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Mercredi
4 octobre 2023

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ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

**Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act, 2023, Bill
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 4 October 2023

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 4 octobre 2023

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

AFFORDABLE HOMES
AND GOOD JOBS ACT, 2023

LOI DE 2023 POUR DES LOGEMENTS
ABORDABLES ET DE BONS EMPLOIS

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 3, 2023, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 134, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the St. Thomas-Central Elgin Boundary Adjustment Act, 2023 / Projet de loi 134, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les redevances d'aménagement et la Loi de 2023 sur la modification des limites territoriales entre St. Thomas et Central Elgin.

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

Mr. Jeff Burch: It's a pleasure to rise to speak to Bill 134, Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act, and to provide some comments this morning.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention a lot of us were up late last night, watching the Manitoba election. On a partisan level, obviously—you win some, you lose some—it was great to see, for us, an NDP majority government, but more importantly, and on a less partisan note, to see Wab Kinew elected as the first First Nations Premier in Canada was inspiring. I was with my friend from Kiiwetinoong and some other folks from that community, and to see the look on their faces and to hear the commentary around the country and know that First Nations people—this really lifted their spirits after truth and reconciliation day, which we recognized on Monday, especially young people across the country. It was very inspiring and great to see. Congratulations to Wab Kinew on his victory.

I'd also like to recognize my friend from University-Rosedale, who has done an excellent job. I enjoy working with her on the housing and municipal affairs portfolio. When the government House leader quotes you often, you know you're doing a good job as a critic. I think she's doing an excellent job, so I want to recognize her.

Also, AMO and our municipal partners—I think we don't recognize enough the hard work they do, especially under the difficult circumstances they've been subjected to over the last few years. I'll be touching on that in my remarks regarding Bill 23 and, historically, what's been happening with municipalities.

Of course, our stakeholders and all the citizens who have come out over the last year, concerned about the things that this government has been doing around the greenbelt and around land deals—thousands and thousands of people across the province have come out to MPPs' offices and to the greenbelt itself to express their desire to keep that farmland and that protected land. That played a huge part in causing this government to change course, and I want to thank all of them.

I want to, before commenting on the bill specifically, provide some context. We've talked about this many times before. This government and the official opposition have very different views of the housing crisis. We've talked a lot about how this government focuses on supply only, and supply rather than demand and the demand that is out there, which is for affordable homes, not for large single-detached homes.

We've never seen a situation where more folks own multiple properties. Speculation has become possibly the biggest problem in the housing crisis, next to supply, and that's something that this government, in our opinion, has really ignored. It's an ideological difference. This government believes that the way to address the housing crisis is just to remove obstacles; remove regulations, what they call red tape; give developers tax breaks; remove due diligence from the planning process, granting undemocratic powers to mayors. These are all things that say, "We're going to step back and we're going to let the market fix the housing crisis." That's not a solution, and it has never been a solution in Canada.

The government of Canada and the provincial government used to be in housing, and that's how we ended up with co-op housing, social housing, public housing. As the official opposition, we've been very vocal in saying we need to use all of those tools and we need to—as Councillor Gord Perks in Toronto recently said, the federal government and the provincial government need to get back in the housing game if we're really going to address the housing crisis,

Secondly, I want to raise that we understand this government wants to slow things down due to the disastrous summer of scandal and housing policy failure, and so this bill, clearly, is an attempt to do that—to slow down, to change the channel from the scandals and the failures of their housing policy. The theme that I think I see in all this is wasted time. If you look at how much time has been wasted, especially over the last year, dealing with scandals, dealing with questionable land deals—this is time that could have been spent addressing the housing crisis. Instead, the government is doing damage control and lurching from one scandal to another.

So while we will be supporting this bill—and I'll explain why—I must begin by saying that this government has been in power for five years, and it has never been more expensive to rent or own a home. Obviously, given the size and urgency of the housing crisis, the meagre measures contained in this bill won't do much to make life easier for folks who are struggling to find affordable places to live in Ontario. This government's failed policies and ill-advised schemes like greenbelt land grabs, strong-mayor powers and governance reviews are not delivering the housing people urgently need; in fact, they're making things worse. The truth is, people no longer trust this government to address the housing crisis.

Specific to this bill—this bill redefines when an affordable or attainable home is eligible for the exemption from development charges under section 4.1 of the Development Charges Act. The new definition of “affordable” is a home whose rent is no greater than the lesser of 30% of the income of the 60th percentile of renter households and the average market rent; the current definition is 80% of average market rent. So that is an improvement. The new definition of “attainable” is a home for purchase whose price is the lesser of the price that would result in annual accommodation costs that are 30% of the income of the 60th percentile of households and 90% of the average purchase price; the current definition is 80% of average purchase price. So that is an improvement. The act also establishes an affordable residential units bulletin in which the minister shall determine the incomes and corresponding rents and purchase prices to which the term “affordable” shall apply.

Schedule 2 talks about allowing the city of St. Thomas to provide assistance for the new Volkswagen EV battery factory in St. Thomas—which was a bill that we also supported.

So defining affordability based on income, as I mentioned, is an improvement over defining strictly based on market prices—80% of a completely unaffordable market price, though, is still unaffordable.

Housing expert Steve Pomeroy told us that the 60th renter percentile is a realistic benchmark.

Redefining affordability based on income instead of the market for the purposes of a development charge exemption is an incremental improvement over the status quo because, as currently defined, developers might receive an exemption for building affordable homes that are not affordable for most people, and that might have been homes that might have been built anyway, without the exemption.

0910

But there's still much more the government should be doing to spur the construction of new non-market homes, especially homes that are affordable for low-income households. We've talked about this many times in the past. While the NDP supports incentives like development charge exemptions to encourage the construction of purpose-built rental housing, especially affordable homes, the province should be covering these costs, not cash-strapped municipalities that are already struggling after over 25 years of provincial downloads and cuts.

The Ford government shows no indication it intends to keep its promise to make municipalities whole for Bill 23 revenue losses—I'll talk about that further—and when the NDP asked about this, the Premier said, “The municipalities love spending money.... We don't have an income problem at the city halls across the province; we have a spending problem. That's the issue.” That's the kind of disdain that the Premier and this government have shown toward municipalities—in our opinion, a real disrespect for municipalities across Ontario.

This government is letting developers off the hook from paying their fair share for services that people need, including parks, transit and affordable housing. We believe this government needs to tackle the housing crisis from every angle. That includes real rent control, clamping down on speculation and getting the province back into the business of building homes people can actually afford.

This government has been in power for over half a decade, and we still do not have a clear, coherent housing policy. Over the summer, this government was lurching from one scandal to another, with no clarity of direction or motives. This creates uncertainty for our municipal partners; they've been very vocal about that.

Meanwhile, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., just the other week, lowered projections on how many homes will be constructed in Ontario. Canada is short 3.5 million housing units for 2030, and Ontario has the biggest supply gap. This government is not even delivering on the supply side, never mind the affordability issue, which is getting worse and worse.

As I mentioned, it's tragic, especially over the summer, how much time has been wasted on government scandals, rather than addressing the housing crisis. For over a year, this government has been wasting time enriching their friends instead of focusing on housing. Tearing up the greenbelt was more important to them. This was sold as their big idea to address the housing affordability crisis, and we heard the government leader speak many times about providing affordable homes for immigrants on greenbelt land, which is one of the most ridiculous claims I've heard this government or any government ever make.

No one ever believed that this was about affordable homes for immigrants built on the greenbelt, and I take particular exception to some of that language, as someone who, before being elected to this place, ran a settlement agency for almost a decade, serving newcomer families and refugee families. I'll tell you, none of my clients ever approached me and said, “You know, I'd really like a piece of virgin farmland with no services so I can build a mansion now that I'm here in Canada.” Most of the immigrants I've met—and if you look at the stats, most of them who come to Canada—are learning English. They're finding jobs. They're often working two or three jobs while they're going to school. They're struggling to pay rent. That's the reality for immigrants, and I really think using them to support an unsupportable housing policy is in bad taste.

It never should have taken a series of scandals from this government for the Premier to attempt to undo the damage

he has done. While people are struggling with an affordability crisis, this Premier has wasted people's time, and after reading both the Integrity Commissioner's and the Auditor General's reports, it's clear tearing up the greenbelt was never about building homes.

CityNews recently had an excellent article that highlighted just how much time this government has wasted with this greenbelt scandal, detailing an incredible timeline. It's amazing to think that it was almost a year ago, November 4, 2022, when the municipal affairs and housing minister announced via news release that Ontario would remove 7,400 acres in 15 different areas of the greenbelt while adding 9,400 acres elsewhere to build 50,000 homes. It contradicted a pledge directly that he made in 2021 not to open the greenbelt "to any kind of development."

On November 11, CBC reported that the landowners who stood to benefit from the greenbelt land removals included prominent developers and that one purchase happened as recently as September. Later in November, the minister said that he did not tip off developers ahead of announcing changes to the greenbelt, and the Premier said the same a day later.

Yet, on January 6, Ontario Provincial Police said they were working to determine whether they should investigate the matter. On January 18, Ontario's Integrity Commissioner and Auditor General both announced that they would conduct separate probes. The Integrity Commissioner launched an investigation into the minister on a complaint from the NDP leader, who asked the commissioner to investigate whether the minister broke the ethics rules around making a public policy decision to further someone's private interests. And now—this is prior to February—the government is fully embroiled in a scandal and not working to provide housing for the people of Ontario.

Later in February, our leader asked the Integrity Commissioner to issue an opinion on the Premier's actions surrounding his daughter's stag-and-doe event ahead of her wedding. The Premier acknowledged that some developers who were friends attended the \$150-a-ticket event and media reports say lobbyists and government relations firms were—

Mrs. Robin Martin: Point of order, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Pursuant to standing order 25(b)(i), I ask, through you, Speaker, that the member from Niagara Centre return to the subject matter of the bill. The member's remarks are not germane to the item currently being debated by the House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): I remind the member of the content of the bill and to stay within the parameters, please. Thank you.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Thank you, Speaker. And I would remind my friend that the government speakers, whom I listened to intently, provided context going back to 2018. As I mentioned, what we're establishing is how much time this government has wasted. Rather than addressing the

housing crisis, they've had to waste time on scandals, and now we have a bill in front of us that doesn't really build any homes. So we have wasted time and now we're discussing a bill that doesn't really contain anything in it that will address the housing crisis. I think it's very germane. We're almost there; we're up to August of this long scandal, but I'll get there.

On August 25, the Premier, in his first comments since the minister's chief of staff's resignation, said he was "confident" nothing criminal took place on the greenbelt, but that RCMP investigation is ongoing.

Now, First Nations, which has been brought up by the government speakers yesterday: On August 28, I think it's worth pointing out that First Nations chiefs across the province called on the Premier to return land to the greenbelt. As we speak this morning, our leader and a number of our critics are in the media studio talking about urban boundary expansion and the disrespect that's been shown to First Nations communities with respect to that. The chiefs brought that up on August 28 with respect to the greenbelt scandal and said very clearly that the greenbelt moves the government made were violating the Williams Treaties that were settled with the province and the federal government in 2018.

So here we are today. We just went through September. On September 4, the minister formally resigned his cabinet post. The Premier appointed the government House leader as the new Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to manage a full-blown crisis, not to build housing—and that's important; that's what we're talking about this morning. It was to manage a crisis. We know what's happened since, with the resignation of three ministers, multiple staff resigning and a potential RCMP investigation.

0920

Recently, Speaker, in a Globe and Mail article entitled "Ontario Government Had Targeted More Greenbelt Sites Without Public's Notice"—

Hon. Paul Calandra: Sorry, Madam Speaker. Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I appreciate that the member probably hasn't read the bill, but if he reads the bill, he will find that it is specifically geared towards the definition of affordable housing and the expansion of jobs in St. Thomas. I would ask the honourable member to focus his comments on—what he's legislatively required to do—the bill that is before the House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): I'll remind the member that the bill is a discussion around the definition of affordable housing and expansion of the St. Thomas site, and to please keep your comments as it regards the bill.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Thank you, Speaker. It only took a few minutes to read the bill because there's not a lot in it. I listened intently to the government speakers yesterday, who wandered all over the political map for a couple of hours. I'll leave it to the Speaker to determine whether I'm

on topic when I discuss issues of why the government is not addressing housing in this bill.

I'll be talking about the things that the government should be addressing, and one of those things, obviously, was brought up just last week, when the official opposition leader tabled the greenbelt restoration act. It would be great in this bill if the government took the opportunity to do what they promised to do and repealed the greenbelt legislation. The bill that we proposed, which the government could have put in this bill, repealed the Conservatives' 2022—

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, Madam Speaker, point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, I bring up the same point: We are not talking about proposed bills of the opposition; we are talking about Bill 134, which is before the House. I appreciate that the member enjoyed my speech yesterday. He had the exact same opportunity, if he wasn't enjoying parts of it, to suggest that we go back on track. That did not happen.

He has a bill in front of him about affordable housing—the definition of affordable housing with respect to St. Thomas. We will continue to interject, and we would ask that the member continue to focus his comments on the bill before him. If he doesn't, then I would suggest he yield the floor to another member of the caucus who might actually have some comments on the bill before the House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): To the member that is speaking, please remember what is in the bill and if you're able to tie it back to Bill 134. Please still keep your comments within what is in the bill.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Absolutely, Speaker. I realize and recognize that the government House leader doesn't want to talk about all of the scandals that they're dealing with right now instead of talking about housing.

Let me talk about someone who's looking for affordable housing in my riding. I trust that will be acceptable to the Speaker, and maybe make him a little more comfortable for a few minutes and not quite as agitated. I'm going to talk about Tim Gibson, someone from my riding who's having a really hard time finding affordable housing. The Premier recently stated of the government's housing policy, "It's not a little bit better; it's not 10% better; it's a thousand times better on all fronts. It's a thousand times better" since the government took office. That's the Premier's words. So while the government continues to stumble from one bad idea to another, people across Ontario still do not have access to affordable housing.

Tim Gibson from my riding in Niagara Centre—60 years old. He lives in Niagara Regional Housing, and he's lived there for 15 years. He's on ODSP. He gets \$700 a month because of the rent-gear-to-income housing. He went to the Hope Centre food bank recently. I've met with food banks in my riding recently; they're having a real hard time all across Ontario. People from Feed Ontario were here last session telling all members of the Legisla-

ture—and I hope many of them took advantage of the opportunity to visit them for their reception—what a difficult time they're having as this government's policies fail and people have to choose between rent and food.

He went to the Hope Centre food bank, and all they had left was two cans of spaghetti sauce. So he got a \$50 gift card from St. Vincent de Paul society. He was telling me this the other day. He left the grocery store with five items, including a bag of potatoes, a package of hamburger, a package of chicken, a dozen eggs and a tub of margarine. That's all \$50 got him. He wants to speak to the Premier directly to raise his concerns. He knows he's lucky to have rent geared to income—that's what he told me—but the housing complex he lives in is tired, and repairs are slow to come, if at all. He worries the place will be shut down for bylaw infractions. Where would all those people go? Even though he's housed, he worries about being homeless.

Speaker, we hear hundreds of stories from people in my riding and across Ontario on the brink of homelessness. We have food banks that have told us people who used to donate are now the ones who are receiving food, and yet the Premier has the nerve to say things are a thousand times better than ever before.

Tim Gibson, the man I just referenced, wanted to speak to the Premier, so I gave him the Premier's number. I know the Premier says he likes to give his phone number out, so I hope he speaks to Tim.

Another example: In an article published just the other day in the St. Catharines Standard, titled "'Perfect Storm of Obstacles' Impacts Food Programs," Jessica Stephenson, who is the Niagara Nutrition Partners program manager in Niagara, said, "It's unprecedented times at the moment. We're currently experiencing a perfect storm of obstacles that impact how we run our programs. We're just trying to meet that increase in student population to make sure that all students have access to a healthy meal at all times...."

"Niagara Nutrition Partners receives funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services but the provincial money—it has remained stagnant since 2014 despite inflation and rising population—only covers a portion of the cost, leaving gaps it works to fill through groups such as United Way, helping put 'buffers in place,' so" schools can provide meals year-long. Again, Speaker, this Premier thinks that things are a thousand times better on all fronts.

Housing affordability in Niagara: I hope the government House leader doesn't mind me talking about housing affordability—

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: Point of order, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Second point of order: the member from Newmarket—Aurora.

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: Point of order: Pursuant to standing order 25(b)(i), I ask that the member from the riding of Niagara Centre return to the subject matter on this bill. Unfortunately, it's not about nutrition; it is about housing. I know you're just speaking about nutrition. Let's

stay on the topic of housing, please, and return the subject to the matter of the bill. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Thank you to the member from Newmarket–Aurora.

The member from Niagara Centre, we are talking about affordable housing—a reminder to keep on point with that.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Speaker, I don't know if I'm going to continue to be interrupted, but clearly, if you look at the record of my speaking, I'm talking about people choosing between housing and food. I don't know how I could be more relevant on this topic than talking about choosing between paying their rent and buying food. I appreciate that the members from the government want me to stay on topic. I would like them to let me continue with my speaking when I'm talking about affordable housing and food and rent. I would appreciate not being interrupted so much when I'm obviously sticking to the subject matter. Thank you.

In Niagara, we're seeing people spend upwards of 60% of their take-home income on housing alone. According to Niagara Association of Realtors, the average price of homes sold in August 2023 was \$688,754. A modest one-bedroom in Welland, for example, is going for \$1,400 a month. A basement one-bedroom apartment in Port Colborne is \$1,300. How does someone like Tim, who I mentioned, afford to buy groceries and at the same time pay rent when they're only getting \$700 or \$800 a month?

0930

Rents have risen across Ontario over the past 20 years, particularly since 2011. Shortly after this government was elected, they eliminated rent control on new units. There's no legal limit set on how much landlords can charge in rent for new builds that are occupied for the first time after November of 2018.

We all agree that we need to build more homes, but we keep pointing out that you can't just look at supply. You have to look at demand. The title of the bill is about housing affordability, but this government refuses to look at the price of homes, at the demand for affordable homes in Ontario. This government seems to keep feeding the demands of speculators while ignoring the demands of Ontarians who just want an affordable place to live.

This government has ignored the advice of its own experts and its own Housing Affordability Task Force by not ending exclusionary zoning. The government is failing to enable missing-middle housing to make it easier for people of all incomes, ages, family sizes and abilities to access affordable housing options in the neighbourhoods and communities they need to live in.

For Niagara Regional Housing, the wait-list for an affordable unit in Thorold, where I live, is eight years. In Welland, you're waiting from four to eight years; in St. Catharines, eight to 15 years. In Niagara Falls, you could be looking at anywhere from five to 20 years for an affordable housing unit.

We have been calling for a strong public sector role to deliver new affordable and non-market housing that the for-profit sector can't or won't deliver. This government has relied almost entirely on the private market to deliver

new housing. Their main tools have been deregulation, tax cuts and sacrificing more farmland and natural heritage to urban development. This approach, Speaker, has clearly failed.

Simply putting forward a bill that changes the definition of "affordability," although it's an improvement and we appreciate it, will do nothing to build new homes. There are so many more things this government should be doing. Instead, they've focused on delivering benefits to well-connected landowners and donors while sacrificing farmland instead of focusing on delivering housing that's actually affordable and meets the needs of regular Ontarians.

Part of this bill is doing what this government does best, which is shifting cost and responsibility from developers onto municipalities, so we have to talk about municipalities and how they will be affected. There's still much more the government should be doing to spur the construction of new non-market homes, especially homes that are affordable for low-income households. While we support incentives like development charge exemptions to encourage the construction of purpose-built rental housing, especially affordable homes, the province should be covering these costs, not cash-strapped municipalities that are already struggling after over 25 years of provincial downloads and cuts.

The Ford government shows no indication it intends to keep its promise to make municipalities whole for Bill 23 revenue losses. When I asked about this, the Premier said, and I remember this very vividly from question period, "Municipalities love spending money.... We don't have an income problem at the city halls across the province; we have a spending problem. That's the issue."

Once again, as they're doing in this bill, they're shifting responsibility and costs from the province to municipalities. Again, we have another bill that fails to fulfill the government's promise to make municipalities whole after the financial ruin they caused with Bill 23. There's nothing to make up for the municipal deficits which will result in service cuts and higher property taxes. AMO has calculated that cities are seeing a \$5-billion revenue shortfall from Bill 23. Changing the definition of affordability is not going to address that problem.

The city of Pickering is raising taxes by 2.44% due to Bill 23. Coupled with the region of Durham's increase of 2.87%, Pickering taxpayers will be paying an additional 5.3% on their bill. The major challenge was the lack of development charges coming into the city as a result of Bill 23, which was the More Homes Built Faster Act.

In Niagara, "the legislation reduces or freezes development charges, the fees municipalities collect from developers and rely on for growth-related services such as roads and infrastructure.

"If the provincial government doesn't offer some form of compensation," regional chair Jim "Bradley has said the region would annually have to raise property taxes 11% to cover an estimated \$122 million in lost revenue."

A report by the city of St. Catharines stated, "The proposed reduced fees will shift the financial burden onto

existing taxpayers instead of growth paying for growth. This will put significant stress on the city's budget and planning to accommodate for the lost revenue required for the city's capital projects.... Further financial risk will be taken by the city due to the downloading of responsibilities, additional studies, programs, staffing and the increased need for long-term debt."

Although I'm not sure I'll have a chance to address it today, Speaker, municipalities, on top of this financial stress, are facing the anxiety presented by this government's tinkering with governance. It's interesting that one of the first things the government House leader did in taking over the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing was to put the brakes on that, but it would be nice for municipalities if they didn't have to deal with further confusion and had some idea of how the government plans to deal with those regional governance reviews.

"In Brampton, city council received a staff report in November estimating revenue losses equalling as much as an 80% property tax increase." And all of these increases, Speaker, are under the guise of helping to create housing in Ontario.

In Guelph, "staff are also recommending eliminating the annual \$500,000 transfer to the city's affordable housing reserve fund to help offset the impacts ... from Bill 23...." So there's an example directly impacting a city's affordable housing reserve fund.

In Waterloo, they've said that the draft budget contains a proposed tax increase of 5.35% that would add about \$75 to the average property tax bill. However, over the next five years, the city stands to lose between \$23 million and \$31 million in development charges—fees paid by developers to municipalities to offset the cost of new facilities and services.

Waterloo also said, "Between the impacts of record inflation in 2022 and the implementation of Bill 23, local municipalities are projecting significant tax increases.

"Regional government is looking at a hike of ... 9.8%, adding \$147 to the average property tax bill."

"The township of North Dumfries is projecting a 4.8% property tax hike for 2023" as a result of this government's housing policy on regional governments "in large part due to the expected impacts" from the More Homes Built Faster Act.

Huron-Perth: "Without additional funding from the province to offset this loss of revenue, municipalities will have little option but to put these costs back on the taxpayer. Adding more costs to existing property owners will increase their costs and could negatively impact current homeowners, who may already be struggling with rising interest rates, to keep their current housing affordable."

In Markham, they've said, "City staff members presented a report on the various impacts of the proposed Bill 23 legislative changes. The most alarming revelation was that the changes in Bill 23 could cost the city \$136 million in annual revenue, requiring an increase of 50% to 80% on property taxes to maintain existing service levels, equaling an estimated \$600 to \$1,000 per year to the average homeowner."

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Now, this bill would have been a perfect opportunity, Speaker, for the government to keep their promise to make municipalities whole.

Brampton city council has joined other municipalities in voicing serious concerns over the economic impacts of the provincial government's Bill 23. The bill is equivalent to an 80% property tax increase over the next 10 years. To put it simply, that bill, Bill 23, shifted a significant financial cost from developers onto already struggling municipalities and that cost would be handed down, obviously, to folks who are struggling to find a home to own or rent.

Now, we've talked a little about things that could have been in this bill, and one of the things I've heard, actually, from the new minister, the government House leader, when he took over the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing after the scandals through the summer, was that they may be taking up an NDP idea, which is a "use it or lose it" clause for developers.

Folks will remember that this government, in its efforts to blame municipalities for everything that goes wrong in the housing market, put very strict rules on municipalities about the time that it takes to move approvals through municipal planning departments—not a bad thing to require municipalities to do things in a reasonable period of time, but they failed to do the same thing with developers.

So, it was great to hear the minister, when he was attempting to change channels after the scandal, take up a good NDP idea which is to bring in a "use it or lose it" clause for developers. There's a housing development in Port Colborne, in my riding, that was approved in the 1980s and has yet to break ground. AMO and the big city mayors have all pointed out that there are 1.25 million homes in the approval pipeline that are not being built. The government could have taken advantage of this opportunity, after already speaking about it in the media, to make that part of this bill, but they chose not to. I hope that they move forward and do that in the very near future.

