soins virtuels et un traitement de la toxicomanie seront disponibles.

Furthermore, this project will be expanded provincially. It will involve more front-line health care providers in the future to improve access to safe and effective mental health supports across the province.

We are also investing \$42.5 million over two years to promote the expansion of undergraduate and postgraduate

medical education and training in Ontario. This expansion will increase 160 undergraduate seats and 300 post-graduate places. Undoubtedly, this expansion will benefit all medical schools in Ontario, including the new Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health and the Ryerson School of Medicine in Brampton.

To conclude, Speaker, as a passionate front-line health care practitioner, I want to end by thanking our paramedics, physicians, nurses, PSWs and all of our allied health care professionals, as well as the managerial and administrative personnel who maintain our world-class health care system operating daily. I am proud to be a part of a government which will continue building, modernizing and innovating not only our health care system, but the whole province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Questions?

Ms. Lise Vaugois: With food security top of mind for so many reasons, can you please explain how the rich farmland of the Holland Marsh and, therefore, the food grown there will be replaced when it is paved over to build Highway 413?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you so much for that question. I have to say that our farmers and our food producers are the backbone of Ontario, because without food, frankly, nothing moves forward. That is why they were so crucial throughout the pandemic, that they kept on bringing our supplies, our Ontario produce to the table.

I know that the Minister of Agriculture has been working extremely hard in supporting all of the local initiatives. I know that in my riding of Mississauga Centre we have, and continued to have throughout the pandemic, our farmers' market. I think it's important that we do everything we can do to continue supporting our supply chain to ensure that our local, homegrown products get to Ontario families so that they can buy them for dinner.

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

Mr. Rob Flack: Thank you, Speaker. I might also thank the member from Mississauga Centre for her remarks, and point out that agri-food in this province is, if not the largest employer in the manufacturing sector—it is, and will continue to be, and this party is the party that represents farmers and agri-food processors. That's why we represent all the ridings where that's produced. So, well done.

To health, and in my theme today of labour, I guess I want to come back to a neglected health care system infrastructure. Yes, we're investing in it, but importantly we need health care workers, nurses, PSWs, doctors. What is this government going to do through Bill 2 and going forward to ensure we get those jobs filled, and filled soon?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you very much for that question. I am very, very passionate about this topic. That's why I'm so proud to be part of a government that has continued to invest in building our health care workforce, but particularly in growing our nursing profession, from our Learn and Stay program, which is giving free tuition to our nursing students that commit to working in underserved areas, to expanding that internationally trained nurses be able to work here in Ontario—that's why

I was so pleased to see that almost 4,000 of those internationally trained nurses were processed and were able to enter our job market here—to also giving free education to PSWs, because, as we know, we have to hire close to 27,000 more PSWs in order to be able to live up to that four hours of daily care standard that we have legislated, leading, frankly, the country in the delivery of long-term care.

And so this is just one of the things that we are doing. But we will continue working with our partners, including the College of Nurses of Ontario, the CPSO and all the regulated health care professionals, to ensure that we can accelerate those internationally trained professionals and to ensure that our health human resources are robust and continue serving the patients of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Next, the member for London–Fanshawe.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Thank you to the member for Mississauga Centre for her debate. It's not only anecdotal that ERs are closing or at risk of closing, and I want to share an example from London. A regional epilepsy program at London Health Sciences Centre has been temporarily closed due to critical staff shortages, the latest casualty of the intense strain in the health care system province-wide. These are not anecdotal stories, Mr. Speaker, and this is an epilepsy program.

I need to ask the question to the member and to all government members in this Legislature: What would you be telling someone who has an epileptic seizure when they go to get help at London Health Sciences Centre and there are no beds? Where do they go?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: I thank the member for that question. That's why I think it's really critical that we understand how much this government has invested in health care in the last four years. We have built an unprecedented 3,100 more acute care beds. These are unprecedented investments to the tune of \$40 billion over the next 10 years. We are building 30,000 more long-term-care beds, because we know that, in Ontario's hospitals, we have ALC—alternate level of care—patients which are taking up valuable resources and that could be transferred out to long-term care had there been enough long-term care built under the previous Liberal government. It is still a shameful reflection today to reflect that, in 15 years, the Ontario Liberals had only built 641 beds. That is why this government is doing things like the accelerated build program to ensure that we are getting shovels in the ground as fast as possible so we can holistically support the growing needs of Ontario's patients.

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: I'd like to put this question—it's actually a statement from a constituent of mine, but it turns into a question. I put it to a member earlier and I'd like to put it to this member as well.

Here name is Donna Behnke. She's on ODSP and she's from Elliot Lake. This is her statement and her question: "If any of them had a single ethical bone in their body or even the slightest hint of common decency, they would do what is right. Does" the Premier "not realize some people

on ODSP are fighting mental illness? People with cancer, people that had strokes, people that had multiple sclerosis—the list goes on and on. He needs to stop painting everyone with the same paintbrush. The Premier and prior governments always target the poor. You can't make healthy people by destroying them. They will never be fit to hold a job. But what it will do is push more people to seek out MAID.”

My question to the member is: Do you agree with Donna?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: I thank the member for the question. I know that ODSP is top of mind. That's why I'm proud that the government actually introduced a 5%-increase commitment starting in September 2022 for families and persons under ODSP, as well as committing to adjusting future increases to ODSP rates based on inflation.

Further to that, I'd like to remind this House that ODSP recipients may also qualify for other health benefits, such as prescription drug coverage, vision care, dental care, devices approved under the Ministry of Health's Assistive Devices Program, special dietary expenses and many more.

I'm glad that the member raised the social determinants of health, because we know that it's not just health care services that contribute to making a person healthy. For example, housing is a huge social determinant of health. That's why one of the first things that we did in this new 43rd Parliament is commit to building 1.5 million new homes—and these are affordable homes, and social housing as well—to ensure that those social determinants of health, like housing, are being met for the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Mississauga–Malton.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the member from Mississauga Centre, who's doing an incredible job. Thanks for being a great neighbour as well.

Ontario's Plan to Stay Open includes concrete measures to build Ontario's health care force; shore up domestic production of critical supplies like PPE and vaccines; and invest in hospitals, long-term-care homes and home care. How does the expansion of home care that the government is committed to fit into the plan, and why is it important for building and supporting Ontario's health care system?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you for that question. For me, as a registered nurse, I know that the health care system doesn't exist in a vacuum. It truly is an ecosystem. So we need to be supporting all parts of health care, including our acute care, including our long-term care, but also home care. That is why the \$1-billion investment that this government has committed to over the next three years will help to ensure that our moms and dads, grandmothers and grandfathers who can stay at home with the right supports do have access to those hard-working PSWs and nurses working in home care.

PSWs are the backbone of home care, and so I'm also proud that this government has committed to making a

permanent wage increase, from \$15 to \$18 an hour. This was an unprecedented move, and I'm just really proud that we are doing everything we can to help grow and nurture our health care system, our health care ecosystem, from each and every aspect possible.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): One very quick question from the Minister of Northern Development.

Hon. Greg Rickford: You know, it struck me, Mr. Speaker, that throughout COVID, and now at this important juncture, we've never really acknowledged anybody who worked as a front-line worker in the health care system who may be part of this Legislature, and I know that this member did. So, colleagues, if you'll indulge me, let's just give her a round of applause.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's always a pleasure to rise, but I think I'm going to start my 20 minutes—so sit back and enjoy—by thanking all the volunteers. A lot of people don't know this is my fourth term here. I know we've got a lot of new people here. I've been elected four times now, much to the chagrin of my opposition, but I still survive.

The reality is, when I started to run, I lost. I talked to one of the gentlemen earlier about how I had lost seven times in a row. My wife kept saying to me that she didn't have any more money to donate to my campaigns, and maybe the people of Niagara Falls didn't want me. I talk about this when I go to schools, and it's about never giving up and following your passion. That's what I did. Since the time that I won a by-election, going back to 2014—and I will add just a little bit to that: I have never propped up the Liberals in my life, when I was here, just for the record.

Having said that, I was lucky enough to do this job, but I'm surrounded by quality people. None of us can get here without our volunteers, without our family. In my case, I have by far the best staff in the province of Ontario, with no disrespect to anybody else that's here. It's because of their hard work—I'm the face out there. I'm the guy that cuts the ribbons and does all those little things that get your face out, but it's the people that are behind you: the volunteers, my staff. And quite frankly, I wouldn't be here without the support of my wife, my three daughters and my five grandkids, who all handed out leaflets during the campaign. The grandkids are kind of fun to watch because they're saying, “You've got to vote for my grandpa.” Those types of things are kind of neat as you get older, and some of you guys will get older at some point in time. So I just wanted to start by saying thank you very much.

I'd also like to say to the Speaker, congratulations. I know you went through an incredible amount of stress to try to keep your job. We go through that, quite frankly, Speaker, every time we run for election. We're all under stress, I think, heading up into an election. I just want to say on behalf of myself—I'm not speaking for anybody else—I'm very pleased that you have the opportunity to do this again. I believe you to be a good gentleman and a fair Speaker. So I wanted to say that and be upfront with everybody that's here.

Now I'll get into, really, my speech. I honestly don't know where to start, but I'll list some of the things I'm going to go through; that might be easier. So you guys might want to pay attention. We have a health care crisis. I don't think there's any doubt about that. I talked this morning about our ambulance services where they're stuck at hospitals, at offloads for six, eight, 10, 12 hours as people who are having heart attacks and some of those things in our community are waiting hours for the paramedics and the ambulance to get there. There are a number of reasons for that, and that's definitely something I'm going to talk about.

Long-term care: I don't even know where to start with long-term care. We saw close to 5,000 people die in long-term care. Last week we had 40 people die in long-term care. It didn't hit the papers; it wasn't a big story. As seniors continue to die in long-term care, most are dying in privately run facilities. Let's get that right off the table.

You take a look about affordability—I mentioned I've got three daughters. They're struggling with affordability, just like everybody else. The reality is that the affordability issue with groceries—the cost of groceries has just come out and they're up over 10%—10%. It's amazing. We know the Weston family that owns Loblaws is making record profits. They're making more money today in the last two years than they made in the years before then, all because they're gouging. I've asked this government, I've asked this Premier, I've asked anybody on that side that would listen: Stop the gouging. And it's gouging at our groceries.

