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Standing Committee on Social Policy

Comité permanent de la politique sociale

Working for Workers Four Act, 2024

Loi de 2024 visant à oeuvrer pour les travailleurs, quatre

1st Session
43rd Parliament

Wednesday 14 February 2024

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Mercredi 14 février 2024

Chair: Brian Riddell
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

COMITÉ PERMANENT DE LA POLITIQUE SOCIALE

Wednesday 14 February 2024

Mercredi 14 février 2024

The committee met at 1003 in committee room 2.

WORKING FOR WORKERS FOUR ACT, 2024

LOI DE 2024 VISANT À OEUVRER POUR LES TRAVAILLEURS, QUATRE

Consideration of the following bill:

Bill 149, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters / Projet de loi 149, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'emploi, le travail et d'autres questions.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Good morning, everyone. The Standing Committee on Social Policy will now come to order. We are meeting today for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 149, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters.

We are joined today by staff from the Hansard and by Julia Hood from the office of legislative counsel to assist us with our work should we have any questions.

The proposed amendments, which have been filed with the Clerk, have been distributed to members electronically and in hard copy.

Before we begin clause-by-clause, I will allow members to make comments to the bill as a whole. Afterward, debate on the bill will be limited to the specific items under consideration.

Committee members, pursuant to standing order 83, are there any brief comments or questions on the bill as a whole? I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I apologize; I have a slight cold.

I just want to state that this is a bill that is touted as helping workers. We had two days of committee in Toronto—it wasn't moved around the province—and then the amendments had to be submitted by 7 p.m. after we heard deputations yesterday, on the second day, which gives you very little time to submit your amendments, to get them in to legal and to be written in for everybody here.

I think that the intent is to make good legislation. I hear often the story of the eagle and the owl, and how the owl, as the government side, is supposed to make wise decisions, and the eagle is supposed to look for ways to improve them. The process that we're following today makes it very difficult to suggest improvements to a bill that, as we heard from particularly the gig workers and people talking about WSIB, seems to have some flaws that could be addressed if we were given enough time to amend it.

I just want to read a statement that came in the USW Canada written submission—it's only a paragraph and a half—in reflection the quality of this bill:

"Given the fact that it will likely be over two years since Bill 88 received royal assent and the DPWRA"—the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act—"commencement was delayed with it now being tied to Bill 149 receiving royal assent before it comes into force, then perhaps the short title of Bill 149 should be delaying working for workers act. Amending regulations for an act, when the act is yet to be in effect and the regulations simply do not exist because they have yet to be written, renders those proposed amendments meaningless....

"We submit to you that if workers provided this level of quality in their work or took over two years to have a task remain incomplete, then they would be unemployed."

We have the opportunity to make these bills a lot higher-quality—and I'm sure that when I submit bills, there are errors and ways to improve it; I'm not saying that everything is perfect. But if the consultations feel meaningless to people who are coming in because of how rushed they are, because there isn't enough time to consider what they said and make meaningful amendments, I think we're doing a disservice to the province, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Your comments have been recorded and are in the record.

We will now begin the—oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead, MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I just have a few comments. Thank you very much, Chair. I just want to follow on my colleague from the NDP's comments with regard to the tight timeline for putting forward amendments to this bill.

If we think about what we heard in committee, I think we heard from both sides that super indexing was questionable for a couple of reasons. There's no policy rationale. There's no formula. It's just a very permissive piece of legislation that doesn't directly address some of the things that we heard in committee that have to do with injured workers. We know that most cases are solved—or not "solved," but 87% of cases aren't complicated, and they get done. People still need more support, but then there are 13% of those people who are on WSIB, who are suffering.

What super indexing is proposing is taking a surplus—employers made an argument that said, "Well, we pay the premiums, and it should come off the premiums." But it takes that surplus, and it spreads it out. It doesn't actually

address the things that need to be addressed. I think if there's a blanket criticism that I can give of this bill—there are good things in it. I'm not going to say that it's bad. It's what's not there.

It seems to me with the Working for Workers Four Act—and versions one, two and three—we keep nibbling around the edges. We heard from the gig workers about what's happening and how there's an imbalance; about the debate whether they're dependent contractors or independent contractors. We have to address that at some point, and I know that my colleagues have put some motions forward on this bill to address that.

I put a couple of motions forward on this bill. I'll probably be asking for unanimous consent. I imagine they may possibly be ruled out of order, so I'll be asking for unanimous consent. I put those in there because there are a couple of issues. One of them I raised here, which is WSIB for workers in residential care facilities. We talk about personal support workers and developmental service workers who are not covered, who are in precarious employment with a couple of jobs. They're not covered, but they have colleagues who work in long-term-care homes, in provincially run facilities, doing exactly the same work with exactly the same people, and they're covered. It's just unfair and unjust, and it needs to be fixed.

I'm not Pollyanna about things. I don't expect that that's going to get solved today. The reason that it's in there is it needs to be solved, and every time and every opportunity that comes up to keep talking about this, I will.

1010

So I'll be asking for unanimous consent then. You can grant it or not. I wish you would grant it, give us a chance to debate it, talk about it a little bit. I don't imagine that you'll pass it. I don't want to presume that.

And the second thing is, we have the Pay Transparency Act that's been around since 2018, legislation that received royal assent that has not in any way been enacted. We talk about pay equity, we're talking about working for workers, we're talking about the measures that we're taking, making things more fair and equal—well, we have a law on the books. It passed. The government's done nothing with it.

And so, that's in there, and I wanted to make those points. I know we could have a long day here. I wanted to let my colleagues here know why those amendments are in there and also to underscore what we all heard from both sides about super indexing.

Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Any other comments? I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I apologize; I'm kind of coming in at the end of this. But I've been one of the MPPs that has been here for all four of these bills, and I think, looking across at my colleagues, most of the colleagues that are here have been here for the four bills as well. There may be the odd change, but I think you guys have all been here.

I can tell you that I spent as much time as I could over the last days—I want to thank all the people at the Legislature and the Clerks. This was on TV, on the leg. station. I couldn't see it during the day because, obviously, I was in my riding, doing work, but I did watch it until about 2 o'clock in the morning the last two nights. That tells you how exciting my life is after 11 o'clock.

But it was important for me as an MPP and as a guy that really comes out of labour for the last 40 years of my working life. I've raised all these same issues with this group, and I listened to my colleague Jamie and my Liberal colleague as well, and we talk about the bill—and every time that I talk here, we talk about the same thing. We started out with the big one, Bill 124, that finally—we knew it was unconstitutional. We had asked our colleagues a number of times in this room to go to your Conservative government and tell them, "Listen, let's not continue to fight it in the courts." They continued. Whenever we brought an amendment forward, they voted it down.

I want to say to everybody that participated in trying to hold the government's feet to the fire on Bill 124, to all the unions that showed up over and over again as we went through the courts and the Conservative government lost and lost and lost—and, finally, they're now saying that they're going to repeal Bill 124. But when you're doing Working for Workers bills, it's hard for me to say that you're working for workers when it's now come out—it was originally about $8 billion. It's now $13.4 billion that was taken from workers in the province of Ontario through Bill 124, which—the government, in some form, is going to have to pay that back. But that $13.4 billion in lost wages hurt our economy. Worse than that, it showed total disrespect for the workforce in Ontario. It showed total disrespect for our nurses, who, by the way, gave every ounce of energy—including our doctors and health care workers and education workers—to try to get us through the pandemic, even though their wages were capped at 1%. We knew—on this side, I know we all knew; I'm sure, on that side of the House, that they knew; I'm sure this Chair knew—that it was wrong.

So I want to say to everybody on Bill 124: Thank you very much for never giving up, continuing to hold their feet to the fire. There's other stuff, like the "notwithstanding" clause that people came together and forced the government, the greenbelt—but on this bill, we could have stopped Bill 124 collectively, because we raised it and raised it and raised it, but continually, they voted against it.

And when I take a look at the other stuff that I raised—I'm passionate about it, because I came out of the labour movement—it's anti-scab. I've asked every single time to put anti-scab into a Working for Workers bill. The reason why I say I think we should all be able to agree to it—and I don't know if my colleagues know this stat; I don't know if the Chair knows this stat—98% of all collective agreements are resolved without a labour dispute—98%. So my question is, why do we not put the anti-scab into a workers for workers bill, and why are we protecting 2% of employees? I'm going to use my good friend the past labour minister, Monte McNaughton, who said we have to go after these scumbag employers. By having an anti-scab bill there, that would take care of that issue. They'd have to go

to the bargaining table and negotiate collective agreements, very similar to what should have happened under Bill 124.

I'm going to talk at some point in time during this—because we put an amendment for it—on deeming. I listened—I'm being very sincere here—and I watched because I'm interested in labour. It's kind of where my passion is. I watched on TV. I watched the number of times that young people and workers came here, even though it was rushed, even though it was two days, even though this whole thing, quite frankly, should never just be a couple of days. It should go across the province. We never decided to do that. And they were talking about injured workers.

I'm going to ask everybody here, and people can agree or disagree with me, but you know what? I go to work, and I did it for a long time in a very dangerous plant. A lot of people got hurt. Some people lost their lives in those plants. They still do, every single day. But when you get hurt on the job, you should be taken care of through WSIB. You should make sure that, if you're hurt, the resources are that you're being compensated fairly so you can take care of your family, you can keep your mortgage up, you can do all that.

Do you know that when they brought in deeming—and this is where your surplus came from, by the way. It's because of deeming and because you cut off so many injured workers that you ended up with a surplus, but the surplus was at the expense of workers in the province of Ontario. I want you to understand this. You guys all have friends that work. You all have workers, whether it's in construction, in factories. We have our young kids, quite frankly, getting hurt at McDonald's, losing a finger or something. Once you're deemed—and I'll explain that in more detail because I've only got so much time here—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Yes, we—

Mr. Wayne Gates: I know. I know my time limits here. But these are important issues because they should have been covered in workers for workers one, two, three, four. These are very important. If you care about workers, these are issues that workers are suffering on.

On deeming, if I get hurt on the job, I'm going to ask anybody, do you think that I should end up living in poverty? Do you think that because I got hurt on the job, and a lot of times through no fault of my own, I have to live in poverty? Because that's what deeming does. I don't know why anybody can't agree to put that in a working for workers bill or support the deeming bill that I brought forward a number of times, because you're hearing it from workers—workers that came here, gave their time up. They could have been anywhere.

They came here to plead to you guys to put deeming in, get rid of deeming in WSIB, because no worker gets injured on the job, whether you're on construction—they talk about skilled trades all the time. Skilled trades aren't reporting their injuries. You know why? Because they don't want to be deemed on the job. So what are they doing? They're using opioids. This has been brought here to this committee through the skilled trades: They're using opioids because they don't want to go on WSIB, be deemed and have to live in poverty. That's disgraceful.

I'm going to talk about occupational diseases. I want to compliment my colleague Jeff Burch, who brought forward a firefighter that passed away of cancer in Welland. A personal note on that particular issue: My daughter and his wife went to school together and are really good friends. When you do something right, it's my obligation to say, "Listen, we got that one right." I think it's great that it's in this bill. Very similar to what my Liberal colleague said, there are some things in the bill that are good. I just think it could be better.