During question period I asked the previous Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing if this government would "stop blaming municipalities, do what is fair and implement a sunset clause of approvals so that developers and builders must build housing in a reasonable period of time after they've been approved." We have yet to hear a commitment from the government, as I've mentioned. I hope we hear that soon.

The NDP has put forward amendments in committee to Bill 23. They were rejected unfortunately by this government, and I hope they're changing their tune now. Our amendment stated, "Section 41 ... (15.4) Subject to and in accordance with the regulations, a municipality may, by bylaw, impose penalties on the owner of the land for failure to substantially commence development within a timely manner after the plans and drawings have been approved under this section."

Planners, Mr. Speaker, say that if the province could incentivize developers to build what it is already approved,

they would be 85% of the way to their goal. Now, we can argue about whether that's exaggerated—I'm sure the government would say it is—but let's say it was only 50%. Let's say by implementing something like this, we could get 50% to our goal, why would the government not move forward to this if it wasn't because they are afraid of the pushback from their developer friends?

In a CBC article, the chair of the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario, Thom Hunt, said, "If the province could incentivize developers to build what is already approved by municipalities, they'd be 85% of the way toward their goal, well ahead of their target. I think the report starts to tell the story that the housing supply challenge isn't really a land supply or development approval problem.... The bigger problem is, probably, how do you compel a developer to build? How do you increase the rate of construction?"

Unfortunately, we have here another housing bill that fails to include a sunset clause to incentivize developers. Despite the government not taking action, some municipalities are already moving ahead with this plan, because they know that it would work.

In April 2022, Aurora mayor Tom Mrakas stated, "Aurora town council unanimously approved a motion ... to add a sunset clause to all future site-specific zoning bylaw amendments. What this means is that if a development applicant does not satisfy the time frame requirements and obtain a building permit, the development approvals will be revoked and the zoning of the property will return to its original state."

The statement goes on to say, "With this planning mechanism in place, Aurora can be better positioned to foster appropriate development that will meet the needs of current and future residents when they need it."

Here's a simple yet effective mechanism this government could implement today. They could have put it in this bill. Instead, since coming to power they've wasted everyone's time with things like strong-mayor powers, regional reviews and flip-flops on selling the greenbelt. It's great to hear the new Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing speaking to the media and indicating he may move forward with an NDP idea, and I hope, certainly, that we see that happen. Unfortunately, it didn't happen in this bill.

Things that we would have loved to see in this bill, Speaker:

- implementing real rent control—we've talked about that;

- building truly affordable housing, including non-profit, public, co-op and supportive housing;

- cracking down on greedy land speculation;

- establishing inclusionary zoning to build homes within existing neighbourhoods near transit and other key infrastructure; and

- getting the federal and provincial governments back in the business of building homes that people can actually afford.

When the government says that the official opposition, the NDP, are always saying no, that they don't have

solutions, that's not true. We've proposed solutions continually and we have some solutions that could be implemented right away. It would have been really easy to include some of this stuff—especially the sunset clause that I referred to—in this bill, but the government is not trying to solve the housing crisis; they're trying to handle a scandal.

AMO released a response to Bill 134, the Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act. They put out a press release: "At its meeting on September 29, the AMO board considered the recent request made by" the minister "to mayors across Ontario regarding their views on the recommendations of the Housing Affordability Task Force."

Remember, Speaker, this was the task force that said, "You don't need to build on the greenbelt. We have enough land within urban boundaries. We don't need to force urban boundaries to expand. We don't need MZOs. We have the land we need."

AMO says, "The minister has requested that all heads of council respond to the request by October 16 or risk financial penalties for their municipality. AMO had previously requested that the ministry extend the deadline to allow mayors to consult with councils; however, the request was not granted."

So here's AMO saying, "Look, our members have received your request. We want some time so the mayors can talk to their councils," and the minister said, "No, no, I'm not going to give you that time." They can waste all the time they want, but they're not going to give municipalities time for mayors to even speak to their councils.

"AMO states that at a sector level, municipalities conditionally support all task force recommendations with a few exceptions, provided that the government puts in place"—and here is what AMO wants. It's not pie in the sky, nothing unreasonable. Here's what they want:

- "a fair and sustainable funding framework to support infrastructure and growth, that is not unduly subsidized by existing property taxpayers"—we talked about that already;

- "a comprehensive, sequenced implementation plan that gives both developers and municipalities certainty regarding costs and rules to support effective long-term decision-making"—doesn't sound unreasonable to me;

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- "an accountability framework that accurately recognizes the roles and responsibilities of different housing partners and does not hold municipalities accountable for the actions of developers or provincial ministries. Mechanisms must be included to ensure that public investments are tied to outcomes in the public interest;

- "a core focus on non-market housing"—that's something we've talked about for a long time—"which was not within the mandate of the housing affordability task force. A robust non-market housing sector is a critical part of a well-functioning overall housing system and needs to be prioritized by governments"—they're saying government needs to get back in the game;

- "a public policy review by the Ontario Public Service verifying that each recommendation is feasible, likely to

result in increased housing supply and/or affordability and in the public interest.”

It’s amazing that we don’t have that already.

So the letter identifies top recommendations from the task force for prioritization, as well as three recommendations that AMO objects to on principle.

“AMO has previously stated that the government has chosen its own path in addressing the housing crisis”—that’s AMO, representing 144 municipalities across Ontario. The government haven’t listened to us. They’ve chosen their own path “in addressing the housing crisis in Ontario, despite the advice of municipalities, and will be accountable for its outcomes. AMO has also stated that municipalities will do everything within their power to help the province to achieve its housing targets and outcomes. The AMO board believes that the response outlined in the letter is reflective of this approach.”

So they’re saying, “The government hasn’t listened to us. They’ve gone their own way. But we still want to work with you.” There’s time to change direction. Municipalities want to work with the government, but they can’t blame municipalities for every problem that exists with the affordable housing crisis. They have to work with municipalities, and they have to listen when municipalities come to them.

Bill 63, which the NDP supported, is being renamed Supporting Manufacturing in St. Thomas Act. I want to emphasize, in closing, some of the things I said when originally speaking to Bill 63. As you all know, the opposition supported this bill, and we have to give credit not only to municipal, provincial and federal governments, but, as we pointed out, to unions as well, who went through very difficult times with thousands of their members losing jobs. They went to the bargaining table. So I think we have to give some credit where credit is due to unions like Unifor and the Steelworkers and others who have gone to the bargaining table and worked with the government. This was obviously something that was led by the federal government and with the industry to try to create the conditions to bring some of these jobs back. And this is one area where we all came together in this House and supported that EV battery factory, which will bring back some of the many manufacturing jobs that have been lost in the past.

St. Thomas was one of those areas in Ontario that was devastated when we lost manufacturing jobs, especially in the 1990s. According to Statistics Canada, from the early 2000s to the mid-2010s, the number of employees in manufacturing fell by roughly half a million in Canada, and we’ve seen the long-lasting impact of that first-hand in Niagara. For example, the St. Catharines General Motors plant, at one time, was up to 11,000 or 12,000 manufacturing jobs; now they’re down to a couple of thousand. So it’s great to see the possibility of some of those jobs coming back, and the official opposition was happy to support a bill that helped to make that happen.

To conclude, we will be supporting Bill 134, Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act. However, this government has been in power for over five years, and we’ve yet

to see a comprehensive, transparent housing plan based on facts and evidence. The government continues lurching from one random decision to another, one scandal to another, with no consistency in their direction or their motives. While this government continues to waste everyone’s time, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., as I mentioned, lowered their projections on how many homes will be constructed in Ontario.

People need affordable places to live, but this government’s failed policies are not delivering the housing people urgently need. In fact, they’re making everything worse. People no longer trust this government to fix the housing crisis. Given the size and urgency of the housing crisis, these measures in this bill are meagre measures that won’t do all that much to make life easier for people. Redefining affordable housing by tying it to a person’s income and not the market is an improvement, but this government is still letting developers off the hook from paying their fair share for services that people need, including parks, transit and affordable housing.

As a result of government inaction, more and more folks are struggling to pay their bills and keep a roof over their head, like Tim Gibson, who I mentioned, from my riding. It’s never been more expensive to rent or own a home after five years of Conservative government. We’ve been calling for the government to tackle the housing crisis from every angle to make it easier to buy or rent a place to call home. That includes real rent control. It includes clamping down on speculation and getting the province back into the business of building homes you can actually afford. We will continue to do that work, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Question?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I listened intently to the member on his speech, and I didn’t hear very much about Bill 134 until the last couple of minutes when, out of the blue, they announced that they’re going to support the bill, as they did Bill 63.

If you remember when Bill 63 was going through the Legislature here, what tipped the scales in favour of the NDP supporting was the calls they received from union leadership that said, “You’re toast if you don’t support this bill redefining the boundaries around St. Thomas,” because it was integral and of paramount importance to be able to establish an EV battery manufacturing facility in the St. Thomas region. So again, they were taking their marching orders from their stakeholders—not necessarily the people of Ontario—who will support this bill without question.

Bill 134 is so important to people in my riding who do have lower-than-average incomes and pay more as a percentage of their income to pay for housing. Thank you for supporting it. It’s about time you got behind this government’s entire—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): The member from Niagara Centre.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Thank you to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for that, although what he says is completely false. We were always supporting the EV battery manufacturing plant—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Unparliamentary. You've got to withdraw that.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Withdrawn.

We were always supporting that bill and didn't receive any calls from unions. I come from Niagara, where we have a General Motors plant, and there was never any doubt that we were going to support manufacturing jobs coming to Ontario.

In terms of the bill and my only addressing the housing in the last couple of minutes, obviously the member wasn't listening.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: The member mentioned the election last night and how that election resulted in an NDP government taking power in Manitoba. I think that makes me feel hopeful.

As the official opposition in Ontario, the NDP and our leader, Marit Stiles, have been trying to get to the housing scandal and fix housing so that people actually have affordable homes.

I want to ask the member: In 2026, when we actually have an NDP government in this province, can you summarize how the NDP government will fix the housing crisis in this province so people can afford homes, and stop tinkering around with the Conservative bills that don't fix the housing crisis?

Mr. Jeff Burch: What an excellent and balanced question that was. I think that we've been pretty clear with our proposals. When you think about this government and the fact that they removed rent controls in the middle of a housing crisis, that says it all right there—a government that removes rent controls.

I think I spoke as well about just our different approach to housing, which is looking historically, looking at facts and evidence and understanding that the government has to intervene. The marketplace is not going to correct housing just by increasing the supply. Government has to get back into the business of providing housing.

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The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Mr. Mike Harris: I've got here the NDP plan—well, we'll call it a plan—on what they would like to do to build more affordable and, I believe, non-market rental homes, to the tune of 250,000 homes in the province. Using some basic math, what it costs, roughly, to build a home right now is around \$500,000. For 250,000 homes, we're talking about—what is it? A billion and a quarter, something along those lines? I'm just wondering what taxes you would raise to be able to pay for those homes.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Sorry, maybe you could communicate with me later. I have no idea what you're referring to; I'm saying that honestly.

But I can tell you that I just talked about sunset clauses on developers, making sure that, as the government House leader himself has proposed to the media—putting a sunset clause on developers so that they start building rather than speculating and sitting on approvals, according

to the big city mayors, would create hundreds of thousands of units of housing. That's something we can do without spending any taxpayer dollars.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Thank you to my colleague from Niagara Centre. It's always a pleasure to hear you speak in the House.

Three times they interrupted you during your speech, even though you were speaking dead on to the bill. They're always trying to change the subject, or at least change the channel.

Coming from northern Ontario—and you spoke a bit in your discussions on this bill—do you see anything in there that will help us build more affordable, supportive and co-op houses? Because this is what's lacking in my area. People have nowhere to go. There's a lack of housing, and plus, we know there are programs that qualify if you have 100,000 in population, yet in northern Ontario, we don't see very much over 100,000. So can you speak on this, please?

Mr. Jeff Burch: Thank you, my friend, for that question. Thank you for recognizing that. I'm not sure what all the interruptions were about. At one point, I was talking about people struggling to choose between food and housing. It's about affordable housing, so I'm not sure what the problem was there.

But the answer is no, there's nothing in this bill that will create any housing at all. It changes a definition of what is affordable housing and talks about an EV battery plant in St. Thomas.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I want to ask the member about the second half of this bill. The member spoke of having General Motors in his region, a fine automotive manufacturer here in the province of Ontario. In my region, we have Stellantis and Ford, other fine automobile manufacturers. This bill talks about Volkswagen and its historic \$7-billion investment in the province of Ontario, brought in part through the incredible efforts of the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

I am very excited about that investment and what this bill talks about, because it means, in my riding of Essex, people are going to have good, solid jobs for life, well-paying jobs. And I'm wondering, since the member has General Motors in his riding, is he excited about this bill and that \$7-billion investment by Volkswagen? Because it's going to have great effects in his riding too.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Thank you to the member from Essex. I believe I said in my speaking that everyone can share the credit. I believe it was led by the federal government. The provincial government was there, municipal government, St. Thomas. That's what the bill was about. I supported it, and I also brought up the fact that I think unions can take some of the credit as well, along with all the members of this House who supported the bill.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

MPP Jill Andrew: Thank you to our member for impactful conversation on the government's bill. This bill is entitled, I believe, the Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act. It certainly is an improvement that the government is proposing to define affordability based on income as opposed to strictly based on market value.

But the question I have—particularly in St. Paul's, where rent is soaring—is, why will the Conservative government not commit to real rent control? We have tenants in St. Paul's who had to leave the community, actually. The rent was \$2,500 a month. The landlord proposed \$3,500 a month and then they went to \$9,500 a month for a two-bedroom condo. This wouldn't be able to happen if we had real rent control in Ontario.

Can the member discuss why real rent control—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Response? Niagara Centre.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Thank you, my friend from St. Paul's. Yes, it boggles the mind that any government in the middle of a housing crisis would remove rent controls. It's had terrible effects on folks, especially in Toronto. I really appreciate the advocacy that she does and also our critic, the member from University–Rosedale.

We just saw this week people protesting about renovations and the situation is just horrible, so hopefully one day the government sees the light. It would be a big deal for renters, but it wouldn't be a big deal for them just to put rent control back.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further debate? Further debate?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Speaker. Your voice is so soft compared to mine, I didn't hear you right off the bat. But I certainly appreciate the opportunity.

However, I do want to say, Speaker, because there's so little time and I would prefer not to have my address today split in two, I'm going to move adjournment of the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Mr. Yakabuski has moved the adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This is a 30-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1008 to 1015.

Pursuant to standing order 49(a), the Speaker interrupted the bells and deemed the debate to be adjourned.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

WHITEWATER O'BRIEN WINERY

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I wasn't expecting to be so early, but then again, I probably caused the problem.

"It can't be done": Don't bother using those words when speaking to an O'Brien. When folks told Del O'Brien some 50 years ago that establishing an airline in Pembroke wouldn't work, he proved them wrong.

Well, his son Jason has done it again. Against conventional thinking that you couldn't establish a vineyard in Renfrew county, he and his wife Lioutsia have done just that. On September 2, I had the honour of attending the official opening of WOW, the WhiteWater O'Brien Winery. Nestled on the shores of Lake Allumette, the vineyard stretches for a quarter of a kilometre and basks in the constant westerly breeze blowing off over eight kilometres of open water. The westerlies ward off late spring and early fall frost and act as air conditioning in the summer. This enhances the moderating effect of cool nights and hot days, which is similar to many of the great vineyard locations around the world.

The vineyard is part of the 700-acre O'Brien farm, which has been in the family since the 1830s and is one of the earliest and largest certified organic farms in the Ottawa Valley. WhiteWater O'Brien Winery is currently producing four varieties: two whites, one red and a rosé. Speaker, I can tell you they are all very, very good.

I want to congratulate the O'Briens on their grand opening and let everyone know that in addition to being available on site, an online delivery service is under development. Renfrew County's WhiteWater O'Brien Winery is on the march and the O'Briens are leading the charge.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Miss Monique Taylor: I rise today to amplify the voices of so many Ontarians who are struggling daily to make ends meet and are reaching out with nowhere to turn. Instead of hearing meaningful solutions to legislated poverty from this government, they are seeing headlines which are filled with scandal after scandal—scandals which are helping developers and certainly not them. Many calls to my office point out how life is getting harder, not better.

Just over a year ago, some of my caucus colleagues and I shed light on what small amount of money was left to buy food on the social services diet. You may recall I spent \$57 for two weeks of food. This was the reality for so many on Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program day in and day out. It was tough. It was physically and mentally draining. The lessons we learned in those two weeks opened up conversations with thousands of people struggling to get access to housing, much-needed medications and food.

Fast-forward to today. I wonder what that same amount of money would buy off the shelves. What would I have to leave behind: the loaf of bread, the can of tuna or the cucumber that was the only fresh item in my basket? As we continue to listen and learn, we hear the challenges. History doesn't have to repeat itself. We can make change.

I will continue to call this government to action and demand social service rates keep people safe, fed and hopeful for a better way forward.

EVENTS IN BRAMPTON WEST

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: I had a very productive break from the House. I spent the summer connecting with the community and joining a wide variety of events.

One of the most remarkable aspects of our country and our province is the wide diversity of cultures. The social fabric of our province gives us, as elected officials, the opportunity to immerse ourselves in a wide variety of beautiful cultures and traditions.

A couple of notable events that I participated in over the summer included the Brampton Boat Race, Ride for Raja, Jalsa Salana, and the Taste of India Food Festival. The Brampton Boat Race is a beautiful display of the Malayalee culture that originates from the Kerala region in India, organized by the Brampton Malayalee Samajam. The Ride for Raja is an event organized by the Sikh Motorcycle Club with all the funds going towards helping children and youths in Peel region. The Jalsa Salana is an event organized by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at that promotes the religion of Islam through preaching peace and inclusivity. The Taste of India Food Festival is an amazing event that displays the unique cultures of India through food and music.

This summer provided an opportunity for me to immerse myself within the community, enriching my knowledge about the various cultures that make up our society.

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr. Peter Tabuns: The Toronto Star this morning reported drops in housing starts, with more drops expected, notwithstanding claims made by the government. This is dire news. It's bad for all. It's very bad for tenants of corporate landlords who are being mercilessly squeezed.

A constituent wrote to me the other day about the 5.5% rent increase she and others in her building are facing. As she said, "Our salaries are not increasing. Many of the people in our building are on Old Age Security, CPP or on social support." They can't afford an increase like that. She noted that units two years ago in that building rented for \$1,300 a month and are now going for \$2,000 a month.

It is no wonder that tenants—people, generally—trying to deal with the housing crisis are facing those really difficult decisions about having a roof over their head or buying groceries regularly. It's no wonder that when I go to food banks in my riding at the invitation of those who are running them that I see large numbers of people.

Speaker, we need action on housing. We need a restoration of rent control with the end of that practice of having unlimited rent increases when a tenant moves out, we need a ban on above-guideline increases and we need substantial direct government investment in housing. People are hurting. We need the action now.

CAMBRIDGE FOOD BANK

Mr. Brian Riddell: Today I'm excited to share a heartwarming story from my riding of Cambridge. Jamie Colwell dedicated much of his spare time this past summer

to assisting those with food insecurities. With the help of a team of volunteers, Jamie was able to collect 4,200 pounds of food and more than \$6,000 for the Cambridge Food Bank. It's amazing.

It's not the first summer he's done this. He spent weekends collecting donations outside of grocery stores. Last year he did the same thing, raising \$5,400 for the food bank to buy healthy snacks for kids heading back to school.

The support Jamie has shown for the Cambridge Food Bank comes at a critical time. Dianne McLeod, executive director of the agency, said the need for food assistance is increasing every month and volunteers like Jamie help meet the ends of what these people are really requiring.

Recently, Jamie was presented with a volunteer award of merit at the food bank's annual general meeting. I'd like to congratulate Jamie for his hard work and for being a citizen of Cambridge.

MARIAN SHRINE OF GRATITUDE

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: It is said that two decades ago, beneath a historic cottage on the banks of the Humber River here in Toronto, a miraculous healing occurred. And so, at this special place a shrine was built, and people were welcome to come and gather and pray. It is called the Marian Shrine of Gratitude in honour of Holy Mother Mary, whose name was invoked at that desperate time of need.

So the people came, countless thousands, day after day, year after year, in rain and in shine, sometimes in the night with the stars above and the sounds of nature all around. They came in the coldest of months in the winter too because, you see, the iron-wrought gates of this special place would never close, because only God knows a person's time of need. The people would come to bask in the feelings of peace and calm the spiritual oasis provided. Many would come to pray for a miracle in their darkest hours and swear that doing so changed their lives forever.

But this summer, the place was abruptly sold—its gates now closed, with guards casting people out with tears in their eyes; barriers erected to keep them away.

Today, the faithful are now called squatters, because they still come to pray every night at 8. The welcomed are now called unwelcomed and mocked—the very same people who loved and maintained this special place for so many years; the great statue to Mother Mary torn down along with other religious artifacts, statues, monuments and more.

This summer, I called on the government to review the heritage significance of this special place and put an urgent stop to the damage. Over 20,000 have signed petitions to save this special place. I will be presenting many of their names to the government this afternoon, hoping they will be moved to step in and help in this hour of need.

JOUR DES FRANCO-ONTARIENS ET
DES FRANCO-ONTARIENNES

M. Stéphane Sarrazin: Le lundi 25 septembre dernier était une journée spéciale. Pour plusieurs de mes

collègues, c'était un retour en Chambre ici à Queen's Park, mais pour moi, c'était une journée de célébration avec les Franco-Ontariens et les Franco-Ontariennes de ma circonscription et de partout à travers notre belle province.

Ce jour-là, le 18^e monument de la francophonie a été inauguré dans un petit village de 1 200 habitants qui fait partie d'une municipalité d'environ 10 000 de population dans l'Est ontarien. Ça a été un honneur pour moi de prendre la parole en tant que représentant du gouvernement de l'Ontario à cette inauguration, qui a eu lieu dans le petit village d'Alfred, qui se trouve à être mon village natal, monsieur le Président. Près de 1 000 personnes ont pris part aux célébrations. Plusieurs résidents d'Alfred accompagnés de plusieurs élèves et de professeurs des écoles francophones environnantes étaient présents.

J'aimerais profiter de l'occasion pour féliciter le comité du Monument de la francophonie d'Alfred pour leur travail incroyable. Il y a 18 monuments de la francophonie, puis sept de ces monuments sont dans ma circonscription, monsieur le Président. C'est quelque chose dont je suis fier.

Chaque année, les 80 000 francophones et francophiles de ma circonscription ont l'opportunité de participer à plusieurs levers du drapeau franco-ontarien et de célébrer leur fierté d'être francophone. Félicitations à tous les Franco-Ontariens, Franco-Ontariennes et francophiles qui ont pris part aux célébrations de lever du drapeau franco-ontarien ici même à Queen's Park et partout à travers la province de l'Ontario.

ONTARIO FARMERS

Mr. Mike Schreiner: This is Ontario Agriculture Week, and I want to express my sincere gratitude to Ontario farmers. As we gather with our families on Thanksgiving, I know many of us will be enjoying the incredible local food we grow in Ontario.

Ontario has the best farmers and some of the best farmland in the entire world, but Ontario unfortunately is losing that farmland at an unsustainable rate of 319 acres per day. This threatens our food security and our \$50-billion farming economy, yet this government is planning on losing even more farmland by imposing expense sprawl on Hamilton, Ottawa, Halton, Waterloo and so many other places. It's greenbelt 2.0.

I want to say to the people of Ontario: Thank you for standing up to protect our greenbelt. From all of us who enjoy local food and support Ontario farmers, we say thank you.

I want you to know that I will be standing with you to protect farmland all across this province. I'm focused on solving the housing crisis by building homes that people can afford on land already approved for development, not paving over farmland to enrich wealthy insiders.

I encourage everyone to buy local for Thanksgiving and to renew your commitment to supporting Ontario farmers and protecting local farmland across Ontario.

POLICE SERVICE DOGS

Mr. Dave Smith: When I've had the opportunity to rise in this chamber for a member's statement, I have always tried to highlight some of the great people or great events in my riding, but today I'm going to deviate a little bit from that. I'm not going to talk about a person or an event. I'm going to talk about a dog—two dogs, actually: police service dog Gryphon and police service dog Isaac. These two dogs are invaluable resources for our community.

Just a couple of weeks ago during a single shift, Gryphon helped nab armed suspects in two separate incidences, two hours apart, and ensured no officers were injured.

This past winter, PSD Isaac tracked a man in his seventies who had taken his own dog for a walk in a wooded area when it started to snow. The man got lost during the snowstorm, but Isaac was able to track him and find him even though more than 15 centimetres of snow had fallen and covered his footprints.