They're also gouging at the pump. It was a little successful—you guys take credit on the 5% or whatever you guys reduced, but the reason why the price at the gas pump has come down is that the oil companies have been exposed on what they're doing with gouging, particularly at the refineries. If you take a look at where the pricing came from, the increases all came from the refineries, and they passed it on to the consumer. But the refineries are owned by who? Does anybody on that side know? Help me out, these new guys. I don't know if you're allowed to speak while I'm talking, but the reality is, it's the oil companies. So the oil companies are doubling us. They're getting us at the refinery level, and they're getting us at the pumps. That's gouging, and that's why some of it has come down.

I don't know how anybody on your side can support a budget that is going to have a 5% increase to ODSP. I challenge anybody, including myself—because I'll stand up and say that I could not live on \$1,100 a month. I couldn't pay my rent. I couldn't buy my food. I couldn't get gas in my car. I couldn't make sure that my kids can go to school or all those things, put them into sports. There isn't anybody over there that should support this budget unless they double ODSP and take it to at least \$2,000 a month—not one of you. So as you guys continue to stand up and say, "The NDP doesn't support this, they don't support this," how do you not support the lowest people in income and then say it's a good budget?

I'm also going to talk about—because some of the—I call you brothers and sisters. It's easier for me, because I

can't remember all your ridings and stuff, so I'll just call you brothers and sisters because we're all in this today together. They talk about the unions and the union support that you guys got. Let me tell you, the Ontario Federation of Labour, that represents 1.2 million—I got to look through you. I'm sorry. I said you were fair, so at least you're giving me the eye contact. That's fine; I have no problem with it. The Ontario Federation of Labour, 1.2 million members, all supported the NDP in the last election. Every one of those unions that are affiliated with the Ontario Federation of Labour supported the NDP. That's how I'm going to start my 20 minutes. I burned a few of it.

1540

Mr. Speaker, I'll start on some of the written part that I have. Obviously, thanks again for allowing me to speak.

We're looking at a budget that was written several months ago, before the most recent election. Well, many things have changed since the election—although I did get re-elected, so that hasn't changed. Since this budget was written, our health care crisis has become so clear that not even this government can ignore it. Inflation is raging at around 7% to 8%. I think it's 7.2%. Last month it was over 8%. Despite that, this budget just carries on like nothing has changed in the province of Ontario. To make matters worse, the climate crisis is growing every day. This budget completely turns its back on the future of this province and our environment. That's disgraceful.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to start with health care. We saw the press conference this morning and what they're going to do, and I'll try to talk about that a little bit as I go through this. Before us today, we have a chance to discuss one of the largest budgets in Canadian government. There is time to act. They don't have to sit here and pretend there's nothing they can do.

We have had over eight emergency rooms close down in the province of Ontario because this government isn't funding them. Earlier today I mentioned we had a resident in Niagara calling 911 and waiting six hours for an ambulance. Instead, they got a taxi from a dispatcher six hours later. Do you know what that government could call that? They said that was innovative. The individual that was running against me, that's what he said.

We have an issue with—and I talked to you a little bit about the hospitals, the paramedics, our offloads. They're sitting at hospitals right across the province of Ontario for six, eight, 10 hours because we have a shortage in nurses. So there's no way that they can release that patient until the nurse comes.

On the weekends, including in Niagara Falls, probably Toronto, I would think Ottawa, Sarnia—some of the ones that have a tourist area—some of those hospitals are operating at 33% capacity. To get nurses to work on the weekend, although we won't repeal Bill 124, they're paying some of the nurses—you might not know this, Mr. Speaker—time and a half and double time, just to get them to come to work.

Now, we know the agency employees that they're sending to these hospitals are being paid by that agency

\$110 an hour. Somebody will have to explain to me on that side of the House—and they can do that maybe through a question, and maybe I'm missing something—how you can't repeal Bill 124, yet you don't mind spending taxpayers' dollars to agencies that are charging you \$110 an hour. If that makes sense to anybody, explain it to me.

How can this government look around this province of Ontario and see health care crumbling in every corner of this province and call it innovative? Do they care that little about the needs of our health care sector or the people who rely on it? Why doesn't this budget amend the health care spending and use our tax dollars to properly fund the system? This is not a done deal. The budget can be amended today, proper money can be spent and people can get the care they need, when they need it, where they need it.

Mr. Speaker, it's very clear that one of the major issues here is staffing. Across Ontario, and certainly in my home riding of Niagara, which, by the way, includes Fort Erie and Niagara-on-the-Lake, Stevensville, Ridgeway, Queenston, Virgil—I just wanted to mention them all. It's very clear that one of the major issues here is staffing across Ontario and certainly in Niagara. We are seeing a situation where health care workers are fleeing the system because of what this government has done. The most clear example of this is Bill 124. Please, I'm willing to listen—I'm willing to listen to you, Speaker, and I am, because I'm talking to you—somebody explain to me why we won't repeal Bill 124 when we know agencies are paying \$110. That's what we're paying agencies, yet we won't pay our nurses, our health care heroes. And now we're paying time and a half on weekends—sometimes double time on weekends—to get nurses. It makes no sense.

Send a clear message to health care workers and paramedics, who are covered by Bill 124 as well, and find out why we won't repeal Bill 124. I will say this loudly: This government must repeal Bill 124 now. Paramedics, corrections officers, education workers—they're all covered under it. It's not just nurses. Repeal the bill. It's a slap in the face to our health care workers and our front-line workers. If you want to help our health care system, then stop capping their wages and pay them what they're owed.

We know the rate of inflation now is around 8%. I think this month it was around 7.4% or 7.5%. Again, I'm going off the top of my head; I might be out by a percentage, a little bit, but it's around 8%.

This is important to listen to, and I can stand up here and say this: This government has no problem paying 73 members of this cabinet more. They gave themselves raises in the tens of thousands of dollars. While they gave themselves a raise, they held down the wages of nurses, paramedics, education workers and corrections officers. Why would you do that?

I'm not the only one that's been begging you to repeal Bill 124. All those workers have. You say you're a party working for workers? You're sitting at the back, back there. How can you cap their wages at 1%? Let's flip that model. Let's keep the PC MPP wages where they are at,

and let's pay our health care workers what they're owed. Why isn't that in the budget? I think that's fair. I think it's reasonable. I think you guys would accept that. You'd keep your pay and—I've got to look at the Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there you go. That's why I put that in there, actually. It makes me look at you.

Another issue that's absent from this bill is long-term care. Long-term care almost makes me cry, almost every time I talk about it. This government will pretend they fixed long-term care, but I ask them to actually go out and talk to seniors living in these places. Across Ontario, we have families being ripped apart because loved ones are separated in care—reunification. It's happening all over the province of Ontario. It's got to be fixed. Families with the skills necessary to care for their loved ones are doing everything they can to care for their loved ones, but they simply aren't the services they need. How did it come to this? How can seniors be that low of a priority for this government?

I want everybody to listen to this. I know you're playing on your phones and you're doing all of that, but let's listen to this: I believe there isn't anybody in here who doesn't believe that this should be fixed. This summer, we are experiencing a massive heat wave. We found out that almost 100 homes in Ontario have no air conditioning. And what happens is that there's a COVID outbreak, so then they have to stay in their rooms because they can't wander the halls.

I challenge any of you: Go to these long-term-care facilities. I put a tweet up. I asked Minister Calandra and the Premier to go to one of these places for 24 hours and sit in that room, and see what they're trying to live with. What happens, Mr. Speaker? Our loved ones, our moms, our dads, our grandparents, our aunts, our uncles—it's going to be me and you one day, probably sooner than we like, but it's going to be us. They're sitting in this and they're getting sick. They're fainting. Some are having heat stroke. The worst is, some are dying. I don't understand why we can't fix that.

You know where most of the problems, the majority, are? In for-profit homes. Because what do they care about? I wished—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I have to interrupt the proceedings. Pursuant to standing order 50(c), I am required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there have been six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader directs the debate to continue.

I see the member for Barrie–Innisfil shaking her head.
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

1550

APPOINTMENT OF HOUSE OFFICERS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I move that Donna Skelly, member for the electoral district of Flamborough—

Glanbrook, be appointed Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House;

That Bhutila Karpoche, member for the electoral district of Parkdale–High Park, be appointed First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House;

That Patrice Barnes, member for the electoral district of Ajax, be appointed Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House; and

That Lucille Collard, member for the electoral district of Ottawa–Vanier, be appointed Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House; and

That, notwithstanding standing order 115(a), the following changes be made to the membership of the following committees:

On the Standing Committee on Government Agencies, Mr. Bourgoïn be added;

On the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy, Ms. Andrew be added;

On the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, Mrs. Stevens be added;

On the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs, Ms. Bell be added;

On the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, Ms. Vaugeois be added; and

On the Standing Committee on Social Policy, Mr. Gates be added.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Ms. Khanjin has moved government notice of motion number 3—

Mr. John Vanthof: Point of order, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Timiskaming–Cochrane has a point of order.

Mr. John Vanthof: I rise on a point of order regarding standing order 6, which governs the appointment procedure for presiding officers. The motion before us reflects what we believe is a fundamental misapplication of standing order 6. By bringing this motion forward, the government has ignored the advice of the recognized opposition party House leader in the appointment of presiding officers, as communicated by letter to the government House leader on July 15, 2022, thereby subverting custom and precedent that has been established in Ontario for more than 30 years.

Before I present our argument, I want to emphasize unequivocally that the concerns raised today are strictly procedural and have absolutely nothing to do with the members named in the motion.

Standing order 6 provides that the government House leader shall appoint up to three Deputy Chairs “on the advice of” the House leaders of each of the recognized opposition parties. This process has gone unchanged since 1989, when up to two presiding officers from opposition parties were appointed, which was increased to three presiding officers from opposition parties in 2004.

Since the inception of the standing order, every single government has applied the rule by appointing the maximum number of presiding officers allowed under the rules from amongst the recognized opposition parties. And while there is no agreed-upon definition of how a conven-

tion becomes an established rule, the consistent application of a provision since its inception dating back over 30 years speaks strongly—if not definitively—to the understanding and intent of the House with respect to the interpretation of standing order 6.