On the occupational disease, I'll talk real quick. I'm going to talk about gig workers too, because that was hard to listen to yesterday on TV. You know the GE workers with occupational disease have been fighting that company for 30 years, because they've been denied WSIB—not all of them; some of them have been covered—for 30 years. What that meant is that that spouse who is trying to fight for her husband who is not with us anymore—or vice versa; the wife, and the husband is fighting for it—for 30 years they've been fighting to get taken care of with WSIB and having it covered under occupational disease.

1020

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): MPP Gates, I appreciate what you're saying. I have had two close friends, both firefighters, who have passed due to cancers. But we have to keep this brief and move on. So if you want to make your closing—

Mr. Wayne Gates: I apologize.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): No, no. You don't have to apologize.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I actually thought I had an hour. I thought it was just like we are at—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): No, it says "brief." If you want to say something in closing—

Mr. Wayne Gates: I thought I had 20 minutes as an opening comment. If I'm past that—but my point is clear: If you're going to bring a Working for Workers bill, then let's take care of workers, something that I believe and I think my colleagues believe. Honestly, I think they believe the same thing.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): We're all here for the benefit of the people of Ontario.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you for giving me the time I had.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): You're welcome.

I recognize MPP Martin.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you to everybody who has commented. I just wanted to take a few brief minutes to say that our government, Premier Ford and Minister Piccini—and before that, Minister McNaughton—are very proud to always have the back of workers in Ontario and to have now brought forward our fourth Working for Workers piece of legislation, a project which we aim to continue. We aim to continue finding solutions for the problems that face workers, because we know that workers are the backbone of Ontario and we want to make sure that we find solutions for all the problems.

Of course, not any piece of legislation has everything in it. This piece of legislation has certain measures which are improving the lot of workers. I think my friends have already indicated there are some good things in this bill and that's what we're here to talk about today. I just wanted to say that our government was the first government to consider working on digital workers' rights; that's why we passed Bill 88, and that has a digital workers' rights platform in it.

Anyway, I think that there is a lot of good work being done through these bills, and the process is part of it. We're hearing from workers, learning about things that can be improved all the time. I applaud the Premier and the minister—both ministers—for all their efforts in listening to workers, finding solutions to the challenges they face and making sure that Ontario is the most competitive place for workers and businesses, so we can all benefit here in Ontario from being a great place to live, work and play. That's all I really wanted to say.

On just one final note: There's always some commentary about how we need more time, but, of course, the bill was introduced several months ago, in November or December, so there has been a lot of time to consider what amendments might be brought forward for the bill, and some time after the witnesses came to also propose amendments. So I think there is a time frame there, and we want to make sure we pass the good things in the bill, to make sure that the workers have the benefit of those things as well. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Any other comments? I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: Just in respect to what was brought forward: I look forward to the government side, the Conservative members, voting in favour of the amendments that came forward. I came in early and read all the amendments. If they're committed to working for workers, these amendments really would move that needle forward.

Saying that we've only hit a couple of little things and we're doing what we can while voting against anti-scab legislation, while voting against deeming, while bragging about the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, which allows these multi-billion-dollar companies to pay their workers below minimum wage, is not working for workers. Saying, "We love workers," while fighting Bill 124 for 53 months is not working for workers.

I'm not trying to be disrespectful to my colleagues, but you cannot say something and do something different. You have to be aligned in your actions and what you say. It is not working for workers when you are legislating people to poverty below minimum wage. It is not working for workers when people are going to WSIB and ending up on ODSP. That is not working for workers.

As I said many times during the debate—and I will be brief, but as I've said many times while asking questions, this bill, like the previous Working for Workers bills, really feels like photo ops and headlines. They want to be able to say things: "Look what we're doing. We're protecting against wage theft"—a law that already exists. "We're protecting against tip-sharing"—a law that already exists. "We're protecting against people asking for Canadian work experience"—a law that already exists.

The worst part of this, Speaker, is that the Conservative government has an incredible amount of power with a majority. They know that wage theft—there's almost $10 million that has been reported. We heard yesterday or the day before how very few are even reported, but there's just over $9 million that the government is aware of that it has made no effort to collect from these people. So I don't see how any of this re-tabling of bills that have already existed as existing laws for 10 years or more will help workers, but I do know how they will help Conservative members in their ridings stand up for photo ops for people who are uninformed about these laws and the fact they already exist and who are uninformed about the fact that the Conservative government isn't taking action to enforce them on bad actors. They love to say, "bad actors," but I'd love to see them hold them accountable, Speaker—or Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): That's okay. Any—

Mr. Wayne Gates: He wants to be Speaker one day.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Hopefully not.

Any further comments?

We will now begin clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 149. As you notice, Bill 149 is comprised of three sections and four schedules. Since the majority of this bill is set out in the schedules, I propose that we stand down sections 1, 2 and 3 of the bill to postpone their consideration and start with schedule 1. Do members agree? Please put your hand up if you do.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Or, "Agree." Okay. We will now begin clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 149.

Section 0.1: Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022. It's NDP new section 0.1.

I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I don't know if it would be a point of order or a question. I'm going to ask for recorded votes. Do I do that individually, or can I ask for just a one-time motion all the way through? I can do it each time; I just don't know if you—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Yes, I don't have—that's fine.

MPP Jamie West: Okay.

I move that section 0.1 be added to schedule 1 to the bill:

"0.1 The Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022 is amended by adding the following section:

"'Deemed employees

"'3.1 Every worker to whom this act applies is deemed to be an employee for the purposes of all acts and regulations unless the operator establishes to the satisfaction of the board that the worker is not an employee.'"

I so move.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Is there any debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: We heard from many organizations representing these digital platform workers and from digital platform workers themselves. We were all given a copy of this document, Legislated Poverty, spelling out how little these members make. When we're being told that before

their expenses, they make $6.37 per hour, it seems like we are not protecting these workers.

The Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, as I had said earlier—it was two years ago that Bill 88 was released. Bill 149 amends that but doesn't address the fact that all it's doing is enshrining these workers that, for the 40% of the time when they are waiting to work, when they're unable to do anything else—as we heard from the bicycle food delivery worker, when they are standing in the freezing cold with their bicycle, waiting for the app to tell them to go somewhere, they are not paid. So their hourly rate really drops down if you consider the amount of hours they're working. We heard from workers who would work 10 to 12 hours a day and not even make minimum wage for an eight-hour shift.

What happens in this bill, Bill 149, is we're enshrining the ability of these companies—I said many times yesterday how wealthy these companies were. Uber makes over $100 billion. I don't have the numbers in front of me. Oh, here it is: Uber makes $141.99 billion, or is worth that much. Lyft is worth $4.77 billion. Their employees, who provide all the equipment and the manpower for the work, won't even make minimum wage per hour. This is a very suitable amendment to this act. The member opposite talked about how this is working for workers. We know many of them are having these gig worker jobs; it would show that the government stands by them and really believes in them.

1030

I want to remind—I'm just going to read this for the record, Speaker. I will be brief in my comments, but I'll just read this for the record:

"August 12, 2021—Class Action Certified in Ontario.

"The Ontario Superior Court of Justice has certified the landmark $400-million class action lawsuit against Uber, filed on behalf of Uber drivers who have been misclassified as independent contractors by the ride-sharing giant."

And "Uber says it intends to appeal a recent Ontario Ministry of Labour decision that found a Toronto courier was an employee, not an independent contractor as the company had argued." So the Ontario Ministry of Labour agrees that these are employees. As well, an MOL inspector had made a decision on February 22: "The February 22 decision from employment standards officer Katherine Haire found several violations of the Employment Standards Act—and employment lawyers and advocates say the ruling sends a clear message on the issue of employment status that gig platform workers have long fought for.

"Haire ordered the company to pay Uber Eats courier Saurabh Sharma wages he argued were deducted without notice last August, along with wages to make up for missing public holiday pay and minimum wage discrepancies, adding up to a total of $919.37.

"The ruling also dinged the company for not allowing required breaks during all of Sharma's shifts."

So we have the Ministry of Labour and a Ministry of Labour inspector, as well as the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, declaring these workers are employees. This is why this amendment is very, very supportable and will make a significant difference in the lives of these workers.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: We did hear at committee about this situation, that many of these workers working in delivery or passenger service were not being treated as employees. These aren't new jobs. These aren't brand new jobs, because people didn't drive people around before or deliver food for them. They're jobs that are being delivered in a different way.

I think what was clear from what we've heard so far—not just here, but in other places—is that there is an imbalance; that the balance between the worker and the employer isn't there. I think this motion right here goes a certain way to address it. It's unfair when there's an imbalance, and so now you're going to have a whole class of workers which we didn't have before in this province who won't be covered by WSIB, who won't be getting workmen's compensation, who won't be able to determine their work because someone else is determining their work for them.

Five or 10 years from now, where are we going to end up? Where are we going to end up as our economy and the technology change, and as more of these jobs that we already have, that already existed, are converted to these platforms? People won't have benefits. Laws that we have around statutory holidays and vacation won't apply to them. It's not a bright future when we look down the road. I know we're talking right now about delivery of people and goods, but what happens when it goes into health care? What happens when it goes into legal services? This is going to happen all over the place.

What's happening is there is a concentration of wealth and power, and a lot of that wealth is leaving this province. We don't see any tax dollars from it. So we have these large companies—and look, I believe in a balance; I don't think it should be all tilted to one side. But we have these large companies that are in this situation where we're basically taking away workers' rights, bit by bit, and they're relying on us to have an education system, a health care system and public safety that allow them to do business without having to pay into it. I don't think that's balanced. And I'm not raging against nationalizing Uber or anything like that. I'm just saying, the balance is out of whack.

So I'm glad that my colleague brought this forward. We've got to get to a better definition of who's a dependent contractor and who's an independent contractor. There needs to be a balance. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Again, I'm going to go back to my experience on the one, two, three and four. This particular issue was raised by us over and over again on the fact that when Bill 88 came in, we were arguing very clearly that no worker in the province of Ontario should be going to work and getting paid zero during the time they're at work. That's what happens here. There's a number of people I watched yesterday who probably didn't say a word for three or four hours, yet during that period of time, they were still being paid, and they should be being paid.

In this case, what they do is, if they're waiting for a job, they're not being paid. Their wait time is not being paid. In the province of Ontario, when somebody is being paid $6.37 an hour when we know the minimum wage is $16.85, there's something wrong with the process.

We have lots of international corporations that set up shop in Ontario, including in the auto industry, but why are we allowing an international company that, like my colleagues mentioned about Uber, makes $142 billion—that's with a B, my friends—in profit by taking advantage of Ontarians in the province of Ontario by having them work for less than the minimum wage? I said it's outrageous, it's disgusting, and nobody here should be allowing that to happen.

The issue is that even though Uber or—I think it's Lyft who made $4.7 billion—still a lot of money; not as much as $142 billion but still a lot of money. The argument is, are they contract employees, or should they be employees? That's where this amendment is coming from. We strongly believe they should be employees and they should have the same rights, so that if they get injured on the job, they collect WSIB. We all know that some are in their cars, but there are a lot of them that are riding bikes and are risking their lives every day. I drive around Toronto—not a lot, by the way. I walk most of the time when I'm in Toronto, trying to stay in shape. But I see the danger that they face. I see and I hear the horns honking and all the stuff. Some are being hit. Some are being injured on the job. Well, if they're being injured on the job, they should be able to collect WSIB. They can't do that.