These two dogs are amazing. It's not just me who says that. They have the proof to back it up.

This year at the Canadian police dog championship, Isaac finished fourth in all of Canada in drug detection, while Gryphon finished fifth in drug detections as well as fourth in building searches. Well done, PSD Isaac and PSD Gryphon. Everyone in Peterborough is proud of you.

ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm happy to share some projects in my riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock that received recent Ontario Trillium Foundation grants. From environmental stewardship to funding for high-tech machinery, to investments with the Alzheimer Society for their Minds in Motion program and the Kawartha Victim Services to help those in crisis, the Trillium Foundation grants have been foundational in driving positive change.

Existing facilities also benefited to help promote an active lifestyle, whether it's new flooring at the Highlands Squash Club, upgrading the decks and shelters at the Bobcaygeon Lawn Bowling Club, outdoor rinks in Harcourt and West Guilford, a new playground in Haliburton, or expanding a natural horsemanship program—all new opportunities for people to get and stay active. Cultural initiatives like those offered at Abbey Gardens have been awarded grants to improve accessibility and increase economic and recreational opportunities as well as to increase their venue capacity for their communities. The Grove Theatre in Fenelon Falls expanded their local arts programs and lineup for the 2023 season and entertained us all.

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Thank you to all those organizations that applied to the Ontario Trillium grants program and to the OTF staff for all their support in communities in my riding.

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

REPORT, FINANCIAL
ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Before I invite members to introduce their guests, I beg to inform the House that the following document has been tabled: a report, entitled Expenditure Monitor 2023-24: Q1, from the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. John Yakabuski: In the members' gallery today I have a constituent from my riding, a distinguished veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces, Michael McCloskey, who is here visiting us in Queen's Park. But also, very importantly, Mr. McCloskey is the father of page Erin McCloskey, who was our page captain yesterday. Unfortunately I wasn't here to introduce Erin yesterday, but I was glad to be able to introduce her father here today, and I look forward to having lunch and sharing some stories with them today.

Ms. Sarah Jama: River Almanzor is the page captain and has been for the last two weeks, and she's from Hamilton Centre. We're joined in the members' gallery by her family: Nicole Almanzor and Jan Almanzor; Angela, who is her aunt; Angie and Oscar, her grandparents; Colton Almanzor, who is her brother; and Marissa Fajardo, who is her grandparent.

Thank you, River, for everything you've been doing this week. It's great to have this family in the House. Welcome to your House.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Je voudrais souhaiter la bienvenue aux membres de l'Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques, également des anciens collègues de travail. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

Hon. Michael D. Ford: It is my pleasure to rise in the House today and welcome members of the Somali community and the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation here to the House. I invite all members to room 230 for a reception over lunch.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I'm proud to welcome my family here in the gallery today: my wife Aleksandra, my son Aleksandar and my son Ilija.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: Good morning, everyone. I'd like to introduce my powerful page—wherever he is—from beautiful Beaches—East York, James Gillespie, and I encourage him to get a good night's sleep because he will be page captain tomorrow. Welcome to the House.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: In celebration of the 25th anniversary of Ontario Agriculture Week, it's wonderful to have the Beef Farmers of Ontario here with us: President Jack Chaffe and his gang, Craig McLaughlin, Joost van der Heiden, Jairus Maus, Thomas Brandstetter, Evan Chaffe and Darby Wheeler. And I saw Richard Horne was in the House as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, after you've been to the Somali reception, please come to the front lawn and enjoy a beautiful beef barbecue.

Mr. Will Bouma: I'd like to welcome to the House Stewart Kiff.

Stewart, I admire your strength and courage, I appreciate your friendship, and I am thankful for your wisdom. Have a good day.

M^{me} Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: J'aimerais bien reconnaître mon amie Melinda Chartrand. Elle porte beaucoup de chapeaux, mais aujourd'hui, elle représente l'Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques. On vous invite à la réception qui aura lieu aujourd'hui de 5 heures à 7 heures ce soir. Bonjour, Melinda.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Speaker, I have the honour of introducing some special guests today in the members' gallery opposite: my wife, Najia Crawford; my mother-in-law, Zahida Mahmood; and my two older girls, who are graduates of the legislative page program. Welcome back, Monica and Michelle Crawford. And my parents, Bill and Diane Crawford, are watching from home. They're all here to support today's page captain Sophia Crawford.

L'hon. Stephen Lecce: C'est un honneur pour moi de présenter à Queen's Park la TFO et l'Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques. Bienvenue.

Join us in 228 and 230 this afternoon for a wonderful reception of Franco-Ontarians.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Mr. Speaker, it is an absolute pleasure to introduce MLA Muhammad Fiaz from the Saskatchewan Party. He's deputy chair of committee as a whole, member of the human services committee, and parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education. He's here for the first time to watch question period.

Mr. Stephen Blais: It's my pleasure to introduce someone who is well known to all of us, I think: Michau van Speyk, a passionate autism advocate, who is with us today.

Hon. Jill Dunlop: I would like to welcome Dr. Adrienne Galway from the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer as well as the rest of her ONCAT team to Queen's Park today.

Thank you for being here.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our introduction of visitors for this morning.

MANITOBA ELECTION

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yes, point of order, Speaker: I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Premier-elect Wab Kinew on his historic win as the first First Nations Premier of a province in Canada and a new bright day in Manitoba.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I understand the member for Kiiwetinoong wishes to speak to the same point of order.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: *Remarks in Anishiniimowin.* Good morning, Speaker. Just a point of order: As an

Anishinaabe, I am very proud this morning; I'm very happy this morning. Last night, Manitoba elected its first Anishinaabe Premier. Wab Kinew is a member of Onigaming First Nation, which is part of Treaty 3 territory here in Ontario. This is a very proud moment for the province and for all Indigenous people.

Congratulations, Wab. I know you're going to do a great job. Meegwetch.

QUESTION PERIOD

LAND USE PLANNING

Ms. Marit Stiles: My question is to the Premier.

Earlier this year, the government made some sudden and very specific changes to the official plans of six municipalities. They carved up 4,700 hectares of farmland and green space for more sprawl, leaving municipalities scrambling.

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Now, the NDP official opposition has obtained an internal government memo that reveals stark warnings about "potential contentious issues" that could come from these changes. It warns that relations with First Nations would be hurt and that forcing this on municipalities would override all the work they've done on local planning.

To the Premier: Why did the government push ahead with these drastic changes despite these very serious warnings from their own staff?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Of course, we're working constantly with our municipal partners. We've made it very clear to all of our municipal partners that we intend to build 1.5 million homes across the province of Ontario. We haven't made that a secret; it is something that has driven us since 2018.

At the same time, we are seeing thousands of people coming to the province of Ontario from other parts of Canada to participate in what is the economic growth and prosperity here in the province of Ontario. At the same time, over the next decade, millions of people will come from all over the world. Because of that, Mr. Speaker—not only because of people coming from other parts of Canada, not only because of the immigration that is coming to this country, but because we want fundamentally to get people out of their parents' basements and into homes, whether it's apartments or whether it's a home of their own—we are going to continue to focus on building homes for the people of the province of Ontario, despite the opposition.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, that answer is not going to cut it because this is not happening in a vacuum. This is a

land grab happening at the same time as this government was carving up the greenbelt.

Let's look at Barrie. The government actually reduced density targets for new developments in Barrie. That means higher infrastructure costs for people in Barrie and more sprawl. But guess what? It's bigger bucks for a select few land speculators. The government's memo warned that these changes would make it harder for the city to meet its own housing targets.

Speaker, to the Premier: If this was actually about housing, why is his government pursuing policies that will make it even harder for future generations to find a home?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Premier.

Hon. Doug Ford: Mr. Speaker, Mayor Nuttall is doing a great job up in Barrie. He wants to build homes. He wants to contribute. He has capacity, whether it's water or sewage, and he's asking to build more homes. That's why we're doing it. We consulted with the mayor, and we're going to build the 1.5 million homes that the opposition doesn't want to build.

Do you notice that they don't want to do anything? They vote against building homes, vote against building hospitals, vote against long-term care. They vote against the expansion of roads, highways and bridges. They vote against everything. This province would be a disaster if you were ever on this side of the aisle here.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'll tell you what, Speaker. We need that Premier to do a better job.

Speaker, the memo also covers this government's 2,300 hectares of forced sprawl in Waterloo region, throwing out all of the consultation and the planning work that the region had already done. The government's own internal memo warned against this, and it said that third-party requests were prioritized over evidence-based solutions by expert planners. This government knew this was wrong; they knew it.

Back to the Premier: Why did his government proceed with this plan for forced boundary changes, and who made these third-party requests?

Interjections.

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

To respond, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, what's exciting about that question isn't the fact that the NDP don't want to build homes. What's exciting about that question is it underlines the economic success that we are seeing in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, in southwestern Ontario. We're seeing that despite the opposition of the NDP and the Liberals.

The interim Liberal leader just called building houses a virus—he called it a virus—and that underpins 15 years of Liberal government rule in the province of Ontario. It is not a virus to have people have the home ownership that generations of Ontarians have wanted. It is not a virus for 700,000 people to have the dignity of a job who didn't

when he and the NDP were in power in the province of Ontario.

We're a province that is growing. Our communities are growing, and they want to participate with us. They want to build homes. They want to meet those targets, and many of our communities want to exceed the targets—

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

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, back to the Premier: There is a reason that we need to pay close attention to the amendments to official plans. It was amendments to York's official plan where the government quietly signalled plans to open up two more protected greenbelt sites to speculators.

The Premier says he will supposedly reverse this greenbelt grab, so will he also reverse the changes to York's official plan?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: No, Mr. Speaker, because the lands she referenced were never actually removed from the greenbelt. She forgot to mention that.

But what we will continue to do is, across the province of Ontario, where we are making billions of dollars of investments in transit and transportation, where we're building brand new GO train stations, we will intensify—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Paul Calandra: —and ensure that we build homes around those infrastructure investments.

It again underlines what's happening in York region. We have people who need employers in York region. When you come to downtown Stouffville, help wanted signs are in the windows because the economy is booming. Our agricultural sector is booming. Our high-tech sector in Markham is booming. It kills the opposition, because for 15 years, they worked with the Liberals to bring the province to its knees.

I'm excited, because, you know what, the Ontario that we have today is booming. It's moving in the right direction. It's because of this Premier and this caucus, and we won't stop.

Interjections.

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

Restart the clock. Supplementary?

Ms. Marit Stiles: So that's a no, Speaker. That's a no. Interesting, because guess who that benefits? Guess who that benefits? Another speculator with ties to the Premier and to his party.

Speaker, the Integrity Commissioner revealed evidence suggesting—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I could not hear the member who duly had the floor. Interjections are always

out of order. I will continue to call out members by name if need be.

Start the clock. Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thanks, Speaker, and I'll start over again.

Because guess who those changes benefit? Another speculator with ties to this Premier and his party.

Speaker, the Integrity Commissioner revealed evidence suggesting Michael Rice asked for a parcel of land in Richmond Hill to be removed from the greenbelt—land he didn't yet own. But Mr. Rice seemed to know that this government was planning to open up this land for speculators, so he made a deal to buy the land at a rock-bottom price, and then this government changed the boundaries to include his property, driving its value up dramatically.

Did the Premier and did this government give preferential treatment to Mr. Rice?

Hon. Paul Calandra: No, Speaker, absolutely not, because the land was never removed from the greenbelt. The land was never removed from the greenbelt. It was never removed from the protection of the Oak Ridges moraine land planning act. That change never happened.

But do you know what we're going to continue to do? We're going to continue to do what they don't want us to do. We're going to focus on building an economy that is stronger than ever. We're going to continue to focus on making sure that the next generation of Ontarians can get out of their parents' basements and can go find homes of their own. We're going to continue to focus on policies that have given us more housing starts than in the last 15 years. We're going to continue to focus on policies that have given us more affordable rental housing starts in over 15 years. Do you know why that is? Because we're removing the obstacles that they put in place.

This isn't about housing for them. It's not about the economy for them, Mr. Speaker. What it's about is not understanding how to build a bigger, better, stronger Ontario, because for 15 years, they worked with them, and they failed.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, this is not and it never has been about building housing in the province of Ontario, and the people of this province know it. And you know what else, Speaker—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. The member for Sault Ste. Marie will come to order.

A number of members down at that end of the chamber will come to order.

The member for Ottawa South could come to order.

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I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Speaker. I know why they're getting so agitated. It's because people in this province feel really let down. They feel let down.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. I apologize. The member for Kitchener–Conestoga will come to order. The Minister of Energy will come to order. We're not going to continue this way. I'm not going to keep interrupting the member who has the floor because of excessive heckling.

Start the clock. Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yes, it's hilarious.

People in this province, they're suffering. They feel let down by this government. They're hurting. They're frustrated. They're watching a government that isn't helping them but is embroiled in scandals of their own making.

They're seeing the pattern of preferential treatment that this government gives to their insider friends and donors. That's why these undemocratic changes that I've been talking about, this forced sprawl, is being called greenbelt grab 2.0.

Back to the Premier: Will he stop making excuses for his insider friends and start fixing this mess?

Interjections.

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

The Premier.

Hon. Doug Ford: Talk to the 700,000 people that are working today that weren't working when you and the Liberals were in government. You chased 300,000 jobs out of the province. Talk to the people up in Durham who don't have to pay the tolls on the 412 and 418 that you implemented and the Liberals implemented. Talk to the eight million people that got a cheque back from the government for the licence stickers. Talk to the people that fill up every single day and save 10.7 cents per litre.

You are against building homes, building hospitals, building long-term care. You are against absolutely everything in this province. Thank God we're running the province and not you two, who absolutely destroyed the province. For 15 years you destroyed it.

Interjections.

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

The next question.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING

Ms. Sandy Shaw: My question is to the Premier. This government unilaterally moved more than 1,000 acres of farmland inside urban boundaries in Wellington county. An internal government memo notes that these changes occurred before the county had completed a land-needs assessment and municipal comprehensive review. Instead of letting Wellington county assess where it could grow sustainably and cost-effectively, the government just went ahead and arbitrarily added 1,000 acres to Fergus and Elora.

The government doesn't even know the impact on groundwater or the cost of infrastructure. Premier, why would your government impose such risk on the people of

Wellington county without any evidence whatsoever to support this decision?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: We made it very clear that we intend to build 1.5 million homes across the province of Ontario. We've also made it very clear to our municipal partners that we expect them to work with us.

In the member's own home community, in Hamilton, despite the fact that their own planners said that they don't have enough land to meet their targets of building homes, they refuse to expand the urban boundaries, so we had to make sure that we did that. You know why? Because Hamilton is expected to grow to over 800,000 people over the next decade. It is our responsibility to ensure that there is enough land available over the next two decades to meet the targets that we are setting.

We have a very aggressive and ambitious target for 2031: 1.5 million homes to put ourselves back on track, Mr. Speaker. We will not be diverted from that, despite the opposition of the NDP and the Liberals. All they like to do is obstacle after obstacle after obstacle. You know what we're going to do? We're going to remove those obstacles and we're going to make sure our municipal partners work with us to build those homes.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Labour, come to order. The member for Orléans, come to order.

Supplementary question.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Let me set this minister straight. Hamilton has already exceeded our housing targets within our existing boundaries. In Belleville, the government ordered the city to sprawl eastward across provincially significant wetlands in the Bell Creek system. The government's own internal memo says there may be legal risk because the decision may not conform with the government's own provincial policy statement.

Why is this government forcing Belleville to make changes to its official plan that it knows might be illegal?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Actually, Mr. Speaker, the city of Hamilton chose to ignore its own planners, who very clearly outlined that the existing urban boundaries did not have enough land to meet the long-term housing needs of the residents. Now, what does that mean, colleagues? What does it mean? It means that in future years, there is not going to be enough land available. It is exactly why we're in a housing crisis today.

You have just admitted to the entire province why it is that you are such a failure in working with them. It's because you don't think long-term. For you, it's all about today. For us, it's about tomorrow and building a better future for the next generation. Our whole job about being here is working to give the next generation something better than we received. That's the difference between you and us, and we will not be sidetracked on that—

Interjections.

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

I'm having a great deal of difficulty maintaining my patience, so I'm going to move to warnings. If you're warned and I have to speak to you again, you'll be named.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Start the clock. The next question.

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. The previous Liberal government, with support from the NDP, turned a blind eye as over 300,000 manufacturing jobs left this province. Their policies left us dependent on other jurisdictions for critical goods.

In contrast, our government took a proactive and common-sense approach. We recognized that in an era of geopolitical uncertainty, we need a resilient manufacturing sector so that we can make products in Ontario again.

Under the leadership of this Premier, this minister and our government, manufacturing employment is now at one of its highest levels since 2008 and is thriving in many parts of our province. Speaker, can the minister please provide an update on the successes in Ontario's manufacturing sector and their contributions to Ontario's prosperity?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: This Friday, our government will join with the hard-working men and women who work in Ontario's world-class manufacturing sector in celebrating Ontario Manufacturing Day, and throughout Manufacturing Month in October, we'll recognize the immense contributions made to our economy.

Ontario is home to more than 814,000 men and women who turn out finished products every day at our 36,000 manufacturing companies. Here's an interesting fact, Speaker: In July, Ontario added more manufacturing jobs than all 50 US states combined. So to the manufacturing workers, we say have a great Manufacturing Day, and thank you for everything you're doing to support our province.

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

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you to the minister for his answer. It is great news to hear that our manufacturing sector is thriving again. The previous Liberal government gave up on the manufacturing sector as they watched jobs flee the province, thanks to their agenda of higher taxes and more red tape.

Under our government, we are witnessing manufacturers investing more in Ontario, and we are continuing to see even more jobs being created in the sector. We cannot afford to lose that momentum. Our government must continue to do all that we can to keep moving forward in building a stronger Ontario.

Speaker, can the minister please explain what our government is doing to advance job growth in the manufacturing sector?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: We understand that vital success that comes from these regional communities that we work

with across the province. That's why we put a regional development program in place. We've invested \$110 million to support 90 companies in the last four years. Those companies themselves have invested \$1 billion and created 2,200 good-paying jobs. And our Ontario Made Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit is lowering the cost for companies looking to invest in new equipment and new machinery. By reducing the cost of business by \$8 billion annually, we've seen the creation of nearly 40,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs since we took office. We will always support and promote our world-class manufacturing sector.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I want to provide an opportunity for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to correct their record. Yesterday, the minister insisted that Mr. Massoudi had never been registered to lobby the government. The lobbyist register tells a very different story. It shows that the firm Mr. Massoudi owns, Atlas Strategic Advisors, was indeed registered and lobbying the government on behalf of numerous clients between 2022 and 2023.

So let's give the minister another opportunity—one more chance, Speaker. Why was Mr. Massoudi given a contract to write speeches for the Premier at the same time that he was actively lobbying this government?

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Hon. Paul Calandra: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, it is actually the individual who lobbies. The member of the opposition: It's not the company. It's individuals who register with the Integrity Commissioner. I'd be happy to help on that. Mr. Massoudi, of course, no longer has a contract with the government.

Look, Mr. Speaker, this is all about the same thing, right? It's about the opposition that the NDP have to building homes in the province of Ontario. We were very clear. We made a public policy decision that was not supported by the people of the province of Ontario when we said that we would try to accelerate the building of 50,000 homes on the greenbelt. That was not supported by the people of province of Ontario. We apologized for that and we're moving on. We accepted all 15 recommendations of the Auditor General.

But, Mr. Speaker, make no doubt about it: We are going to double down in making sure that we build those 1.5 million homes for the people of the province of Ontario. That is a goal that we've had since 2018 and we will not be sidetracked on that mission.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I didn't hear an actual answer in that non-answer. What I heard was excuses. I heard a technical response. So, Speaker, let's try this one more time.

It's worth noting the government didn't hire Mr. Massoudi by name to provide these services to the government, following his departure. Instead, they hired the company that he owns, Atlas Strategic Advisors, to write the Premier's speeches and provide communication advice.

They also admitted that this undertaking was already happening until a few weeks ago—just a few short weeks. That same company is registered to lobby and is actually doing quite a bit of lobbying. In fact, the Integrity Commissioner has been looking into this, “looking into Atlas Strategic Advisors for allegations of illegal lobbying since June.” By the minister’s own admission, Mr. Massoudi was providing these services until only a couple of weeks ago.

People deserve honest and lawful government. Does the minister understand that this arrangement with a close friend of the Premier’s could potentially be illegal lobbying?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, Mr. Speaker, the commissioner will investigate that, and we’ll look at that. At the same time, the Premier was very clear: He expected more, and Mr. Massoudi is no longer employed by caucus research and services.

But make no mistake about it: As I just said, and I’ll say it again, I am not ashamed of the fact that we have said that we made a mistake when we wanted to build on the greenbelt. We made a mistake because we wanted to accelerate the construction of 50,000 homes across the province of Ontario. The Premier was very clear on that. We apologized. We accepted the 15 recommendations of the Auditor General.

But make no mistake about it—and I say this very clearly to people who are, right now, in their parents’ basements; students who are wondering where their first home, where their first apartment is going to come from; students on our campuses across the province who can’t find homes because we can’t get homes built in communities that refuse to build them: We will untangle the obstacles, we will get the job done and we will build for the people of the province of Ontario. That, I guarantee you.

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Robert Bailey: My question is for the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. For far too long, many Ontarians have had to make the decision to uproot their lives and move or face long commutes every day in order to find employment. Unfortunately, this means that people experience the loss of leaving their communities, because many businesses are located in large cities or downtown Toronto.

Building up communities across our province will help to strengthen our economy and build a stronger Ontario for the next generation. That is why it is important that our government continues to implement innovative solutions that bring economic development opportunities to more communities across Ontario.

Speaker, can the minister please share what our government is doing to help bring good jobs to every part of our province?

Hon. David Piccini: I’d like to thank that member for his work and for his mentorship. He has been such a strong advocate for Sarnia–Lambton.

And it’s true, Speaker: As someone who is proudly from rural Ontario, we recognize that we need all corners of this province flourishing if we’re going to unlock the economic potential and might that is Ontario. I’m proud to highlight two important funds that our ministry is working on, that the incredible team is working on to support rural Ontarians: the Skills Development Fund, which is open right now until November, and the capital stream. This is making a difference.

This morning, I just met with beef farmers. Processing capability is a big, big issue for so many farmers in communities like mine. We talked about the Skills Development Fund as an important tool to unlock the capabilities of the next generation in processing. This is just one small example of a difference this government is making to unlock the potential that is rural Ontario.

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

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you to the minister for that response. It’s good news that the WSIB head office is moving to London, which will save taxpayers money, help workers and also bring more jobs to local communities in southwestern Ontario. Good jobs are a catalyst for reviving neighbourhoods, inspiring communities, raising optimism and creating potential for greater economic and social prosperity.

People should be able to work near their families, friends and the places they know and love. That is why our government must continue to deliver on the actions that show respect for the working people of Ontario.

Speaker, can the minister please elaborate and explain how those decisions, such as relocating the WSIB head office to London, will help to build a stronger Ontario?

Hon. David Piccini: You know, Speaker, sometimes it’s small changes that make a world of difference. It’s this Premier, this government, that recognized that when you have all the agencies, boards and commissions on the most expensive strip of real estate in downtown Toronto—we asked ourselves, “Is that the best use of taxpayer dollars, or employer dollars in the case of the WSIB?” The answer, Speaker, is no. We’re saving \$100 million by moving that facility to London, Ontario.

And what does that mean? It means we can expand—
Interjection.

Hon. David Piccini: Maybe if you would listen, you would learn something about the firefighters in Orléans that I met with.

That means expanding thyroid cancer—
Interjection.

Hon. David Piccini: Thyroid cancer, Speaker, and pancreatic cancer: expanded coverage for firefighters in that member’s community of Orléans.

We’ll take no lessons from a man who can’t get the bloody transit in Ottawa right. And he’s heckling us? We’re going to get workers working in the province of Ontario, save taxpayer dollars—

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

I'll once again remind members to make their remarks through the Chair.

PLANIFICATION MUNICIPALE MUNICIPAL PLANNING

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le premier ministre. Plus tôt cette année, le gouvernement a apporté des changements aux plans officiels de Waterloo, Wellington, Guelph, Barrie, Belleville et Peterborough. Ces changements ont déplacé 4 700 hectares de terres agricoles et d'espaces verts à l'intérieur des limites urbaines.

Une note obtenue par les néo-démocrates révèle que le gouvernement a été averti au sujet de « questions litigieuses potentielles » qui pourraient découler de ces changements. La note avertissait le gouvernement que les relations avec les Premières Nations seraient affectées et que les municipalités considéreraient ces changements comme une ingérence.