The use of the phrase “on the advice of” in standing order 6 is significant. In fact, standing order 6 is the only standing order that instructs the House leader to act “on the advice of” the opposition, as opposed to acting in consultation with recognized parties or permitting opposition parties to indicate a preference. So what degree of deference does an instruction to act “on the advice of” prescribe? The phrase immediately calls to mind the relationship between the crown and the Legislative Assembly. The office of Ontario’s Lieutenant Governor describes that relationship as follows: “In a parliamentary democracy, the Lieutenant Governor almost always acts on the advice of the Premier and the cabinet. This is because it is the Premier and the cabinet who are ultimately accountable to the Legislative Assembly and the public for the government’s actions while in office.” We must assume that the use of the phrase “on the advice of” in the standing orders was not accidental and that it does, in fact, prescribe a high degree of deference to the advice of the House leaders of recognized opposition parties. At the very least, it prescribes a level of deference that cannot be ignored without an overwhelmingly compelling reason. In this case, no such compelling reason has been offered, and in our opinion, no such reason exists.

I also draw your attention to the language of standing orders 5(a) and 119(d). Standing order 5(a) states that “a member shall be appointed by the House as Deputy Speaker,” which means a government member, a member of a recognized party in opposition to the government or an independent member.

Standing order 119(d) states that the Vice-Chair of a committee chaired by the government “shall be a member of a recognized party in opposition to the government or an independent member.”

By contrast, standing order 6 refers only to recognized opposition parties. Surely if the intent of standing order 6 was to provide for the appointment of members other than from recognized opposition parties, it would have done so, which explains why no previous government has ever interpreted it in that way.

Further, standing order 115(b), which allows for the appointment of independent members to committee, states that independent members “may state” their “committee preference to the House leaders but such statement of preference is not binding.” Again, if the intention of the standing order was to provide the government House leader with discretion to follow the advice of recognized party House leaders, it would have made that explicitly clear. The absence of such language, coupled with more than 30 years of practice, only reinforces the interpretation that the intent of standing order 6 is to bind the government to act on the advice of the House leaders of recognized opposition parties.

As you’re aware, Speaker, parliamentary tradition makes clear that presiding officers belong to the House,

not to the government. The procedure for the appointment of presiding officers is designed to send a strong message that those who serve in these roles, by virtue of their obligation to maintain order and decorum in an impartial manner, must rise above partisan conditions. The procedure itself must provide both symbolic and practical confidence in the non-partisan apolitical nature of the role, which is why it can be argued previous government House leaders have always upheld the principle of neutrality by acting on the advice of the opposition House leaders. In fact, in both provisional and permanent contexts, no government has ever deviated from the recommendations of the recognized opposition parties, confirming that this was indeed the original intent of the House in the application of this standing order.

The government's break with a tradition so well established and clearly justified begs the question of the grounds on which they are going against the advice of the opposition. To provide some context for our concerns about the misapplication of standing order 6, I want to read from a letter dated July 7, 2022, from the opposition House leader to the government House leader regarding the election of the Speaker of the assembly. The letter states:

"I am writing in follow up to our meeting this week, in which your government threatened to strip the official opposition NDP caucus of three Deputy Speaker roles, and six standing committee Vice-Chair roles, if we do not agree to unanimously vote for Nina Tangri in her election for the Speaker of the assembly...."

"You requested that the official opposition urge all NDP caucus members to vote in favour of Ms. Tangri as Speaker, and to join you in issuing a joint public statement in support of" her "before the vote is held. If those conditions were not met, you threatened to ignore 30 years of tradition and disregard the advice of the official opposition House leader on the appointment of three Deputy Speakers."

At the very minimum, the government House leader must make clear why this unprecedented new interpretation of standing order 6 is necessary and why a radical departure from the only procedure that has ever been followed in this place to appoint Deputy Chairs is warranted.

In light of what we contend is a misapplication of standing order 6, we are asking that you rule this motion out of order. More than 30 years of consistent application is not an accident or a coincidence. It is our position that the language of the standing order and the history of its application make clear its meaning and intent, and that departing from that interpretation and tradition could undermine public confidence in the independence of our presiding officers and the integrity of our legislative process. The onus rests on the government to justify this departure and to establish that the rule is, in fact, different from how it has been commonly understood and consistently applied since its inception.

1600

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader, I assume, wishes to speak to the point of order?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Look, at the outset, let me just say that I'm surprised that, yet again, we're dealing with a point of order, given the ruling that you made just last week on a similar point, though, of course, we are discussing a different motion today. Opposition members did raise their concerns about this a week ago and I'm sure that you took those issues raised into consideration before making your decision last week.

But, specifically in this case, the relevant standing orders are standing order 5 and 6. Neither standing order prohibits what I'm proposing in this motion. Standing order number 5 states, "At the commencement of the first session of a Parliament, or from time to time as may be required, a member shall be appointed by the House to be Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House."

Standing order 5(c) continues to state that "the House shall appoint three Deputy Chairs of the Committee of the Whole...." Neither standing order specifies restrictions on these appointments except that it may be made by the House.

Standing order 6 adds a single restriction, that "up to three of the five presiding officers of the House shall be chosen from recognized opposition parties." In the motion I have tabled, we are proposing one member of the NDP, a recognized opposition party. As you will note, Speaker, one satisfies the criteria of up to three. The term "up to three" can be restated as "not more than three." The language does not, however, set a minimum number of presiding officers which must be appointed from recognized opposition parties.

Standing order 6 also specifies that the recognized opposition appointments may be—may be—"on the advice of the House leader of" a recognized opposition party. In fact, the NDP House leader did recommend to me, in a letter dated July 15, 2022, that the member for Parkdale–High Park be appointed as a presiding officer, and you will note that that is what I have proposed in my motion. It is true I did not accept the other recommendations of the NDP House leader, but the standing orders imbue no obligation on me to do so.

Further, Speaker, I am only empowered to propose a motion to this House. I am not empowered to appoint members to these positions. It is the House which will make the final decision in this matter when the motion is put to a vote.

Speaker, I think that if you look to the origin of standing order 6 in the 1980s, you will find that the intent was to encourage cross-partisan representation in the presiding officers of the House, while preventing a situation, which would be possible in a Parliament with a minority government, where all positions could be held by opposition members. The motion I have put forward is in keeping with this principle, despite the fact it is not strictly required.

Mr. Speaker, to address the form of this motion, while we are not asking for unanimous consent, that is not unprecedented. There is no standing order which requires presiding officers to be appointed with unanimous consent

of the House, and we need only look to 2003, which was the most recent occasion that this House considered a substantive motion to appoint presiding officers with a normal course of debate.

Now, in fact, Speaker, you yourself were the subject of that motion, having been appointed First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole at that time. If you think back to 2003, you will recall that the reason this motion was put forward for debate rather than unanimous consent was because the NDP, who at the time had been reduced to just seven seats and had lost party status, were displeased that none of their members were being proposed as presiding officers. The situation is similar to today: The NDP have been reduced in size in a duly conducted provincial election, and my motion reflects that reduced size and better reflects the current proportionality of the House, as the NDP desired in 2003.

In 2003, the NDP didn't have much of a leg to stand on respecting appointments. The standing orders then, as they do now, did not prohibit independent members from being appointed as presiding officers, but also do not require it.

To resolve this tricky situation, the NDP came up with a bizarre argument at the time that, although it had never been done in the standing orders and the standing orders did not require it, section 28 of the Legislative Assembly Act, as it was worded then, required a secret-ballot election for Deputy Speaker, which was not fulfilled. The NDP's only resort was an unprecedented argument that the Speaker of this House could somehow be empowered to be an interpreter and arbiter of the statute, which we know is not the case, in the hopes that they might be successful in electing a member for a presiding officer if any secret ballot were part of the process.

First, I can assure the NDP that the language in the Legislative Assembly Act has since changed to reflect our long-standing process. But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, this is typical of the NDP: They didn't get the result they wanted at the ballot box, so they are trying to get the result by any means necessary. This is, unfortunately for the NDP, not how this place works. We have rules on this side of the House which we are following. We debate and we vote on matters before the House, and that is what we are doing with this motion. Now, if the NDP are displeased that fewer of their members will have legislative positions with additional salary, then they should take it up with the voters in the province, who chose to reduce the size of that caucus to what it is today.

In the case of this motion, Mr. Speaker, I put forward a recommendation to this House that, of the four vacant presiding officer positions, two be held by government members, one be held by an NDP member and one be held by an independent Liberal member, who represents a continued larger-than-usual group of independents in the House. We have proposed this format to respect proportionality. Looking to the percentages held by parties in this House, the NDP are presently at about 24%, the government is at about 67% and the Liberals at 7%. Applying these proportions to the presiding officer positions means about three for government members and about one for the

NDP, leaving one position for independent members. That is presumably closer to what the NDP wanted in 2003, when it benefited from them, but of course now they feel differently. Now they are seeking an entitlement to more positions with additional salary, and they seek to marginalize their closest opponents, the Liberals.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, standing order 1(c) does not apply. The relevant standing orders have a clear meaning, even if the NDP disagrees with that meaning. Further, related to 1(c), while the tradition had been in the last Parliament and in other Parliaments that the Deputy Chairs of the Committee of the Whole had been allotted to opposition parties, that is not a requirement of the standing orders. While 1(c) allows the Speaker to consider tradition, it does not allow the Speaker to place tradition and historic arrangements before the clarity in the standing orders. If the House wanted the positions of Deputy Chairs of the Committee of the Whole to be allocated exclusively to the official opposition or recognized opposition parties, they would have clearly stated that, which they did not.

Regarding standing orders 5 and 6, no language in them challenges the orderliness of the motion before the House, and that, first and foremost, should inform your ruling in this matter. That is simply the question that is before you today, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Are there any other members who wish to speak to the point of order?

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: Standing orders 5 and 6 are indeed crystal clear. To the extent that the member opposite spoke of some kind of analogy to the relationship of cabinet and the crown and accountability, this government supports the long parliamentary tradition of responsible government. That is not what this point of order is about, nor is it about discretion, nor is it about matters not provided for in the standing orders referencing 1(c). This is about the clear, unequivocal language of standing orders 5 and 6, further to standing order 4, all under part II, the presiding officers section.

Standing order 4 has been complied with. Your election was August 8, 2022. Now we have the proposed Deputy Speaker, and the proposed First, Second and Third Deputy Chairs of the Committee of the Whole by this motion. These are proposals for the House to vote on. This is a motion on notice. It is properly before this House to be considered by this House and voted on by each and every member of this House.

1610

The question, then, is the language, and the language, I submit, is crystal clear, so that you need not have resort to standing order 1(c) nor any analogy of a relationship between cabinet and crown, nor any issue of discretion. It's not about discretion; it's about the plain meaning. And we know that when one reads, from any perspective, the unambiguous language of standing order 6—"On the advice of the House leader of each of the recognized opposition parties in the House," full stop there—that conversation can't involve any member of an unrecognized party or independents. Then that advice is given to the government House leader. That has been done.