They don't get stat holidays. That's why they should be employees. They certainly aren't contract employees when they're being told by the company what they can do, when they can do it, how they work. That's not it.

So I'm in full support of this bill. I am going to say that when you hear wages like $6.37, you think of Third World countries, not a country like Canada, one of the richest countries in the world. This is by far the richest province in this country. Workers should be treated with respect and dignity, and they should be paid at least the minimum wage while they're at work. No worker, including us, should go to work and not be paid for our time, and that's what's happening with these. It's wrong, and I'm hoping that my colleagues on the other side support this particular amendment. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? I recognize MPP Quinn.

Mr. Nolan Quinn: I recommend voting against this motion because our government introduced first-in-Canada protections for gig workers, bringing real transparency to a sector that was governed by algorithmic ambiguity. The Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022, would generally provide digital platform workers with certain rights such as:

—the Employment Standards Act, 2000—ESA—general minimum wage;

—the right to keep their tips;

—the right to regular pay periods;

—the right to information and transparency around algorithms, including how pay is calculated and factors used to offer work assignments;

—written notice if a worker is being removed from the platform for a period of 24 hours or longer and why;

—the right to resolve their work-related disputes in Ontario; and

—protection from reprisal should they seek to assert these basic workers' rights.

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These rights would apply whether the worker is an employee or a contractor. The Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022, would not diminish anyone's rights under the Employment Standards Act, 2000. Digital platform workers who are employees are covered by the ESA and entitled to the ESA's minimum standards. The Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022, would not change that. These workers would have entitlements under both the ESA and the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: In response to that, I've said several times that this feels like an "all sizzle, no steak" bill. When you talk about the rights that workers will have under the DPWRA, you have a right to make a complaint, but if the government is writing a law to enshrine the ability of billionaire companies to pay their workers more than $10 less than minimum wage—that's what this law is doing. It's enshrining that ability. So those workers have a right to know how little they're being paid, they have a right to know how it's being figured out that they're being paid that little, they have a right to make a complaint, but that will not go anywhere because the law allows these companies to do that. This, literally in the middle of a "working for workers" bill, is the Conservative government signalling to us that they're going to be voting for the billionaires and not for the workers.

Yesterday, we heard from Willem Robbins. He's been a gig worker since 2021 and he said the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act is like "a kick in the face" for workers in this province: "The Conservative government telling me they're paying me for only engaged time is insulting. I'm out in the winter in my gear ready to work, and I get less than minimum wage from these employers, no overtime, no right to refuse unsafe work. These so-called 'rights' remove my rights as a worker. We rely on strangers to pay our bills. I've had to go to the hospital for accidents."

In this bill, Bill 149, it duplicates existing legislation from the Employment Standards Act about wage theft. Here we have multi-billion-dollar companies, and workers saying, "They are not paying me minimum wage." We have a government that knows about $9 billion of wage theft already existing; they're not interested in going after the employers to pay back these workers and put money back in their pockets. I am telling you, and I'll be loud and clear about this: If this amendment is voted down, I'll be very clear with everyone that this is not a government that is working for workers. This is a Conservative government that is siding with billionaires over the lowest-paid workers

in our province, who are starving. Yesterday, when I asked the question, "Well, why don't you get another job?", Stuart was very clear with us. He said, "I have to eat." There's no other work that he can get.

So what we're telling these people—these people who are working for less than minimum wage to put food on the table for them and their families; these people who are starving—what the Conservative government is saying with this message is, "We don't care about you as workers. We care about billionaires. We care about ensuring that companies like Uber are able to maintain the $141-billion net worth that they have, and the way they can do that is by paying you less than minimum wage, and the Conservative government is 100% okay with that."

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? Ready to vote?

Ayes

Brady, Fraser, Gates, West.

Nays

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I declare it lost.

There are no amendments to sections 1 to 5 of schedule 1. I therefore propose we bundle these sections together. Is there agreement? If yes, is there any debate?

Are members prepared to vote?

Ayes

Barnes, Brady, Fraser, Gates, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai, West.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

We'll now go to schedule 2, Employment Standards Act, 2000—schedule 2, section 1. Debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that subsection 2(1) of schedule 2 to the bill be—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Excuse me, MPP West. We're just going to pause for a second.

Just to go back: Shall schedule 1 carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Brady, Fraser, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

Nays

Gates, West.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

So, back to schedule 2, Employment Standards Act, 2000, section 1. I'm sorry I interrupted you, MPP West. You may continue.

MPP Jamie West: No, I appreciate that we're following the—thank you to the Clerk for making sure we're on target.

I move that subsection 2(1) of schedule 2 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection to section 8.4 of the Employment Standards Act, 2000:

"Applicant's permission required

"(1.1) No employer shall use artificial intelligence to screen an applicant's resume or CV without the applicant's"—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): We're doing schedule 2, section 1.

MPP Jamie West: Is there another motion? I'm not sure where we are.

Interjection.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Lesley Flores): Yes. We need to do section 1 before we do your motion for section 2.

MPP Jamie West: Okay.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Shall schedule 2, section 1, carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): All those opposed? Carried.

So now, we'll go to the subsection 2(1). I'll recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Can we take a five-minute break, please?

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Sure.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you.

The committee recessed from 1048 to 1056.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): We are now back in session. We'll go to schedule 2, section 2, subsection (1). I believe, MPP West, you had some comment?

MPP Jamie West: No, I thought we were moving a motion. I apologize, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Okay. Is there any debate?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): We're moving.

MPP Jamie West: I move that that subsection 2(1) of schedule 2 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection to section 8.4 of the Employment Standards Act, 2000:

"Applicant's permission required

"(1.1) No employer shall use artificial intelligence to screen an applicant's resume or CV without the applicant's permission."

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Debate? I recognize MPP Pierre.

Mrs. Robin Martin: He's supposed to tell us why he's bringing the motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Okay. MPP West, I just saw your hand come up.

MPP Jamie West: Yes, I apologize. This would create a new subsection of schedule 2 that amends section 8.4 of

the Employment Standards Act. This adds to the new section of schedule 2 of the act and requires a prospective employer to not use AI to screen an applicant's CV or résumé without the applicant's permission.

Basically, because AI is evolving so quickly—and we heard from the privacy commissioner—I think that simply disclosing that AI is being used isn't enough protection for workers. Workers aren't sure how their data is being shared. They're not sure how the AI is being used. They're not sure of biases that—if you're following AI, your biases are provided by the data that they collect.

What we're proposing is that we do not allow artificial intelligence to screen their résumés or CVs while people are applying for things until we have a decent definition of what AI means or a standard for what AI should be used for.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Debate? I recognize MPP Pierre.

Ms. Natalie Pierre: I recommend voting against this motion because Bill 149 seeks to provide greater transparency for job applicants while allowing employers to leverage emerging technologies. Bill 149 would, if passed, amend the Employment Standards Act to require employers to disclose in a publicly advertised job posting if artificial intelligence is being used during the hiring process. Under Bill 149, applicants submitting applications for job postings would be doing so with the knowledge that AI will be used during the recruitment process. At the same time, it would not limit employers from using hiring tools they might find helpful.

This proposed motion would add undue burden on employers as employers would need to obtain and track applicant consent to use AI. Record-keeping requirements may be needed to implement this motion, which would create additional burden on employers.

The intent of the AI provision in Bill 149 is to provide information and awareness to applicants and not to limit an employer's ability to use AI.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I understand what my colleague is trying to do with this motion. It's a bit of a blunt instrument because it does restrict the use of that. The bigger problem is, what are the rules? Honestly, is someone going to say, "No, you can't use AI on my application"? Then the employer is going to go, "Yeah, sure. Thank you." That's what's going to happen.

What we really need here are rules which say, "Here are the rules around using artificial intelligence, the sharing of data"—not allowed to share data. How do you protect that data? Because when you're giving your personal application, you're basically giving a lot of personal information. Maybe there is some financial information.

It's more than just saying, "They've got to say, 'I've got AI.'" Employees won't have a choice. Prospective employees won't have a choice. And this motion, as well intended as it is, is not going to help. The problem is, we need rules around that.

This bill will likely pass today. The protections that are in there aren't protections, other than people being aware: "Just be aware that we are using AI and there are no rules." That's essentially what we're saying the people.

I'm not going to vote against this motion. I'm not going to support it. But I would just encourage the government to get on with putting some rules around the protection of people's personal information and data when AI is used as part of a job-screening process.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: Just briefly, Chair: I think that this amendment could have been better written if we'd had the opportunity. We had the opportunity, basically, to speak, dividing our time, seven and a half minutes and then another round seven and a half minutes, between three applicants when they spoke about this, and then shortly thereafter, we adjourned and had to have the amendments in by 7 p.m.

Recognizing that AI is sort of the Wild West, as it was described—just simply saying, "We use AI"—they could use AI to check for, for example, Canadian work experience, which we wouldn't want to allow because it's already illegal because of human rights. It's already going to be illegal once this bill passes.

It's a bit of a blunt hammer to stop the process, but we could rush through a bill once we have the definition and that information. But a lot of the reason that this is a wide scope of putting pause on it is because of how quickly the amendments were rushed through.

I just wanted to state that for the record.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? MPP Barnes.

Ms. Patrice Barnes: We had the privacy commissioner come in and talk about the things that we need to continue to work on in regard to AI, a very fast and emerging technology. As a government, we're committing to continue to work on that and look at that.

There is a section that is already being used for employers that are scanning résumés. An employer that gets 100 résumés already had something in place prior to the emergence of AI that would scan through and give you smaller amounts of applicants as to how they qualify for a job. This is really, now, with the emerging technology of AI, saying that we need to let employees who are applying for a job know that AI is being used.

AI is an emerging technology. The government will continue to work on how to regulate it, on how to put in place legislation for it, but it's just not appropriate at this time.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: It's a small amendment, so I don't want to belabour the point, but, actually, what's needed is a law that essentially says, "You can't share people's personal data gathered by AI when they're applying for a job." There are no protections. Under PHIPA, people's health information is protected. The fines for disclosing or sharing that information are huge. This is the Wild West. And again, I'm not going to vote against it. I'm not going to support it. The government needs to address it, and sooner rather than later.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Any further debate? Ready to vote?

Ayes

Gates, West.

Nays

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I declare it lost.

Shall schedule 2, section 2, carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Gates, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai, West.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

There are no amendments to sections 3 to 8 of schedule 2. I therefore propose that we bundle all these sections together. Is there agreement? Agreed.

Any debate at all? Are members prepared to vote? Shall schedule 2, sections 3 to 8, inclusive, carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Brady, Fraser, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai, West.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): It is carried.