Monsieur le Président, pourquoi est-ce que le gouvernement a apporté des changements drastiques aux limites municipales malgré les sérieux avertissements de son propre personnel?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: As I just said, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of the fact that we are seeing such incredible economic growth in that part of the province. Kitchener-Waterloo, southwestern Ontario, is seeing a tremendous amount of growth. People want to be in that community.

Now, it's not just building homes, right? We had to build long-term-care homes. I've been in all parts of southwestern Ontario, whether Leamington or Brantford-Brant—we're building long-term-care homes in all of those communities because the NDP and the Liberals never made it a priority. We are.

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I was in Windsor opening up Meadowbrook Place, which is the first social housing to be built in that community in over 30 years. But we need to build more. Do you know why we need to build more in that community? We need to think about more than just today. We have to think about tomorrow, because this minister and this Premier are landing economic development unseen in this province ever—is it \$25 billion worth of investment coming to southwestern Ontario? They need places to live, and we will deliver for them in the part of the province that is growing like wildfire, Mr. Speaker. We'll get it done.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: Je dois vous dire, monsieur le Président, que les médias qualifient les changements apportés par le gouvernement aux plans officiels des municipalités comme la « ceinture verte 2.0 ». En effet, non seulement ils s'attaquent aux terres agricoles et à l'intégrité des systèmes naturels en étendant de force les

limites urbaines, mais ils accordent également un traitement préférentiel aux spéculateurs financiers privilégiés, enrichissant ainsi ces initiés aux dépens du public.

Le premier ministre ordonnera-t-il un examen de toutes les modifications ministérielles apportées aux plans officiels municipaux et annulera-t-il toutes les modifications qui sont fondées sur l'accès au gouvernement et non sur les preuves?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, any official plan that has been approved, the municipalities did have the opportunity to comment on that. The only one that has, of course, is Hamilton, and we know why Hamilton is commenting on that, because they disagreed with their own planner's assessment that they didn't have enough land available to meet the long-term goals of housing in their community. So they're fighting us to stop housing from being built in their community—not today, not tomorrow, but in the future, and that is everything that is wrong with the NDP, right? It's everything that is wrong about them. All they think about is today. They have no concern about the future of the province of Ontario.

That is why, with the Liberals, they helped put red tape in the way. They built up huge debt and deficits. They destroyed the energy sector. They wiped out jobs and economic growth. And it kills them—

Interjection.

Hon. Paul Calandra: You hear the member for Orléans. He's so upset that we got 700,000 jobs back in the province of Ontario. He's so upset. I'm not upset. I think it's a good day—

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

The next question.

LAND USE PLANNING

M^{me} Lucille Collard: My question is for the Premier. The construction of Highway 413 will require the destruction of sensitive lands currently within the greenbelt. Yet, the Premier has been very clear about his support for this project. The Premier already promised Ontarians that he would not touch the greenbelt and then promised \$8.3 billion worth of land to friends through a flawed and biased process.

The Premier recently apologized for removing those lands and has once again committed to protecting the greenbelt. Mr. Speaker, protecting the greenbelt and building Highway 413 are incompatible goals.

Will the Premier please be clear with Ontarians? Will he once again remove lands from the greenbelt so he can build Highway 413 or will he learn from his mistakes and finally keep his promise to Ontarians?

Hon. Doug Ford: Mr. Speaker, the member from Ottawa maybe forgot that, back in the election, we won an overwhelming majority—the largest since 1929—and it was based on the 413 that their government put the original route in. They flip-flop back and forth; we're building the 413. We have a clear mandate from every

riding in Mississauga, every riding in Brampton, every riding in Caledon—the whole region wants the 413.

They don't believe in building. They don't believe in spending \$184 billion in building infrastructure. Not only are we building the 413, we're building the Bradford Bypass, we're building Highway 7, we're expanding the 401 east out to your area so that people can get back and forth a lot quicker, we're expanding Highway 3. We're building this province because it was ignored for 15 years and we're building homes for the young students that were—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Stop the clock. Members will please take their seats.

Start the clock. Supplementary question.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Thank you for answering but not answering the question.

Mr. Speaker, Ontarians do not need more highways cutting through the greenbelt. They need more public transit. Highway 413 has been widely recognized as a terrible investment. It is estimated that, at a cost of over \$6 billion, the new highway would move 7,000 people per hour at peak capacity, but investing the same \$6 billion in public transit instead could move over three times that number of people.

This government claims to be fiscally responsible, but it's clear that Highway 413 does not make financial sense for everyday Ontarians. Despite the many questions surrounding this project, the government refuses to provide Ontarians with a clear business plan for it. Will the Premier explain why Ontarians should trust this government's decision regarding Highway 413 when it refuses to be transparent about how much the project will cost taxpayers and how many hectares of prime land will be destroyed?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I can't believe what the members opposite are saying here. I want to take them on a trip. Whether it's through Brampton or Mississauga—I offer them any time, any day of the week—the people of Brampton and the people of Mississauga are stuck in gridlock. The members opposite are so far out of reality.

This is about a project that is going to bring home over \$350 million in GDP. We're going to create over 3,000 jobs, and we're going to unlock thousands of homes. We're going to unlock thousands of jobs by building this. Unfortunately, the members opposite refused to listen to the people of Brampton and Mississauga for 15 years. They never invested in those cities. They never invested in those regions.

Under the leadership of Premier Ford, we're building Highway 413, we're building the Bradford Bypass and we're building new hospitals all across this province. It's because this government believes in building and investing in infrastructure and transportation, and we will take no lessons from the members opposite on how to—

Interjections.

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

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Andrew Dowie: First, I want to give my appreciation to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for celebrating the province's investment in 3100 Meadowbrook—truly a home that its residents can be proud of.

Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Long-Term Care. All seniors in Ontario deserve to be treated with dignity and receive the quality of care they need. The successive investments made by our government into building and redeveloping long-term-care homes has become a reality in many communities across the province, including my own, with 36 new and 60 upgraded beds at Brouillette Manor in Tecumseh. However, at the same time, Ontario seniors are entering long-term-care homes later than ever before and often with more medically complex needs. Our government must continue to do all that we can to minimize the need for these residents to be transferred to acute-care hospitals because the long-term-care homes do not have the equipment, supplies and services they need.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is supporting long-term-care homes to better address the increasing care needs of our seniors?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the Minister of Long-Term Care.

Hon. Stan Cho: This morning, we've had a lot of talk of investing in the next generation, but we also have to remember where we came from. We need to talk about the generation that created us; that's our seniors, and I'm glad the member asked that question.

Let's not forget that the Liberals failed to invest in our seniors. This led to an underfunding of the long-term-care sector, huge wait-lists and unnecessary hospitalizations. In some cases, this forced our seniors to move to long-term-care homes way outside their community to receive the care they needed. That's why this government is investing over \$120 million this fiscal year to support residents with complex medical needs.

The member is right: Seniors are living longer. That means there are more complications. That's why this investment includes \$20 million into the local priorities fund—a fund that allows Ontario Health to make targeted investments in staffing, equipment and services. This local priorities fund had a tremendous first year, supporting 189 projects across the province. We're not going to stop there. We're going to continue to invest in our seniors.

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

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Thank you, Minister, for giving that answer. It's truly reassuring that the residents with complex needs can receive the care they deserve in the comfort of the home instead of a hospital, and there are six more new homes being rebuilt and expanded just in the Windsor region alone. Thank you to you, Minister. Thank you to the previous minister for that.

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I have truly seen the impact of the local priorities fund first-hand. The Village of Aspen Lake, which coincidentally was where my grandmother lived, is a long-term-care home in East Riverside. It has received \$199,065 from the local priorities fund to help purchase equipment that will make access to care faster and more convenient.

As a government, we must maintain our commitment to ensuring that residents in long-term-care homes get the quality of care and quality of life that they need and deserve, both now and in the future. Mr. Speaker, can the minister please elaborate on how our government is expanding specialized services in long-term-care homes that will support residents with complex needs?

Hon. Stan Cho: I will elaborate, and I will remind this Legislature that Windsor, Essex and Tecumseh were ignored for so long when it came to our seniors, and it took the leadership of this Premier and this Minister of Housing to fix that situation.

What the member highlights is exactly those investments: local priorities. He mentioned one very specific to his riding—a wide variety of needs. Seniors aren't at long-term care with the same needs. We need to recognize it. That's why we're expanding those specialized services, including our behavioural specialized units, an innovative model designed to support residents with complex care challenges like dementia.

We're not going to stop there. Last week, we were in Cambridge, Kitchener, Guelph—we're going to go across this entire province. We're going to make sure we take care of our seniors with record investments, not just into building homes, but into human health resources.

Speaker, I'll remind this House: Seniors took care of us. It's our turn to take care of them.

GO TRANSIT

Ms. Catherine Fife: Speaker, the people of Kitchener-Waterloo have been waiting a decade for two-way, all-day GO service. Despite Metrolinx CEO Phil Verster's promise yesterday that Kitchener-Waterloo would finally get trains "every 15 minutes or better on the Kitchener line," the people of KW still have no timeline. Ten years of waiting for what we were promised is simply unfair.

Yesterday's GO train network outage that caused such chaos is exactly the reason why the public requires a comprehensive plan and timeline, and this needs to be very transparent. Too many students—so many students—are left behind and waiting for buses. Those buses are packed. A three-hour commute is not acceptable for the people of Kitchener-Waterloo.

To the new Minister of Transportation: When will Kitchener-Waterloo finally get two-way, all-day service every 15 minutes, as they were originally promised?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: This government has made record and historic investments in GO rail transit across this province. In fact, on the Kitchener line, just a couple of months ago, the former Minister of Transporta-

tion and our entire team announced the revised station upgrades to the Bramalea GO station.

Mr. Speaker, we appreciate and understand how important this is. That is why we have increased services on the Kitchener line and will continue to make those investments, even though that member opposite has voted against our investments each and every time. When we talk about GO rail investment and the increases that we've made in this province, for every single budget or fall economic statement, that member has stood up in this House and voted against that investment. That is unacceptable. On this side of the House, we'll continue to make those investments and build transit across this province.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: We'll vote for legislation that works, but right now, nothing is working on the Kitchener line. The president and CEO of the KW chamber of commerce said that more trains will deliver "up to 170,000 new jobs, billions in new investment from the private sector." Still, there's no train from Toronto to Kitchener in the morning so people can get to those jobs in Kitchener-Waterloo. There's no direct train on the weekend. We don't have a GO station or a plan to ensure safe drop-off and pickups for commuters. The service is slow, it's infrequent, it's unreliable.

We all know that trains are good for business, good for people and good for the environment. Again to the Minister of Transportation: Why doesn't Kitchener-Waterloo deserve what they were originally promised, and when can they finally expect to see two-way, all-day service every 15 minutes? Stop leaving Kitchener-Waterloo waiting at the station.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: We are moving forward with two-way, all-day service every 15 minutes across the system. This is something that is really important to us, and we've made those investments. In fact, I'd like to remind that member opposite: Every time we have made investments to improve tracks, to improve platforms across any line, she has stood in this House and voted against each and every single one of those investments.

We are going to continue, thanks to the great advocacy of members on that Kitchener line, whether it's the members from Kitchener, from Waterloo. On this side of the House and in this government, we're committed to building that transit system across this province and to investing in GO rail. That's why we've also launched the largest investment in public transit in the history of this province. Over \$70 billion in the next 10 years are being invested across not only the Kitchener line but across this province.

Every single one of those investments, the members opposite have voted against. Whether it's improving the Kitchener line, whether it's improving GO rail transit, whether it's building subways like the Ontario Line or the Scarborough extension, there's one common denominator: The members opposite are against building transit.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Adil Shamji: My question is for the Premier. It seems that every time the Premier makes a major public policy decision, wealthy well-connected insiders always seem to come out on top. We saw it with the greenbelt, where a small group of insiders became billionaires overnight. Are we really supposed to believe that this decision was about 1.5 million homes and not about \$8.3 billion? Accordingly, when it comes to the Premier's expansion of private, for-profit health care, can we blame Ontarians for wondering where his priorities truly lie?

Mr. Speaker, this week, a walk-in clinic in Ottawa is operating that will charge patients desperate for primary care \$400 a year just to have the privilege of paying for visits. We know that's not the only one of these kinds of clinics popping up in Ontario.

To the Premier: While cash-for-access arrangements may be commonplace within this government, is it fair that he expects the people of Ontario to count this as the norm within their own health care system?

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

Hon. Paul Calandra: What an ironic question coming from the member opposite, who just recently endorsed the only person in the province who still supports building on the greenbelt. What a question from that gentleman.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? We have said that we are not going to do that. We are going to continue to make investments in building homes across the province of Ontario. Because of that, we have to make more investments in building hospitals all over. Do you know why we're doing that? I'll tell you why we're building hospitals and reinvesting in hospitals and long-term care: Because for 15 years, the government that you are now a party member of literally never did it. They built 611 long-term-care homes across the province.

I would ask the member this: If he could call his partner and say, "Listen, the people have spoken. We need help building homes, but building on the greenbelt isn't the way to do it." I wonder if he might do that to the person he just endorsed in the Liberal leadership, because I saw the other candidates, and they are simply against that as well.

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

Mr. Adil Shamji: That's not necessary, Mr. Speaker, because it's not going to happen.

But I'd like to remind the Premier of a saying he has burned into the minds of Ontarians this year. He said, "All you need is your OHIP card—never your credit card." It kind of reminds me of that famous video where he promised not to touch the greenbelt, and then he did.

History is repeating itself. Walk-in clinics like the one in Ottawa are just the beginning. Bill 60, which was executed swiftly just like the greenbelt, was said to be about clearing the surgical backlog, but it's just another cash cow. It opens the floodgates for private clinics to profiteer on publicly funded surgeries, meaning the people

of Ontario will be bankrolling clinics that have a financial incentive to provide the lowest-quality care possible.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier said that real leadership is about being able to admit when you've made a mistake. Will he reverse his decision on private, for-profit health care, the same way he reversed his decision on the greenbelt?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Speaker, I want to be very clear, and I want the member opposite and everyone to understand that we will never tolerate clinics and organizations to charge OHIP-funded services. We will make sure that is the case.

Having said that, in terms of expanding the access to primary care and to surgical diagnostic centres, we 100% need to do it. We have done it. I talk about a change that the Premier made in January, where we expanded cataract surgeries. We have now, as of that one change, had 19,000 minor eye surgeries in the province of Ontario, because we made an extension in January. We have a plan. That plan is working.

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I understand that the member opposite is suggesting that he would like to shut down some of these organizations that have been doing minor surgeries in communities for decades in the province of Ontario—

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

The next question.

BEEF FARMERS

Mr. Dave Smith: My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. The livestock industry is essential to Ontario's agriculture and food industry. In Peterborough county, beef farmers generated over \$11 million in farm cash receipts back in 2022. The beef sector continues to be an integral part of my local economy and, of course, of Ontario's growing economy. Can the minister please explain how our government is ensuring that our beef sector continues to fuel our economy and feed our growing population?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I want to thank the member from Peterborough for being a genuine champion not only of rural communities but of our agricultural industry as well. He's spot on when he talks about the contribution that Ontario beef farmer make to our overall GDP. That translates into tens of thousands of jobs right across this province.

Ontario beef farmers understand that they finally have a government that listens and understands. Never was I more proud earlier this year to stand with the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Colleges and Universities to announce a unique initiative whereby the Minister of Colleges and Universities oversaw a partnership between the University of Guelph and Lakehead to expand the veterinary program. My Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs complements that with a veterinary incentive

program to ensure that large-animal vets are incented to work in underserved areas. That's just one example of many.

Another example would be just the briefing I had from the Minister of Labour, where we were talking about how we can better support the growth of the opportunities and capacities of our meat-processing plants—

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

Mr. Dave Smith: I want to thank the minister for her response. It is necessary that our government continues to support our beef farmers, from farm to fork. I personally am going to support our beef farmers from farm to fork to stomach today at lunch.

Having additional processing capacity and a stable workforce is essential for a growing beef sector and for Ontario-made food to get to market. Can the minister please explain how funding initiatives by our government will ensure that Ontario is building the capacity that we need to grow the agricultural industry?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: We're investing heartily because we recognize the opportunities that lie ahead of us. We just recently announced a \$12-million program to enhance processing capacities not only in our meat processing plants but also with abattoirs across this province. That builds on a \$14-million investment through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership earlier.

This matters why? It matters because Ontario beef farmers know they have a government that stands with them as they travel the world to make sure that countries that are looking for good-quality beef products come to Ontario first. That matters because there's a huge opportunity in terms of exports, and that translates into jobs right here at home. Whether it is Cargill in Guelph, or Cardinal Meats in Brampton, Norpac in Norwich or St. Helen's right here in Toronto, we are producing—from farm to processing plant to table—protein that people can count on around the world.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Minister of Energy. The minister recently said he would respect the city of Thorold's resolution rejecting the increase of gas-burning power capacity in that city. Toronto city council has twice voted against expansion of gas burning at the Portlands Energy Centre. Will he respect the wishes of Toronto city council to protect the environment, protect ratepayers' wallets and protect public health by blocking the expansion of gas burning at the Portlands Energy Centre?

Hon. Todd Smith: Let me first start by saying that we are very fortunate in Ontario to have an electricity system that is 90% clean, among the cleanest electricity systems not just in North America but in the entire world. Our intention is to keep it that way because it's attracting new investment into our province.

When the NDP and the Liberals teamed up previously and we saw electricity prices soaring, we saw communities

that had energy projects forced into their communities—we changed that in 2018 when we became the government. We gave municipalities the ability to make decisions on what would be located in their project.

In the case of Thorold that the member opposite mentions, we won't be putting a new gas plant in that community, because the members of that council voted no to that. Having said that, we are at the peak of our nuclear refurbishment process here in Ontario, and we're going to need to ensure that we have the power for all the growth that we're seeing.

I look forward to the supplementary.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Again to the Minister of Energy: The Royal Bank of Canada and the Electricity Distributors Association have both said it would be effective and cheaper to invest in energy efficiency rather than ramping up gas burning to meet electrical demand in this province. Both recognize that investing in our homes, our businesses, our institutions can cut energy use, save money, protect the climate and reduce air pollution.

Why won't he respect Toronto city's council resolution to take the cheaper and environmentally better route to meeting energy needs in this city?

Hon. Todd Smith: Let's be clear, Mr. Speaker: What the member is advocating for is higher electricity prices and blackouts and brownouts in the city of Toronto. That's what that member is advocating for in the question.

We are investing in energy efficiency programs, the conservation demand management programs. We have a billion dollars in that four-year framework, and we're out consulting with municipalities and other stakeholders on a new CDM energy efficiency program for Ontario.

But we saw the track record of the Liberals and the NDP teaming up on energy policy. For many years, electricity prices were soaring in this province, out of control. Manufacturing jobs were leaving for other jurisdictions. Since we became the government, we've seen 700,000 new manufacturing jobs coming to Ontario. Why is that? It's largely because of energy policy that makes sense, that's predictable, that's affordable and reliable, something you won't get with those—

Interjections.

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

HOMELESSNESS

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Associate Minister of Housing. For people who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness, it is essential they have access to the right supports and services. While our government has made significant investments in programs to help the most vulnerable Ontarians, the reality is that our province needs to continue addressing the issues of affordable housing and homelessness. More resources are needed to build upon the work already under way and to bring forward more solutions to address these serious matters. Our government must continue to demonstrate our firm commit-

ment in addressing housing and service needs for the most vulnerable in our communities.

Speaker, can the associate minister please explain what actions our government is taking to increase the availability of affordable housing options and support services for those in our province who need it most?

Hon. Rob Flack: Thank to the member for Brantford–Brant. Yes, he is indeed right: The rise in homelessness throughout our province is compelling. That is why we have been working with our municipal and non-profit leaders like Indwell to tackle homelessness and supportive housing.

For example, last March, this government invested \$6.8 million in capital spending and capital investment to grow 85 units of supportive housing in Hamilton, and in August last year, we invested \$270,000 of operational funding for 40 new supportive housing units. The bottom line is this government has invested \$700 million in the last year, up \$200 million in the Homelessness Prevention Program, up 42%. We'll always give a hand up to those in need. This government is getting the job done.

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

Mr. Will Bouma: Every person in Ontario deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. It's very welcome news that greater funding investments by our government have delivered on providing vulnerable Ontarians with the supports they need for housing as well as mental health and addictions care.

However, the nature and scope of homelessness is different in every region. There is not a one-size-fits-all solution. That's why our government must continue to work closely with community partners to make the most impact in reducing and preventing homelessness.

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Speaker, can the associate minister please explain how our government is working with municipalities and the non-profit sector in addressing housing needs and support services for individuals and families in our communities?

Hon. Rob Flack: Thank you, again, to the member from Brantford–Brant for his question. When it comes to homelessness and supportive housing in Ontario, the need has never been greater. That is why I've been meeting with municipalities, mayors, councillors and supportive housing managers throughout this province, and I've been encouraged, frankly, by the collaboration all have shown from all levels of government.

For example, Speaker, last week I was in St. Thomas, in my riding of Elgin–Middlesex–London, where we announced \$1.2 million of supportive housing for 45 new units at The Station. When we got together, we were very excited. The mayor was there; 200 people showed up, community leaders. Indwell leadership was there. It's something to behold. It's a great example. We invite everyone to come to St. Thomas.

Again, Speaker, those in need will always get a hand up from this government. We are committed to housing stability throughout this province. We will get the job done.

FOOD BANKS

MPP Lise Vaugeois: To the Premier: According to a recent Food Banks Canada report, 43% of people in Ontario feel they are worse off than last year. The evidence? Food banks are struggling across the province. The director of Thunder Bay's regional food distribution centre notes that over the next four years, their costs will increase by 80%. Incredibly, since 2021, the London Food Bank has seen a 91% increase in people coming to them for food. So, no, things are not 1,000% better than when the Premier took office five years ago.

The NDP has a plan to address this crisis by doubling OW and ODSP and implementing real rent control. When will the Premier stop the gravy train for his friends and take the obvious and necessary steps to address food insecurity in this province?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I thank the honourable member for the question. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to remind the honourable member that it was her and her party that voted against the 5% increase and another 6.5%—the largest increases in ODSP rates in decades in the province. It's this government and this party that's fighting to make life more affordable for Ontarians.

But along the way, Mr. Speaker—you have discovered this—all day, all week, the week before, they're against housing, they're against long-term care, they're against schools, and they're now clearly showing they're against the people of this province, for us to be able to lift them out of poverty, to make sure that we provide the supports for people who need them. The largest increase in support in social assistance—every single member across voted against it.

But, Mr. Speaker, that's okay, because Ontarians elected this government, members of this caucus and the majority middle to stand up for every single person in this province, and we won't let them down.

DESTIGMATIZING DEMENTIA RECEPTION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): A couple of members have informed me that they wish to raise points of order. The member for Thornhill.

Mr. Aris Babikian: Scarborough–Agincourt.

Interjection: Behind you.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thornhill first.

Mr. Aris Babikian: Ladies first.

Ms. Laura Smith: Thank you. I would like to sincerely invite everyone in the House today to stop by room 228 between 12 and 2 p.m. for a destigmatizing dementia lunch-and-learn, hosted by TT4ever. They're a non-profit organization that aims to get individuals involved in fun activities and tournaments to increase their interest in sport. Please join Kevin Guo, the Canadian table tennis champion; myself; and the member from Mississauga

Centre as we meet with many experts and researchers with dementia and within that realm.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Next, the member for Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'd like to introduce Sandy Henderson, Chris Praught and Amanda Meek from Eli Lilly Canada, who are also joining the luncheon today on destigmatizing dementia.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Scarborough–Agincourt.

Mr. Aris Babikian: I would like to welcome page Huzaifa Farooq's father, Tahir Farooq; his mother, Moona Satter; and his three sisters, Rumaysa Tahir, Nusaybah Tahir and Rufaidah Tahir. Welcome to Queen's Park.

SOMALI CENTRE FOR CULTURE AND RECREATION RECEPTION

Mr. Graham McGregor: I just want to remind members that in room 230, we have folks from the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation. There's awesome Somali artwork there; some of this was featured at Nuit Blanche. It will be a great thing and we welcome all members to join. Thanks.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There being no further business this morning, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1145 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I'm very proud to welcome the faithful from the Marian Shrine of Gratitude. There are many, many, and some of them are here with us today. They are Domenica Forini, Carlo Forini, Matteo Cavellini, Angela Carboni, Johnny Biafore, Stanislaw Sokolik and Lucy Capili. Welcome to Queen's Park, and thank you for being here.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: I'd like to recognize some of the members that have joined us today from the Ontario Commercial Truck Training Association, OCTTA. They were here meeting with a couple of our ministers regarding some of the issues from their community. I want to recognize Narinder, Burinder. Narinder Jaswal and the entire team, thank you for coming. Burinder, as well, thank you for being here. I hope you enjoy today's proceedings.

INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS

CONVENIENT CARE AT HOME ACT, 2023

LOI DE 2023 SUR LA PRESTATION COMMUNE DE SOINS À DOMICILE

Ms. Jones moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 135, An Act to amend the Connecting Care Act, 2019 with respect to home and community care services and health governance and to make related amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 135, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2019 pour des soins interconnectés en ce qui concerne les services de soins à domicile et en milieu communautaire et la gouvernance de la santé et apportant des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the Deputy Premier care to briefly explain her bill?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Yes. The proposed Convenient Care at Home Act amends the Connecting Care Act, 2019, to establish the service organization. The service organization is a corporation under the name of Ontario Health at Home. The existing local health integration networks are amalgamated to become the service organization.

PETITIONS

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Tens of thousands have signed petitions to protect the Marian Shrine of Gratitude. I have over 1,000 with me here today. The petition reads as follows:

“Save Our Marian Shrine.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Marian Shrine of Gratitude is a sacred place in our community, where people have been gathering for many years to pray and seek a connection with their spirituality and is believed to be the site of several miracles;

“Whereas the government has an obligation to identify and protect sites of cultural, heritage, and provincial significance;

“Whereas we believe the shrine and buildings on site are of significant provincial heritage, cultural value and meet the criteria outlined in the Ontario Heritage Act;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to designate the Marian Shrine of Gratitude as a property under the Ontario Heritage Act thereby protecting it for future generations” to come.

I certainly support this, will by signing my name and giving it to page Sofia.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: This petition is signed by over 1,000 parents, students and people in Ottawa. The petition is titled: “Petition in Support of the Resignation of the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority General Manager and Executive.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) is responsible for all home-to-school transporta-

tion on behalf of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) and the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB); and

“Whereas OSTA’s mission is to deliver safe, efficient, effective and equitable multi-modal transportation solutions for students with superior customer service for OCDSB and OCSB; and

“Whereas two days before the 2023 Labour Day long weekend which marks the beginning of the school year for OCDSB and OCSB students, OSTA informed parents their routes were cancelled, negatively impacting thousands of children in the city of Ottawa, including rural Ottawa; and

“Whereas OSTA reported as recently as September 14, 2023, that the route cancellations were due to ‘funding pressure’; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Education confirmed that throughout the summer they worked with the OCDSB, OCSB and OSTA to address the ‘funding pressure’ and committed to supporting the school boards with additional funding;

“Whereas OSTA failed to inform parents that the” additional “funding pressure was addressed; and

“Whereas OSTA refused to give parents a voice at the table and ejected an elected official from a ‘private’ meeting that was intended to provide an update to Ottawa city councillors; and

“Whereas 80% of reported school bus cancellations in the province of Ontario for the 2023–24 school year are attributed to OSTA; and

“Whereas OSTA has year after year” continuously “failed to meet its mission statement to deliver safe, efficient, effective and equitable multi-modal transportation solutions for students with superior customer service for OCDSB and OCSB;

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

“That the Minister of Education mandate the immediate resignation of the general manager of the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority as well as all OSTA executives, and the Ministry of Education oversee the hiring of new, competent leadership at OSTA who are capable of doing their job and will commit to being transparent, open and accountable to the public.”

I will sign my name to this petition and give it to page Constantine.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Ms. Sarah Jama: I received hundreds of signatures across Ontario about the following petition to support access to spine care in Ontario. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas people waiting for complex spinal surgeries, including scoliosis, are forced to wait for years in debilitating pain for the care they need, risking lifelong consequences and deterioration in function;

“Whereas surgeons are willing and able to help, but the system puts up many barriers. Surgeons face the difficult

choice of offering routine spinal surgeries—which guarantee compensation—over complex spinal surgeries, further lengthening the wait times for patients with complex cases;

“Whereas the lack of collaboration between the Ministry of Health adjudicators and providers has led to challenges in conducting fair and accurate assessments of complex cases;

“Whereas Ontario’s funding for complex cases for spinal surgeries, derived from the general funding bucket, deprioritizes complex spinal surgeries, over routine/simple surgeries;

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

“—address the ever-increasing wait times and make complex spinal surgeries available in a timely manner;

“—immediately improve access to surgery for complex spinal conditions by increasing and equitably funding spine care in Ontario hospitals.”

I support the petition, and I am signing it as well.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Mr. Nolan Quinn: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Erin’s Law amends the Education Act to ensure every board shall develop a policy to engage their pupils annually in all schools under their purview, in a developmentally appropriate manner, regarding the topics of child sexual abuse prevention and reporting, including age-appropriate techniques to recognize child sexual abuse and tell a trusted adult;

“Whereas each board is also required to provide information annually on these topics to parents and guardians, as well as teachers and other staff in schools;

“Whereas to ensure the workforce is prepared, it will include:

“—building upon the mandatory sexual abuse prevention training introduced in September 2022, the zero tolerance for sexual abuse policy by the Ontario College of Teachers and the health and physical education curriculum introduced in 2019; and

“—personnel curriculum must cover the warning signs of child sexual abuse and mandated reporting, how to appropriately respond to disclosure, how to talk to parents, and how to speak to students about child sexual abuse prevention;

“Whereas every board shall ensure that information respecting child sexual abuse prevention and reporting, including information on available counselling and resources for children who are sexually abused, is available to all parents and guardians of pupils enrolled in schools of the board; and

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

“To urge all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario support the passage of the Education Amendment Act (Erin’s Law).”

I will gladly sign this and give it to page Clara.

1510

ONTARIO PLACE

Mr. Chris Glover: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Save Ontario Place.

“Whereas Ontario Place has been a cherished public space for over 50 years, providing joy, recreation and cultural experiences for Ontarians and tourists alike and holds cultural and historical significance as a landmark that symbolizes Ontario’s commitment to innovation, sustainability and public engagement;

“Whereas redevelopment that includes a private, profit-driven venture by an Austrian spa company, prioritizes commercial interests over the needs and desires of the people of Ontario and it is estimated that the cost to prepare the grounds for redevelopment and build a 2,000-car underground garage will cost approximately \$650 million;...

“Whereas meaningful public consultations with diverse stakeholders have not been adequately conducted and the Ontario NDP has sent a letter of support for a public request to begin an investigation into a value-for-money and compliance audit with respect to proposed redevelopment of Ontario Place;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to halt any further development plans for Ontario Place, engage in meaningful and transparent public consultations to gather input and ideas for the future of Ontario Place, develop a comprehensive and sustainable plan for the revitalization of Ontario Place that prioritizes environmental sustainability, accessibility and inclusivity, and ensure that any future development of Ontario Place is carried out in a transparent and accountable manner, with proper oversight, public input and adherence to democratic processes.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my signature and pass it to page Sophia Rose.

ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

M^{me} France Gélinas: J’aimerais Jess Montgomery, de Lively dans mon comté, pour ces pétitions.

« Attendu que les enfants francophones ont un droit constitutionnel à une éducation de haute qualité, financée par les fonds publics, dans leur propre langue;

« Attendu que l’augmentation des inscriptions dans le système d’éducation en langue française signifie que plus de 1 000 nouveaux enseignants et enseignantes de langue française sont nécessaires chaque année pour les cinq prochaines années;

« Attendu que les changements apportés au modèle de financement du gouvernement provincial pour la formation des enseignantes et enseignants de langue française signifient que l’Ontario n’en forme que 500 par an;

« Attendu que le nombre de personnes qui enseignent sans certification complète dans le système d’éducation en

langue française a augmenté de plus de 450 % au cours de la dernière décennie;

Ils et elles demandent à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario « de fournir immédiatement le financement demandé par le rapport du groupe de travail sur la pénurie des enseignantes et des enseignants dans le système d’éducation en langue française de l’Ontario et de travailler avec des partenaires pour mettre pleinement en oeuvre les recommandations. »

J’appuie cette pétition. Je vais la signer, et je l’envoie à la table des greffiers avec la page Ella.

ROAD SAFETY

MPP Lise Vaugeois: This petition is entitled: “Safe Roads for All.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas drivers with inadequate training are being licensed to drive transport trucks in Ontario;

“Whereas audits of carriers, and the qualifications of their drivers, are not taking place on a systematic basis in Ontario;

“Whereas drivers are experiencing wage theft from unscrupulous carriers;

“Whereas many prospective drivers are paying for training they are not receiving;

“Whereas drivers are being pressured to meet unrealistic delivery deadlines in order to access their full pay;

“Whereas OPP statistics show the number of accidents involving transport trucks has increased dramatically, putting all road users at risk;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, call upon the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to improve road safety:

“By requiring ministry enforcement officers to audit carriers to ensure they are operating at the highest possible safety standards;

“By investigating and cracking down on carriers engaged in wage theft;

“By bringing charges and significant fines against carriers that fail to meet safety standards;

“By establishing, monitoring, and enforcing the required number of one-on-one hours of behind-the-wheel training, including practice with loaded trailers and practice with winter driving;

“By restricting immediate driver test retakes;

“By having weigh scales and inspection stations open during a substantial amount of time each week, in every region of the province;

“By establishing a reporting system for unsafe driving.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my signature to it and give it to Sophia.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Catherine Fife: This petition is entitled “Tell” the Premier “to Double Social Assistance Rates.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there are over 900,000 Ontarians who are forced to rely on social assistance;

“Whereas” the Premier’s “Conservatives promised to raise ... (ODSP) rates by only 5%, and have provided no additional support for those who receive Ontario Works...;

“Whereas inflation is at a 40-year high and people on fixed incomes are forced to make sacrifices every day just to survive;

“Whereas both ODSP and OW recipients live in legislated deep poverty, a meager \$58 increase to ODSP and no additional support for OW recipients will do virtually nothing to improve the lives of people living on social assistance;

“Therefore, we the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately double social assistance rates, so that people can live dignified, healthy lives.”

It’s my pleasure to affix my signature and give this to page Sofia.

ONTARIO PLACE

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am pleased to be able to read this position entitled, “Save Ontario Place.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario Place has been a cherished public space for over 50 years, providing joy, recreation, and cultural experiences for Ontarians and tourists alike and holds cultural and historical significance as a landmark that symbolizes Ontario’s commitment to innovation, sustainability, and public engagement;

“Whereas redevelopment that includes a private, profit-driven venture by an Austrian spa company, prioritizes commercial interests over the needs and desires of the people of Ontario and it is estimated that the cost to prepare the grounds for redevelopment and build a 2,000-car underground garage will cost approximately \$650 million...;

“Whereas meaningful public consultations with diverse stakeholders have not been adequately conducted and the Ontario NDP has sent a letter of support for a public request to begin an investigation into a value-for-money and compliance audit with respect to proposed redevelopment of Ontario Place;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to halt any further development plans for Ontario Place, engage in meaningful and transparent public consultations to gather input and ideas for the future of Ontario Place, develop a comprehensive and sustainable plan for the revitalization of Ontario Place that prioritizes environmental sustainability, accessibility, and inclusivity, and ensure that any future development of Ontario Place is carried out in a transparent and accountable manner, with proper oversight, public input, and adherence to democratic processes.”

That sounds great. I am happy to affix my signature to this and will send it to the table with page Erin.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Ms. Catherine Fife: I’m pleased to present this petition on behalf of the member for Humber River–Black Creek entitled “Save Our Marian Shrine.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Marian Shrine of Gratitude is a sacred place in our community, where people have been gathering for many years to pray and seek a connection with their spirituality and is believed to be the site of several miracles;

“Whereas the government has an obligation to identify and protect sites of cultural, heritage, and provincial significance;

“Whereas we believe the shrine and buildings on site are of significant provincial heritage, cultural value and meet the criteria outlined in the Ontario Heritage Act;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to designate the Marian Shrine of Gratitude as a property under the Ontario Heritage Act thereby protecting it for future generations.”

It’s my pleasure to affix my signature and give this petition to Clara.

VISITORS

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

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I’d like to introduce representatives of TT4ever, a Ping-Pong group helping people with Alzheimer’s. They are Lucas Zhang, Jabril Zarita and Isaac Luo. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

AFFORDABLE HOMES AND GOOD JOBS ACT, 2023

LOI DE 2023 POUR DES LOGEMENTS ABORDABLES ET DE BONS EMPLOIS

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 4, 2023, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 134, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the St. Thomas-Central Elgin Boundary Adjustment Act, 2023 / Projet de loi 134, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les redevances d’aménagement et la Loi de 2023 sur la modification des limites territoriales entre St. Thomas et Central Elgin.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): When we last debated this bill, the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke had the floor. He’s still got time on the clock, so I recognize him.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I didn’t think I’d use the whole minute, but apparently that’s what the clock tells me, and I’ll have to go with the clock.

I want to begin, Speaker—and if I get ruled out of order, I’ll abide by the rulings, you know that. You know me, I never do anything off-centre in this place.

1520

I do want to begin, because the other day—and I want to thank the government House leader for recognizing

myself and MPP Scott for having served in this Legislature and served our constituents for 20 years. I do just want to touch on that for a moment and how grateful I am.

Last week, I had the opportunity—on the day that it would have been 60 years that my father was elected as the member for Renfrew South—to speak for a moment or two, but I didn't have a speaking slot, so it was very short. I do want to say, Speaker—and I know you know this better than anybody having been here since 1990—what an honour it is and how grateful we are to be sent to represent our constituents in this great chamber. I want to thank them. Particularly, I want to thank my wife and my family for their support. I could tell a million stories. People have said to me, “John, you'll have to write a book one day,” and my wife has said, “No, no. I'll write the book.” So I'm a little worried if it ever comes to that about what stories may make the book.

I know that everybody here that serves is grateful and honoured to be here. I just want to say, for 20 years, it's been a special honour for me so thank you very much for allowing me to address that today.

Now, here we go again—another housing bill. I almost fell off my chair this morning when I heard the opposition critic say that they would be supporting Bill 134, because, you know I did a little work—to tell you the truth, no, I actually had my staff person do a little work. We just went back to 2018 so there's—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15—16 bills that our government has brought forward dealing with the housing crisis. How appropriate is that, Speaker? I know that there will be disagreements of what is the existential crisis of our time, but the one that faces us right now that must be dealt with now—and doesn't have a 20-year time frame, a 40-year time frame, or anything like that—is the housing crisis. You know, when we went through our campaign in 2022, you heard it repeatedly. You heard our Premier, who was seeking re-election, repeatedly say that the priority of our government, after we emerged from the COVID crisis, was going to be building homes for the people of Ontario.

Since the election of 2022, I think it's fair to say that it's only gained greater importance and urgency, because we see every day what's been happening. I thank the people for their campaign, on the other side, because it certainly helped us win a historic second majority for Premier Ford. Since that time, the world has changed: Our world here in Ontario and certainly in Canada has changed if you're trying to solve a housing crisis—not for the better.

We have federal policies. Our House leader has touched on that repeatedly, about how the federal policy vis-à-vis, for example, the carbon tax and how inflationary that is. What does inflation do? It forces the Bank of Canada to say we've got to do something to pound this down somewhat. We can't exist with 8%, 6%, 5%, or whatever the case may be, and we are working to get that down. What did that do to the economy? Well, it drives up interest rates. You fight inflation, you drive up interest rates. What is one of the biggest negative forces if you're trying to build or do anything that costs money? It's the

cost of borrowing that money. So if you can't borrow the money at a reasonable rate, you're going to be faced with significant pressures against what you're trying to do.

I have talked to people all across this province—not as many people as my House leader would talk to and certainly not the Premier, but I'm sure they hear the same stories all the time, where people who have planned to build a housing project have said, “I don't think we're going to proceed.” Why? Because of the interest rates, the cost of building that project. Even: Are they going to be able to get the financing? But even if they do, John Q. Public and this generation that is looking for their first home, where in the name of Sam Hill, as they say, are they going to get the money to buy that place? It ain't happening. It's just not happening.

We as government—this government, our government, your government—I say this to the people of Ontario: Your government has been seized upon the task of doing whatever is necessary, whatever is within the realm of possibility to encourage homebuilding in this province. What did I say, 16 bills? Tennessee Ernie Ford had a song, “Sixteen Tons.” I might bring out one: “sixteen bills.” Sixteen bills, and what do you get? Lots of yeses over here. Over there? “Nyet, nyet, nyet.” Hey, that rhymed, didn't it? What do you get? Nyet. That's what you get over there when you have 16 bills: You get “nyet,” because those folks over there really don't want to see us succeed in our housing plan.

I say to my friends over there—and I consider them friends—maybe not close friends. But I seriously ask them: Would it not be better for us to succeed in bringing 1.5 million homes to the people of the province of Ontario over the next seven years to 2030? Isn't that more important than politicking on every single initiative that we bring forward to increase the supply of homes?

I'm going to tell you, I've got great admiration for my friend and colleague, and I've known him for many, many years, Steve Clark, the former minister, and of course today Minister Calandra, who has taken over the file—because we have left no stone unturned when it comes to trying to figure out and find ways that we can get the job done when it comes to building homes. And we're going to get it done. That is the way we work here; we get it done. In spite of what we're hearing from the opposition, when they would like to—as I say, Speaker, it is disappointing, because we'll all be better off, including the members on the other side, especially if they have children or grandchildren or friends or relatives that would like to have their name on the deed of their first home too. It is going to help everybody.

We have four children. We've got 12 grandchildren—

Mrs. Robin Martin: Well done.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much.

Home ownership is so important. It is really something that—I live in the first home that my father built—well, with my wife too. That was built in 1960. I was three years old when we moved into that house. It was a different time then. My father never borrowed money. He put it away and saved and saved. There were 10 children at that time

and two parents living in, I'm going to say, maybe 800 square feet on the top of our old store, on the second storey: 10 children and two parents living in there, getting by, because he wasn't going to be borrowing money. You know that's really not feasible anymore today.

We bought our first home in 1983. It was a bungalow, nothing too fancy, a nice lot. In the city, the lot would probably be worth a couple of million dollars. We bought that home for \$47,500 in 1983. The last four vehicles I've bought, none of them could have been close to being bought for \$47,500. In fact, one time when I bought a little better truck, and my wife mentioned, "For the price of that truck, you might be living in it." But it was a lot more than \$47,500, but, of course, I had to finance the truck.

1530

This is the world we're living in today. How are we going to—I read something in the newspaper the other day, that we need—how many homes was it that we needed to build? We needed a stock of 22 million homes in Canada before we would see an appreciable reduction in the cost of homes. And I know, and I heard from one of the members over there one time when they were speaking—again, I was already in my chair, so I didn't have far to fall. They said that the theory of supply and demand is a myth. Speaker, it is the most basic rule of economics, absolutely the most basic rule of economics. That is why those experts—and I know my friends on the other side often like to quote experts, but they quote the experts they like. An old saying—and I'm going to be guilty of it myself—but there's an old saying: Do you know what an expert is? That's anybody with a briefcase more than 25 miles from home. So those are who they quote as experts sometimes, because it suits their narrative, right? Somebody rolls into town with a briefcase: "He must be an expert."

A quantity of experts are saying clearly that if we don't increase the supply of homes, we cannot bring down the price of homes, and it really is basic common sense, Speaker. So, what does our government do? As I said, 16 bills, each and every one of them since we got elected in 2018 is designed to do just that: to increase the supply of homes. Because without increasing the supply, if there are 20 people looking for a house and there's one house—I mean, you've seen it; everybody has seen it here. It's crazy in a place like Toronto, but it's even happened up where I come from, in little old Barry's Bay, as the House leader mentioned yesterday. Even in little old Barry's Bay, if there are more people who want a home than there are homes available, the price of the homes go up. It's basic math, basic economics.

And you've seen these—what do you call them? Bidding wars—bidding wars on houses in Toronto and elsewhere, where the price just goes crazy. So, how does that help? It doesn't. But why does it happen? Because there aren't enough homes for sale. There are more people wanting the homes, and we're living in a situation, Speaker—and I know that even at the federal level, they're beginning to talk about how they might address it. When you have hundreds of thousands of people coming to

Canada and the majority of them coming to Ontario and the majority of those coming to the greater Toronto-Hamilton area, that puts more pressure on the reality that if we don't have enough homes to serve the current population, how are we going to serve the increased population?

So I am very excited about what the minister has done here in Bill 134. I know we're addressing the changing of the St. Thomas boundaries legislation. I think that was Bill 63, if I'm not mistaken. That was a bill that the opposition actually supported. And as I say—and I know you can't question the motives of anybody here, but I think we all know where some of that pressure came when the time came to support that bill.

But let's get back to Bill 134, which I've been, of course, speaking on all along. So, Speaker, this bill, which is going to define and put more clarity on what affordable housing is, or what qualifies or can be defined as affordable housing, is going to be tremendously helpful in areas like mine. I'm not sure how many of you people have ever been to my riding—probably not very many—but we have some significant pockets of good jobs. Canadian Nuclear Laboratories exists in my riding. That's a very high-tech nuclear facility. There are a number of people who have very, very good incomes, but we also have a portion of the population that simply does not. This new definition that the minister has brought forward is going to be hugely helpful in allowing those municipalities to be able to approve building permits and developments that will not be subject to development charges.

I can tell you, development charges, when you're a young person—we weren't as young as a lot of people, but when we bought our first home, there was no such thing as development charges in the communities then.

I did say to one person who was talking about development charges—

Hon. Paul Calandra: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order: I recognize the House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Pursuant to standing order 9(f)—just to inform the House—when the House adjourns tonight, it will return tomorrow morning at 10:15.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, House leader. I'll be there—or here, or wherever.

What I don't remember is where I was.

Mr. John Vanthof: Unfortunately, we do.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes. So if somebody can give me a prompt here, I can get going again.

Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin: No development charges for your first house.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, the development charges, yes.

I remember some person telling me that they think development charges are just fine, and I asked them—I think he was a guy older than me. I won't use his name. I said, "So when you built your nice home"—it's a nice home—"did we have development charges?" "Oh, there was no such thing as development charges then." I said, "Bingo. But you think maybe the folks today should be

subject to those development charges? I say, not so, not fair.” And he said, “Well, the municipalities need the money.”

The municipalities should find other ways of gaining that money. The municipalities can also be aware that if there are a hundred homes not built because people can't afford development charges—you know what they're getting? As the minister says, squadoosh, nada. But if there are a hundred homes built because there are no development charges, well, that municipality is just—it's a little bit of a windfall for that assessment, because each one of those homes now is going to be a revenue source for that municipality.

So let's get together. Let's get together. I know you're going to support this bill. But there are so many things—stop talking about the greenbelt. We made a mistake. We're moving on. Let's get building homes. We can do it together, to help everybody right here in the province of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Question?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I do want to say, 20 years of service is commendable, and, actually, every time this member has talked about his father, it has been very emotional.

I've been here, serving with you, for 11 years.

To the housing issue: Your government has moved forward in a very unconventional way, I would have to say. I'm looking at the leaked document that your members received from the Premier's office, and it goes on to say, with regard to Waterloo region, “some concerns about the lands proposed to be added including third-party requests”—if the Liberals had tried this, this member, I know for a fact, would be saying, “Who are those third parties? Who is requesting that the urban boundary be expanded? Why are they asking for that? Where is the motivation?” It goes on to say that 2,380 hectares is likely to be met with opposition by Indigenous communities. The ministerial modifications to expand the region's settlement boundary were not shared with Indigenous communities.

The member knows full well we have a duty to consult. What do you say to this leaked document in—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Response?

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Mr. John Yakabuski: I appreciate the comments and the compliments from the member as well.

But, let's be clear: It is apparent, maybe even obvious, that we're going at this subject from two different points of view. Our absolute commitment as government—and you've heard the Premier rise in question period over and over and over again, as well as the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and our House leader, and what they have said is, “We are going to build homes.” We're not going to focus on something that the opposition wants to talk about and dig up and try to slow the process down. This is a crisis and what it needs, needs, needs is all hands on deck—everybody rowing in the same direction—

because if we don't fix this housing crisis, we are going to be in big trouble down the road. Let's get together.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Question?

Mr. Mike Harris: It's always great to hear the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. He is such a fantastic orator, and I would like to congratulate him on his 20 years here in the Ontario Legislature.

I do find it interesting that the member opposite from Waterloo wants to talk about potential third parties. I think some of those third parties actually donated to her campaign. I think if we checked through the listings, we might actually see some names, which might be funny.

But I think my biggest concern is—I think we all know I have five kids. I want them to be able to afford a house. That is something that is incredibly important for me and it's one of the reasons why I got into politics. The Liberals' Fair Hydro Plan, I didn't think was all that fair. It was going to be put on my children and the backs of their kids.

So I would like to hear from the member. I know his kids are—gosh, I think they're almost about my age, but maybe speak a little bit about how he thinks this is going to really benefit people of the future and the generations to come.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I want to thank the member from Kitchener–Conestoga. I do share his aspirations. I share the aspirations he has for his children to be able to afford a home. And that's why I keep saying to the members on the opposite side—they want to focus almost on—it's a scare tactic, trying to drop every kind of thing that is against what we're doing. We said the process was wrong. We have accepted first the 14 and then all 15 recommendations of the Auditor General because we know we have to move on. We have to get the job done for the sake of the people of Ontario and for Mike Harris's five kids. I'm not even sure how old they are but, Mike, it's got to be younger than you. Come on.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Question?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Just to continue on the housing conversation—although, I must digress, it does seem like the member from Kitchener–Conestoga knows who those third parties were in the region of Waterloo who requested the carve-out of the urban boundary. I don't know who they are, but if you do know, I think it would be in your best interest to let us know who they are. I want to know. I want to know who they donated to. I want to know who they lobbied. I want to know if they're registered lobbyists. I want to know everything about the carve-out and the urban boundary.

Now the member, though, has a long history of championing transparency and so I realize that this discourse is somewhat complicated for you. But the leaked report from the Premier's office also says that we were being watched. It's right in the document. April 2—there was a protest; we're all listed in the people who attended.

Do you think that's a good use of government resources to be spying on members of provincial Parliament?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, Speaker, I'll tell you what's not a good use of public money—because we all get paid here and our staff get paid—to go on ad infinitum

to slow down the progress we are determined to make when it comes to the housing file. Because there's not a single person in this chamber and outside of this chamber—if they watch the news at all—that doesn't go to bed wondering what the future is going to be if we don't get the job done when it comes to building homes. We're looking at every option including modular homes, lower-priced homes, homes that people can afford to be a starter home and maybe someday they'll move to a bigger home and somebody else will be able to buy a starter home. But if we don't get the job done, I worry about my grandchildren. Yes, I worry about people like the pages working here. What's going to be the possibility of owning a home if you cannot afford it? We have to get them affordable and the only way to do that is to build them.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Questions?

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: I want to thank the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for their passionate speech. Madam Speaker, everyone knows now that I came to this country as an international student. I can tell you how difficult it is to buy a home for a new immigrant, and especially for international students. I bought my house 10 years back; imagine when there were low interest rates and a detached house was less than \$500,000. We have immigrants come to this country every day, international students, and they always worry how they will be able to afford a home. They want this government to take action because only this government can take action because the previous governments always ignored this. And the member was right: We are in crisis right now and people expect our government to take action. This is why we're building 1.5 million homes in the next 10 years.

Can the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke explain to the House how this bill will benefit the future generation?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I want to thank the member for that question. I also want to thank him for the numbers that he talked about: \$500,000 to buy a home. You know, 25 years ago, that would have been in the upper echelons of homes, and now it's not even the average price. This is the crisis we're facing, Speaker. How can a young family, even two people working in the household—let's just say on a combined income of \$200,000. They can't even afford a house of average price in Toronto today. And what's going to happen when the other ones that have a fixed mortgage at, say, 3% and now they're going back to the bank and it's going to be 7%? It doesn't work.

That's why we've got to move to bring this housing supply up so that it can help to bring down all of those other costs and let those young people get a home within their budget.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Questions?

Ms. Catherine Fife: The member goes on to say that this is a process with integrity, and I will challenge you on that. Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation expressed support for the regional plan because they were consulted. The briefing note from

the Premier's office says that the ministerial modifications to expand the regional settlement boundary were not shared with Indigenous communities.

All we're trying to do, Madam Speaker, is open this process up and shed some light, not let it fester. The member says that we're trying to slow things down. The only thing that we're trying to slow down in this place is the corruption that's happening with this government.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Please watch the word "corruption."

The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, Speaker, I would have hoped she would have been asked to withdraw that word, but I'm not the boss here.

I do want to say that when it comes to consultation with Indigenous communities, I have the utmost faith in our Minister of Indigenous Affairs. I don't think that anybody has done more to forge a working, collaborative relationship with First Nations in our province ever in history than Minister Rickford. And that is something—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Thank you.

Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to say a few words about Bill 134, Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act. The bill is not very substantive. If you are so interested, it is three pages and you have it done. Really, in two pages, you have it done.

It has two schedules. The first schedule of the bill talks about redefining "affordable." The government had passed a law, a bill, and now they're passing a new bill to change the changes that they had done. "Learn from your mistake," is what I have to say to that.

What the first part of the bill will do is that it will exempt affordable and attainable residential units from development charges. What has changed, really, is the actual definition of "affordable." Right now, with the bill, the definition of affordable would be a home whose rent is no greater than either 30% of income of the 60th percentile of renter households, or an average market rent, that is currently at 80% of average market rent, which would go to 90% of average purchase price. So a very small step, but kind of in the right direction, because when they had changed it initially, they had put it at 30% of income of the 80th percentile. Well, I will tell you, Speaker, that bringing it down to the 60th percentile will mean that the percentage itself will go down, which is something good.

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We want to have more rental units, but we want them to be affordable to people, so if developers bring rental units at a price that's equivalent to 30% of income of the 60th percentile, they will get a discount on the service fees that they have, the development charges that they would have had to do. It's a tiny, weenie little step, but I have no problem supporting a step in the right direction. Let's make it clear: The road to the end goal where we have affordable housing for everyone is a long ways away, but the bill makes a tiny step, and we appreciate that. That's in the first schedule of the bill.

The second schedule of the bill is very specific. We all know that Volkswagen has had this billion-dollar deal to start to do EV batteries—electric vehicle batteries—in St. Thomas. What the second part of the bill does is that it allows, basically, St. Thomas to expand into Central Elgin—a boundary adjustment act so that, basically, they can allow Volkswagen to set up the plant to build the electric vehicle batteries.

Again, I think that the people in St. Thomas and part of Central Elgin certainly are looking forward to the jobs and the opportunities that this multi-billion dollar electric battery plant will bring to their area and that, basically, the second part of the bill is to allow them to have enough land within St. Thomas to set up this plant. That is what the bill will do.

It was interesting to listen to the member prior to me talk about how the world that we are living in has changed. If you look to the second part of the bill where Ontario will have plants to produce electric vehicle batteries, we all know that in order for those plants to be there, in order for batteries to see the light of day, they will need minerals. I happen to be from the riding of Nickel Belt, where all of the mines in Sudbury are located. I have many, many, many, many, many mines in my riding, providing pretty much all of the minerals that are needed for those battery plants to see the light of day, to have the minerals to do that work.

That brings me to a specific mine that I would like to talk about, and it is Côté Gold. It's a mine that is fairly new—actually, the Premier and a series of his ministers came to my riding to celebrate the grand opening of Côté Lake mine. They did that in September 2020. The mine is located across the street. So it's called Highway 144. Highway 144 is a highway that goes from Sudbury to Highway 101. Highway 101 is the highway that brings you to Timmins—so a highway that goes from Sudbury to almost Timmins, and you do a quick right, 30 kilometres, Highway 101, you're there. The new mine is on that highway. On one side of the highway, you have the brand new mine. On the other side of the highway, you have the community of Gogama.

I was really pleased when the big contingents of the minister and the Premier were there—the Prime Minister was there also—to celebrate the grand opening of Côté mine in my riding. Côté mine is not in full production yet, but I can tell you that 1,900 people work at the mine site right now. If you go on Google, you can see the workers, you can see the mine taking shape and all of this. And they all have to live in bunkers. Why is that? Well, it's because there are many homes and lots in Gogama that people could buy, but the government owns them all.

And so, back on January 6, 2021, after the Premier had come to my riding, I wrote to him. I will read the letter into the record—it takes two minutes, but you will see, Speaker, that it's directly related to the bill. So on January 6, I wrote to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario:

“Premier...,

“I am writing to you about the economic potentials of Côté gold mine for my constituents and for the community

of Gogama. Gogama is a beautiful, small, isolated northern community in my riding of Nickel Belt. It was once home to 1,200 residents.

“I want to thank you for attending the groundbreaking ceremony of Côté gold mine on September 11, 2020. As you know, the mining company Iamgold”—that's the name of the company—“is opening a new gold mine across the street from the community of Gogama. This mine is an opportunity for Gogama businesses and people to flourish. Unfortunately, there are currently very few opportunities for potential businesses, mine workers and their families to purchase properties in Gogama.

“The community is home to many abandoned homes and lots. These homes are on paved roads, with street lights, hydro, telephone, Internet, water and sewage. For example MNR used to have many houses in Gogama. They have not used them for over a decade” because they closed the MNR office in Gogama. “They are being managed by CBRE” which keeps the lights on, pays for the heating, shovels the driveways, cuts the grass, maintains them all, and this has been for decades that we have paid that company to maintain those houses. “Many people are interested in purchasing these homes. Other lots have been cautioned by the Ministry of Finance, but they cannot be sold or acquired as crown land by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. And since Gogama is an unorganized area, they also cannot be acquired and resold by a municipality.” They are not a municipality; they are a local services board.

“In September, at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Côté gold mine, you spoke about the potential of the gold mine to bring economic prosperity to change lives in Gogama. Unfortunately, without land for businesses to set up shop and houses for people to live in, Gogama will be missing out. Workers will commute directly to the mine and leave once their work is done. Many people want to live in Gogama, send their kids to the local school, be part of the community. Some fully-serviced lots as well as lots on crown land could be purchased by people who want to move and set up shop in Gogama in order to work for or do business with Côté gold mine. If you are serious about this mine having a positive local impact, then the government needs to create avenues for people to purchase these properties in Gogama.

“Premier, will you create a clear and simple process for people to purchase government owned properties in Gogama? People and businesses need a single point of service that they can reach out to for help in acquiring these properties. You often speak about your government's commitment to cutting red tape. Please don't let red tape stand in the way of the economic opportunities for this community. Stand by your commitment at the Côté gold mine groundbreaking ceremony, and allow Gogama to benefit from the gold mine across the street!”

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So I wrote to the Premier on January 6, 2021.

The next day, just to be sure, I wrote to the Minister of Government and Consumer Services and told her pretty much the same thing that I just told the Premier.

I don't leave any pages unturned. So on the same day, I wrote to the Minister of Finance and told the Minister of Finance that I had met with MNRF on December 4 and the ministry told me the Ministry of Finance has a list of forfeited properties which is circulated annually to MNRF, and that it is likely the abandoned properties in Gogama are on that list. So I communicated with the Minister of Finance to check: "Where are those properties. Are they on the list?"

I don't leave any stone unturned. I wrote to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry on the same day and basically told them the same thing: "On December 4, I met with Adam Bloskie from your office to discuss this issue, but unfortunately it has not yet been resolved. Time is running out as people will want to begin moving to Gogama this spring. While I know some of the lots are under the purview of the Ministry of Finance, I hope that your office"—I'm now talking to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry—"will be able to address and manage the lots abandoned by MNR years ago."

I also wrote to the Minister of Infrastructure, and to the Minister of Infrastructure, I basically told the same story, about, "The government owns a whole bunch of lots and homes in Gogama. There are thousands of people across the street who live in bunkers who would like to live in the homes, would like to have their spouses and their kids live in the homes across the street. Please let them buy those properties."

I sent them pictures. There are some very nice houses, with patios, with beautiful trees, houses with garages. I sent them pictures as to where they are located in the community. A nice little bungalow—I know I'm not allowed to show them, but they're nice houses that everybody would love to have, to move into. One is on the hill that's—the present government shut down the OPP in Gogama, so the OPP station as well as the homes where the police officers used to live are all empty and could be up for sale. Anyway, I sent them the pictures. I sent them the map. I told them all of that.

I got a response back that due process had to take place and it would take between 12 and 24 months for due process to take place. Okay.

Six months later, I checked again, and then I got a letter from Christopher Keep, caucus and stakeholder relations adviser in the office of the Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry:

"I wanted to update you on your inquiry into eight properties in Gogama, Ontario that are deemed surplus to government needs.

"Infrastructure Ontario advises that it is moving through the standard disposition process as noted in the realty directive. This process includes circulation to provincial ministries, agencies and other levels of government to determine if there is a continued government need for the property.

"If there is no other government need identified, the properties will be marketed to the public by an external real estate broker for sale on the open market. It is estimated that it will take between 12 to 18 months for the

properties to be listed on the open market should there be no other government need identified.

"Should you have additional questions related to the status of these properties, please contact"—and they gave me a contact, Lindsey at Infrastructure Ontario, whom we had already been in contact with.

So, first, it was 12 to 24 months; six months later, it's 12 to 18 months—things are moving ahead; I'm sort of happy.

A year later, I check—nothing gone.

Two years later, I checked again.

So on June 21, 2023—this time I wrote to the Minister of Infrastructure. We have a new Minister of Infrastructure. It's basically the same letter:

"I'm writing to you about the issue my constituents are having with purchasing properties in the community of Gogama."

I reminded her: "Premier Ford attended the groundbreaking ceremony of Côté Gold mine on September 11, 2020, near Gogama. The mine is an opportunity for businesses and people to flourish, but this cannot happen without properties available to be purchased. There are many government-owned abandoned homes and lots on paved roads with hydro, telephone, Internet and water and sewage. Many people are interested in purchasing them as they want to live in Gogama, send their kids to the local school and be part of the community.

"The current process by Infrastructure Ontario does not work up north in Gogama, we need a new process that makes sense. These properties are not of high-monetary value and the due diligence process" has taken over 24 months and people in Gogama are missing out.

"Minister, the government needs to create avenues for people to purchase these abandoned properties in Gogama" and in other areas in northern Ontario. "People and businesses need a single point of service that they can reach out to for help in acquiring these properties.

"Thank you for your consideration...."

I had waited two years before I did the follow-up letter to the Minister of Infrastructure, and I get a letter back from the minister—and I gave her all the lists of the properties, who owns them and where they're located. I gave them pictures and all of this so they know what they're talking about. I get an answer on August 11 telling me they had to do due process: "Estimated timeline is a minimum of 12 to 24 months due to the complication with resolving title issues."

So they've known since September 2020 that there's a gold mine across the street from Gogama, that the government owns property and lots in Gogama. I have written to all of those ministers. We have waited the 24 months it was to take Infrastructure Ontario to do their work. I write back to the minister and got the exact same answer, that "The intent is to move forward as expeditiously as possible following our standard process. Estimated timeline is a minimum of 12 to 24 months"—the exact same letter that I got two years ago I got two years later.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Exactly. It's like Groundhog Day.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes, it was like Groundhog Day, so I'm not super happy.

I write back to—

Mrs. Robin Martin: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order, the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Pursuant to standing order 25(b)(i), I would ask that you direct the member from Nickel Belt to return to the subject matter of the bill. I've been very indulgent, trying to see where she was going to make the connection and even she spent a lot of time reading things into the record, which is generally not permissible as I understand it, but I'd like her to get back to the bill—

Interjections.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Point of order?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order, member for Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I believe I'm able to discuss the point of order that was raised. Before us is Bill 134 which is titled by this government, the Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act. I would like to say that I've been listening intently to the member describing what affordable homes would be in the community of Gogama, especially based on good jobs from that particular gold mine. So literally exactly what the bill sets out to discuss: affordable homes and good jobs. The member has done a beautiful job speaking directly to the bill. That's my point on the existing point.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Thank you for both points. The member, that is speaking, from Nickel Belt, please, we're talking about affordable housing. There was a little bit of a thing in there, so let's stick to what is in the bill. Thank you so much.

M^{me} France Gélinas: No problem, Speaker; you're absolutely right.

The point I wanted to make is that the housing crisis is not only in southern Ontario; it exists in northern Ontario when 1,900 workers sleep in bunkers because they cannot purchase lots that are owned by the government of Ontario. The government of Ontario has known for three years that we need those properties to be up for sale and then they answer to me in writing that it will take another two years to put an \$80,000 house up for sale.

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The government has some work to do. They can blame a whole lot of people for the housing crisis; they can only blame themselves for the housing crisis in Gogama. It rests on their shoulders and nobody else.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Questions?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you to the member from Nickel Belt for her comments. I was struggling to understand how you were connecting this. Honestly, we've heard earlier today from the member for Niagara Centre on your side that rents rose dramatically, particularly since 2011—those were his words—and that we're now in a housing crisis, of course. I believe that it

was your party that held the balance of power in 2011 and thereafter.

What I would like to ask the member opposite is what you guys did during that time you held the balance of power to address the housing crisis and why you won't get on board with the 16 pieces of legislation that this government has brought forward to move housing supply forward in Ontario.

M^{me} France Gélinas: As parliamentarians, we have a responsibility for everybody who lives in Ontario. Whether you live in northeastern Ontario, like I do, or whether you live in and around the GTHA, we have a responsibility for all. The solutions to the housing crisis will be very different depending on where you live.

What I was trying to do today is to show them we do have a housing crisis in northeastern Ontario in and around Gogama, in part because of the new working opportunity at the mine, that the government could solve today. Put those houses up for sale. By Friday, they will be sold and, by Saturday, people will have moved in. It's as simple as that. When there are easy solutions, don't let them go by.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Ms. Sarah Jama: This bill redefines affordability based on income, instead of the market, for the purpose of the development charge exemption, which is an incremental improvement over the status quo. But as it's currently defined, developers might receive an exemption for building affordable homes that are not affordable for most people and that might have been built anyway without these exemptions. My question to you is, do you think that this bill goes far enough with this redefinition of affordability?

M^{me} France Gélinas: The answer to your question is no, this bill does not go far enough. We recognize that a tiny, wee step is being done in the right direction and we applaud the tiny, wee step in the right direction. But we are still miles away from the ultimate objective of making sure that Ontario is a welcoming place for everyone. In order to be welcoming people have to find a place to stay.

To bring forward real rent control would go a long way. This is something that the NDP government pushed when we were there: real rent control for Ontario. The units that were built when the NDP government were in power are still under rent control and they are still affordable—even to the people of Toronto—but there are fewer and fewer of them. So is this enough? No, absolutely not.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

M. Anthony Leardi: J'étais heureux d'entendre la députée de Nickel Belt parler positivement au sujet de l'agrandissement d'une mine—Côté Gold. J'aimerais poser la question à la députée. Est-ce qu'elle regrette sa décision de voter contre le projet de loi 71, Loi visant l'aménagement de davantage de mines?

M^{me} France Gélinas: La question n'a rien à voir avec le projet de loi, mais je vais y répondre quand même. Moi, dans mon comté, j'ai des centaines de mines qui ont été abandonnées et qui n'ont pas été nettoyées.

Donc, dans le projet de loi auquel tu fais référence, parce que l'on diminue encore plus les responsabilités des compagnies minières de nettoyer le désastre qu'ils laissent derrière eux après avoir fait leur travail, les gens de Nickel Belt ne pouvaient pas appuyer ce projet de loi-là.

On a en ce moment de l'arsenic d'une vieille mine d'or qui va dans le lac Long. Le lac Long, c'est un super beau lac dans Sudbury qui est en train de se faire polluer parce qu'une vieille mine met de l'arsenic dans le lac.

Il y avait de bonnes choses dans le projet de loi, mais la partie où on diminuait les responsabilités pour le nettoyage quand les travaux miniers sont finis faisait que, dans Nickel Belt, on ne pouvait pas appuyer ça.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I feel like just saying, "What she said." I do want to ask the member from Nickel Belt—she quite rightly outlined the solutions that are right there in front of the government: easy, low-hanging fruit.

The member from Nickel Belt has been a long-standing advocate for the rights of Indigenous communities, dignity for those communities, collaboration and consultation. When you found out that this government is actively removing and really neglecting their duty for due diligence to consult on housing, particularly in Waterloo region and across the province, and in particular, the Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, who were intentionally not consulted on the carve-out of the lands in Waterloo region and Barrie and Ottawa—the list goes on.

Is this going to help the housing crisis? This government is so distracted by their own diversion into the housing development market that they're forgetting their core principle that housing is needed in the province of Ontario.

M^{me} France Gélinas: The government has a responsibility to get fully informed, prior consent for anything that goes on in traditional First Nations territory. This is a responsibility that we signed on to when we signed the treaty. We have to respect that if it has to do with a First Nation's traditional territory, they have to be consulted. They have to give full, prior consent before anything is done on their territory. Would you accept anything being done in your backyard? Would you accept anything being done to your home without you having a say in it? No, and neither do they.

But at the same time, they are very reasonable. Take the time to talk to them. They are human beings like you and I. They understand that we're in 2023. They see what needs to be done and what could be done differently. Take a little bit of time. Listen to them. I guarantee you'll learn something.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

M. Anthony Leardi: La députée a dit en réponse à ma question qu'elle avait peur de la possibilité qu'il y ait quelques conséquences négatives à cause de notre projet de loi 71. En même temps, la députée a dit qu'elle veut que des gens déménagent pour s'installer juste à côté d'une mine.

À mon avis, il me semble que la députée, qui a dit que des gens doivent déménager pour s'installer juste à côté

d'une mine—ça m'indique que la députée n'a pas vraiment peur qu'il y ait des possibilités ou des conséquences négatives. Est-ce que la députée est d'accord avec cette analyse, oui ou non?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Non, pas du tout, mais je vais essayer de l'expliquer. On a en ce moment une nouvelle mine, Côté Gold, qui a pris le temps de parler à la Première Nation Mattagami et qui a pris le temps de montrer quel sera le plan de nettoyage lorsque la mine va être terminée. Une mine d'or, ça ne dure pas 100 ans. Une mine de nickel, ça dure 100 ans; une mine d'or, 10 ans, 12 ans—c'est à peu près tout.

Mais Iamgold a un plan très précis qui a été partagé avec les communautés pour leur démontrer comment ils étaient pour nettoyer tout ça avant de partir. Et ils ont mis l'argent dans un compte que les gens peuvent vérifier pour que les millions de dollars soient là pour faire le nettoyage si jamais Iamgold s'en va au milieu de la nuit.

Votre projet de loi ne demandait pas que l'argent soit là. Les gens veulent que l'argent soit là pour faire le nettoyage. La journée qu'on met la première—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Thank you.

Further debate?

1620

Mr. Stephen Blais: It's a pleasure to be here with you all this evening to debate Bill 134, the so-called Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act. Let's be clear, Madam Speaker: Homes in Ontario have skyrocketed out of control, and this government is not doing a particularly good job at addressing it. The skyrocketing costs of housing and runaway cost of living are amongst the most pressing issues facing Ontarians. But while families are struggling with higher grocery bills, higher energy bills and the rising cost of living, this government is focused on insider deals to help enrich their friends.

The Ford government has been in power for half a decade. In that time, we've seen the average price of a home in Ontario skyrocket out of control. When this government was elected in 2018, the cost to buy a home in the GTA was \$787,000. In Ottawa, the cost was right around \$449,000. Today, an average home in the GTA is well over \$1 million, and the average in Ottawa exceeds \$750,000.

The dream of home ownership, once a bedrock, a foundation of living a good life in the best province in this country, is now becoming a nightmare. Not only is the cost of buying a home skyrocketing; as a result of this government's policy to eliminate rent control, the cost of renting a newly built condo or apartment is also moving further and further out of reach for so many Ontarians.

Madam Speaker, there used to be a pact in Ontario—a sacred trust, if you will—between the government and the people: Ontarians would work hard, they would do an apprenticeship or start a business, maybe they would go to university, but they would work to do the things that they love to get a good job and to earn a good living. That hard work and that good job would afford them the opportunity to start building their life, maybe getting married and

starting a family. Ontarians would pay their taxes on that hard-earned living because the government would be there to provide them some very important services.

Their hard work and their good job would lead them to being able to buy a home and have kids in a nice neighbourhood that had good schools and nice parks. There might even be a school bus to pick them up, bring their kids to school and bring them home every night. They would have a doctor to help them raise their kids and keep them healthy, and if there was an emergency, an ambulance would be there quickly to take them or their loved ones to a good hospital.

But, Madam Speaker, under this government's watch, that pact, that sacred bond, is being broken. Ontarians are working just as hard as ever, even harder, but too many of them—too many of our neighbours, friends and family—are having trouble making ends meet. For too many, they can't even contemplate buying a home and starting a family because they're focused on getting to their next paycheque.

For those who do struggle and claw and are able to find a home and start a family, they are no longer receiving those same bedrock services from their government. Millions of Ontarians don't have a family doctor at all, and more don't have one in the community in which they live. Their kids are going to schools with too many children in the class, where their teacher's attention is divided too many different ways, and they're having trouble keeping up. They're living in communities where it's hit or miss if an ambulance will be available to pick them up in an emergency, and some Ontarians are waiting hours and hours for help. As we've seen in almost every part of the province, hospital emergency rooms are closing at night or on the weekend, leaving people without basic emergency medical service.

Now, Madam Speaker, nobody has ever liked paying taxes, but we know that it is a key element and important part of the sacred bond between the people and their government. Ontarians are still paying their taxes, but the government is no longer providing the same basic core services in exchange for those hard-earned taxes Ontarians are paying.

It's good to see that the government is focusing some legislation on trying to make homes more affordable by changing the definition of affordability, but it's too little, too late. They could have acted much sooner. They could have acted sooner on the recommendations of their own Housing Affordability Task Force, which urged them to double the pace of new home construction and increase density in single-family neighbourhoods.

We've seen that, despite the promise to build 1.5 million new homes and despite pledges from municipalities to get on board with the government in doing so, I don't think any of them—maybe one or two—are even on pace to come close to meeting those targets. Building permits are down. Construction starts are down. They're not going to come anywhere close to building 1.5 million new homes, and a minor change to the definition of "affordability" isn't going to kick-start things the way that

they need to in Ottawa and in the GTA and other parts of the province.

This government continues to blame previous governments for the housing supply crunch while doing nothing for nearly half a decade. In that half a decade, as I've already mentioned, the price of a new home in Ontario has skyrocketed. In some parts of the province, it's more than doubled. And through their actions, this government has proven that they're not on the side of Ontarians, because instead of focusing on the issues that matter most to families, instead of addressing affordability in a real way, instead of helping municipalities build complete communities with good parks and hospitals and schools that meet the expectations of Ontarians for the price they're paying and the taxes they're paying, this government is focused on helping a very few small number of insiders enrich themselves.

You know what isn't affordable, Madam Speaker—what's not affordable to most Ontarians, what's not affordable, I would suggest, to anyone in this room: \$8.3 billion is not affordable. But that's what just a handful of insiders and friends of this government was set to benefit from as part of their attempt to build over the greenbelt. And every day it becomes clearer that all roads in this greenbelt scandal lead back to the Premier's office. It's cost them dearly. Not only has it cost them time, not only has it cost Ontario families time in addressing the real affordability crisis, it's diverting the government's attention from addressing those real issues that Ontarians—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Point of order, Speaker: Pursuant to standing order 25(b)(i), I ask, through you, Speaker, that the member from Orléans return to the subject matter of the bill. The member's remarks are not germane to the item currently being debated in this House.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Thank you. A reminder to the member from Orléans that you're discussing Bill 134 in regard to affordable housing.

Mr. Stephen Blais: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'd like to point out that the bill before us, the Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act, is about affordable homes, which I was discussing. It also changes the Development Charges Act, 1997. Development charges, of course, are collected by municipalities and school boards to build important infrastructure like parks, like schools and like other critical pieces of infrastructure, which is, I think, everything that I've been talking about so far this evening.

So let's talk about how we can build affordable homes in a city like Ottawa. Ottawa is, of course, Ontario's second-largest city, and the government has set a very ambitious target for new home construction in that city. One way to build new homes is to ensure that key government documents like official plans are approved on time, so that home builders know where the land will be to build homes and they can then build those homes or sell those homes or rent those apartments and units to people that need them.

That's why it was so curious that this government, which is fixated—rightfully so—on the housing affordability issue, took nearly two years to approve the official plan in the city of Ottawa. And what have we learned happened during those two years? While the city of Ottawa and the elected officials in Ottawa approved the addition of over 1,000 hectares of new land to the Ottawa boundary to ensure that there was land available to build new affordable homes for residents, that report and the approval of that report sat on the minister's desk for nearly two years. During that time, a key parcel of land in the city of Ottawa was sold for market value for farmland or thereabouts. Over the course of the two years, the people that bought that land contributed—what we've found so far—over \$30,000 to the government's political party and their riding associations, and then magically, after nearly two years, the minister of the day decided to bring that land into the urban boundary. That's a very interesting way to spur new home construction and the affordability of new homes, but I'm not sure that it passes the smell test that most Ontarians would put to the issue.

1630

Another important aspect of affordability is, of course, support for infrastructure from the government. We've seen that, when it comes to those kinds of questions, this government has a preoccupation with ignoring the city of Ottawa. In the year since the city's new mayor has been elected and their new council has been elected, there has been very little action in the city of Ottawa, very little investment by this government. I understand that the mayor may have been invited to a barbecue at the Premier's house and the Premier has said some nice things about him in the chamber and at the news conference, but not much else has happened.

In the what, like two months since Olivia Chow was elected in Toronto, the Premier has bent over backwards to create a new task force that's going to solve all the economic issues and problems in the city of Toronto. It would be nice if, when the government is discussing affordability and good jobs, every once in a while—maybe every five years or so since this government has been elected—they might spend a little time and attention talking about the second-largest city in the province. Because you know what? There are over a million people that live in Ottawa. I know they don't have a lot of members from Ottawa anymore after having just lost a by-election that was held by Conservatives for 100 years, but the residents of Ottawa shouldn't be punished for the government's inability to hold a key riding in the west end of the city.

Now, Madam Speaker, as we're continuing to talk about affordability—because, of course, that's what the bill is about, the affordability of housing—I think it's important to note that life in Ottawa and life across the province is becoming more and more unaffordable. As I just discussed, there's a deal going on to try to fix affordability in Toronto, but the city of Ottawa has been ignored. The city of Ottawa is actually projecting tens and tens and tens of millions of dollars in deficits for

their public transit agency, as just one example, without any consideration being offered or suggested by this government.

So while it's very nice for the mayor of Ottawa to be invited to a barbecue at the Premier's house and have some nice things said about him at a news conference, it would be nice if this government actually showed up to Ottawa and started doing some things to help the city and the people of Ottawa out.

Madam Speaker, my time is running out, so I'd just like to conclude the way in which I began. While we are debating the Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act, let's not be fooled and let's not have Ontarians be fooled: Housing in Ontario isn't affordable. It has become less affordable under the watch of this government, and they are not doing a good job at addressing it.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Question?

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: Through you, Madam Speaker, my question to the member opposite—okay, so first of all, he talked about specifically affordability and that everything has become more expensive to buy a home under this government. As the great member from Renfrew-Nipissing—

Mrs. Robin Martin: Pembroke.

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: —Pembroke noted, we've brought in 16 bills to help the process so that we can get more shovels in the ground to have more homes. What did the Liberals do over 15 years? I can tell you one thing that they did: I remember the hydro bills. My own personal hydro bill was over \$300 a month. Under this government, today I'm paying on average \$125. That's a big difference. Affordability goes hand in hand—if you can't afford to pay your bills associated with your house—that's what the Liberals did to us.

My question to the member from New Orleans—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Thank you to the member from Newmarket-Aurora.

Response?

Mr. Stephen Blais: New Orleans is in Louisiana, which is in the southern United States. Orléans is a suburb of Ottawa—the eastern suburb of Ottawa, where the sun rises on our nation's capital, just to correct the record.

In terms of affordability, when this government was elected in 2018, the average cost to buy a home in the greater Toronto area was \$787,000. In Ottawa, it was \$449,000. This isn't about interest rates. It's about the price of buying a home, which the Minister of Labour should understand.

The current average in the GTA exceeds a million dollars and, in Ottawa, it's above \$750,000. The price of homes is demonstrably higher five years after this government took power.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Ms. Catherine Fife: The member from Orléans and I are in a similar position in the province right now because the government has overridden our urban boundaries, local democracies, citizen input. And yet, in the briefing note that was leaked to us—to the Premier, by the way—

it goes on to say that there were some protests. People have a right to protest in the province of Ontario if they don't like what the government of the day is, and there's been lots of protests here and on the front lawn of Queen's Park.

But it goes on to say that a number of elected officials attended the rally, so they're keeping track of MPPs and activists and citizens who are standing up for their rights to actually participate in their democracy.

Do you think that this is a huge distraction for the government away from the housing crisis in the province of Ontario?

Mr. Stephen Blais: I am surprised and disappointed and shocked that a big-C Conservative government would be acting like Big Brother and tracking people who are attending protests and rallies, Madam Speaker. Ontarians have the right to voice their opinions about the actions that the government is or is not taking. And that's why it was profound that the residents of Kanata–Carleton, after 100 years, chose to protest the Conservative government and after 100 years told them that they're not doing good enough and elected a member of the Liberal Party.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I want to ask a question about the fantastic development of automotive jobs and industrial might in southwestern Ontario, and that is partially dealt with in part two of this particular bill, which authorizes the city of St. Thomas to offer certain, let's say, incentives to encourage the \$7-billion investment by Volkswagen in the city of St. Thomas. And I'm lucky to have the associate minister here very close to me who helped land this spectacular deal for southwestern Ontario. Even though it's not in my riding, I'm excited about it because I know people in my riding are going to benefit from it.

My question to the member who just spoke is, even though this fantastic \$7-billion investment in St. Thomas is not in my riding, I'm excited about it because I know my people are going to benefit from it. How does he feel about it?

Mr. Stephen Blais: The automotive industry is one of the foundations on which Ontario's economic might is built and so I'm very excited to see investment in the automotive industry. It's also why, Madam Speaker, I was so disappointed that, during the great economic crisis in 2009, the Conservatives voted unanimously against saving the auto industry in Ontario. They were very happy to see General Motors and other car companies pull up shop, close things down and move permanently to the United States. And only under the efforts of the McGuinty government was the auto industry in Ontario saved, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

M^{me} Lucille Collard: I will start by thanking my colleague from Orléans for some really valid and good points that he's made in his debate, and I hope that there will be notes taken.

This government has been making decisions that are threatening our environment, our farmlands, putting at risk

the way we'll be able to feed our family. Now, you've mentioned a few times that the government is nowhere near attaining its stated objective of building 1.5 million homes. Can you elaborate and give some indication that the government is nowhere near attaining that objective, even though that's the guise under which they are presenting this new bill that attains very little in the end?

Mr. Stephen Blais: I appreciate the question. As you know, when various pieces of government legislation were being introduced, one of our colleagues attempted to amend one of the bills to ensure that constant reporting on the government's ability to meet their goal and where they are in the moment of time in meeting their goal were reported to the Legislature and reported publicly. The government wouldn't even allow that to be debated and certainly didn't support it. They are nowhere close to meeting 1.5 million new homes. In fact, at committee earlier this year, the former Minister of Housing couldn't even explain which metrics they were using to keep on track of their status. Were they using building permits? Were they using CMHC status? Were they using other metrics?

1640

So, first of all, the government needs to decide how they're going to track new housing, which metric they're going to use, and then they need to be reporting on it, every year, to the public. As far as I can see, that's not happening.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you to the member from Orléans for his comment.

We had 15 years of Liberal government, and for the last several years—from 2011 on, when the member from Niagara Centre said prices really started to skyrocket—we had the NDP supporting that Liberal government, and we watched as housing prices skyrocketed. And this did not happen in a short period of time. This happened over decades before that, building up to eventually skyrocketing from 2011 on. It is this government that is now taking steps to address it with 16 pieces of legislation for housing supply action plans. The previous Liberal government did nothing—stood by while prices went up, did nothing to address the housing supply crisis—and even now are raising issues to try to stop the kind of moves we're trying to make to make sure we have more housing.

Will the member from Orléans get with the program, join us and support these housing initiatives?

Mr. Stephen Blais: Redesignating land to enrich your friends isn't a plan to build homes; it's a scheme.

A plan to build homes would be helping municipalities get through permits faster. A plan to build homes would be addressing the affordability issues that residents of Ontario are facing each and every day. If residents are spending money, paying to access a front-line health clinic—which is happening in Ottawa today—then they don't have that money to pay rent or to pay the mortgage or to buy groceries. That is at the root of the affordability crisis we're facing.

The government has had five years. House prices are up. Everything is up. No plan—just schemes.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further debate?

M. Anthony Leardi: Ce soir, nous traitons du sujet du projet de loi 134, Loi de 2023 pour des logements abordables et de bons emplois. Ce projet de loi comporte deux parties : la première partie qui parle de la définition du mot « abordable » et, deuxièmement, une partie qui traite du sujet des pouvoirs de la cité de St. Thomas. Mes commentaires ce soir vont porter sur la deuxième partie, la partie qui traite de la question de l'augmentation des pouvoirs de la cité de St. Thomas.

Il me sera utile de donner à cette Assemblée une petite description de ma région—c'est le comté d'Essex—et après ça, je donnerai également un bref aperçu du bilan désastreux du gouvernement précédent libéral en matière de fabrication automobile en Ontario. Puis, après ça, je soulignerai le bilan fantastique du gouvernement actuel en matière de fabrication en Ontario, et aussi le bilan incroyable de ce gouvernement en matière de création d'emplois.

Et maintenant, je commence avec une description de ma région, qui est le comté d'Essex, qui compte de nombreuses industries formidables.

Nous avons, par exemple, d'énormes producteurs de céréales. Je parle particulièrement de la famille Wismer.

Nous avons, bien sûr, une industrie productive des légumes de serre. Nos légumes de serre que nous cultivons dans le comté d'Essex sont vendus partout en Amérique du Nord et sont commercialisés dans le monde entier et peuvent être trouvés dans bien de supermarchés américains.

Nous avons même une industrie du vin et des spiritueux. Ma circonscription ne compte pas moins de 20 vignobles différents. Nous avons une distillerie et au moins quatre sociétés de bières artisanales différentes.

Et nous avons des élevages. Nous avons des élevages de poulet, de dinde, et nous avons même un élevage d'alpagas.

Mais l'industrie de base de ma région reste l'industrie manufacturière, et notamment la fabrication des automobiles. Nous avons ce que nous appelions « the Big Three ». Il s'agissait de GM, Ford et Chrysler, et moi j'emploie toujours les mots « the Big Three », même si beaucoup de choses ont changé. GM ne fabrique plus dans ma région, Chrysler a changé son nom à FCA et puis l'a changé de nouveau à Stellantis. Ford reste toujours Ford—peut-être que ce sera toujours Ford. Mais une chose qui n'a pas changé dans ma région est la suivante : l'économie du comté d'Essex compte fortement sur l'industrie automobile.

Sous le gouvernement libéral précédent, nous avons perdu des milliers et des milliers d'emplois. Bon nombre de ces emplois se trouvaient dans notre industrie de fabrication et dans le secteur manufacturier. Des analystes estiment que nous avons perdu environ 20 000 emplois dans le secteur et dans la région du comté d'Essex. Nous

avons perdu, par estimation, 300 000 emplois dans tout l'Ontario pendant le gouvernement libéral.

Le bilan du gouvernement libéral précédent en matière de création d'emplois était mauvais, et en effet il n'avait pas de stratégie de création d'emplois. On pourrait dire, quand même, qu'il y avait une stratégie de destruction d'emplois. Mais tout cela a changé sous le gouvernement du présent premier ministre.

La création des emplois sous notre gouvernement a explosé. Depuis que nous avons formé le gouvernement en 2018, le gouvernement du premier ministre actuel a créé plus de 700 000 emplois partout en Ontario. Ce sont des emplois, en majorité, à temps plein et bien rémunérés. Beaucoup de ces emplois se trouvent dans le secteur de la fabrication.

Sous le gouvernement libéral, la fabrication des automobiles était presque morte en Ontario. Les analystes de l'industrie prévoyaient que l'Ontario ne recevrait aucun pourcentage de nouveaux investissements dans le secteur automobile. Mais, tout cela a changé sous notre mandat. Notre premier ministre a mis au travail son ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce. J'appelle cet homme « l'homme à la cravate jaune ».

I just talked about the man I called “the man with the yellow tie.” He is our Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, and at this point, I would like to tell a very important story. As with all my stories, they are directly related to the topic of debate, but of course you have to be patient because the full importance of the story might not reveal itself until the very end of my statements.

1650

So, of course, all of my stories start in Anderdon township; that's where I grew up. I went to Anderdon Public School. Anderdon Public School has the most wonderful library in Essex county. When you go into the library, there's a balcony that wraps around the second level, because it's a two-level library, and all the books are around the balcony level.

When I was in school, we used to go to the library approximately once a week, and we would line up in two lines. The boys would line up in one line and the girls would line up in another line, and we would proceed to the library, and we would walk in parallel lines. We were not allowed to run; we were instructed to walk. Let me tell you, we were very tempted to run because we wanted to get to the library. We wanted to get to the library before anybody else got there because we wanted to make sure we got the books we wanted and nobody else took the books we wanted.

So we were terribly tempted to run and, sometimes, we gave into that temptation and we would run to the library. If you got caught running, the librarian would scold you. We had a wonderful librarian; her name was Mrs. Klein-Lebbink, and she was a marvellous librarian. If she caught you running, she would scold you in a high-pitched voice, just like a librarian should. She had a pair of glasses which she hung around her neck on a chain, just like the quintessential librarian.

Mrs. Klein-Lebbink's office was located on the lower level of the library, and you could take the stairs down to the lower level and there was an open area where Mrs. Klein-Lebbink would read us stories. She read us wonderful stories—wonderful stories.

For example, she read us the story *The Cat in the Hat* about a marvellous cat with a big, tall hat who had wonderful machines that would do marvellous things. And she read us another incredible story, Mrs. Klein-Lebbink did. She read us a story called *Horton Hears a Who!* and it was about an elephant who discovered an entire civilization on a tiny speck. And then, the elephant undertook to protect that civilization by placing it on a flower. That story told us a very important lesson, and the lesson was this: A person is a person, no matter how small.

And Mrs. Klein-Lebbink, she read us a story about *Curious George*, a little monkey. *Curious George* was a monkey who always got into trouble. Now, I had a little bit of difficulty understanding the story of *Curious George* because I wanted a pet too. I wanted to have a dog or a cat. I couldn't understand how this particular gentleman, the man with the big yellow hat, had a pet monkey—my mother said we couldn't have a cat or a dog because we'd have to clean up after it. I couldn't understand how a man could have a monkey as a pet—

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order, the member from Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I rise on point of order 25(b)(i) regarding the member's current direction, which doesn't seem to be in the flow of the debate or the discussion at hand, or the bill or anything related to the bill. As a former educator, while I love storytime, now is not the time, but I'll leave it to the Speaker to decide.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Please refer back to the bill.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: The member's timing is impeccable, because I am now getting to the most salient part of this story. You see, it was about the Man with the Yellow Hat who was *Curious George's* caretaker. You never learned his name because the stories never told you his name, but you did know he wore yellow, and yellow, of course—I didn't understand it then, but I understand it now—is the symbolic colour of hope. It's the colour of hope. That's why, when I see the man with the yellow tie, it reminds me of hope, because he brings hope. He brings hope to the province of Ontario, which is what this bill does, Bill 134. And now you see, in the fullness of time, we've come full circle back to the import of the story.

Let me tell you a few examples about how the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, together with the Premier, has brought hope to the province of Ontario—hope which is symbolized by the colour yellow. Here are some examples: Magna investing \$471 million to manufacture EV batteries in Brampton; Honda investing \$1.4 billion to manufacture hybrids in Alliston; Ford investing \$1.8 billion to manufacture EV models in Oakville; General Motors investing \$2 billion to manufacture commercial EVs in Oshawa; Stellantis investing \$3.6 billion to modernize its Windsor and Bramp-

ton plants; Stellantis, again, and LG investing \$5 billion to build an EV battery plant in Windsor; and Volkswagen investing \$7 billion to build a new EV battery plant in St. Thomas, Ontario—which, of course, is the subject of this specific bill.

So you see, if you had been patient, we would have brought ourselves right back to the bill again. What a remarkable record of achievement and hope—over \$25 billion in automotive investment in the province of Ontario in just three years. Thank you, man with the yellow tie. Thank you.

Now, here's what Lana Payne, the national president of Unifor, has to say about all of these remarkable multi-billion-dollar investments. Unifor, of course, is Canada's largest private sector union. It has over 300,000 members. Here is what Lana Payne has to say:

“In less than three years, Canada's auto industry has gone from an apparent ... ‘has been’ to ‘has it all.’ ...

“Let's be ... clear that what's happening in the auto sector isn't happening by accident....

“The fact is this industrial renaissance is happening because governments” of today “are investing in making it happen.”

Thank you again, man with the yellow tie.

The Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade is making it happen in all of those communities that I just mentioned, right across the southern half of Ontario, and in particular in my region, southwestern Ontario. I can tell you that people in Essex county are hugely excited about these investments.

C'est pourquoi nous avons eu la Loi de 2023 sur la modification des limites territoriales entre St. Thomas et Central Elgin. Par ailleurs, le titre de la loi est modifié et la loi s'intitule désormais la Loi de 2023 sur le soutien au secteur manufacturier de St. Thomas.

La nouvelle loi est modifiée pour permettre à la cité de St. Thomas d'accorder une aide à une personne morale précisée pendant une période de temps précisée. La nouvelle loi fixe le montant total de certains types d'aide qui peuvent être accordés et permet au ministre de prendre des règlements, notamment des règlements qui imposent des restrictions, des limites et des conditions au pouvoir que la loi confère à la cité de St. Thomas.

Si le projet de loi est adopté, la cité de St. Thomas peut accorder de l'aide directement ou indirectement à une personne morale.

Le montant total d'aide, telle qu'elle est définie par la loi, qui est accordée en vertu de la loi ne doit pas dépasser le montant total que devrait normalement payer la société avant l'octroi de l'aide, au titre de ce qui suit :

—premièrement, les impôts prélevés aux fins municipales par la cité en vertu de la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités sur des biens réels pendant la période d'aide; et

—deuxièmement, les droits et les redevances fixés par la cité de St. Thomas en vertu de la loi pendant la période d'aide.

1700

Aux fins de la loi en question, le mot « aide » s'entend de :

—une subvention, autre que la vente ou la location à bail à un prix inférieur à la juste valeur marchande, ou encore la concession de bien-fonds; ou

—une exonération totale ou partielle d'impôts, de redevances ou de droits imposés pendant la période d'aide.

L'aide accordée en vertu de la loi peut s'appliquer à tout secteur de la cité de St. Thomas.

Le ministère des Affaires municipales et du Logement peut, par règlement, imposer des restrictions, des limites et des conditions au pouvoir que la loi confère à la cité, y compris prévoir que l'aide ou certains types d'aide ne peuvent s'appliquer qu'à des secteurs précisés.

À mon avis, pour la ville de St. Thomas et pour tout le sud de l'Ontario, y compris le comté d'Essex et tout le sud-ouest—comme j'ai dit, notre région dépend de l'industrie manufacturière. Notre région dépend de la fabrication des automobiles pour une bonne économie, pour des emplois à temps plein, pour des emplois bien rémunérés, pour un avenir pour nos enfants, qui est un avenir qui, tout le monde le sait, est un avenir avec beaucoup d'opportunités et d'emplois. C'est un avenir pour que tout le monde aime travailler.

Pour toutes ces raisons, et bien d'autres encore, j'appuie le projet de loi proposé ce soir, et j'encourage les membres de cette Assemblée à voter en sa faveur.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Questions?

M^{me} France Gélinas: J'aimerais demander au membre : le projet de loi a des dispositions qui exemptent les unités d'habitation abordables des frais de redevances d'aménagement. Vraiment, c'est tout ce que ça fait pour les loyers. Combien de personnes sur les 1,5 million d'habitations dont on a besoin vont être aidées par ce projet de loi?

M. Anthony Leardi: En réponse, beaucoup plus de personnes qu'ont été aidées par le gouvernement précédent libéral—qui ont perdu leurs emplois et qui ont dû déménager à l'extérieur de l'Ontario pour se chercher des emplois.

Pour ça, il faut voter pour ce projet de loi, parce que ce projet de loi est un projet de loi qui donne de l'espoir à tout le monde en Ontario qui veut travailler en Ontario, qui cherche une maison en Ontario : une maison qui peut être abordable, une maison pour sa famille.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: Thank you to my friend from Essex for the wonderful speech.

Madam Speaker, I really enjoyed that story. He highlighted that yellow is the colour of hope, and I don't see any yellow on the other side, because people do not have any hope from the opposition. People have hope from the government side, because they know that only this government can address the crisis.

Experts continue to say that this crisis is decades in the making. The NDP and Liberal governments had their chance, but they failed to act. This government will act and bring the province out of this housing crisis.

Can the member please explain to the House how this legislation will address the housing crisis?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: This is one piece, along with all of the other measures that this government is taking in order to build more homes, because the only way you're going to make it possible for people to get homes is to increase the supply. That's the way we're going to do it.

By the way, the member from Brampton who just spoke must have a lot of hope, because Brampton is receiving millions and perhaps even billions of dollars of automotive investment brought here because the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade and the Premier have worked so hard to land these remarkable investments after this industry, the automobile manufacturing industry, was decimated by the previous Liberal government.

Finally, we have hope brought to this province by the Premier and the Minister of Economic Development, whom I call the "man with the yellow tie"—the colour of hope, bringing hope to places to like Brampton, Essex county, Windsor and Alliston and all places from Oakville and in between. Jobs, hopes, progress: That's what we want.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm pleased to ask the member a question. In today's Toronto Star, there was an article called, "Canada Is Building Fewer Homes Today than During the 2020 Lockdowns—and 'The Worst Is Yet to Come.'" One of their comments in here was, "(Developers are) are no longer seeing that these projects will be a good investment for them, especially with the additional high cost of materials and labour." It goes on to say, "That's why we need less reliance from the private sector."

My question to this member who just spoke about the supply and the challenges: When are we going to see from this government a shift away from that super reliance on their super donor developer friends and recognize that the public sector and government leadership have a place in building homes for people that they can afford?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: The member from Oshawa who just spoke must be absolutely overjoyed by the work of the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade because Oshawa is getting a \$2-billion investment from General Motors, which I'm sure is going to be fantastic for her community, and I'm sure she's going to want to thank the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade for that, because that is wonderful for Oshawa and it's wonderful for the entire area around Oshawa. So I'm sure the member is going to want to thank the minister for that.

The member talked about the importance of having both government and private sector involved in the building of homes. Of course, the member's own plan, which is delineated in that member's policy, says that the government, the way she wants to do it or the way that party wants to do it, is going to finance—finance—250,000 homes, which, by my calculation, would cost the government \$125 billion. I challenge the member from Oshawa to tell me how many taxes—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Thank you.

Further questions?

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you—il a parlé un petit peu français. C'était très bien, très bien travaillé. Merci.

Thank you for your wonderful presentation. The member from Essex is a wonderful colleague and also a great representative not only for the Essex riding but also across Ontario. Thank you for passionately talking this bill.

Madam Speaker, the housing crisis is growing beyond the boundary, and I'm very pleased to see our government continue to take the housing supply crisis very seriously. I know there are too many families in my riding of Markham—not only the Markham–Thornhill riding but across Markham—finding a house, especially finding houses for the younger generation—their dreams are really going beyond out of reach. Can the member elaborate why the government is moving on the Ontario housing supply crisis so quickly, introducing yet another piece of legislation—so very, very important? Could he elaborate on that, please?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Speaker, I want to thank the member from Markham–Thornhill, who is probably, if not the best member, one of the best members on this side of the House. I agree with that statement, and I thank him for that question.

He asks how we are going to move forward. Well, we're going to move forward by building more supply. We've got to get more supply, and we're going to have the Minister of Labour, who's moving mountains and moving so hard to get more people into the skilled trades, because we're going to need those skilled trades people to build all the houses we need.

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Skilled trades registrations are up approximately 22% to 24% over the last year. That's a great accomplishment. I can tell you, we're going to need more and more and more skilled trades people, so an increase of 22% to 24% in one year alone is fantastic. That's one of the ways we're going to get to the goals we want to meet, which were outlined by the member from Markham–Thornhill. We need more skilled trades people, and that's what the Minister of Labour is going to—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Thank you.

Further questions?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks to the member from Essex for a very creative presentation—I mean, I like Stuart McLean from The Vinyl Cafe as much as anybody does.

You were talking at length about the colour of yellow and yellow being a colour of hope—and I was thinking of another colour; it was more in the brown category. But I do want to say, the yellow, the colour of hope, actually—I took a little bit from that presentation.

I see that the Minister of Long-Term Care is here. He's the new minister. Congratulations. I have hope that the minister is going to call Bill 21, the Till Death Do Us Part

bill, at social policy committee so that seniors in the province of Ontario also have hope to be reunified as they age—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Question?

Ms. Catherine Fife: —and so perhaps you might talk about how hopeful seniors have, in the province of Ontario, especially if this minister calls Bill 21 to the social policy committee.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Well, I'll tell you, if you're an elderly person and you're looking for hope, you need no longer look any further than Belle River, Ontario. What happened in Belle River, Ontario, was that the Ministry of Long-Term Care issued a licence to allow the operator to build a brand new, state-of-the-art facility for retired elderly people in Belle River, Ontario. It's a state-of-the-art facility—160 units—that's going to replace the old facility, which was only 80 units and very outdated. It's a brand new facility—state-of-the-art, 160 units—which, I might add, was opposed by the NDP. Luckily, the Ministry of Long-Term-Care, notwithstanding the objections of the NDP—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Thank you very much for the spirited debate and all the hopeful ways we have gotten here.

The member from London North Centre.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It's my great honour to rise today to add the voices of the wonderful people of London North Centre on what is possibly one of the most important topics of our time, which is housing.

Today, we are discussing and debating Bill 134, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the St. Thomas-Central Elgin Boundary Adjustment Act, 2023. This bill is very light on details. Just to take a look at the two schedules that comprise this bill, they talk about the definitions of affordable or attainable homes, and they also talk about the adjustments to the St. Thomas-Central Elgin boundary adjustment—an adjustment, I might add, was one that the NDP was proud to support. We helped expedite that adjustment to make sure that we were able to land the historic investment of the Volkswagen plant in St. Thomas.

Housing is something that every single constituent of mine discusses with me at every event I go to. I speak with seniors who are looking to downsize, who are concerned because they simply can't maintain that bigger home. There are also people in the mid-ranges who have adult children who can't move out or may never realize the dream of home ownership.

It's really shocking when we see the policy changes that have been enacted by this government and governments previous which have resulted in this unaffordability crisis. You see, housing is foundational. Housing is fundamental. Housing is health care, when you look at it in a more broad sense. Unfortunately, because of policy changes over the last 30 years, we've seen that housing has become more of a commodity rather than what it is, which is a human good, a necessity.

If you take a look at both Liberal and Conservative housing policies, they centre around developers. They have this focus on this trickle-down economic situation, where they expect that if they create a policy environment to enable the creation of housing, somehow that will result in affordability. But 30 years after those policies have been enacted, we see that they are utterly wrong.

This bill is an opportunity, and I would say that, though the NDP, the official opposition, will be supporting this bill, it unfortunately misses the moment. I have to wonder, with a bill that is comprised of two very brief schedules, if this legislation actually serves the purpose of the magician trying to distract the people of Ontario. What is happening in both hands? You see, we have the greenbelt grift. We have this handout to land speculators. We've seen so much corruption and scandal embroiling this government that this legislation seems to be something where they're trying to put out a good news story and distract from what is actually going on.

It's no wonder, Speaker, that they will interrupt all the members on the official opposition side when we dare talk about the greenbelt in relation to this legislation, because they don't want anyone to know. They don't want anyone to pay attention. They certainly don't want anyone to investigate, otherwise they would obviously have co-operated more fully with the Integrity Commissioner. We would have ministers that actually told the legitimate and honest truth, and we would see a government that actually would pass the official opposition's motion to strike a special committee—

Interjection: Select.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: —a select committee to investigate and get to the bottom of this corruption crisis. But unfortunately, this government is long on words and short on actions. You see, those words and actions, they don't always mesh.

The NDP, the official opposition, has always been and will always be the party of housing. Back during the 1990s, the NDP government built the most significant amount of affordable housing, supportive housing, co-op housing of any government of its kind, and much of that still exists to this day, despite the reckless and destructive cuts of the government that came after them with the Mike Harris government. They cancelled so many projects, so many co-op housing projects, in the tens of thousands. But this government, unfortunately, isn't really looking after people; they're looking after developers.

It's also unfortunate because I think this results in the weakening of peoples' faith in our elected representatives, because this government has tried to cloak their greenbelt grift with the shield of housing. They've tried to hide behind this defence, pretending as though this unbridled corruption crisis was something other than what it was, which was about rewarding insiders. It was about making sure that a few people were turned from millionaires into billionaires, but instead, this government would pretend that it was about housing.

I wanted to first look at an analysis of this government's cousin, their federal leader, Pierre Poilievre, and his

discussion of housing, because I think we see resonance with this government and their principles. This was posted; it says how Poilievre blames city regulations and red tape that are causing the housing crisis. He said that these inflate the cost of housing, and his entire plan is to force or encourage cities to remove them. We see much resonance with that and this government stepping all over municipal partners, overriding their authority, really insulting them, pretending as though they're sitting on all of this unspent money when it's this government that has a \$22-billion slush fund that they're sitting on. However, they would like to point the finger at somebody else—again, changing the channel and trying to distract.

This analysis goes on to say that the red tape is “a way of speaking to the needs of ‘ordinary’ Canadians, while advancing the interest of the party's corporate backers. The existing capitalist provision of housing in Canada need not be changed in any way. We just need to cut government waste.”

So it's interesting when you take a look at this government and their discussion of housing because we always see such focus on red tape. It's like they're trying to change the target. They're trying to change the channel. They don't want people paying attention to what they're actually doing; they would rather point the finger at somebody else.

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If we look at the historical provision or the responsibility for housing, back in 1995, the Conservatives cut the provincial housing program and the Liberals cut the National Housing Strategy. As a result, we have a crisis that has been created by government cuts, by government neglect, by governments not doing and not abiding by their historic responsibilities.

You see, back in the 1990s, governments began to rely on the for-profit model and our for-profit market to deliver housing and, unfortunately, that has been something that has not provided what Ontarians need. We also see that pension funds, REITs and so many more have realized that they can commodify or reap enormous profits off housing, and this government has done nothing to stop them. We've seen some tinkering around the edges. We've seen increases on the non-resident speculation tax, but there are giant loopholes you could drive a truck through with those.

It's also really interesting, when you take a look at recent history, because this government has had a flurry of bills, they've had a ministerial shuffle, they have really tried to distract from what is actually going on here, which has been a corruption crisis, despite them masking it with housing. We have to ask the question: Which is more important: people or profit? Clearly, there's a division down the middle of this chamber, because on this side of the chamber, we believe that people are more important than profit. Yet, with this government, we see them rewarding millionaire friends, turning them into billionaires. We see corporate tax cuts. We see all of these incentives that are given to people who don't need our assistance.

I have to think about a really interesting quotation I read just recently. This individual said that, really, if you are a

person of faith, if you believe in some sort of “Almighty,” that our responsibility here is to look after the little people and make sure they’re being protected from the big people. But we see a reverse of that with this government—entirely, entirely opposite.

As we look at this legislation in question, there are some interesting points to it. There is the definition of affordability based on income instead of the market. It’s an incremental improvement; it’s not perfect. It’s somewhat better than the status quo, but there’s still so much more this government could do to actually create that housing. This government talks a lot about creating housing, but they are actually taking a back seat. They are really not taking responsibility; they’re leaving that up to other people. They really don’t want to be in the driver’s seat. I don’t know—maybe they don’t want to be responsible, maybe they’re afraid, maybe they’re just afraid to get their hands dirty. I’m not sure what it is, but they’re not building the housing.

Now, we also, on this side of the House, want to look at the housing crisis from every angle. There is not one silver bullet to tackle the housing affordability crisis, so we also need to look at people on all parts of the spectrum of housing. That would include real rent control. It’s shocking to think that, this government, during the throes of a housing affordability crisis, that the Premier and this government in 2018 would remove rent control from all new buildings. They will pat themselves on the back, Speaker. They will tell themselves, “Look at all the new housing starts.” But what they don’t admit is that none of these are affordable, and that they’ve created a system of exploitation whereby people are stuck.

People have finished year-long leases—I’ve talked with so many folks who were not informed that the government did not have their back. They were not informed that the government did not care about their safety. They were not informed that the government didn’t want to provide them with protections, so after that year-long lease, their rent skyrocketed. It’s unconscionable that, in the midst of a housing crisis, this government would take away things away from people.

Now, we take a look at some of the other distractions in terms of housing that this government has created. We have Bill 23, and Bill 23 was a direct attack on municipalities removing development charges, again, rewarding the people who didn’t need further reward—those developers, those speculators, those people who are already wealthy—while removing protections from people who were hardly protected in the first place. I believe the Association of Municipalities of Ontario have estimated that with Bill 23 the impact will be in the neighbourhood of—what is it, \$5 billion?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: This government is sitting on \$22 billion. It’s giving money to wealthy people by allowing them to be exempted from development charges. They’re sitting on this additional money. And who’s going to pick up the tab? Municipalities in rural Ontario are going to pick up the tab.

Earlier, from the official opposition, we heard from our wonderful critic for municipal affairs and housing, who talked about all of the smaller municipalities that were going to be hit by these disastrous increases to tax. I believe it was the city of Pickering—they had to raise taxes by 2.44%; the region of Durham, 2.87%. Let me see—Pickering taxpayers have to pay 5.31%, and it goes on and on.

So much of this government’s actions have actually really hurt rural Ontario. They’ve neglected rural Ontario. They’ve taken rural Ontario for granted. They thought they could pave over farmland; they thought they could gift it to wealthy developers and wealthy speculators, allow them to flip it for a profit. It is a slap in the face to the people who feed Ontario.

In the municipality of North Huron, there are about 5,000 residents. They were talking about an additional municipal tax increase of 20.65%. There’s this government making the people of rural communities pay for their grift. In Kincardine, they’re looking at an 11.15% tax increase; Stratford, a 7.5% tax increase; Huron county—

Mr. Mike Harris: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): One second. I recognize the member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

Mr. Mike Harris: While I do appreciate that the member from London North Centre is very passionate about what he’s speaking about today, the words “grift” and “corruption” are fairly unparliamentary and I don’t think belong in the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): A reminder to the member about unparliamentary language, please. Thank you.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I appreciate the reminder. Thank you very much, Speaker.

I do get passionate about these things. It makes me very upset when people who can’t afford to have money taken from them have it taken from them, and when the government could do more to make sure that they’re making their lives easier.

Let me continue. In Bruce county, we’re talking about a 7.9% increase—I could go on and on. The city of Peterborough has a \$7-million-to-\$12-million gap over five years—I believe there’s also an additional \$9 million because of the removal of development charges. Northumberland county—boy, oh, boy, it is shocking how many places in rural Ontario have been let down by this government while they tried to reward wealthy speculators.

What this government could do in terms of actually addressing the affordability of housing—they don’t have to give away these incentives to rich developers. Instead, what they could do is, they could actually incentivize the creation of municipal properties, non-profit properties. Why are they not making sure that these incentives that they’re providing are for those people who don’t have that profit motive, who are going to make sure they deliver the most amount of value to the people who need it the most?

If projects are exempted from development charges because they’re building affordable housing—but when you combine that with the fact that there’s no rent control

for buildings that were first occupied after November 2018, how does this government make sure that things are even going to remain affordable? There are really no protections.

We have NDP legislation on the table right now that could be passed if this government truly cared about renters, if this government truly cared about affordability. Some of those include legislation that I have been proud to co-sponsor—the Rent Stabilization Act. There are also other wonderful pieces of legislation that the government could pass—there is Bill 48, Rent Control for All Tenants Act; as I said, Bill 25, the Rent Stabilization Act.

In my city of London, we've seen horrible situations where seniors who've lived for decades in rental units—they built a home there, they've raised families there. They're in their retirement now. They're enjoying their life, but unfortunately that building gets sold to a new person.

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See, the Liberals in, I believe, 1997, opened up an adjustment to the Residential Tenancies Act that allowed vacancy decontrol. It allowed unethical landlords to kick good people out so that they could jack up the rent to whatever the market could withstand. It's a gigantic loophole where people are losing their housing—people who have raised our families, built our communities.

I speak with folks all the time and they say to me, "What am I supposed to do? Am I supposed to live in my car?" Those seniors have effectively paid for the buildings in which they reside. They deserve our respect. They deserve our protections. This government is seeing fit to remove protections to allow even more unethical people into the playing field. I could go on. I've barely even touched all of the issues that happened within the greenbelt.

Everything that's happened within this sphere, within housing, that we've seen over the past number of years have done next to nothing to solve the unaffordability crisis. There are many options which have been presented, which we are happy to work with you on, but I can tell you when the government is only looking at the top tier of the people who have the most money expecting that money to trickle down expecting that affordability to trickle down—that simply isn't going to happen. We have to prepare for years and decades down the line. We have to make sure that our policy is sound, that our policy is thoughtful that unintended consequences aren't going to get in the way.

I also want to ask: Will this definition that they've provided of affordable housing be extended to areas other than exempting development charges, such as social assistance recipients or RGI funding calculations? I too also wonder is this going to be a loophole for this government's developer buddies. We see that they're focused on speculators. They're just focused on their insiders. Is that allowing them to make their billions back after the greenbelt scam was discovered? It's a question that is on the top of mind of all the folks I speak with in my riding.

People saw what this government did, despite all the distraction, despite trying to shield themselves, pretending it was about housing. Everybody knows this was never

about housing. This was about the shifting of public money into a few peoples' hands. This was about corruption at the highest levels—

Mr. Mike Harris: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order.

Mr. Mike Harris: I thought we were going to make it through the last 13 seconds, but again, the member is using very unparliamentary language. It's very unfortunate that he has to revert to that to be able to get his thoughts across.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): And we've brought that forward before. Could the member proceed without the unparliamentary language?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I apologize. I have a bad habit of calling a spade, "a spade," but I do withdraw.

I want to thank everyone for their kind attention. I want to thank the government for not interrupting me during my speech too much.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Questions?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Madam Speaker, the member who just spoke comes from London North Centre and that riding is a mere 20-to-30 minutes away from the fantastic \$7-billion investment that Volkswagen is making in the province of Ontario at St. Thomas. That riding, London North Centre, is going to benefit immensely from the incredible investments being made in this province as a result of the efforts of the Minister of Economic Development and the Premier. Thousands of people in London North Centre are going to have jobs and hopes and a bright future, because they're going to get great jobs, at a great pay with pensions and benefits at Volkswagen.

I'm really excited for the people in London North Centre, because they are going to benefit immensely. You can tell the excitement I have for London North Centre. I want to know if the member from London North Centre is as excited for his taxpayers as I am.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I began my speech this afternoon speaking about how the official opposition helped expedite that legislation to change the municipal boundaries in Central Elgin so that we could land that historic investment.

I'm kind of surprised by the member from Essex's comments, because I don't think that he has paid attention to his federal leader. Here on the NDP side of the House, we very much believe in workers. We believe in unions. We believe in collective agreements.

But what's funny is that the federal Conservative leader, Pierre Poilievre, is really attacking this. He says, "How much of Canadians' money is he giving to this foreign corporation? How many jobs? How much is the cost per job?" Pierre Poilievre has gone after that.

I wonder why the provincial Conservatives have a different tune than the federal Conservatives. It's very confusing.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further question?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I want to congratulate my colleague the member for London North Centre on his remarks. The

member and I were both very proud to be part of the city of London when AMO was hosted there in the summer, and one of the things we heard repeatedly from municipal representatives was the financial hit that they were facing because of Bill 23 and the loss of development charges. In the city of London, it's going to cost \$97 million.

Now, this bill will further decrease the amount of revenues that municipalities will be able to collect based on development charges because we want to spur the building of affordable housing. But what does the member think about cash-strapped municipalities like London, which is already dealing with an almost \$100-million revenue hole, having to further absorb the cost of these development charge exemptions?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the member from London West, who, along with the official opposition, was listening very intently to our municipal partners. We've seen a provincial Conservative government that has ignored them, that has tried to override them, that has foisted upon them strong-mayor powers, dividing councils against one another.

The member is absolutely right. We see municipalities that are going to be cash-strapped as a result of this government doing this sort of anti-Robin Hood thing, taking money from people who can't afford it and giving it to wealthy folks in the form of removal of development charges.

This government really should be treating municipalities as partners, especially for the provision of affordable housing and supportive housing. We've seen that the province has neglected their historic responsibility, which was to create and build and maintain that housing. Instead, they've kicked it down to the municipal partners, not provided the funding and not provided the care or really abided by their responsibility.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Mr. Mike Harris: I brought this to the attention of the member for Niagara Centre earlier, and I'll bring it to the attention of the member for London North Centre now. Right from your campaign platform, I have here that the NDP were to—and maybe they're still looking to; I'm not 100% sure—bring in a new agency that would build housing that would theoretically be built by the government. It says here 250,000 new units. If you look at the cost, the average cost to build a home right now is roughly \$500,000. Do some quick math; it's about \$1.25 billion to build these homes that you're speaking of.

So I'm going to ask again the same question: What new taxes or what taxes would you raise to be able to pay for this? Because every time, an NDP government—and I'll say, it's only been once, actually, in the history of Ontario—has bankrupted this province, and a Conservative government has had to come and clean up the mess.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I think the member needs to break out a calculator and really recognize that when the NDP government was in power in Ontario, the deficit was around \$1 billion. By the time the Harris government was done, it was \$5.5 billion, and that was a time of record

growth. They had to sell off the 407; they had to sell off hydro just to balance the books because they were such poor fiscal managers.

Really, all the member needs to do is look into their slush fund, their contingency fund, where they have hoarded \$22 billion. There's plenty of money for the provision of public services there. Or maybe they should look at the \$8.3 billion—2016 numbers—that they have tried to gift to their insider friends. There's plenty of money. It comes down to political will. On this side of the House, we will look after the people who need it the most.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am also glad to be able to ask a question of the member for London North Centre. I appreciated his thoughtful comments, especially because it's so connected to community, which we miss a lot in this space opposite this government.

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One of the comments that the member mentioned was about how, in the midst of a housing crisis, this is a government that would allow folks to lose their homes. He spoke about rent control, the need for rent control and about some NDP private members' bills that are in the hopper now about rent stabilization, rent control. I'd like for him to delve a little bit more into that because I want the people who are watching at home to know that there is a better way and different way, and that this government is not open to those things, because there are already solutions on the table and yet we don't see it in this piece of legislation.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the member from Oshawa for that excellent question, and she's absolutely right. There are folks who are renting who simply are at a loss. They're working paycheque to paycheque. They're unable to afford that most basic necessity of housing because we've had governments that have allowed the market to get out of control. We've allowed governments to have these corporate landlords basically set the rules. We see things like renovations, where a landlord will claim that they're going to come in, they're going to change over a unit. There are laws in place that allow renters to have the right of first refusal, but too often they do not get in. The Landlord and Tenant Board, which is moribund—it is absolutely not working—often works in the interests of landlords, but still, it's not working for anyone.

We also see landlords who will try to pretend they're moving in their family. We need further protections so everyone, whether it's landlord or tenant, achieves justice and has a safe place to call home.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further questions?

Mr. Mike Harris: Madam Speaker, the member from London centre was right: I did need to break out the calculator. Actually, I forgot two zeros. It's actually \$125 billion, which I think, colleagues, if I'm not mistaken—

the member from Essex, that's what? About 60-some-odd per cent of the provincial budget?

I'll ask him the question again. What new taxes would the NDP install to pay for these 500,000 homes?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I think perhaps I should write my answer on a napkin with crayon so that the member from Kitchener–Conestoga will actually pay attention to it. Really what we have here is a government that is sitting on \$22 billion. They know exactly what they could use for housing. They have the greenbelt issue, where they've tried to turn millionaires into billionaires. There is plenty of money. Trying to come at this plan with numbers—obviously I can't outline the entire plan for you right here, right now—

Mr. Mike Harris: That's because you don't even have a plan.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: We do have a plan. Work with us and we'll show you.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Okay, simmer down, Kitchener–Conestoga, the member from London North Centre. I'll also say that we will keep our comments to the policy and not personal attacks, please. Thank you. So we have—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): We'll stop the clock. Thank you.

Where were we? Okay, we'll move on to further debate. Further debate? Further debate?

Mr. Calandra has moved second reading of Bill 134, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the St. Thomas-Central Elgin Boundary Adjustment Act, 2023. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Mr. Trevor Jones: Speaker, we'll actually refer this bill to the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): So ordered. Orders of the day?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Point of order?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Is there unanimous consent to see the clock at 6? Agreed.

Report continues in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott

Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Deputy Clerk / Sous-Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Meghan Stenson, Christopher Tyrell, Wai Lam (William) Wong

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Tim McGough

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barnes, Patrice (PC)	Ajax	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Bowman, Stephanie (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Brady, Bobbi Ann (IND)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Bresee, Ric (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Byers, Rick (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement Minister of Legislative Affairs / Ministre des Affaires législatives
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough- Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds— Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Dixon, Jess (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Dowie, Andrew (PC)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Associate Minister of Housing / Ministre associé du Logement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario Premier / Premier ministre Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Michael D. (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud—Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques et du Multiculturalisme
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)	Milton	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hazell, Andrea (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Holland, Kevin (PC)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Jama, Sarah (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre
Jones, Trevor (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Ke, Vincent (IND)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kemaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	
Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean	
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Mantha, Michael (IND)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)	Durham	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises
McCrimmon, Karen (LIB)	Kanata—Carleton	
McGregor, Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
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, Kaleed (IND)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Northern Development / Ministre du Développement du Nord Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
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	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
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	Deputy Speaker / Vice-Présidente Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée déléguée aux Petites Entreprises
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Transportation / Ministre associé des Transports
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	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
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	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	