And then the most important language is crystal clear: “Up to three of the five presiding officers”—we have one. Mr. Speaker, you sit as the one. We have four still to be considered by this House. Up to three of the remaining four presiding officers of the House “shall be chosen from recognized opposition parties.” This creates a ceiling and at the same time it creates, only by any reasonable interpretation of it, a minimum. It means, in effect, that all three could be from recognized opposition parties, but as few as one could be from recognized opposition parties, and that would be compliant.

What has occurred here, unlike 2003, is that the proposal generously includes a member of an unrecognized party or one of the 10 independent members of this House. That is considered fair and reasonable. That is the basis of the motion, and that is a true respect for all members of this House for the fact that proportionally it roughly accepts that at least one member should come from an unrecognized party, and that is the nature of the proposal. So, all of that is clearly compliant with standing order 6, and all that remains is for the House to vote on it.

It’s important to note, as the government House leader already mentioned, that when you look back to the precedent of 2003, the Parliament at that time that was elected, like this Parliament and like every other Parliament, reflects the will of the citizens who sent each and every member here. We elect Parliaments, not governments. We have 124 elections in a general election. This motion reflects respect for both standing order 6, with the proposal for one of the remaining four to be from a recognized party, but it also reflects respect for the will of the people in terms of at least one from a group of the other 10 who were not elected as representatives of any recognized party.

On that basis, Mr. Speaker, I submit that the motion is in order and all that remains is for this House to vote upon it.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Are there any other members who wish to participate? Seeing none, I appreciate the member’s point of order and the responses by the two government members. I require a few minutes to consider the matter. I’m going to recess the House for 15 minutes.

The House recessed from 1614 to 1632.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On August 10, 2022, the government House leader filed notice of a substantive motion for the appointment of presiding officers, which is printed on today’s orders and notices paper as government notice of motion number 3. The official opposition chief whip, Mr. Vanthof, has raised a point of order relating to this motion.

After taking a few minutes to review the submissions of the government House leader and the member for Durham, Mr. McCarthy, together with prior research and consideration of the motion after it was placed on the order paper a few days ago, I am now prepared to provide a ruling on the point of order that was raised.

The motion, if adopted, would appoint four members to the presiding officer roles of Deputy Speaker and Chair of

the Committee of the Whole House, and First, Second and Third Deputy Chairs of the Committee of the Whole House. The appointment of these positions is governed by standing orders 5(a), 5(c) and 6, which read as follows:

“5(a) At the commencement of the first session of a Parliament, or from time to time as may be required, a member shall be appointed by the House to be Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House....

“(c) At the commencement of every Parliament, or from time to time as may be required, the House shall appoint three Deputy Chairs of the Committee of the Whole House, to be known respectively as the First, Second and Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House, any of whom shall, in order of precedence, whenever the Chair of the Committee of the Whole House is absent or otherwise unable to act, be entitled to exercise all the powers vested in the Chair of the Committee of the Whole House, including those powers as Deputy Speaker....

“6. On the advice of the House leader of each of the recognized opposition parties in the House given to the Government House leader, up to three of the five presiding officers of the House shall be chosen from recognized opposition parties.”

The motion before the House proposes the appointment of the following members to these positions, respectively: Donna Skelly, member for Flamborough–Glanbrook; Bhutla Karpoche, member for Parkdale–High Park; Patrice Barnes, member for Ajax; and Lucille Collard, member for Ottawa–Vanier.

In his point of order, the official opposition whip flagged the party affiliation of these presiding officer candidates as a potential violation of the rules and practices of this House. Ms. Skelly and Ms. Barnes both belong to the government caucus, Madame Collard is an independent member, and Ms. Karpoche is a member of the official opposition caucus. Mr. Vanthof noted that while the language of standing order 6 provides that up to three of the five presiding officers—a total that includes the Speaker—shall be chosen from recognized opposition parties, the long-standing practice of this House is that three of the five presiding officers are recognized opposition party members.

The current standing order 6 dates back to 1989, before which time there was no requirement for the appointment of members of recognized opposition parties as presiding officers, either procedurally or in practice. The 1989 standing orders provided for four presiding officers, up to two of which would be chosen from recognized opposition parties. The position of Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House was subsequently added to the standing orders, along with the provision that up to three of the five presiding officers shall be chosen from recognized opposition parties.

A review of the history of the appointment of presiding officers reveals that from 1989 to 2018, the House has appointed members of recognized opposition parties to the maximum allowable number of presiding officer positions. Between 1989 and 2008, where the standing orders

provided that up to two opposition members be appointed, the House appointed two. And from 2008 to 2018, when the standing orders provided for up to three opposition members to be appointed, the House appointed three.

This motion represents the first time that less than the maximum number of members from a recognized opposition party has been proposed to fill presiding officer roles, the first time that an independent member has been included in the motion and the first time that the Speaker has been asked to interpret this standing order.

As noted, since the inception of this standing order, the House has always appointed the maximum number of presiding officers from among members of recognized opposition parties, indicating an established practice. But while practice and precedent are often persuasive in determining the course of parliamentary procedure, they do not override the clear rules of the House when such rules are asserted in place of practice.

As noted in *Parliamentary Practice in British Columbia*, fifth edition, page 32, “When a question of procedure needs to be decided, the Speaker’s first resort is to the standing orders. An express rule or order adopted by the Legislative Assembly, whether standing, sessional or special, supersedes every mere practice or precedent.” A similar discussion along these lines is set out in *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, at pages 273 and 274.

The fact that standing order 6 uses the term “up to three” clearly suggests that fewer than three is both a contemplated scenario and one permitted by the standing order, in which case, if fewer than three of the five presiding officers are to be drawn from the recognized opposition party or parties, and if indeed the House is to appoint the full complement of five presiding officers, then the remaining number must come from other parts of the House. Again, it is clear that the standing order contemplates this scenario because it does not say “three of the five shall,” it says “up to three of the five shall.”

I therefore find that the motion is not out of order on the basis that its passage would result in fewer than three of five presiding officers being members of recognized opposition parties.

With respect to the fact that the motion provides for an independent member to be appointed as one of the presiding officers, I see nothing that prohibits it. The standing order is silent on this matter, suggesting that the House is entirely at liberty to appoint from its membership to these positions as it sees fit.

The opposition whip has asserted that standing order 6 provides the opposition House leader the right to designate members of the opposition to fulfill presiding officer roles. With respect, the right is effectively limited to the provision of the names of recommended candidates, not the right to require their appointment. Advice can guide and inform decisions but, as such, its acceptance is not mandatory.

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If the House, in its wisdom, proceeds with government notice of motion number 3, it is my ruling that it will be

acting within the authority of the standing orders, and I find this motion to be in order.

Further debate?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Speaker, thank you for your ruling, as I thanked you for your previous ruling as well. I am glad to hear that our standing orders will always precede over any traditions, as was mentioned earlier, which brings me to debate on the motion before us and the great Deputy Speakers that have been put forward for this motion. I want to take a little bit of time to tell the members—who may know their colleagues very well, but some may not know—about some of the great accolades and backgrounds of our members in this motion who are being nominated to be presiding officers and Deputy Speaker.

I wanted to start off with my great colleague the member from Flamborough–Glanbrook. It’s really a great story in terms of what she’s going to bring to the House, with her incredible experience and her 30-year career in broadcasting and in journalism. So I want to thank her, because she put her name on a ballot, she ran and now we have this incredibly talented elected member of this Legislature, who brings such great decorum and diplomacy with her experience and career in the broadcasting sector to this Legislature. We were lucky to have her re-elected for another four years to serve here.

This is a very fitting role for this member, in my opinion. Certainly I’ll leave it to the vote of the House to concur or not to concur, but you only had to tune in—I unfortunately didn’t have an opportunity to tune in. But as we tune in to CPAC or to the legislative channel for those who are watching at home today, you can see all our members here; for the member from Flamborough–Glanbrook, not only could you tune in to this channel to see her, but for many years you could tune into CHCH television to see much of her reporting on that station.

And it didn’t stop there. We talk about working with different leaders and different union leaders, and we saw that in the last election, when we got elected as a strong, stable, majority government, a lot of the support we received was from many private sector unions. But many of you may not know that our member from Flamborough–Glanbrook actually held a leadership role as a president of a local union employee bargaining unit. It tells you that we work across different leadership roles, and certainly her experience in that—being able to be at the table, doing a lot of negotiation and bargaining roles, and being able to put on a hat of diplomacy—will also serve her really well as a Deputy Speaker of this House. Really, I think that putting her name forward is a good choice.

But it doesn’t just end there, Speaker. She also stepped up to advocate before the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, known as the CRTC, and was there at the parliamentary committee and did that in her role—so again, great experience already on the legislative side at the federal level, to serve her to be a really great Deputy Speaker of this Legislature.

I had a great experience when, during the pandemic, we served on the standing committee on finance, where we

had back-to-back witness testimony. We sat long hours. It was very different. We also travelled together for a red tape reduction committee as well, and I got to see the member being able to, again, understand the rules and regulations that preside over committees, but also the valuable role that's going to play in serving this Legislature as a presiding officer.

In addition to that, I wanted to mark that back in March 2016, the member from Flamborough–Glanbrook was also elected to Hamilton city hall, and she took a great stand against some of the wasteful spending at city hall. Again, executing that great experience, she was able to work at a municipal level and bring that experience here to be able to preside over this Legislature.

We talk about representation in the Legislature, and it's great to see more women representation. As someone who is also a young female who got elected, it's nice to see other females represented in the House, and people of all different walks of life and all different experiences. It's no wonder why the member from Flamborough–Glanbrook was a recipient of the YWCA Woman of the Year in Politics Award, again showing her accolades and her participation in getting more people involved and what she has done to encourage more women in politics. So it would be wonderful to see her as a presiding officer to represent that particular demographic.

Speaker, we talk about cultures and bringing that experience to the Legislature as well. Well, the member from Flamborough–Glanbrook also served on the National Advisory Board for Canadian Culture. She served on the board of Banyan Community Services, a not-for-profit organization serving at-risk youth and people with disabilities. It really tells you that our member from Flamborough–Glanbrook is not just headstrong, but has a big heart as well. I think that will help with a lot of judgment and precision in her particular presiding officer role.