We'll now discuss section 8.1, motion number 3. I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 8.1 be added to schedule 2 to the bill:

"8.1 Sections 50, 50.0.1 and 50.0.2 of the act are repealed and the following substituted:

"'Personal Emergency Leave

"'Personal emergency leave

"'Definition

"'50(1) In this section,

"'"qualified health practitioner" means,

"'(a) a person who is qualified to practise as a physician, a registered nurse or a psychologist under the laws of the jurisdiction in which care or treatment is provided to the employee or to an individual described in subsection (3), or

"'(b) in the prescribed circumstances, a member of a prescribed class of health practitioners.

"'Personal emergency leave

"'(2) An employee is entitled to a leave of absence because of any of the following:

"'1. A personal illness, injury or medical emergency.

"'2. The death, illness, injury or medical emergency of an individual described in subsection (3).

"'3. An urgent matter that concerns an individual described in subsection (3).

"'Same

"'(3) Paragraphs 2 and 3 of subsection (2) apply with respect to the following individuals:

"'1. The employee's spouse.

"'2. A parent, step-parent or foster parent of the employee or the employee's spouse.

"'3. A child, step-child or foster child of the employee or the employee's spouse.

"'4. A child who is under legal guardianship of the employee or the employee's spouse.

"'5. A brother, step-brother, sister or step-sister of the employee.

"'6. A grandparent, step-grandparent, grandchild or step-grandchild of the employee or the employee's spouse.

"'7. A brother-in-law, step-brother-in-law, sister-in-law or step-sister-in-law of the employee.

"'8. A son-in-law or daughter-in-law of the employee or the employee's spouse.

"'9. An uncle or aunt of the employee or the employee's spouse.

"'10. A nephew or niece of the employee or the employee's spouse.

"'11. The spouse of the employee's grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece.

"'12. A person who considers the employee to be like a family member, provided the prescribed conditions, if any, are met.

"'13. Any individual prescribed as a family member for the purposes of this section.

"'Advising employer

"'(4) An employee who wishes to take leave under this section shall advise his or her employer that he or she will be doing so.

"'Same

"'(5) If the employee must begin the leave before advising the employer, the employee shall advise the employer of the leave as soon as possible after beginning it.

"'Limit

"'(6) Subject to subsection (7), an employee is entitled to take a total of 10 days of paid leave under this section in each calendar year.

"'Same, entitlement to paid leave

"'(7) If an employee has been employed by an employer for less than one week, the following rules apply:

"'1. The employee is not entitled to paid days of leave under this section.

"'2. Once the employee has been employed by the employer for one week or longer, the employee is entitled to paid days of leave under subsection (6), and any unpaid days of leave that the employee has already taken in the calendar year shall be counted against the employee's entitlement under that subsection.

"'3. Subsection (9) does not apply until the employee has been employed by the employer for one week or longer.

"'Leave deemed to be taken in entire days

"'(8) If an employee takes any part of a day as paid leave under this section, the employer may deem the employee to have taken one day of paid leave on that day for the purposes of subsection (6) or (7).

"'Paid days first

"'(9) The 10 paid days must be taken first in a calendar year before any unpaid days that are otherwise provided under the terms of the employee's employment can be taken.

"'Personal emergency leave pay

"'(10) Subject to subsections (11) and (12), if an employee takes a paid day of leave under this section, the employer shall pay the employee,

"'(a) either,

"'(i) the wages the employee would have earned had they not taken the leave, or

"'(ii) if the employee receives performance-related wages, including commissions or a piece work rate, the greater of the employee's hourly rate, if any, and the minimum wage that would have applied to the employee for the number of hours the employee would have worked had they not taken the leave; or

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"'(b) if some other manner of calculation is prescribed, the amount determined using that manner of calculation.

"'Personal emergency leave where higher rate of wages

"'(11) If a paid day of leave under this section falls on a day or at a time of day when overtime pay, a shift premium or both would be payable by the employer,

"'(a) the employee is not entitled to more than his or her regular rate for any leave taken under this section; and

"'(b) the employee is not entitled to the shift premium for any leave taken under this section.

"'Personal emergency leave on public holiday

"'(12) If a paid day of leave under this section falls on a public holiday, the employee is not entitled to premium pay for any leave taken under this section.

"'Evidence

"'(13) Subject to subsection (14), an employer may require an employee who takes leave under this section to provide evidence reasonable in the circumstances that the employee is entitled to the leave.

"'Same

"'(14) An employer shall not require an employee to provide a certificate from a qualified health practitioner as evidence under subsection (13).'"

I so move.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is deemed out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before the committee. As Bosc and Gagnon note on page 771 of the third edition of House of Commons Procedure and Practice, "An amendment is inadmissible if it proposes to amend a statute that is not before the committee or a section of the parent act, unless the latter is specifically amended by a clause of the bill."

I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Chair, I ask for unanimous consent to debate this motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Is everyone in consent? No.

There are no amendments to sections 9 to 10 of schedule 2. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections together. Is there agreement? Is there any debate? Are members prepared to vote? Shall schedule 2, sections 9 to 10, inclusively, carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

Shall schedule 2 carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

Schedule 3, Fair Access to Regulated Professionals and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006: There are no amendments to sections 1 to 3 of schedule 3. I therefore propose we bundle these sections together. Is there agreement? Is there debate? Are members prepared to vote? Shall schedule 3, sections 1 to 3, inclusively, carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Brady, Gates, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai, West.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

Shall schedule 3 carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Gates, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai, West.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

We'll now move to schedule 3.1, motion 4, and it's independent. I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I move that schedule 3.1 be added to the bill:

"Schedule 3.1

"Pay Transparency Act, 2018

"1. Section 22 of the Pay Transparency Act, 2018 is repealed and the following substituted:

"'Commencement

"'22. This act comes into force on the day the Working for Workers Four Act, 2023 receives royal assent.

"'Commencement

"'2. This schedule comes into force on the day the Working for Workers Four Act, 2023 receives royal assent.'"

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of a parent act that is not before the committee. As Bosc and Gagnon note on page 771 of the third edition of the House of Commons Procedure and Practice, "An amendment is inadmissible if it proposes to amend a statute that is not before the committee or a section of the parent act, unless the latter is specifically amended by a clause of the bill."

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to ask for unanimous consent—

Interjection: No.

Mr. John Fraser: Can I finish?

I'd like to ask for unanimous consent to debate this motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Is there consent? No.

We will now move to new schedule 3.1, motion 5. I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that schedule 3.1 be added to the bill:

"Schedule 3.1

"Labour Relations Act, 1995

"1. The Labour Relations Act, 1995 is amended by adding the following sections:

"'Definitions

"'73.1(1) In this section,

"'"employer" means the employer whose employees are locked out or are on strike and includes an employers' organization or person acting on behalf of either of them; ("employeur")

"'"person" includes,

"'(a) a person who exercises managerial functions or is employed in a confidential capacity in matters relating to labour relations, and

"'(b) an independent contractor; ("personne")

"'"place of operations in respect of which the strike or lock-out is taking place" includes any place where employees in the bargaining unit who are on strike or who are locked out would ordinarily perform their work. ("lieu d'exploitation à l'égard duquel la grève ou le lock-out a lieu")

"'Application

"'(2) This section applies during any lock-out of employees by an employer or during a lawful strike that is authorized in the following way:

"'1. A strike vote was taken after the notice of desire to bargain was given or bargaining had begun, whichever occurred first.

"'2. The strike vote was conducted in accordance with this act.

"'3. At least 60 per cent of those voting authorized the strike.

"'Interpretation

"'(3) For the purposes of this section and section 73.2, a bargaining unit is considered to be,

"'(a) locked out, if the employees in the bargaining unit are locked out; and

"'(b) on strike, if the employees in the bargaining unit are on strike and the union has given the employer notice, in writing, that the bargaining unit is on strike.

"'Use of bargaining unit employees

"'(4) The employer shall not use the services of an employee in the bargaining unit that is on strike or locked out, including an employee receiving benefits under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

"'Use of newly hired employees, etc.

"'(5) The employer shall not use a person described in paragraph 1 at any place of operations operated by the employer to perform the work described in paragraph 2 or 3:

"'1. A person, whether the person is paid or not, who is hired or engaged by the employer after the earlier of the date on which the notice of desire to bargain is given and the date on which bargaining begins.

"'2. The work of an employee in the bargaining unit that is on strike or locked out.

"'3. The work ordinarily done by a person who is performing the work of an employee described in paragraph 2.

"'Use of others at the strike, etc., location

"'(6) The employer shall not use any of the following persons to perform the work described in paragraph 2 or 3 of subsection (5) at a place of operations in respect of which the strike or lock-out is taking place:

"'1. An employee or other person, whether paid or not, who ordinarily works at another of the employer's places of operations, other than a person who exercises managerial functions.

"'2. A person who exercises managerial functions, whether paid or not, who ordinarily works at a place of operations other than a place of operations in respect of which the strike or lock-out is taking place.

"'3. An employee or other person, whether paid or not, who is transferred to a place of operations in respect of which the strike or lock-out is taking place, if he or she was transferred after the earlier of the date on which the notice of desire to bargain is given and the date on which bargaining begins.

"'4. A person, whether paid or not, other than an employee of the employer or a person described in subsection 1(3).

"'5. A person, whether paid or not, who is employed, engaged or supplied to the employer by another person or employer.

"'Prohibition re replacement work

"'(7) The employer shall not require an employee who works at a place of operations in respect of which the strike or lock-out is taking place to perform any work of an employee in the bargaining unit that is on strike or is locked out without the agreement of the employee.

"'No reprisals

"'(8) The employer shall not, because of a person's refusal to perform any or all of the work of an employee in the bargaining unit that is on strike or is locked out,

"'(a) refuse to employ or continue to employ the person;

"'(b) threaten to dismiss the person or otherwise threaten the person;

"'(c) discriminate against the person in regard to employment or a term or condition of employment; or

"'(d) intimidate or coerce or impose a pecuniary or other penalty on the person.

"'Burden of proof

"'(9) On an application or complaint relating to this section, the burden of proof that an employer did not act contrary to this section lies upon the employer.

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"'Definition

"'73.2(1). In this section,

"'"specified replacement worker" means a person who is described in subsection 73.1 (5) or (6) as one who must

not be used to perform the work described in paragraph 2 or 3 of subsection 73.1(5).

"'Permitted use of specified replacement workers

"'(2) Despite section 73.1, specified replacement workers may be used in the circumstances described in this section to perform the work of employees in the bargaining unit that is on strike or is locked out but only to the extent necessary to enable the employer to provide the following services:

"'1. Secure custody, open custody or the temporary detention of persons under a law of Canada or of the province of Ontario or under a court order or warrant.

"'2. Residential care for persons with behavioural or emotional problems or with a disability as defined in section 2 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

"'3. Residential care for children who are in need of protection as described in subsection 74(2) of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017.

"'4. Services provided to persons described in paragraph 2 or 3 to assist them to live outside a residential care facility.

"'5. Emergency shelter or crisis intervention services to persons described in paragraph 2 or 3.

"'6. Emergency shelter or crisis intervention services to victims of violence.

"'7. Emergency services relating to the investigation of allegations that a child may be in need of protection as described in subsection 74(2) of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017.

"'8. Emergency dispatch communication services, ambulance services or a first aid clinic or station.