You just look at her reputation. I think many of us on the government side know the great reputation this member has, but for those who aren't aware, she's a consistent community champion, always out there at all events, championing her local causes, building employment, boosting the manufacturing sector, talking about shipbuilding and steel and, of course, all of the things that are going to help us grow our economy. This member is very much there, and if she does get a little bit of time, I hear—although I haven't seen her there, because I've yet to visit the riding of Flamborough–Glanbrook. But if you don't see her at a lot of events, I hear you could potentially see her at a local park with her dog, Louis. If he misses the member from Flamborough–Glanbrook, he knows where to tune in to see her, because she will be in the chair when you're not able to, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank her for agreeing to take on this particular role, and I want to thank her for all her years of service and many years of service to come.

Next, Speaker, we also have as part of this motion to be a presiding officer none other than the newly elected Patrice Barnes, for the riding of Ajax. Let me tell you, it's

incredible, the level of talent we have, and I'm very, very honoured and humbled to actually be able to serve amongst so many of my great colleagues.

Speaker, this member from Ajax, for more than a decade, worked in so many different not-for-profit sectors, whether it's helping manage events and helping with charitable causes or, for example, the different professional successes she has had and awards that she has been able to achieve by doing a lot of that not-for-profit help when it comes to managing events for those sectors.

In addition to that, she also has her experience, of course, when she represented parents on the Durham District School Board as a public school trustee. Again, that experience will be, I think, very beneficial to all members and make her a very good mediator and presider of the House, so I want to thank her again for putting her name forward. I know that that particular position as a trustee she held for nearly a decade, first elected in 2014, so it really shows you the integrity of the member. A lot of people really appreciated her work, because they put their trust in her year after year after year, so thank you for that.

In that work that she had done, she played a really integral role in the creation of what were called innovative school programs, like the Cypher program for Black boys, the Empower Her conference for Black girls and the first getting-ready-for-kindergarten program for Black students, which really builds on that diversity and culture that we really want to bring to this Legislature, as we represent all Ontarians. Again, I think many young girls and young boys from these groups will be so proud to see you in that chair as well, and that will really inspire the next generation to take on these roles, not only as elected officials, but going above and beyond that to serve, whether it's as Speaker or Deputy Speaker or any other role that they choose in this Legislature.

1650

She's also a director with the Ontario Public School Boards' Association and was a member of the advisory group that authored the Ontario Black Youth Action Plan, and she contributed to a policy paper called Education Post-COVID as part of the Ontario Education Partnership Roundtable. Again, Speaker, this member is not afraid of hard work. So if we give her a few more roles in addition to her primary role, which is, of course, representing the constituents of Ajax, and then her other role as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education, but she'll also take on this role. We can see that she's not afraid of hard work and wearing multiple hats and doing a little multi-tasking, which is wonderful.

I wanted to thank her for that and I'm looking forward to, if the Legislature agrees and we are able to put the question to a vote, we'll be able to see the member there in the chair.

That brings me to the last two presiding officers, Speaker. We have the member from Parkdale–High Park. She's really setting history here because, for the last four years, she not only set history by being the first person of Tibetan heritage to be elected for public office in all of North America, but now, in this additional role that we are

putting forward in this motion, she'll also be the first person of Tibetan heritage to be a presiding officer. Again, she's making history for that community and bringing that great diversity and culture to this Legislature.

It's interesting: As we've gone through this pandemic—some members might know this; some may not—but she's an epidemiologist by training, so it's very fitting, given what we've gone through in the last few years. She has done a lot of public health research focusing on the social determinants of health. And given her research and her work—we had one of the members today talk about how the scientific method helps them be a better legislator here—it's also going to be a great skill set she'll have to be a presiding officer in this House. I'm really looking forward to that.

She's been recognized for much of her work as well. I think at one point she also received a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for her work. And she's certainly recognized in various awards, whether it's Toronto's Best MPP by *Now Magazine* or various other accolades as well, so I'm really looking forward to her work in that capacity.

Last, but not least, and you try to save the best for last, we have the member from Ottawa–Vanier as well. I think this is what's so important about this motion, Speaker, that we have representatives from all different parties, all different walks of life, bringing all different kinds of experiences, and we get to share in that pride in this Legislature. The member from Ottawa–Vanier comes with a law degree, which should be perfect for being a presiding officer. She graduated from my alma mater as well, the University of Ottawa, although I graduated a little bit later. She graduated in 1999; I was somewhere in the 2000s—not to age myself. Pursuing a great career in law and public service really puts her on good footing to be a presiding officer. I want to thank her for the work that she will do, if we all agree to support this motion.

We talk about the role of a presiding officer being able to hear each side and make sure that rules are being abided, standing orders—Speaker, which I know you really relish—are being met. I think her experience, of course, being in international trade and doing those negotiations at the NAFTA Secretariat, administering various laws of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, really is good experience for her in terms of mediation and some of the things she may have to deal with in this Legislature. So, again, I want to thank her.

Speaker, I did want to begin my speech by also letting you know that I am going to be sharing my time with the member from Durham, someone who also, like the member from Ottawa–Vanier, shares a background in the legal world, and is becoming very passionate about standing orders and will very shortly become an expert that we can all turn to.

But I want to thank you again, Speaker, for your ruling today. I think it really shows what democracy stands for, what the definition of democracy is—the fact that we are going to have, potentially with this motion here, voices from all different parties represented in the Speaker's chair, when you're not able, Speaker, of course, as a presiding officer.

So, with that, Speaker, I am going to share my time with the member from Durham.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member from Durham.

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague the member from Barrie–Innisfil.

This motion is fair, inclusive and respectful of parliamentary democracy. It's ironic when we look back to 2003, when, as a result of the general election, the NDP, now the official opposition, was reduced to non-party status and they stood up against the Liberal government of the day and sought some kind of recognition to have one of their own be a presiding officer. They failed to convince the government and that motion resulted in what it resulted in. And we look at that as a precedent of this House and also of electoral and political realities. But, when we look at it, it's important to look at it in both contexts: politically and in terms of parliamentary tradition.

In my respectful submission to this House, it was unfortunate that the NDP were rebuked in their effort to be included in having one of their own as a presiding officer, but it was not to be. That is why this motion is fairer and more inclusive. We have four women proposed—members of this House from very different backgrounds—as presiding officers. And we have, as a result, what I talked about in my initial speech in reply to the speech from the throne, Mr. Speaker: this idea that we—and it's not just the idea; it's the ideal. It is what parliamentary democracy is all about. It is why I said in the submission I made on the point of order that we, the citizenry, elect Parliament, not government. We're all equal in this House, and we come together as equals to debate respectfully and vote on matters.

So why did the previous Liberal government in 2003 not do what this government is proposing by this motion today? I respectfully submit that, having received a majority government, they felt they could just run the show and not include anyone who wasn't on the government side. That's not how this government behaves. This government listens to the citizenry; it does listen to members opposite. In fact, the government House leader confirmed and advised that, in accordance with standing order 6, he took advice from his counterpart in the recognized party's government House leader's position and submission and, of course, respected the standing orders in the process.

So, the proposal is to have the most appropriate returning member from the recognized party, elected for the first time in 2018 and now returning as a re-elected member—the member for Parkdale–High Park, an excellent choice, I respectfully submit—in being one of the recommended presiding officers in this motion. That is not only an excellent idea on its merits, but it's also respectful of the standing orders that are applicable here and it's also in accordance with at least an aspect of the advice given by the recognized party's government House leader to the government House leader.

Then we have an independent Liberal, who, in terms of her background and also her service in this House

already—she was a member of the previous term, having been elected in the by-election of 2020. So we have some experience there, as well, and different skill sets. And then we have, of course, the member for Flamborough—Glanbrook—I'm going to need some glasses here when these riding names change; mine is pretty simple, Mr. Speaker, just Durham. Although some tease me to say, “You're not the member for the region of Durham, you're just the member for the riding of Durham,” so I have great members elsewhere in Durham, like another proposed member who's part of this motion—who will, no doubt, like the member for Flamborough—Glanbrook, perform admirably as a presiding officer in this House.

So this is truly a fair and inclusive motion that is respectful of parliamentary democracy, because we have different representatives from this House—on all sides of the House, we could say, or both sides of the House. It is an important parliamentary precedent, I submit, that has been set by the motion that proposes one of the members not to be—let's face it, the government House leader, in this motion, could have proposed that the fourth and final member to be a presiding officer could come from the government benches. Standing order 6 would have permitted that, but that was not and is not what the government House leader is proposing or what those of us who plan to support this motion believe in, because we do believe in the importance of each and every member of this House, because we do believe in the importance of members of this House who are not on the government benches or are not a member of a recognized party. That's what is behind this motion.

1700

Make no mistake about it; have no doubt about it: The reality is that the Speaker does leave the chair. There is our proposed Deputy Speaker, who will no doubt perform admirably, excellently and fairly in replacing the Speaker from time to time. But the importance of these three Deputy Chairs, the First, Second and Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House, and how important their role is—what better way to be fair and respect the integrity of this House, to respect the role of each and every member, whether in a recognized party or not, than to be inclusive, as this motion allows for, and to, perhaps for the first time, do something unprecedented?

Not every parliamentary precedent or tradition is necessarily something that should be followed forever and slavishly. Rather, consider the standing orders, as was done here, and consider parliamentary precedent, but consider that greatest of parliamentary traditions: the right to be heard, the right to engage in thoughtful debate. What better way to reflect that than by being inclusive, even of unrecognized party members, as this motion does?

When one considers those of us who are new to this House and what we've seen from the outside, there's no question: There's going to be emotion that fuels debate. But the presiding officers will ensure fair rulings and decorum, and all of us must participate in that.

It's not unlike judicial appointments. Why do we have—both at the federal and provincial level, for many,

many years now—judicial advisory committees? Because we want to make sure that the Minister of Justice federally and the Attorney General provincially receive recommendations from a committee that receives input from the general community and the legal profession, and in some cases interviews applicants. We want to ensure that the judiciary reflects the population that it serves. If there's a perception that it does not, then we have failed in the appointment process.

So, by ensuring and inviting applications to the bench in the judicial branch of government, federally and provincially, from a wide spectrum of members of society—and this also applies to justices of the peace, who do not necessarily have to be lawyers. Maybe that's a good thing—not “maybe”; it is a great thing, the tradition of the lay bench for justices of the peace. Whether it's justices of the peace or judges of the Ontario court or the Superior Court of Justice or the Court of Appeal, the idea is that the bench should reflect the population it serves. It's another branch of government, but it is public service.

And so, to the extent that presiding officers, when they occupy the chair of the Speaker, whether it be the Deputy Speaker or one of the First, Second or Third Deputy Chairs of the Committee of the Whole House, as these four proposed presiding officers will be—the fact that four out of five don't come from the benches of the governing party instills, in my respectful submission to this House, greater confidence in the presiding Chair position. What we then have here is the Speaker, who was duly elected by secret ballot on August 8, and then of the remaining four, only two are from the government benches when three of those four could have been, making it four out of five.

As is the case with the other branch of government, the judicial branch, who we select, who we appoint and how we appoint them is extremely important to society having confidence in the objectivity and fairness of the judicial process. As we lawyers say before the courts—and I know that the Minister of Indigenous Affairs earlier today remarked, “I then became a lawyer; don't hold that against me.” But as we lawyers say—and it's true, I think, in terms of how we operate in this House, because it's very much akin to a court—it's not only that justice must be done, it must be seen to be done. How we appoint judges and the fact that judges are the face of the society that they make rulings on or rulings for, that they serve, it is very, very important that it be seen to be done fairly, broadly, in a way that's inclusive and that is a reflection of the society that that branch of government serves. That's what this motion does.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, it may well be the first time, as your ruling suggests, that this actually has occurred. In that sense, it's in the history of this place a historic motion that is to be considered, which I would urge all members to support because of the thoughtfulness that went into it, because of its fairness, because of its inclusivity and because it really is unprecedented—unprecedented in a positive way.

Much of what we consider when we decide how we should be governed and debate about how we should be

governed is about perception. When we see the rotation that will occur if this motion is passed and these four presiding officers are appointed to sit in the chair in the place of the Speaker, when we see that and when those who visit this assembly in the galleries see it and when those who view it on the parliamentary television channel see it, perception is a very, very important aspect of what we do here.

How we behave, who presides, much like the courts, that is essentially what this motion is about and that's why I'm proud to support it, not just because of the quality of the four proposed presiding officers, which has been detailed by my colleague for Barrie–Innisfil; not just because of the richness and diversity that each one of them can bring to their role, from the proposed Deputy Speaker through to each of the three Deputy Chairs of the Committee of the Whole House—and they do bring a distinct, rich, diverse approach to the role—not only because of that, but because of the fact that from a partisan perspective it's inclusive, and from every other perspective it's inclusive.

We will all be seen to be fairer and better in terms of who we decide or who we may decide to preside over us by adopting this motion. It's progressive, it's thoughtful, it's the right thing to do in 2022. Mr. Speaker, I urge unanimous adoption of this motion to appoint these four presiding officers.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to stand in this House, and today to debate motion 3 regarding the appointment of presiding officers and the appointment of many members to committees.

First of all, I would like to thank you for your thoughtful ruling. That's why you were elected, Speaker: for your thoughtfulness. And I would like to—I listened very intently to the member from Barrie–Innisfil and the member from Durham. One phrase that the member for Durham said is that the choices come from a wide spectrum of society. I agree with that. But all the Speaker candidates who were proposed came from a wide spectrum of society. Actually, one of the great things about this House is that we come from a wide spectrum of society. I've said that here many times. In the high school year-book, I wasn't the one most likely to be an MPP. I've never hid the fact of that. We come from a wide spectrum of society.

1710

He also said that perception is very important. But perception also has to equal reality, and perception doesn't quite equal reality. We can't deny—first, I'd like to back up. This isn't about the people in the House. I've been here awhile, and each of us has unique qualities that no one else has. I have come to respect that, come to enjoy that. It's one of the great things about this House: Each of us, every one of us here, is here for a reason. So this isn't about individual people, not at all. I respect each one.

Now, whether it's perception or reality, the fact is that we were told, on this side, by the government House leader that if we didn't do what he suggested, there would be

changes in how Deputy Speakers would be chosen, and that was our risk. Do I know that that was the case when this was done? No. But we do know that the threat was made. That's reality: That threat was made. Is that threat why that tradition of the last 30 years was changed?

I agree with the member for Durham that not all traditions are good; some traditions need to change. This government has changed a few things in the standing orders that I agree with. We are not opposed to all change. The question-and-answer period is much better than the four members' statements and then a member's statement from the first speech—a good change. But it hasn't really been demonstrated that this is a good change to the tradition, because all the people who were nominated or who were given on the advice of the opposition were as diverse, as wide a spectrum of society, as the ones the government decided to take. The threat was a reality. Whether or not this is the result of the threat is up to people to decide.

There's another part of this motion, where opposition members are put on committees not by the recommendation of the opposition but by the recommendation of the government, of the government House leader. You won the election. You have the right to put forward your agenda. There's not a problem with that. That's how our system—I respect our system. But especially in a government that has a large majority, you should also be careful to make sure that the opposition has the tools to help you, because holding you to account is—perhaps you might not like it, but it's helping you. It's certainly helping the people of Ontario.

When the opposition puts forward suggestions, which have in previous years always been respected, on who we think would be the best people for committees, that's based on our knowledge of our people. And yes, we are going to put forward the people who are going to give you the hardest run for your money in committee, because that's better for the people of Ontario, because you need that. You need to be held accountable. But when the government says, “Well, the member of the opposition that the opposition has suggested for a committee like public accounts, we don't like that member, because she asks some tough questions, so we'll put her somewhere else,” that's a travesty.

I'm going to be upfront. The government House leader and I don't always get along. Could you imagine if the opposition had the ability to choose the government House leader? It wouldn't be the current one. He's good at his job. I respect him. I don't always like what he says, but I respect him. But why does this government lack the confidence to actually let the opposition put the right people in the right place, at least in our opinion, to hold you to account? Instead—and this has never been done before—you take members and move them to different committees from where we suggest. Why? A government with such a majority—why do you have to go to that length to protect yourself from any criticism at all?

I'll give you an example. Like I said at the start, every member here has unique skills, but we all have different

ones. I was once the finance critic for the opposition, and now our finance critic is the member for Waterloo. Her skill set, as far as finance critic, is much better than mine; I don't mind admitting that. That's why we put her in public accounts: because, in her own words, that's where you follow the money. That's an oversight committee, a powerful committee. The government chooses to take her out. You take one of the best people here on finances and you decide—and I don't think the government House leader decides that; probably the Premier's office decided to take her out. That's reality.

You're so proud of voting for this motion, but the fact is that you've got a big majority again, and you still have to try—this might be unparliamentary—to stack the deck in committees. I withdraw that, if it is. But when we put forward members and your government decides to change them away, it's like if this was hockey: You've won the championship, but for the next season, you're also going to get to pick the lines for the opposing team. How many people would have faith in that league? Not very many, very few, eventually none. That's what you're doing here, and for the life of me, I don't understand why, unless it is part of the, "Well, let's stick it to 'em." I don't know. I can't think of another good reason why you would.

Why don't you want the best people from our side in the places that we—like I said, we're going to put in the best people to give you the hardest time, but that's the best for the people of Ontario. Why? For the life of us, we don't understand what you're doing here. We fully agree with and respect the Speaker's decision.

When I came here and we did the—maybe that's changed; it was 10 years ago. They give you the two-day course on what you need to do as a parliamentarian. I've got to admit, if you want me to calve a cow or grow a crop, I'm an expert in that; parliamentarian is not my thing.

1720

I never had an office before this. I like telling funny stories, so to show you how little I understood about Parliament: In the first office I ever had, there was this little remote control on the desk. I'm thinking, "I don't see a garage door here anywhere." I pushed it. Nothing happened. I pushed it three or four more times, and all of a sudden, a bunch of security people came in, because that was the hazard button. That's how much I knew about this place. But I trusted the system, and when they explained the standing orders, the standing orders were the rule book to make sure stuff was fair. And people didn't just respect what was exactly written; they also respected the intent. What you're doing here and what you're doing for subsequent governments as well—I might not be here, and you might not be here; you're not always going to be on that side—what you're doing is you're weaponizing the standing orders, and especially the example—

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order: the member for Barrie–Innisfil.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I want to reference section 24(i) of the standing orders. Speaker, in your wisdom—on my side, I've been hearing words like "take her out," "stick it

to them," and just now a lot of imputing of motive, which is section (i): "imputes false or unavowed motives to another member." So I just wanted to—in your wisdom, Speaker, if you can make a suggestion on that.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): It is correct that the standing orders prohibit the imputing of motive.

I recognize the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane to continue.

Mr. John Vanthof: I am not trying to impugn motive, but it certainly could be argued that moving members from one committee to another, moving opposition members who try to hold the government to account from one committee to the other against the wishes of the opposition is certainly not the intent of the standing orders.

Just because you have the power to do something doesn't mean you should. In truth, in our opinion, in my opinion, it shows a lack of confidence. You have a mandate. You have the agenda, and you should be wanting to hold it up to as much criticism as possible so that the legislation you put forward stands the test of time and so that people across the province are well served by it. That's the role of the opposition, and yet you seem to be trying to minimize that role—while some day you will be opposition yourself, because of the fact that we have elections and that governments sometimes change. But, again, why?

We are voting against this motion because of that fact. There's no need to do what you're doing, no need at all.

I would like to share my time with the member from Toronto–St. Paul's.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll recognize the member for Toronto–St. Paul's.

Ms. Jill Andrew: I'd like to first start by thanking the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane. Thank you, John, for a passionate response to government motion number 3.

I want to start by saying congratulations to the Speaker again for your appointment. As a fairly new MPP starting in my second term—I'm a couple of months in—I have watched you try to manage this House as best you can, with decorum. You have called me out for heckling a time or two or 10, like many other members in the House. But I do want to say congratulations to you. I do feel that, for the most part, you have fairly treated every single member in this House, recognizing that things can get intense, recognizing that this is a very partisan space, but we are all here trying to do the best we can. I just wanted to say that.

A little while ago, I was called by our interim leader, the member for Toronto–Danforth, and I was told that I was being put forth as one of the names to be appointed for Deputy Speaker. To say I was elated would be an understatement. I was very excited. I called my mother right away. She was very proud, as she has been proud of me throughout my time in this House as the first Black queer person elected to the Legislature.

And then I thought about it and I thought about it. I was supposed to get back to the member from Toronto–Danforth in a day, but it wasn't an immediate yes, because I understood the gravity of the role, and while I was

excited, as any one of us would be, I also wanted to do the deep reflective work of asking myself if I could really do this, if I could memorize every single name and every single riding and every single title but, more importantly, if I would be able to sit in that chair and listen objectively and listen with respect to each member, recognizing that they had come here from their own ridings to do the best job that they could for the people who elected them, no matter how small the percentage or how high the percentage.