"'Same

"'(3) Despite section 73.1, specified replacement workers may also be used in the circumstances described in this section to perform the work of employees in the bargaining unit that is on strike or locked out, but only to the extent necessary to enable the employer to prevent,

"'(a) danger to life, health or safety;

"'(b) the destruction or serious deterioration of machinery, equipment or premises; or

"'(c) serious environmental damage.

"'Notice to trade union

"'(4) An employer shall notify the trade union if the employer wishes to use the services of specified replacement workers to perform the work described in subsection (2) or (3) and shall give particulars as to the type of work, level of service and number of specified replacement workers the employer wishes to use.

"'Time for giving notice

"'(5) The employer may notify the trade union under subsection (4) at any time during bargaining, but in any event, shall do so promptly after a conciliation officer is appointed.

"'Same, emergency

"'(6) In an emergency, or in circumstances which could not reasonably have been foreseen, the employer shall notify the trade union as soon as possible after determining that he, she or it wishes to use the services of specified replacement workers.

"'Consent

"'(7) After receiving the employer's notice, the trade union may consent to the use of bargaining unit employees instead of specified replacement workers to perform some or all of the proposed work and shall promptly notify the employer as to whether it gives its consent.

"'Use of bargaining unit employees

"'(8) The employer shall use bargaining unit employees to perform the proposed work to the extent that the trade union has given its consent and if the employees are willing and able to do so.

"'Working conditions

"'(9) Unless the parties agree otherwise, the terms and conditions of employment and any rights, privileges or duties of the employer, the trade union or the employees in effect before it became lawful for the trade union to strike or the employer to lock out continue to apply with respect to bargaining unit employees who perform work under subsection (8) while they perform the work.

"'Priority re replacement workers

"'(10) No employer, employers' organization or person acting on behalf of either shall use a specified replacement worker to perform the work described in subsection (2) or (3), unless,

"'(a) the employer has notified the trade union that he, she or it wishes to do so;

"'(b) the employer has given the trade union reasonable opportunity to consent to the use of bargaining unit employees instead of the specified replacement worker to perform the proposed work; and

"'(c) the trade union has not given its consent to the use of bargaining unit employees.

"'Exception re emergency

"'(11) In an emergency, the employer may use a specified replacement worker to perform the work described in subsection (2) or (3) for the period of time required to give notice to the trade union and determine whether the trade union gives its consent to the use of bargaining unit employees.

"'Application for directions

"'(12) On application by the employer or trade union, the board may,

"'(a) determine, during a strike or lock-out, whether the circumstances described in subsection (2) or (3) exist and determine the manner and extent to which the employer may use specified replacement workers to perform the work described in those subsections;

"'(b) determine whether the circumstances described in subsection (2) or (3) would exist if a strike or lock-out were to occur and determine the manner and extent to which the employer may use specified replacement workers to perform the work described in those subsections; and

"'(c) give such other directions as the board considers appropriate.

"'Reconsideration

"'(13) On a further application by either party, the board may modify any determination or direction in view of a change in circumstances.

"'Same

"'(14) The board may defer considering an application under subsection (12) or (13) until such time as it considers appropriate.

"'Burden of proof

"'(15) In an application or a complaint relating to this section, the burden of proof that the circumstances described in subsection (2) or (3) exist lies upon the party alleging that they do.

"'Agreement re specified replacement workers

"'(16) The employer and the trade union may enter into an agreement governing the use, in the event of a strike or lock-out, of striking or locked-out employees and of specified replacement workers to perform the work described in subsection (2) or (3).

"'Formal requirements

"'(17) An agreement under subsection (16) must be in writing and signed by the parties or their representatives.

"'Same

"'(18) An agreement under subsection (16) may provide that any of subsections (4) to (11) do not apply.

"'Term of agreement

"'(19) An agreement under subsection (16) expires not later than the earlier of,

(a) the end of the first strike described in subsection 73.1(2) or lock-out that ends after the parties have entered into the agreement; or

"'(b) the day on which the parties next make or renew a collective agreement.

"'Prohibited circumstances

"'(20) The parties shall not, as a condition of ending a strike or lock-out, enter into an agreement governing the use of specified replacement workers or of bargaining unit employees in any future strike or lock-out, and any such agreement is void.

"'Enforcement

"'(21) On application of the employer or trade union, the board may enforce an agreement under subsection (16) and may amend it and make such other orders as it considers appropriate in the circumstances.

"'Filing in court

"'(22) A party to the decision of the board made under this section may file it, excluding the reasons, in the prescribed form in the Superior Court of Justice and it shall be entered in the same way as an order of that court and is enforceable as such.

"'Reinstatement after lock-out, etc.

"'73.3(1) If, at the end of a lock-out or lawful strike, the employer and the trade union do not agree about the terms for reinstating employees, the employer shall reinstate them in accordance with this section.

"'Same

"'(2) Subject to subsections (5) and (6), the employer shall reinstate each striking or locked-out employee to the position that he or she held when the strike or lock-out began.

"'Right to displace others

"'(3) Striking or locked-out employees are entitled to displace any other persons who were performing the work of striking or locked-out employees during the strike or lock-out.

"'Same

"'(4) Despite subsection (3), a striking or locked-out employee is not entitled to displace another employee in the bargaining unit who performed work under section 73.2 during the strike or lock-out and whose length of service, as determined under subsection (5), is greater than his or hers.

"'Insufficient work

"'(5) If there is not sufficient work for all striking or locked-out employees, including employees in the bargaining unit who performed work under section 73.2 during the strike or lock-out, the employer shall reinstate them to employment in the bargaining unit as work becomes available,

"'(a) if the collective agreement contains recall provisions that are based on seniority, in accordance with seniority as defined in those provisions and as determined when the strike or lock-out began, in relation to other employees in the bargaining unit who were employed at the time the strike or lock-out began; or

"'(b) if there are no such recall provisions, in accordance with each employee's length of service, as determined when the strike or lock-out began, in relation to other employees in the bargaining unit who were employed at the time the strike or lock-out began.

"'Starting up'"—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is—

Interjections.

MPP Jamie West: I'm going as fast as I can.

"'Starting up operations

"'(6) Subsection (5) does not apply if an employee is not able to perform work required to start up the employer's operations, but only for the period of time required to start up the operations.

"'Continuation of benefits

"'73.4(1) This section applies with respect to employment benefits, other than pension benefits, normally provided directly or indirectly by the employer to the employees.

"'Lawful strike or lock-out

"'(2) This section applies only when it is lawful for an employer to lock out employees or for employees to strike.

"'Payments

"'(3) For the purpose of continuing employment benefits, including coverage under insurance plans, the trade union may tender payments sufficient to continue the benefits to the employer or to any person who was, before a strike or lock-out became lawful, obligated to receive such payments.

"'Same

"'(4) The employer or other person described in subsection (3) shall accept payments tendered by the trade union under that subsection and, upon receiving payment, shall take such steps as may be necessary to continue in effect the employment benefits, including coverage under insurance plans.

"'Cancellation of benefits

"'(5) No person shall cancel or threaten to cancel an employee's employment benefits, including coverage under insurance plans, if the trade union tenders payments under subsection (3) sufficient to continue the employee's entitlement to the benefits or coverage.

"'Denial of benefits

"'(6) No person shall deny or threaten to deny an employment benefit, including coverage under an insurance plan, to an employee if the employee was entitled to make a claim for that type of benefit or coverage before a strike or lock-out became lawful.

"'Effect of contract

"'(7) Subsections (4), (5) and (6) apply despite any provision to the contrary in any contract.

"'Commencement

"'2. This schedule comes into force on the day the Working for Workers Four Act, 2023 receives royal assent.'"

You would want a Working for Workers Act to include anti-scab legislation, Chair, and this will be the fourth time we've moved this amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before this committee.

I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, just because of the importance of anti-scab and the fact that they used scabs in Windsor Salt, I'm asking for unanimous consent to consider the motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Is there consent? No.

Mr. Wayne Gates: They're against the anti-scab, then? Is that what they're saying?

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Say that again, please.

Mr. Wayne Gates: They're against the anti-scab? They support scabs in workplaces, so that's why they're disagreeing? I'd just like to know why. I mean, it's—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I understand. I'm going to have to disregard that, and we're just going to move on to schedule 3.

New schedule 3.2, number 6: I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that schedule 3.2 be added to the bill:

"Schedule 3.2

"Occupational Health and Safety Act

"1. Section 32.0.2 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act is amended by adding the following subsection:

"'Hospitals and long-term care homes, public reporting

"'(3) An employer that is a hospital and an employer that is a long-term care home shall, at least once a month, publicly report on its website the number of incidents of workplace violence that took place at the hospital or the long-term care home, as the case may be, during the immediately preceding month.'

"2. Section 32.0.6 of the act is amended by adding the following subsection:

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"'Hospitals and long-term care homes, public reporting

"'(3) An employer that is a hospital and an employer that is a long-term care home shall, at least once a month, publicly report on its website the number of incidents of workplace harassment that took place at the hospital or the long-term care home, as the case may be, during the immediately preceding month.'

"3. Subsection 50(1) of the act is repealed and the following substituted:

"'No discipline, dismissal or other forms of reprisal

"'(1) No person, including an employer, shall take a reprisal against a worker because the worker, in good faith,

"'(a) acts or has acted in compliance with this act or the regulations or an order made under this act;

"'(b) seeks or has sought advice about a possible contravention of this act or the regulations or the enforcement of this act or the regulations;

"'(c) seeks or has sought the enforcement of this act or the regulations;

"'(d) assists or has assisted with the activities of a joint health and safety committee or health and safety representative;

"'(e) seeks or has sought the establishment of a joint health and safety committee or the designation of a health and safety representative;

"'(f) performs or has performed the function of a joint health and safety committee member or occupational health and safety representative;

"'(g) refuses or has refused to perform an act or series of acts that the worker reasonably believes violate this act or the regulations;

"'(h) gives or has given information to a joint health and safety committee, a member of the joint health and safety committee, a health and safety representative, a trade union, an inspector or any other person responsible for the administration of this act or the regulations;

"'(i) makes a report of workplace violence or workplace harassment or a report of any other contravention of this act or the regulations to an employer, supervisor, joint health and safety committee or member of a joint health and safety committee, health and safety representative, trade union or inspector;

"'(j) participates in a workplace violence or workplace harassment investigation or in any other health and safety investigation;

"'(k) is about to testify or has testified or otherwise given evidence in a proceeding in respect of the enforcement of this act or the regulations or in an inquest under the Coroners Act; or

"'(l) provides information to the public or makes a disclosure or complaint to the public about workplace violence, workplace harassment or any other possible contravention of this act or the regulations.

"'Same

"'(1.1) For the purposes of subsection (1), a reprisal is any measure taken against a worker that adversely affects the worker's employment, and includes, without limiting the generality of the foregoing,

"'(a) ending or threatening to end the worker's employment;

"'(b) demoting, disciplining or suspending, or threatening to demote, discipline or suspend, a worker;

"'(c) imposing or threatening to impose any penalty related to the worker's employment, including any penalty such as layoff, transfer, discontinuation or elimination of a job, change of a job location, reduction in wages or change in hours of work; or

"'(d) intimidating or coercing a worker in relation to the worker's employment.'

"Commencement

"4. This schedule comes into force on the day the Working for Workers Four Act, 2023 receives royal assent."

I can't see how we'd vote against stopping workplace harassment and violence. I so move.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before the committee.

I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I don't know if people know that we've had three homicides in long-term care in the last two months. There have been charges of abusing residents. I think that we should have the opportunity to debate this, so I'm asking for unanimous consent to consider the motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Is there consent? No.

We will now move to section 3.3, motion 7. I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that schedule 3.3 be added to the bill:

"Schedule 3.3

"Respecting Workers in Health Care and in Related Fields Act, 2024

"Purpose

"1. The purpose of this act is to improve the working conditions of personal support workers, homemakers and workers in certain health care settings in order to encourage these workers to remain in these career fields as well as encourage future workers to enter these career fields.

"Definitions

"2(1) In this act,

"'minimum wage' has the same meaning as in the Employment Standards Act, 2000; ('salaire minimum')

"'Minister' means the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development or such other member of the executive council to whom responsibility for the administration of this act may be assigned or transferred under the Executive Council Act. ('ministre')

"Health care providers

"(2) A reference in this act to a health care provider means a member of a college under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, provided that the member is acting within the scope of the member's practice at the relevant time.

"Permanent and full-time employment in certain health care settings

"3. The minister shall take all necessary steps, including introducing legislation if necessary, to ensure that, if a hospital, long-term care home, home care agency or health care provider employs more than 20 individuals, no less than 70 per cent of the total number of individuals employed by the hospital, long-term care home, home care agency or health care provider are employed on a permanent and full-time basis at the hospital, long-term care home or home care agency or with the health care provider.

"Personal support workers

"4. The minister shall take all necessary steps, including introducing legislation if necessary, to ensure that,

"(a) an individual who is working as a personal support worker is paid at least $8.00 more than the minimum wage for each hour worked as a personal support worker;

"(b) an individual who is working as a personal support worker on a full-time basis in a calendar year is entitled to no less than 10 days of paid leave for the calendar year with respect to a personal illness, injury or medical emergency of the personal support worker;

"(c) an individual who is working as a personal support worker on a part-time basis in a calendar year is entitled to a certain number of days of paid leave for the calendar year, pro-rated in proportion to the 10 days provided for in clause (b) based on the number of hours worked in the calendar year, with respect to a personal illness, injury or medical emergency of the personal support worker; and

"(d) an individual who is working as a personal support worker on a full-time or part-time basis is entitled to receive health benefits and be a member of a pension plan.

"Homemakers

"5(1) The minister shall take all necessary steps, including introducing legislation if necessary, to ensure that,

"(a) an individual who is working as a homemaker is paid at least the minimum wage for each hour worked as a homemaker; and

"(b) Parts VII (Hours of Work and Eating Periods) and VIII (Overtime Pay) of the Employment Standards Act, 2000 apply to an individual who is working as a homemaker.

"(2) In this section,

"'homemaker' means a person who is employed,

"(a) to perform homemaking services for a householder or member of a household in the householder's private residence, and

"(b) by a person other than the householder.

"Commencement

"6. The act set out in this schedule comes into force one year after the day the Working for Workers Act, 2023 receives royal assent."

I cannot see why we wouldn't want to have more full-time workers in health care, including PSWs.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before this committee.

I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Once again, I think the importance of sick days and the lack of respect shown to workers under Bill 124—I'm asking again for the Conservative majority to consider consent to consider this motion and debate it.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Consent? They said no.

We will now go to schedule 4, section 0.1, motion 8. Go ahead. I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I move that section 0.1 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"0.1 The Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 is amended by adding the following section:

"'Residential care facilities and group homes

"'2.0.1 An employer, whether public or private, in either of the following industries is a schedule 1 employer for the purposes of this act:

"'1. Residential care facilities, including retirement homes, rest homes and senior citizens' residences.

"2. Group homes.'"

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before the committee.

Mr. John Fraser: I would like to ask for unanimous consent to debate this motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Consent?

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): No, I don't think so.

Okay. We'll now go to new section 0.1, motion 9. I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 0.1 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"0.1 The definition of 'firefighter' in subsection 14(1) of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 is amended by striking out 'or' at the end of clause (a) and by adding the following clause:

"(a.1) an wildland fire fighter - Ontario fireranger, or"

Basically this would ensure that the wildland firefighters are also recognized for presumptive coverage. I so move.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before this committee.

I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm hoping that the Conservative government will agree to give its unanimous consent to debate this bill. I think the wildland firefighters and the Ontario fire rangers absolutely should be covered.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Consent? No.

We will now go to section 0.2, motion 10. I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: This is another amendment that would improve the Working for Workers bill to make it even better than it is—a lot better for the workers of Ontario.

I move that section 0.2 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"0.2 Section 15 of the act is amended by adding the following subsections:

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"'Causation, etc.

"'(2.1) For the purposes of this section,

"'(a) a worker's health condition shall be considered to be an occupational disease if the worker's employment constitutes a significant contributing factor in the onset of the health condition;

"'(b) the determination of whether the worker's employment constitutes a significant contributing factor in the onset of the worker's occupational disease shall be made by assessing whether it is more likely than not that the employment is a significant contributing factor;

"'(c) it is not necessary for the worker's employment to be the sole, primary or predominant cause of the occupational disease;

"'(d) when making determinations respecting the worker's entitlement to benefits, evidence consisting of scientific data or information about the worker's employment-related exposures may be considered but shall not be used as a substitute for those determinations;

"'(c) all of the worker's exposures shall be considered and shall be presumed to be additive unless the presumption is rebutted with evidence of a synergistic effect; and

"'(f) evidence that the rate of a particular occupational"—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I'm just going to interrupt you right now and ask you to reread (e).

MPP Jamie West: Oh, did I misread it? I apologize.

"'(e) all of the worker's exposures shall be considered and shall be presumed to be additive unless the presumption is rebutted with evidence of a synergistic effect; and

"'(f) evidence that the rate of a particular occupational disease among persons in the worker's workplace is higher than the rate of the disease in the community shall be presumed to be evidence that the occupational disease occurred due to the nature of the worker's employment.

"'Same, interpretation

"'(2.2) In subsection (2.1),

"'"Significant contributing factor" means a material contribution that is not required to meet any particular quantifiable threshold but that is more than trifling or speculative."

This is aligned with what the Occupational Disease Reform Alliance had asked for from the committee to date, and I think it's very supportive.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before the committee.

I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, again, I'm hoping my colleagues will reconsider and support a motion for unanimous consent. This will give closure to workers in Ontario, and I used the example of GE, who have been fighting for WSIB for over 30 years. So I'm hoping that they'll give unanimous consent to debate the motion and support the motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Consent?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Did we win?

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): No, you didn't.

We will now go to motion 11, and I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 0.3 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"0.3 The act is amended by adding the following section:

"'Wildland fire fighters—Ontario firerangers

"'15.0.1 For the purposes of sections 15.1 and 15.2, wildland fire fighters—Ontario firerangers are,

"'(a) firefighters, despite any regulation made under clause 15.1(8)(b); and

"'(b) are deemed to be prescribed under clause 15.1(8)(a).'"

This, again, would help our wildland firefighters, in the hard work they're doing and, actually, the underfunding

they're getting, receive the same compensation through WSIB that the regular firefighters, professional firefighters, receive. It's a completely supportable amendment. It would really improve this act.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: Now, I know that previous amendments are being ruled out of order. We're trying to signal to the Conservative government about ways that we could actually be working for workers. There's a lot of, in the last four Working for Workers bills—it's been a low-hanging fruit. Not to go too far off from the weeds, but it's not that they're not supportable; it's just that they're not major gains.

We know that wildland firefighters are desperately underfunded. They're paid a lot less than the firefighters and professional firefighters make. Because of the hot, dry seasons we're having, they're working even harder. They're reaching incredible levels of burnout and stress. All that we're asking for—these are workers in similar workplace conditions—is that they would also have the presumptive cancer coverage that already exists in this bill that the professional firefighters would have.

It's possible that because of the workplace conditions, it wouldn't even apply to as many of them because of the fires they're fighting. So for many of these workers, it would be symbolic. If they didn't get these sorts of cancers, it would be symbolic to them that the Conservative government cares about these wildland firefighters as much as they care about the other firefighters. I think it would signal that we value the work that they do, and for those who do contract this sort of cancer, it would demonstrate to them and their families that they're valued as much as anyone else in the firefighter industry doing that sort of work, and that we would take care of them just like we would any other brothers or sisters.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? I recognize MPP Jordan.

Mr. John Jordan: I want to thank the member opposite for bringing the motion forward. It's not lost on this government the importance of our wildfire firefighters. There is more work, however, that has to be done relative to this motion as far as determining who qualifies. For that reason, we recognize the evolving nature, and the growth and importance and reliance we have on the wildfires, so—more to come. Graydon Smith has had great conversations, and this issue is on the table for the government in the future.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I do appreciate the Conservatives' comments, but nobody should go to work and end up with cancer. Cancer is cancer. I don't know what more research has to be done. We know that professional firefighters have got cancer, as you've mentioned already, Chair. We've had firefighters who have died from cancer. We brought in bills to protect firefighters: wildlife firefighters, Ontario firefighters, rangers. They should be covered like anybody else. Cancer is cancer, and if it's a workplace cancer, it should be covered.

So I appreciate their comments, but this is pretty clear. I think it's very supportive. I want to thank Jamie West for, quite frankly, bringing this motion forward, and I'm hoping that the Conservatives will support this motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Chair, I've heard both sides of the debate on this, and what I'd like to propose through you or ask through you is, is there any way to amend this motion that would indicate the government's intention to address this and leave it to regulations? I'd just like to ask the government if they would be willing to accept an amendment that way, a friendly amendment; if you would like to write that amendment that would at least show the intent that you're going to do it and leave it up to your own decisions, over whatever time it takes you to do it, to provide regulations that would make sure that these people are covered. I think that would be an elegant solution, because I do hear from the other side that there is an intent that they do want to do it.

I understand there are challenges with the way that this motion was written. I think it was written with good intent. But can we get something out of this? I'd just propose—and I know I may not be very popular when I say this—a five-minute recess for the government, for all of us, and maybe the government can go back and see if there's any way that they can make an amendment to this motion to allow for—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): We're 10 minutes from lunch, so what I'm going to do instead is just ask, is there any further debate? I recognize MPP Jordan.

Mr. John Jordan: I think the government is actively considering options to enhance support to our firefighters and coverage for the wildfire firefighters. I think we can go that far.

I just want to remind the opposition and the independents that it's this government that brought in support for our firefighters, and so I think that speaks to our commitment, our acknowledgement of the importance of our firefighters.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I respect that, what was brought into this bill. I know that previous governments started the presumptive illness in firefighters, and that's just the case. We're not here to debate that.

All I'm asking is, there is an opportunity to do something in a friendly way, to take a pause for the government to consider it. If you're telling me no right now, that's fine; just say that directly. I think there's just an opportunity for the government to do something here, to provide a friendly amendment that says, "We're going to do this. It's not going to happen right now. It's subject to regulation." That's just my request. But if the answer is no right now, that's fine. I was just suggesting that.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I want to thank MPP Fraser for his comments. I think that in the situation we're in, we're often set up as very adversarial. Even in this room, we're across the table from each other. That's just the system we have for debate and conversation. But it is important to acknowledge that some of the presumptive legislation started under the Liberal government, that a lot of what came into

this act came from a bill from a New Democrat, from MPP Burch, and then was moved forward by the Conservative government.

These are those opportunities I think the people of Ontario want to see: As politicians, where we get out of these corners, where we get out of the defined far-left/far-right "You say black; I say white. You say spoon; I say fork," and work together on fixing these things. This is an opportunity to do that, and I think sober second thought is a reasonable request—a five-minute request, or perhaps we adjourn for lunch early and we come back early. But I think that having that conversation, that time to think about it, would demonstrate to the people of Ontario that we really do care about workers in a bill called Working for Workers and that we want what's best for all of the firefighters, including the wildland firefighters.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: As I said, I just want to indicate to the government side that it's an opportunity. I think what you've done in this bill is good. There's an opportunity to make it better. It's not a criticism, and I think what MPP West said in regard to how we all work together on this stuff—this is just an opportunity. I know it's coming up, and I didn't consider this clause. We didn't discuss this before. But there is an opportunity to say we intend to do this, as you're saying, but we're going to leave this up to regulation. We do that often in bills. That's my request. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I recognize MPP Martin.

Mrs. Robin Martin: We've already said what we thought about this proposed amendment. We appreciate the fact that you've brought it forward. We've said that further conversations are necessary. We're not having those conversations here today because the people who need to have those conversations are not here today. So we're prepared to vote, Chair.

Mr. John Fraser: Chair, I'm not prepared to vote yet.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: It's unfortunate. This is the reason that we have committee. There's an ability to do these things. I've been in situations before where we've had to go away and come back with a friendly amendment, in government, on your side of the table. It's an opportunity for you. That's why I'm trying to actually run the clock until noon: So the government can actually go away and consider this without—

Mrs. Robin Martin: It's not going to change anything—

Mr. John Fraser: Well, I think I have to consider it more, so I really do have to request a five-minute recess, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: There has been a request for a five-minute recess. My understanding is that it should be granted. My understanding is that if it's requested, we have to grant it.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): We have seven minutes to 12 o'clock, when we will—

Mr. Wayne Gates: We can extend our lunch.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): We will have a five-minute recess.

The committee recessed from 1153 to 1158.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): We are now back in session.

Further debate? MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I'll just ask if the five minutes allowed my colleagues on the other side to realize that it was an opportunity for all of us to give an indication to wildland firefighters that the government is going to do what they're committed to do, that all of us together are going to say, "This is what's going to happen and we'll prescribe through regulation how it's going to happen." That's my question.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? Ready to vote?

Ayes

Brady, Fraser, Gates, West.

Nays

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): And I declare it lost.

We will now recess until 1 o'clock, and we will resume then.

The committee recessed from 1159 to 1302.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): We are now back in order, now that everybody is here, including John.

There are no amendments to sections 1 to 2 of schedule 4. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections together. Is there agreement? Okay. Is there any debate? Are members ready to vote?

Shall schedule 4, sections 1 and 2, inclusive, carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

We will now go to section 2.1, motion 12. I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 2.1 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"2.1 Subsection 43(2) of the act is amended by striking out '85 per cent' in the portion before clause (a) and substituting '90 per cent'."

This is something the government has promised to do prior to the last election and that was called for by people deputizing over the last couple of days, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before this committee.

We will now move to section 2.2, motion 13. I recognize MPP West. No relation to Jim West?

MPP Jamie West: No.

I move that section 2.2 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"2.2 Section 43 of the act is amended by adding the following subsection:

"'No earnings after injury

"'(4.1) The board shall not determine the following to be earnings that the worker is able to earn in suitable and available employment or business:

"'1. Earnings from an employment that the worker is not employed in, unless the worker, without good cause, failed to accept the employment after it was offered to the worker.

"'2. Earnings from a business that the worker does not carry on.'"

We heard many times from people about how difficult deeming was on them and how it, basically, legislated them into poverty. This is a very important amendment that I think we should all support.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before this committee.

I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I think you've heard it loud and clear over the last couple days, on the importance of getting rid of deeming. I think a number of presenters came here and talked about it. I've mentioned it a number of times, that 46% of injured workers are living in poverty; that's nearly one in two people collecting WSIB. They're phantom jobs. There is absolutely no reason why we shouldn't be supporting this motion. I don't think any worker in the province of Ontario should live in poverty, so I'm asking the Conservative members on this committee to let us debate this motion. It's that important.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): There will be no debate.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Is there consent? They said no.

We will now go to section 2.3, motion 14. Go ahead, MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 2.3 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"2.3 Subsection 45(2) of the act is amended by striking out 'an amount equal to five per cent of every subsequent payment to him or her for loss of earnings' and substituting 'an amount equal to the worker's pre-accident Canada Pension Plan contributions'."

This would ensure that as injured workers retire, they're able to pay their bills. It would bring them closer to about 11%, which may not seem like a lot, the difference between 5% and 11%, but it would make a huge difference for these seniors who are injured and unable in many cases to do any other additional work to supplement their wages.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of a parent act that is not before this committee.

I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Once again, I believe it's a way to support injured workers. I've already talked a number of times about deeming, so I'm once again asking my colleagues from the Conservative government to support injured workers and unanimously give consent for the motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Is there consent?

Mrs. Robin Martin: No—Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I recognize MPP Martin.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Can I ask that we don't have a debate about the motion but have a debate about whether we're giving consent? Can you just have the—if they're asking for consent, have that be part of it and not have MPP Gates wax on about the reasons he thinks we ought to give consent? Because we're just deciding whether we're giving consent or not. I don't think that's an appropriate time to be making arguments. Otherwise, we should make arguments too, and we could be here all day.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I understand.

Mr. John Fraser: Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I don't think that MPP Gates is waxing on, just for the record.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): You don't think—

Mr. John Fraser: He's waxing on.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Maybe it's the moustache.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Okay. All right. We have to use proper language and be nice to each other in this committee.

I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, I'm used to MPP Martin saying stuff about me. I'm used to that. But I just want to say that all I'm trying to do when I'm talking about giving a little bit of detail is I'm trying to get the Conservatives to do the right thing. I'm trying to help them, so that's why I like to at least talk about it. Whether it's deeming, whether it's pensions, whatever it is, I'm just trying to help them. Particularly when it comes to working for workers, they need lots of help that way. I'm just trying to be helpful.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Yes, thank you.

There was a notice filed for schedule 4, section 3. Do you wish to debate it? I recognize MPP Brady.

Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady: I suggest, and we will go through this three times, that we reconsider the additional indexing in sections 3 through 6. I asked the minister when he was before us Monday morning to provide evidence that additional indexing is required for Ontario's injured workers and that, if it did exist, to bring it forward. The minister failed to bring forward that evidence.

I would add that if that evidence does exist, we should be examining the root cause of why injured workers require additional indexing in the first place. As we know, injured worker benefits keep pace with inflation, according to CPI. That's a good thing, and that should always happen. But we heard time and time again over the two days of testimony that there is no evidence to support additional indexing. There is need to support injured workers

additionally, but perhaps in other ways that we heard through some of the testimony.

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So unless a sound public policy explanation is presented and properly costed, I have a difficult time agreeing to additional indexing, because there is no number, there is no percentage being presented that we would be calculating that additional indexing on. The devil would be in the details.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Debate? I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I just want to state for the record that I agree with my colleague. We heard from both sides, both employers and employees and workers saying, "What are you doing here? It's a policy that really has no parameters other than saying it gives you the ability to do something."

I think, in fairness to the people who came forward to us, the employers were saying, "Well, we do pay the premiums and it is something we do that supports our workers, and we want to know that you're actually fixing the things that you need to fix." And so if you're going to fix them, go in and fix them that way. Don't use this as a broad brush or a broad tool that's not going to address some of the problems that we have. They also said, "We'd like to see that in terms of not turning into pressure on premiums." It's not just about next week or next month or this year, but five or 10 years from now. And then we have employees on the other side saying, "I can't get the support that I need. I'm not covered," as I mentioned earlier in this debate.

There are all sorts of things that we can do inside workers' compensation legislation that's going to help workers, but using this broad brush that sounds really good—a whole group of workers, as we heard, coming before us here and the people who represent them, are saying, "Well, you're just not addressing the problem."

And so, for that reason, I think I feel comfortable supporting this motion. It's not that I don't want all those workers to have some extra money, but what I really, really want is for those workers who aren't covered and for those workers who are having difficulty and challenges in getting the benefits that they're entitled to—that we work on that. I think it's important as a government. All of us, collectively, have been through this at one point or another over the last 30 years. It's still not where it should be. For that reason, I'll be supporting my colleague's motion.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): To clarify, a notice is not a motion. The section itself will be voted on, not the notice.

I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, you're talking about a section.

I want to, once again, now that I get the opportunity to talk on the floor—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Just to let you know, this is a notice.

Mr. Wayne Gates: No, I get that, but I think it's part and parcel to it. We—not necessarily myself; I watched it on TV, but when you guys have been here, you listened to workers and employers tell you how to fix WSIB. I don't know of any employer that wants to see that employee, when he gets hurt on the job, live in poverty. I talk to them all the time. It doesn't matter whether they're in the restaurant industry, the tourism sector, manufacturing; they respect the workers that put in a fair day's work for a fair day's pay.

The way to fix WSIB in the province of Ontario is to get rid of deeming. We all know it. Everybody on that side knows it, even though they continue to vote against it during these Working for Workers bills. You want to fix WSIB? You want to make sure you're treating workers with respect and dignity in the province of Ontario? You want to make sure that injured workers don't live in poverty, where 46% today are? You want to respect workers who end up living in poverty and collecting government money, whether it's on ODSP or OW? Do you want to make sure that that injured worker doesn't live in and end up having financial trouble in that home? In a lot of cases—whether you want to hear it or not, it's accurate—they end up having marital problems; they end up splitting up because they're living in poverty. They were going to work in a place where they were getting paid a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. They end up getting injured and they end up being deemed by WSIB.

It's worked out really well that you ended up with a surplus, but you ended up with a surplus only one way: You ended up with a surplus in WSIB because you deemed workers and you didn't pay them the benefits that they deserved, whether that was 80% at one time, 85%, 90%, 95%. It doesn't matter what that number is, because you deem them and they end up getting half. You give them a phantom job that's not even there, that they can't even get, and they end up living in poverty.

So I'm going to say to my independent colleague, to my Liberal colleague, to my good friend Jamie West, to my colleagues over there that if you care about workers in the province of Ontario, stop deeming workers who get injured on the job. Nobody in this province should live in poverty because they got hurt going in to perform a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. That's how you fix WSIB.

Thank you for finally allowing me to get that out.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Shall schedule 4—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Oh, I'm sorry. MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: No problem, Chair. I think my colleague MPP Gates said most of what I want to say. But today we heard, mainly, from organizations representing businesses that what they need is stability and predictability. They're worried about the super indexing. The way the legislation is written, it's not clear when it will happen, how it will happen or anything like that, or if it will even address what is being seen there.

When we spoke with workers who are being affected, or people representing workers who are affected by WSIB, when I would ask the same question that I asked the business community chair about, "How do we address WSIB? How do we ensure this is working effectively?", we kept hearing the business organizations say, "Let's have a round table. Let's figure out how to do this so it would be

predictable and responsible." And the worker organizations said loud and clear they would sidestep that completely, and just said, "Get rid of deeming."

The previous motion I had, motion 12, about the loss of earnings, just raising it back to the 5% that was promised by the Conservative government prior to the 2022 election. That is something that would be predictable for business, that they could expect coming. It would be sustainable. It wouldn't cause the WSIB fund to be unfunded. Also, I think that getting rid of deeming would be a reasonable way for them to understand what's going on for these workers.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): MPP Martin.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you for all the comments everybody has made. We are very proud to be part of a government that is continuing to work for workers and put forward legislative changes to make sure that workers in the province of Ontario are treated well. The proposed proposal, if passed, would give the government authority to prescribe additional indexing amounts to WSIB benefits. For an injured worker who earns $70,000 a year, an additional indexing of 2% could mean an additional $900 in that injured worker's pocket.

Our government ran on a promise of putting more money into the pockets of Ontarians. The amendment of the super index would put even more money in pockets of injured workers and their families. That's especially true for injured workers who, for too long, were ignored by previous governments.

That's why we've put forward these strong pro-worker policies that, if passed, will support injured workers when they need it most. Our decision to do this is really simple. We believe that during a cost-of-living crisis, injured workers should have more. By opposing this, really, people are sort of suggesting that during this cost-of-living crisis, they don't think these injured workers should receive more. But under the leadership of Premier Ford, our PC government is working for workers, and will continue to do so and take action to put more money in their pockets.

I did hear from witnesses here at committee that were in support of the super-indexing proposal, including Mr. Warsame—I believe that is how you pronounce his name—and others. And I know that it's supported by other labour unions like LIUNA 183, so there is support for this. I think it's important, during this very difficult time, to put more money into the pockets of injured workers.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: It might be a good idea to put money in the pockets of workers who don't have coverage—just saying. No one is saying that we shouldn't put more money in people's pockets, but for the people who have none—if you were serious about doing the thing about putting more money in people's pockets, if you made a commitment to go from 85% to 90%, and that was five years ago—that's one point a year—then you'd do it. The point is, nobody is saying here we want people to have less money. It's just that there are some people who have none, and nothing is being done to address that issue. Why are we doing this first when there are people who have none, who are struggling with nothing?

By the way, we're paying for them as well, too, all of us, collectively—not the insurance plan; we are, everybody in this province. So the point I'm trying to make is, there are things that are not being addressed, and by doing something, this broad brush, this broad stroke, people with nothing are being left with nothing in this bill. That's the point.

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The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? I recognize MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I think in terms of deciding how to vote for this, Speaker, the members of the Conservative Party had talked about the importance of putting money into these workers' pockets, working for workers and, particularly for this section, about injured workers. Now, this is a promise that was made—my Liberal colleagues, five years ago; I know that it was announced during the election in April 2022—that hasn't really moved forward.

If we're going to be supporting or voting against this, I think that if the Conservative members could give me a deadline in terms of when it will be brought forward and what will the amount be—because that was what I heard from the business community and workers as well, that the super indexing just sort of seemed to be something that would be good to say at a press conference, but there aren't many details. There isn't much substance to it.

So I think for voting one way or another, if there was a commitment to bring it forward by a certain percentage by a certain date, then that would make a lot more difference. But if right now, all we want to do is have a flag that we can wave to say, "Just wait till tomorrow; the cheque's in the mail"—these people are literally starving, many of these people on ODSP or injured workers who are frustrated. We saw that in deputations. To be able to tell them that money is coming very shortly, by a certain date—I don't mean "very shortly" like how sometimes people will say "several" and that could be several years; I mean, "You're going to have it by Injured Workers Day, and it's going to be 5%, 10%," or whatever it is. That would be meaningful to the workers. It wouldn't just be press conferences about how you're working for workers but not doing much for the workers, and it would be predictable and sustainable for local businesses who are going to be affected.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? I recognize MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm just going to again respond to MPP Martin's comment about how they're proud of working for workers. I'm going to tell you, there is nothing to be proud about over the five years that we had to fight Bill 124, which is now going to cost taxpayers $13.4 billion in back pay when they should have just allowed it to go to collective agreement. There is nothing to be proud about that you continue to support scab workers in workplaces, including in a riding that is represented by a Conservative MPP, with Windsor Salt.

You continue, as I talk about this—and I've been here for all four of these bills. Maybe not completely, but I've been here. I have talked to you about deeming. You listened for two days from employers and from workers that you had to get rid of deeming. That was what was putting injured workers in poverty.

I brought forward a bill with PSA testing for men, including skilled trades workers, firefighters, MPPs, on covering the testing for PSA. Do you know, every day, as we sit here today, five men are going to die with prostate cancer? Again, when you say, "working for workers," that's not working for workers, because every one of those men—not every one, but most that have a prostate—are working today.

And to my colleague Jamie West and the Liberals, all you have to do—I'm not sure where all of your ridings are, but I think some of you may be or you certainly walk down the streets of Toronto, you see what's going on with encampments, people living on the streets, in one of the richest provinces in the country.

So when you say you're proud, if you want to be proud, I just gave you a list of things that you could include in this bill—which, by the way, I'm sure everybody on this side will support. I don't think there's any of us that wouldn't support those. Let's talk about the issues that are making people—

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): MPP Gates, just as a reminder, section 3 of schedule 4 is on the floor and comments should be made related to the section and schedule on the floor. I'll give you—

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate it. I'm good. I'm fine. Listen, I can't be more clear that I'm not sure using the words "proud" and "workers" in the same sentence is how I would see what has gone on since I have been here for 10 years now. By the way, it was my anniversary yesterday. My 10-year anniversary was yesterday. I'm very proud of that.

Interjections.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, very proud that they lit up the falls in orange. I had to buy all the lights, but that's fine. I certainly got it out.

But I just want to say that we could do a lot better for workers, and I gave you some examples that you shouldn't be proud of.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Shall schedule 4, section 3, carry?

Ayes

Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

Nays

Brady, Fraser, Gates, West.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

We will now go to schedule 4, section 4. A notice was filed for section 4 of schedule 4. Is there any debate? I recognize MPP Brady.

Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady: I think that I won't belabour this, because it's all going to become a moot point if we've voted to adopt section 3. But we heard that the Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups also disagrees with this approach the government is taking with additional indexing. And the Council of Ontario Construction Associations suggests that perhaps we reconsider, and if there is belief that injured workers are falling behind, it's time to engage an impartial research organization to conduct a benefits adequacy study to make a proper assessment. I am a bit concerned, because what we see with additional indexing really isn't typical of fiscal conservative policy.

We want injured workers to be treated fairly. As my colleague Mr. Fraser said, we are not taking care of everyone who needs to be taken care of. There was a presentation yesterday about victims of WSIB prior to 1985, where benefits did not reflect the workers' wages, but rather they were a flat rate. I know this surplus exists at WSIB, and perhaps this is a group of people that could also be supported, and money distributed to those families who have been living in poverty since 1985.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? I recognize MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: I won't belabour the point, but one of the challenges that we have, or one of the things that our job demands of us, is that we hear those voices that are the hardest to hear. In this committee, we heard those voices. We heard those voices of workers. We heard those voices of businesses that were saying, "I've got a problem with this." We have to listen.

When you have a kind of a consensus like this, it's like, "Let's go back and take a look at what we're doing," because everyone is saying, "We don't think you are right. We think you need to think about this more." That's what the point of my colleague's notice is. What we're saying is, you need to think about what we're doing, because people are telling us that. The last notice was lost and the rest of them are moot, so I'm not going to say anything more about this, I promise you.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Further debate? Ready to vote?

Mrs. Robin Martin: What are we voting in favour of?

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Shall schedule 4, section 4, carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

We should now go to schedule 4, section 5. A notice has been filed for section 5 of schedule 4. Debate?

Ready to vote on schedule 4, section 5?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): All those opposed? Carried.

We will now go to section 5.1, motion 15. I recognize MPP West.

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MPP Jamie West: I move that section 5.1 be added to schedule 4 to the bill:

"5.1 Subsection 161(3) of the act is amended by striking out 'and' at the end of clause (a) and by adding the following clauses:

"'(c) to review, at least annually, the lists of substances in group 1 (known carcinogen) and group 2A (probable carcinogen) published by the International Agency for Research on Cancer; and

"'(d) to ensure that,

"'(i) if the International Agency for Research on Cancer finds that there is sufficient evidence for a substance to be classified in group 1 in respect of certain organs, the substance is included in schedule 3 and is considered for inclusion in schedule 4, and

"'(ii) if the International Agency for Research on Cancer finds that there is sufficient evidence for a substance to be classified in group 2A in respect of certain organs,

"'(A) the substance is included in schedule 3, or

"'(B) if the board determines that the substance cannot be included in schedule 3, the board develops a policy concerning the substance and any associated diseases after consulting with workers, workers' representatives, employers and employers' representatives.'"

This seems like a great way to help workers. I move that.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): The proposed amendment is out of order because it seeks to amend a section of the parent act that is not before the committee.

MPP Gates?

Mr. Wayne Gates: I just want to add two comments to it. Out of 3,000 people diagnosed with occupational cancers last year, only 170 received compensation. I did go to GE; I did meet with those families who lost their moms, their dads, their aunts, their uncles. Some residents there have been fighting for compensation for 30 years, Chair. Think about that: 30 years. They're living in poverty, they need closure, and I think that we should certainly support this motion and get it out. So I'm asking for UC.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Is there consent?

Interjection: No.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Schedule 4, section 6: A notice was filed for section 6 of schedule 4.

Debate? I recognize MPP Brady.

Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady: Thank you. I'm going to withdraw.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Okay.

Shall schedule 4, section 6, carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

We will now go to schedule 4, section 7. Is there any debate? Ready to vote?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

Shall schedule 4 carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

We will now consider sections 1 to 3, which were postponed in the beginning.

We will go to section 1, contents of this act. Is there any debate? Ready to vote?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

Section 2, commencement: Any debate? Ready to vote?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

Shall section 3, the short title, carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

Shall the title of the bill carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

Shall Bill 149 carry?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

Shall I report the bill to the House?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Oh, I'm sorry.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Sorry, I'm just trying to make sure that we don't miss anything. Did we pass schedule 4, as a schedule?

Interjection.

Mrs. Robin Martin: We did? I must have missed it. I just wanted to make sure.

Ms. Patrice Barnes: Yes, we did.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): You scared me there.

Shall I report the bill to the House?

Ayes

Barnes, Jordan, Martin, Pierre, Quinn, Wai.

The Chair (Mr. Brian Riddell): Carried.

That concludes our clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 149, and our business for today. Thank you, everyone.

The committee is now adjourned until Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 9 a.m. for public hearings on Bill 151.

The committee adjourned at 1337.

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