I then called my friend and colleague Jen French, the MPP for Oshawa, who I had also watched with great admiration in this role during the term. The MPP for Oshawa—and now I'm going to get emotional just thinking about the conversation we had—was a real mentor to me when I came here in 2018. I was nervous. I was terrified and wanting to do the best job I could for my community of Toronto—St. Paul's and, frankly, for the communities that I exist within and represent across the province. We had an about an hour-and-a-half conversation about the pitfalls, the highlights, the opportunities of sitting in the chair, trying to uphold democracy, trying to do the best job we can to keep the conversation going.

I want to make it clear: The conversation is actually not so much about what we say as individual members; the conversation, at least for this side, the official opposition, has always been about bringing the voices of our constituents into the Legislature, whether that's here in the chamber, whether that's through putting forth amendments that, frankly, with this Conservative government, are rarely ever listened to. We don't come here to play games. It's not a sport. We don't like to argue. We come here to represent our communities, and in hopes that when we put forth solutions that are humane, that are rooted in an anti-oppressive framework, that recognize certain human rights like housing, like access to clean drinking water, like access to a livable wage—the basics, literally the basics—that the government would respect those and respond to them in a timely fashion. That hasn't been the case.

So the potential of sitting on that chair and sometimes having to call out my own members for heckling was something I had to think about. Would I be objective? And then I went back to my days as a teacher, as a CYW, as a prof, as a TA, as a friend, when sometimes you hear something that hurts or you are told something that you may not agree with, but hey, if they've said it without being disrespectful, you've got to at least appreciate their point of view.

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And after about seven days of thinking it through, I said yes. I said yes not because it would have made me the first Black woman to sit on the chair, after the very esteemed and hard-working Alvin Curling, but I said yes because I also reflected on what it would mean to sit in that chair as not only a Black woman, as a queer woman, as a fat woman, quite frankly.

I actually had this conversation. I said to a friend of mine, "I hate chairs with arms. They aren't the most

inclusive. So I better be able to sit in that chair." And I had conversations with the interim leader about even the uniform. I said, "Is it going to be made in a way that really takes into consideration my voluptuous hips?" I want to be able to sit in that chair and not only shepherd and support the work that we're doing in the House, but do it in style. And I did want to know I could wear shoes that had a little pop of colour and maybe a mask or two that had a little bit of fancy on it for St. Paul's. So it was an exciting moment.

I want to say that the fact that we will not get that opportunity, that I will not get that opportunity, that Jen French—sorry, the MPP for Oshawa—will not get that opportunity, is truly disheartening. Because not only does it laugh in the face of 150 years of tradition—because as far as I understood and my interim leader explained to me and other Deputy Speakers explained to me, it is the official opposition that puts forth and advises the government on the three Deputy Speaker spots. So I couldn't help but wonder, was this personal, quite frankly? Was there a level of personal to this? Because it made no sense to erase a very—

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: Mr. Speaker, I really hesitate to interrupt, but—

Interjections.

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: A point of order, if I may.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the member for Durham.

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: It's standing order 25, already cited by the member for Barrie—Innisfil with respect to the previous speaker. We once again have imputing of motives, and in my respectful submission, that's just not right, and the member needs to be called to order on it.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): It's absolutely correct that the standing orders prohibit imputing of motive, and I will ask all members to reflect upon that and ensure that they don't in the context of their comments.

Member for Toronto—St. Paul's.

Ms. Jill Andrew: Thank you, Speaker. It is not my intent to impute motive. However, as I had said to a reporter who interviewed me—they were also very excited to hear the news. What did they say? "The NDP, as the only recognized opposition party in the Legislature, is required to advise the government on the appointment of three Deputy Speakers."

What did I say here? I said, "'This is an opportunity for me to help create a safe(r) space in the Legislature for all MPPs. As Deputy Speaker, I am tasked with taking an even-handed approach to enforcing rules and maintaining order as MPPs conduct the business of debate, inside the chambers,' she added.

"'As the first queer Black person elected to the Legislative Assembly in Ontario and in any Legislature across Canada, I've seen my share of inappropriate behaviour in the chamber, including direct attacks against me and others who are disproportionately women, Black, Indigenous and racialized by other government members,' said Andrew.

"'Sitting in the chair as Deputy Speaker will be an opportunity for me to help create the best possible physical

and mental space for MPPs to do their best work, representing our communities as meaningfully as we can, without the fear of oppressive, insulting, bullying, sexist, or racially motivated attacks rearing their ugly heads.”

I share that to say this: I am human, Speaker. So when the government, again, flies in the face of parliamentary tradition of over 150 years and magically says, without saying it, that there's something potentially wrong, I mean, it has to only be with me. Because the member from Oshawa has done an exemplary job, we all know that in the House, despite party lines. And we've also seen the member for Parkdale–High Park, who hasn't been Deputy Speaker yet, but in my opinion is one of the best MPPs Ontario has had in this Legislature since 2018 when she was elected, and the first Tibetan member, if I'm not mistaken.

When we see the game—I should not say the game—the goal or the project of the government being to say yes to one racialized woman who happens to be the member from Parkdale–High Park, no to someone who has proven in spades that they can do this job 1,000% and has experience, but says no to me, the person who has also been a member here since—

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order: the member for Barrie–Innisfil.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Sorry, I'm just reminding the member about section 25(i) one more time, that there's an implied no in terms of the motive behind our motion. The motion certainly doesn't apply a no to certain members; it's just nominating particular members.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Toronto–St. Paul's can continue.

Ms. Jill Andrew: And to those who are watching, it is not lost on me that a fellow sister in the House, a woman-identified MPP, is the person who is suggesting that I am somehow imputing motive in my comments when I'm simply speaking my mind. It would be nice to think in the 21st century that feminism, sisterhood would come with some cachet. It's sad to see that some have discredited or disregarded its value.

Back to what I was saying, Speaker. I want to make it clear that I am very, very happy and proud of the three members in the House who have, I assume, been put forth now by the government to be Deputy Speaker. I am exceptionally proud of our member from Parkdale–High Park. I don't know well the member from the independent party—and, I mean, this is a really lucky draw for that member, considering 150 years of tradition and that it's never been an independent person per se, necessarily sitting in the chair. But I am most proud, ironically—I'm not imputing motive here, but I'm just saying if there was some sort of “we dislike Jill” campaign here, ironically, it demonstrates how little the government knows me and, frankly, demonstrates a very limited understanding of systemic racism and of the histories of oppression.

I am most happy for yourself, the member from Ajax, because at the end of the day there will be a Black woman sitting in that chair to let every little Black girl in Ontario

know that it can be them, too, regardless of political lines. For that, I am personally happy. I'm very happy.

Before I got into office, I met with MPPs who looked just like me: some of them were from the Liberal Party; some of them were PCs who hadn't been elected yet, but were card-carrying Conservatives; some were NDP and some were Green supporters. I've always made it clear in this House, before I bled orange, I bled Black. I am Black. There's nothing that's going to change about that, whether I'm in politics or not, right?

This is our calling. This is our vocation. This is an extreme honour to work as an MPP. But we should never be so egotistical to have this role become who we are. So I can extend my joy and congratulations to the other member. What I don't appreciate is the government, the House leader, the Premier thinking that two—or one Black person on the chair is too much. We're not interchangeable, Speaker. Black people are not interchangeable. We're not interchangeable. We could have both done the role. We're not interchangeable.

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The sad thing about that is that this evokes one of the oldest tricks—and I challenge anyone to research it for themselves. I understand that we all have our own scholarly interests; mine happened to be sociology, education, anti-racism, EDI. But I ask anyone who thinks I'm making it up to do their own research. As to not suggest motive, the practice of pitting one Black person against the other—oh, man, it's as old as the days going all the way back to slavery, and I would like to think that this government was above that.

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order?

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: This is imputing false or unavowed motives to another member of this House. That is completely improper, and it's sad and it's wrong. I ask that the member be directed accordingly.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Again, I will remind all members, including the member for Toronto–St. Paul's, that the standing orders specifically prohibit imputing motive.

The member has the floor.

Ms. Jill Andrew: Thank you, Speaker.

To the member who thought that me mentioning slavery was somehow imputing motive: I was simply using that example to demonstrate that when anyone—not the government; anyone—creates a climate that is contentious and that could cause historically marginalized and underrepresented members of society, in places like these—it is not the best practice of equity. It's not the best practice of inclusion, it's not the best practice of celebrating diversity and it certainly doesn't extend best practices of democracy. That's all I'm trying to say.

I would say to every member in this House who might be Black, or might be racialized or may be Indigenous-identified or all of the above, or 2SLGBTQIA+: Yes, we are all members of different parties, and yes, things can get pretty hot in here, pretty contested, but we should never, ever allow any of our parties—and I'm saying this

message even to my own party—to pit those of us who are so minuscule and small in our percentage of representation here to begin with against one another.

I would hope that all of us here who are marginalized or from marginalized communities—I'm not really a fan of that word, but that's the word, so I'll put it out there—will be able to see through the smoke and mirrors, and recognize when poli-tricks are being played and when the real business of advancing democracy is happening, especially the member from Brampton Centre, the member from Ajax and the member from Scarborough Centre, who I knew of back in my time at Canada's largest school board. Whenever we—and I'm saying “we” this time, because I've taken off the partisan hat; I'm talking to us as Black legislators—are given opportunities by our party to do additional work, to help the business of democracy flow, we must always be sure to ask ourselves the purpose of that work, the goal of that work, because none of us in here deserve to be used as pawns.

In my opinion, sir, if this appointment of the member from Ajax is to signal a celebration of firsts, a celebration of a hard-working member—I don't know the member from Adam, but I'm sure you're very hard-working—then I certainly hope that this is also a turning page for the government, where they might finally listen to things like implementing a provincial anti-racism strategy, maybe appointing a minister responsible for anti-racism, maybe introducing mandatory anti-oppression and anti-bias training for all public employees in the Legislature, maybe actually doing the work to dismantle white supremacy across our province, as opposed to, as the Speaker may remember, photos popping up with our Premier and Faith Goldy and Charles McVety and Tom, Dick and Harry, people that—I don't know about you—I wouldn't invite to my dinner table. All that to say, this should be a House for simply doing the business of democracy. It should be a House where, yes, we scream and heckle when we can or want to, and then the Speaker calls us out. But at the end of the day, we should be able to look ourselves in the mirror afterwards and be okay with the reflection we see reflecting back.

I have a message to the House leader, through you, Speaker. This is a House leader whose own family members have emailed me in previous years to tell me how to and not to speak about racism in this House. So it is very difficult to not see some problematic nature in what has happened in this parliamentary session, so early on, with regard to the appointment of Deputy Speakers.

But I will continue to work hard for the people of Toronto—St. Paul's, who put me here. I will continue to be a representative—a proud one, a kind one, an approachable one—to all folks from diverse communities who call and email and stop me on the train and the bus to say thank you.

I would love to share some of my time as well with my member from Oshawa.

Thank you, Speaker, for having this chance to say some of what I'd like to say. I'm sure I'll have opportunities to say much more elsewhere.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll recognize the member for Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Thank you very much—
Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm sorry about the confusion. I recognize the member for Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Thank you, Speaker. I had a sneaking suspicion we would get there, ultimately. Having served for four years in that chair, I've learned to listen very carefully to the small asides.

I'm taking a second opportunity to speak on this topic, but this is to the specific motion, which, as we've all discussed in this room, is about what we colloquially call Deputy Speakers. Really, there's only Deputy Speaker. The member for Flamborough—Glanbrook will be the Deputy Speaker—and if she isn't aware yet, I believe the suit has longer tails. It's a slightly different role. But the other three are Deputy Chairs of the Committee of the Whole House.

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It was my esteemed privilege to serve and my comments from the other day stand, in terms of my personal feelings on that, but I wanted to add a little bit more today on the heels of the discussion that we've had. It is very interesting to hear the—I won't say “word salad” because I think that sounds rude—a lot of talk, a lot of words about, yes, democracy, which we always want to talk about, but also tradition and integrity. I will be called out, I'm sure, for imputing motive. I will not do that. I will not impute motive, but I will say that we will all have the opportunity to perceive things in this House and those feelings have merit. Those feelings have value, and they're going to differ. That's part of the fun. That's part of the pain. That's part of just being here as members, that we come to this space from different backgrounds and different experiences, different understandings and education. The member from Durham is most assuredly coming from a legal and law background, as he has shared with us, and I would have known that even if he hadn't told us because he uses words like “submit” in a sentence. Speaker, I will submit that when we're talking about true respect for all members of this House, it also has to be perceived respect—justice being done and that justice must be seen to be done.

I perceive that there is a spirit of—is “vindictiveness” the word? That is how I perceive things. I perceive that there could be motivations when it came to that threat that we understood had been levied were we not to support someone for Speaker. We didn't support someone for Speaker. There are members on the government benches who also slipped that shock collar and voted their own conscience, however they decided to come to that. And justice is being served, or so I've read in the paper in terms of whether that's punishment or what have you. We're all wearing a little bit of that, it would seem.

Anyway, all that to be said, it's disappointing that we're starting out on this foot. We do want this Legislature to be a positive work environment. It's going to often be contentious, and I would say necessarily so; we're debating

important issues. The members who have been appointed are fortunate. It is a special, special opportunity to serve in that chair, and I applaud them. We will all do our best to do as we're told when each and every one of them is in that chair, as challenging as that might be from time to time, when the spirit moves us.

I would say that, back to the point of order—and I appreciate your ruling—it was an interesting conversation to have. It was interesting to hear the government's side. You can't argue that the language helped you to land where you landed—"up to three members"—all of those things. But the tradition of this space, the last 30 years, have always driven that. Which is why it was a threat that was levied, I would guess, because it has always been done. But it can be taken away, and it was—whatever the motives. I can't impute them; I can just talk about the outcome.

We're not sure on what grounds the government is breaking with that long-standing tradition to veto the opposition choices. We'll see this over and over, I have every faith, for the next four years, that we will not always know why. And we can't talk about the why. I don't know why. You don't know why. We can only guess. We gave advice, as the opposition, on committees, on all of the things, and we'll probably do that again. It makes me wonder why we would bother, if it can be ignored.

I'm not sure, and I'll ask the member from Durham for—I know we can't have a back-and-forth—advice in the legal context. If you were having the—what am I trying to say? The advice to dissolve this space in this place: Well, what if you didn't take the advice? Doesn't it have a legal meaning, the advice of the opposition shall?

Anyway, I guess we're lucky that the government House leader didn't choose—well, I guess we get along with everyone on our benches. But the government House leader going forward—not this one, the next one or whomever—it's an interesting precedent that we have set, that you have set, that this House has set, that next time it could be anyone, that it doesn't have to take the advice. It could be a challenging member. You can mix up all sorts of things.

Back to what the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane had said, we would like to be able to do a wicked awesome job on committee. We would like to be able to hold this government to account in many ways. Some of our members have put up their hand and said, "I have a strength in this area, and I would like to contribute on behalf of the people in my communities, but also to strengthen the committee process, to strengthen this House." It is disappointing that we're not allowed to do that, that for whatever reason, that is not going to be something that will be heeded. That isn't true respect for all members of this House.

I listened. It was interesting, actually, to hear the government side of things, and I won't actually argue those points because they're head-nodders, right? The member

from Durham was talking about inclusion, and if I thought that that's what this was about, then okay, inclusion.

It is changing a tradition. It wasn't a precedent because today was the precedent, today was the ruling, but it was a tradition.

Anyway, justice must be done. Justice must be seen to be done. Punitive justice is also a thing, and I don't know if that's what this was about, but we don't have an answer as to on what grounds the government is breaking with the tradition to veto the opposition choices. More than 30 years ought to mean something, and I think there will be opportunities when the government members, instead of—and I don't know how they're feeling. There's been a lot of talk in here, and a lot of new members are probably hearing things for the first time and thinking, "Well, hold on. Who do I listen to? Who do I believe here?" You know, he said, she said, all of that sort of thing. It's a disappointing way, I think, to start. It's been kind of a contentious first week or so, but I am hopeful that we will all find ways to contribute, to serve our communities as best we can, reaching towards our skill sets and actually using them.

I do have every faith that the members who will have the opportunity to serve on committee or to serve in that chair will not only embrace it but they'll probably be wonderfully good at it, and we will respect them and appreciate them. There aren't too many people who have had the opportunity to serve in that place, Speaker, and we wish them well and we want them to be successful.

I had said before when I spoke that the Deputy Chair appointments all were women. I know that the member for Ottawa—now that I'm not Speaker anymore, I don't remember anybody's riding. Oh, come on.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Vanier.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Ottawa–Vanier. I don't think that she knew about this before her name was in the book. And while I hope that she's excited, and it's going to be excellent to have a francophone Deputy Speaker and all of that, making decisions for women without their involvement is an interesting way to start things. I would encourage all women in this House—all members in this House, but I'm going to speak to the women. A lot of us are alphas in this space, and let's remember to continue to be that. If you feel that your voice is being taken away, on this or anything else, I would invite you not to let it, because we have a lot of little girls at home. We have a lot of folks who watch us.

I'm very proud to be in a caucus that is predominantly female now. We will continue to take our space; we will continue to rise, regardless of what we're up against—

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

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday, August 22, at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1800.

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Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Valerie Quioc Lim, Wai Lam (William) Wong,

Meghan Stenson, Christopher Tyrell

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| MacLeod, Lisa (PC) | Nepean | |
| Mamakwa, Sol (NDP) | Kiiwetinoong | Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle |
| Mantha, Michael (NDP) | Algoma—Manitoulin | |
| Martin, Robin (PC) | Eglinton—Lawrence | |
| McCarthy, Todd J. (PC) | Durham | |
| McGregor, Graham (PC) | Brampton North / Brampton-Nord | |
| McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB) | Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York | |
| McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC) | Lambton—Kent—Middlesex | Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences |
| Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC) | York—Simcoe | Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports |
| Oosterhoff, Sam (PC) | Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest | |

| Member and Party / Député(e) et parti | Constituency / Circonscription | Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités |
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| Pang, Billy (PC) | Markham—Unionville | |
| Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC) | Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill | Associate Minister of Housing / Ministre associé du Logement |
| Pasma, Chandra (NDP) | Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean | |
| Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC) | Northumberland—Peterborough South | Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs |
| Pierre, Natalie (PC) | Burlington | |
| Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC) | Timmins | Minister of Mines / Ministre des Mines |
| Quinn, Nolan (PC) | Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry | |
| Rae, Matthew (PC) | Perth—Wellington | |
| Rakocevic, Tom (NDP) | Humber River—Black Creek | |
| Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC) | Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville | Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises |
| Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC) | Kenora—Rainy River | Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Northern Development / Ministre du Développement du Nord |
| Riddell, Brian (PC) | Cambridge | |
| Romano, Ross (PC) | Sault Ste. Marie | |
| Sabawy, Sheref (PC) | Mississauga—Erin Mills | |
| Sandhu, Amarjot (PC) | Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest | |
| Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC) | Brampton South / Brampton-Sud | President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor |
| Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC) | Glengarry—Prescott—Russell | |
| Sattler, Peggy (NDP) | London West / London-Ouest | Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle |
| Saunderson, Brian (PC) | Simcoe—Grey | |
| Schreiner, Mike (GRN) | Guelph | |
| Scott, Laurie (PC) | Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock | |
| Shamji, Adil (LIB) | Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est | |
| Shaw, Sandy (NDP) | Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas | |
| Skelly, Donna (PC) | Flamborough—Glanbrook | |
| Smith, Dave (PC) | Peterborough—Kawartha | |
| Smith, David (PC) | Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre | |
| Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC) | Parry Sound—Muskoka | Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts |
| Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC) | Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte | Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie |
| Smith, Laura (PC) | Thornhill | |
| Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP) | St. Catharines | |
| Stiles, Marit (NDP) | Davenport | |
| Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC) | Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre | Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure |
| Tabuns, Peter (NDP) | Toronto—Danforth | Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario |
| Tangri, Nina (PC) | Mississauga—Streetsville | |
| Taylor, Monique (NDP) | Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain | |
| Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC) | Scarborough—Rouge Park | |
| Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC) | Huron—Bruce | Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales |
| 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 |
| Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC) | Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington | |
| Vanthof, John (NDP) | Timiskaming—Cochrane | |
| Vaugeois, Lise (NDP) | Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord | |
| Wai, Daisy (PC) | Richmond Hill | |
| West, Jamie (NDP) | Sudbury | |

| Member and Party / Député(e) et parti | Constituency / Circonscription | Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités |
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| Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC) | Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre | Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes |
| Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP) | Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre | |
| Yakabuski, John (PC) | Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke | |
| Vacant | Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre | |