



Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario

First Session, 39<sup>th</sup> Parliament

Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario

Première session, 39<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Monday 22 February 2010**

**Lundi 22 février 2010**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

---

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 22 February 2010

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 22 février 2010

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by the nondenominational prayer.

*Prayers.*

### USE OF QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. Peter Kormos:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I bring this point of order under standing order 1(b)(iii) and standing order 1(c), which gives the Speaker power or jurisdiction. If you bear with me, I'm going to be very brief—as brief as possible.

I do want to, at the commencement of this point of order, refer to Griffith and Ryle on Parliament: Functions, Practice and Procedures, page 777:

“Parliament is not directly involved in the process of governing the country or providing its system of public administration. It has the secondary task of sustaining in office the government of the day, whilst simultaneously performing its essential role of holding the executive to account. This crucial parliamentary task can too easily be taken for granted. Governments are by nature secretive and must be forced into the open. Governments prefer to conceal actions which in the event do not reflect credit on their administration. The more that is known of what governments intend, the greater is the scope for criticism. Under many systems of government, secrecy and concealment are commonplace. Dictatorial regimes do not admit of elected assemblies that do more than record their assent. Challenges even to the most unlawful of official acts will, at best, go unanswered.”

Marleau and Montpetit—and this is echoed, of course, in the second addition by Bosc et al—page 416:

“More than any other segment of the parliamentary day, question period serves as a daily snapshot of national political life and is closely followed by members, the press and the public, each sitting day of the House. It is that part of the parliamentary day where the government is held accountable for its administrative policies and the conduct of its ministers, both individually and collectively.”

Furthermore, the ruling of Speaker Jerome, back in 1975, referred to in Marleau, again, on page 419: “He”—Jerome—“established that asking oral questions was a right, not a privilege of the members, and he identified several principles for the conduct of question period.”

I appreciate that we don't have a standing order 15 like the federal Parliament has. We, however, do have the Executive Council Act, as amended, still in effect, which of course—section 7—requires attendance of cabinet

ministers at question period; that is section 7(1) of the Executive Council Act.

I put this to the Speaker, and I ask you to make particular reference to 1(c), from which you will derive authority to respond and to act. We are told, and we appreciate being told, that today, over 25% of cabinet ministers will be absent. Among these are some of the most senior cabinet positions. We've only been sitting for three days; we've had a hiatus of a significant period of time. I don't have to tell anybody that there are things going on out there in our communities across this province that have to be raised in this Legislature, and most appropriately at question period.

I put to you, Speaker, that we in the opposition need your assistance. We need you to exercise your inherent authority under 1(c) of the standing orders to assist us in exercising our right to ask questions, because if the cabinet ministers don't show up, we don't have that right. That right is being frustrated. That right is being not just frustrated, but denied. I ask you to provide some direction and guidance to this government for its ministers' attendance at question period so that our right to pose questions is given effect.

Thank you kindly.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker: I appreciate the third party House leader for raising this point of order this morning. I don't have the references to your new book in here as well, but I do support what he is speaking about, which is that it is our fundamental right to question the government and to hold them accountable, and that question period is the most appropriate time in which to do so. When you have a situation like you have today, where a quarter or more of the government ministers are missing, it in fact implies that our rights are not considered as important to this government.

Having said that, I've always been disappointed in the fact that I've never lived on the government side of the House and have only lived on the opposition side of the House, and I wish that there was a standing order that would imply that they have to actually do something when they do attend question period in the House; that is, to actually answer questions. We understand that they don't have to do that, but we should expect, and we have the right to expect, that they would at least be here to answer our questions.

It's even more appropriate this week. I think it should be pointed out that this is one of the most important

weeks for rural Ontario municipalities in their calendar year, and that is when the OGRA/ROMA conference is on. The government, because they have a disdain for rural people, is making sure that we're in the House doing our job while they can send all kinds of people down to the ROMA conference, and thus not allow us to join with our municipal partners, because we're doing our job in the House while they ensure that our municipal partners aren't joined by their provincial members. I think that's something that should be addressed as well, something this House should be considering, and that is not sitting when the OGRA/ROMA conference is on, to show some respect for the rural municipalities of Ontario as well.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That's my issue on this point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The government House leader on the same point of order.

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this point of order this morning. I would point out that, in fact, we do have seven ministers away today, but the Minister of Education is the Acting Premier and she is ready and willing to answer all questions.

The legislation that was referred to by the member for Welland is, in fact, legislation that we brought in and that this government has passed, and it requires that ministers be penalized if they miss a third of question periods in a session. I would note for Mr. Speaker and the information of those members on the other side of the House that no one in this government has ever fallen below that threshold, and we are happy to be here to serve, to respond to all questions.

I'm unclear as to what the member was seeking in restitution on this point of order. Was he seeking to adjourn the House this morning? I doubt that. We're here, ready, willing and able to answer questions, and we look forward to doing so.

1040

With respect to the member opposite's comments on the Rural Ontario Municipal Association meetings, we are most happy to be attending some of those meetings and will continue to do so as part of our duties as government, and we look forward to welcoming them here, should they be coming to visit us as well.

While it was lovely to hear the member from Welland pontificate again this morning—because we did miss his eloquence over a period of time—we are prepared to answer questions and would like to go forward with question period this morning.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I want to thank the honourable member from Welland for his point of order, as well as the comments from the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and the comments from the government House leader.

I would turn the members' attention to a ruling of Speaker Stockwell on April 21, 1997, during debates. I'm going to paraphrase from Speaker Stockwell's ruling, that it's not within the Speaker's purview to ensure that certain members are present for question period, that the

standing orders do not compel a minister to be present for question period, and that the Speaker has no control over the issue even if the minister has been absent for a couple of days or consecutive days.

So, again, I thank the honourable member, but there's nothing within the power vested in the Speaker that I can compel a minister to be present during question period. I would encourage and urge the government House leader that question period is the time of day when the opposition does, as was pointed out, have the opportunity to question the government and keep the government accountable, and I would encourage the government House leader to do everything within her power to encourage as many ministers to be in attendance at question period as possible.

I thank the honourable members for their interjections.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Please join me in welcoming grade 5 students, teachers and parents from Brother Andre Catholic School in Ajax, who are joining us in the gallery today.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like at this time to introduce some constituents: in my neighbouring constituency, Don McGugan, mayor of Brooke-Alvinston, and his wife, Anne, attending the Good Roads convention today; and also, from my constituency, John Phair, councillor of the town of Petrolia.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'd like to introduce, from CARP, the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, Susan Eng, vice-president of advocacy, and Kim Hakan, government relations and a former intern; and from Pro Bono Law Ontario, Wendy Miller, child advocacy project director.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today guests from my community. Lori Strauss is here with her son Kevin and daughter Tracey, fitting in their Olympic garb.

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** I'd like to introduce today the parents of one of our pages, Anthony Meola from Mississauga South. His mom and dad are in the west gallery behind me. It's Luc and Diana. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** In the absence of the Premier, the finance minister or the economic development minister, my question is to the Acting Premier, I guess.

Acting Premier, it's a good thing for Dalton McGuinty that there are no Olympics for economic performance. If medals were handed out for lowest unemployment rate, Saskatchewan would win the gold, Manitoba the silver

and Alberta the bronze. Ontario doesn't even come in the top half in Confederation.

Before Dalton McGuinty took office, Ontario was the dominant gold medal winner in Canada when it came to economic performance. To the Acting Premier: How did you take Ontario out of medal contention so quickly?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** That's a very important question, and I'm happy to have the opportunity to provide some information to all members of this Legislature. The good news is, to the members of the opposition, jobs are up in the province of Ontario by 30,000. Since June, there has been a \$64,000 increase in jobs that have been created. Members in the opposition are calling over here, "Where?" and "They're public sector jobs." Actually, General Motors has 700 people coming back to work. A second shift is being added at their Oshawa facility, and I'm sure their member from Oshawa is very happy about that. Toyota is also introducing a second shift in Woodstock, and that is going to add 800 more jobs to that local economy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The reality is that Dalton McGuinty, in the last year alone, promised a million net new jobs, but actually lost 140,000 jobs in 2009 alone. We all know that for the first time in three decades, under Dalton McGuinty, Ontario's unemployment rate is higher than Quebec's.

The Acting Premier must be relieved that there's no medal round for economic growth, because Alberta wins gold; BC, silver; and Saskatchewan, the bronze. Here again, Ontario is at the back of the pack.

I'll ask the Acting Premier how this happened. Was it your high taxes, was it your runaway spending, was it your increased red tape, or was it a combination of all three that took Ontario to the back of the pack?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** I'm surprised that I have to stand in this Legislature and say to the Leader of the Opposition that there has been a global recession, that the reality that we've experienced here in Ontario has been experienced in the United States—indeed, around the world. That is why this government has been working very hard to create jobs in the province of Ontario—just last month, 30,000 new jobs in Ontario.

I want to share with the members of the opposition a report that was released today from the Conference Board of Canada. It indicates that the Ontario economy went through a severe downturn last year, but the outlook is much more positive. The economy will reverse course, with real GDP forecast to rise by 3.5% this year and 3.7% in the year 2011.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** As far as we know in the PC caucus, Saskatchewan is part of the globe, Manitoba is part of the globe and BC is part of the globe. Every province was impacted by a global recession, but Ontario, under Dalton McGuinty, fell the farthest. Under Dalton McGuinty, Ontario fell the farthest, and now we're leading the country in unemployment and job losses under

your high taxes and runaway spending. Until Dalton McGuinty came along, Ontario's rate of economic growth was booming across this province, and now we're limping along like some aging athlete. This is an extraordinary failure of leadership in the Premier's office and the finance minister's office.

When will Dalton McGuinty finally realize that it's time for him to hang up his skates?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** We have great faith in the people of this province to get through this recession, which has been experienced in every jurisdiction around the world. With respect to the impact that has been felt by families in Ontario, it has been significant. There is no other jurisdiction in Canada that manufactures and exports more goods around the world than the province of Ontario. We will continue to work with companies and with manufacturers in Ontario. We will continue to create a climate that will invite businesses to come here, invest, and create jobs—the very initiatives that you speak against every day in this House and that you vote against every chance you get.

#### PROVINCIAL DEBT

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Deputy Premier: No doubt, after six years in office, Dalton McGuinty's failed policies have taken Ontario from the engine of growth that used to power Canada to a have-not province with its hand out to the federal government, on the welfare rolls of Confederation. It gets worse: According to your own budget figures, you will have doubled the provincial debt by 2012.

Over the couple of weeks when Dalton McGuinty mused about Dalton days, he said that he liked alliteration. I ask the Acting Premier: How do you like the sound of "Dalton the Debt-doubler"?

1050

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Our government has made the investments that have been necessary and that have in fact created jobs in the province of Ontario. We partnered with the federal government on the most significant infrastructure program that has ever been undertaken in this province and in our country—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Members will please come to order. I'm finding it difficult to hear the answer.

Please continue.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** I'm very surprised at the members of the opposition when we're talking about investments that have taken place in your communities. The municipalities have been absolutely delighted; all the groups that have received resources from this government would say it is past time that those investments were made. We are committed, in partnership with the federal government, to make those investments at a time when our economy needs those investments to keep jobs, and at the end of those investments, we will have excellent infrastructure that has—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I don't know what planet the Acting Premier is coming from, because that is not the story we are hearing from hard-working Ontario families across this province, increasingly struggling to make ends meet, and now they have to deal with Dalton's enormous debt increases.

Let's put this in perspective. It took from Confederation to when Dalton McGuinty came into office to get total debt to \$148 billion. By the finance minister's own projections, Dalton McGuinty, in his time in office, will spend his way to a \$290-billion debt by 2012. In less than a decade, Dalton McGuinty has managed to create a debt level equal to all of the other Premiers in Confederation combined.

I ask the Acting Premier: Why have you mortgaged away the future of our children and grandchildren?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** We are working in partnership with the federal government. We continue to make the investments that we know will create jobs for Ontario families. We have also implemented a program of tax cuts for families. They voted—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** You missed it because you were heckling. Minister?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Again, our government has made a concerted effort to assist families to get through these difficult economic times, and that is why we implemented a program of tax cuts, which you voted against; 93% of Ontarians will receive a tax cut. We have also restructured the tax system in Ontario. It's restructured in a way that, when they were in government and even in opposition, but before it was introduced in this Legislature, they were in favour of a harmonized tax structure. They voted against that. We know that those—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Acting Premier says they're reducing taxes. This is the government that brought in the so-called health tax—a massive tax increase. This is the government that's bringing in the HST sales tax grab. Hydro rates are going up. Auto insurance rates are going up. You say you are going to reduce taxes. Acting Premier, with all due respect, give me a break. There's only one way under Dalton McGuinty; that is, taxes are going up. We know that after six years in office, you will have added \$150 billion to the provincial debt; \$150 billion on the backs of our children and grandchildren because you had your runaway spending.

Please tell me, Minister, because we all know that today's deficits under Dalton McGuinty are tomorrow's taxes exactly what tax you plan to increase next.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** I want to take the opportunity to share what other leaders have to say about actions, the state of the economy and how governments need to respond to the challenges we have experienced. I have a quote here: "I actually do think we are in a rare

period, one that as an economist I don't think we would see again in my lifetime, where deficits are not only necessary but actually advised."

**Hon. Gerry Phillips:** Who said that?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** That was Stephen Harper. So we have the Prime Minister of Canada, who understands and appreciates that we are in very unusual, unique economic times, and it does require a very unique response. We have partnered with the federal government. We are making investments. At the end of the day—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Minister of Health. On Friday, the McGuinty government announced \$14 million to plug a hole in the Niagara Health System's budget, but hospitals across the province are in deficit and are being forced by this Liberal government to make cuts to patient care. For example, hospitals in London, this minister's hometown, have placed 63 jobs in limbo, including jobs of front-line nurses. What is the minister doing to stop these cuts to patient care?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I welcome the question from the leader of the third party, especially as it contrasts with the questions we heard earlier. It seems there are some people in this House who think that you can balance budgets without doing the really hard work that's happening right now in hospitals right across this province. This really is tough work that the hospitals are engaged in. No decisions have been made on what the increase in funding for hospitals will be, other than: There will be an increase. The Premier has said that clearly.

We have built a very strong foundation in our health care system. In the six years that we've been in office, we have made deliberate investments in health care. Because we took those steps in the previous six years, we will be able to weather this economic storm from a much stronger position than we would have otherwise. In the last six years, we've increased hospital funding—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It appears to me that the minister seems to be basing decisions on political impulses rather than on a sound health care strategy in this province. Worried about a by-election, the minister found \$15 million for a Toronto hospital. Attempting to divert attention from the closing of emergency rooms in Fort Erie and Port Colborne, the minister found another \$14 million for hospitals in the Niagara Health System.

Will this minister continue to play cynical politics with Ontario hospital funding, or will she reveal an actual plan so that hospitals will be funded properly in this province today and into the future?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The member opposite knows that part of the ongoing work of the Ministry of

Health and Long-Term Care is working with hospitals through the LHINs to determine where additional investments need to be made. This is part of the work we do every single day.

The suggestion that we ought not to have kept the Grace hospital open is one that simply astounds me. It was the party opposite that actually created extraordinary distress amongst the patients at Toronto Grace, the staff members, the families. They created an issue where one did not exist.

We will continue to do the work that we do, which is to look very carefully at every dime we spend in health care and make sure the right investments are made to maintain the very high level of health care that we have in this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** By this minister's response, it's even more obvious that there is no plan for the growing crisis Ontario hospitals are facing. The minister seems to be making it up as she goes along. If this was an Olympic event, they'd call it freestyle hospital funding.

When will this minister come forward with an actual plan, instead of denying that there is a crisis while she goes about picking and choosing hospital winners and losers?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** The work that we do in the ministry is tough work. We rely on experts to help us make the decisions that we must make in order to maintain and improve the high level of health care that we have. We have increased funding year over year over year for hospitals over the past six years. A 42% increase over six years is an extraordinary investment in health care.

We are at the point now where that kind of year-over-year growth is simply unsustainable. Regardless of the economic situation we now find ourselves in, it is time to look very carefully at the spending on health care. It is time to make the right investments, the smart investments, the investments that are based on evidence. We are determined to continue to improve health care in this province.

1100

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is to the Acting Premier. Earlier this month, the Harper government announced that they had negotiated a new trade deal with the United States government. As details emerge, more and more people are asking very serious questions about that deal because it seems to give up a lot and get very little in return.

So my question is a simple one: Will the McGuinty government commit today to holding public hearings across the province so people can actually see and debate this deal in the open?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Trade issues are very important, and we have our Premier and our Minister of

Economic Development and Trade who are absolutely focused on ensuring that we have the best deal in place for the people of Ontario and ensuring that we can continue to bring high-quality jobs to this province. Our government has made that commitment very clear and we will continue to do so.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Ontario families are being told that this deal is supposed to protect jobs, but as details leak out, they're wondering exactly whose jobs those are. For example, fair wage policies in communities like Sudbury may very well now be at risk as a result of this deal. If that's the case, why won't the government let people see for themselves at open, public hearings what impact this policy will have on their jobs and on their communities?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** We are very interested in working with the honourable member. I know that she was offered a briefing on the agreement that we have forged, and I don't know that the honourable member has responded to that. So, again, I make that offer so that she would take full advantage of the briefing. We would be very happy to bring her up to speed on what that contains.

What I can say is that we are eager to ensure that more jobs come to Ontario with this agreement, and we're confident that with the deal that has been put in place, that in fact will be the case. It is the case that when you open yourself up for business, that means we have tremendous opportunities, greater opportunities than before, to seize jobs for Ontario—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I would suggest that this government decide once and for all to actually brief the public and hear what the public has to say on their policies around this trade deal, because people are very, very worried about their jobs. They don't want to see rubber-stamped backroom deals by politicians who continue to say, "Just trust us. We know what's in your best interests." They expect their government to actually be accountable.

This deal has been criticized as lopsided and unfair. Even the federal Liberals call it questionable and underwhelming.

With thousands of jobs at stake, why is this government afraid of open, public debate and dialogue on this secret, backdoor trade deal?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** We have been hearing from the public about the work that has been achieved with this deal. I have a quote from Jayson Myers. Jayson is the president and CEO of CME. He said, "This is an important agreement... puts Canada in a stronger position to fight counterproductive protectionist policies in the future." That was just last week.

We also have a municipal partner from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Basil Stewart says, "Canadians are fighting hard to recover from the recession, but they need to be on a level playing field with their

neighbours south of the border.” He would say that the agreement that has been reached “gives them hope.”

So the public has responded to the agreement that we have forged. They are positive about it. We believe that it will bring more jobs to the province of Ontario. That is what the people expect of us.

#### ABORIGINAL LAND DISPUTE

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** To the Acting Premier: February is the four-year anniversary of the McGuinty Liberal government abandoning the rule of law and leaving the residents of Caledonia to fend off home invaders on their own.

The Hamilton Spectator is reporting today that the McGuinty government plans to hand over the Douglas Creek Estates to the Six Nations. The Ontario PC caucus opposes this move. We believe it is the wrong thing to do.

Acting Premier, can you please tell us why you are planning to hand over Douglas Creek Estates to the Six Nations at this point in time?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** To the Attorney General.

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** As Attorney General and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, I can tell you that no decisions have been made with respect to the Douglas Creek Estates property.

What we have done and what we continue to do is encourage people who live as neighbours to engage in productive discussions. The future of any relationship begins with those productive discussions, and we will continue to encourage that. No decisions have been made with respect to the land. We continue to work very hard as a province, trying to bring everybody to the table, and we look forward to an ever more energetic federal government to help resolve a 200-year-old land claim.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary? The member from Halton.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** To the AG: In court testimony, a woman described her terror on a night when she was alone with her child in her home and bandits broke into her home. She called the police; no one came. Criminals ransacked the house, electronics were smashed, upholstery shredded, mattresses were urinated on and china was smashed. “White trash,” “pigs” and “racists” was written on the walls, and those are just the words I can repeat in this chamber.

An Ontario family’s home is invaded and Dalton McGuinty does nothing for them. Why are you treating the lives of Ontario families like they are just another issue to be managed?

**Hon. Christopher Bentley:** Nobody—I won’t speak to the specifics—should be treated in any way, shape or form other than in a way we would all expect to be treated. Those in charge of effecting security in the area have a very challenging job and are working very hard at it. But I would come back to the point I made to the Leader of the Opposition: At the end of the day, it’s building relationships. The MPP for Brant, Dave Levac, has worked

very hard to help build those relationships. I would encourage the members opposite, rather than taking the opportunity today to ask the types of questions they do, to engage in a productive way to help build those relationships and to bring a more energetic federal government to the table because a 200-year-old land claim can only be solved by the federal government. We need action now.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Two years ago, I brought to this minister the case of a 74-year-old grandmother who was cut off from temporary care assistance. The minister told me that the ministry’s cuts were justified and that I was wrong and we were wrong for challenging her actions. After an exhausting two years, the Social Benefits Tribunal has issued its decision. It is this minister who is wrong, wrong and wrong.

Will the minister finally take responsibility for her actions and reinstate temporary care assistance to all—I repeat, all—grandparents who have been wrongfully cut off?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** First of all, I take exception to what the member just said. Temporary care assistance is a benefit that is owed to those who qualify, including the grandparents. This member opposite wants us to believe that it’s only grandparents who are entitled to it. No, there are other people also. There are specific rules around this benefit and those are applied by the municipality—the director of Ontario Works in each municipality. When people are not receiving these benefits there is an appeal process, and I encourage people to go to the appeal process after they have spoken with those administrators in each of the municipalities.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Once again, the minister is putting words in my mouth. The minister still doesn’t get it. Her ministry directives are wrong. There are choices here. The minister can let each grandparent go through a two-year tribunal process, costing their families extreme emotional and financial stress and unnecessary waste of tax dollars, or she could make a promise to these families, to CARP, to Pro Bono Law Ontario and to all Ontarians.

Will this minister introduce regulatory changes that reflect a large and liberal interpretation to ensure that temporary care assistance is equally delivered across Ontario in accordance with the original intent and the law of this province?

1110

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** First of all, I don’t think that the member is right, because if I look at my stats, in 2003-04, there were 300,000 cases of temporary care assistance in our caseload, and in 2008-09, it’s over 4,000 cases. I think that the program has been applied very fairly. Again, if grandparents and those who believe they qualify are not receiving benefits or their benefits have been stopped, I encourage them to appeal after they have spoken to the administrator of the program in each of the municipalities.



## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** My question is for the Minister of Government Services. As Ontario's economy recovers, news of job losses is increasingly displaced by news of job gains and job creation measures assisted or implemented by the province of Ontario. But the jobs that concern so many young Ontarians are those that assist the students preparing for a career in the 21st century. As winter runs out of its icy breath, students turn their thoughts to how to find summer employment while they pursue their education and training for a life in the trades, the professions or in other work. Summer jobs are a growing part of their talk and their activity.

Minister, what initiatives and programs has Ontario implemented to help more youth find summer work in their communities?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar:** I want to thank my colleague from Mississauga–Streetsville for asking this question and for his interest in the summer experience program. Actually, this is a very important program for our students. The provincial government provides \$10 million in base funding, and we also add \$3 million from the federal stimulus program to this. It provides opportunities to about 5,000-plus students to gain some experience and gain valuable transferable skills which will be very valuable to them in the future as well. We are providing almost 5,000-plus students the opportunity to work with the government and gain good experience under this program. These are tough economic times, and it is our duty to make sure that our students gain valuable experience and at the same time have the opportunity to earn some money as well.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Some 70% of the jobs in this decade require post-secondary training, and all of the assistance Ontario can offer youth as they prepare to contribute to their families, to their communities, to their province and to their country is even more valuable. Young people need to know that these programs are available, what they offer and where the summer opportunities can be found. The experience program that you have described, Minister, is what many students have asked me about in their classrooms.

Would the minister share some specific industries and opportunities currently available to Ontario's young people looking to gain valuable experience in the Ontario public service?

**Hon. Harinder S. Takhar:** Summer jobs are available in business, critical government activities and a variety of programs like recreation, culture, fish and wildlife, travel and tourism, laboratory research, justice administration and law enforcement.

These programs start in May and last six to eight weeks. They will be advertised starting March, and there are staggered dates for the students to start. As I said before, these opportunities provide students with work experience and transferable skills.

There are additional programs that we also offer through the government. There's the Ontario internship

program, aboriginal youth work exchange program and the OPS learn and work program.

Most of the details about these programs actually can be found on the Ontario government website. I just want to quote that website so that students have the opportunity to go to that website—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

## GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is for the Acting Premier today. Why didn't you protect the tax dollars that you handed over to Samsung from being funnelled into full-page, partisan ads in the Toronto Star?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** What I can say is that the investment that has been made by the people of Ontario with Samsung will create 16,000 jobs in the province of Ontario. I think that's very important to families who will benefit from that investment, who will gain employment with that company.

This is a direct result of the Green Energy Act that we've passed in the province of Ontario. It has been recognized around the world that this is the jurisdiction to invest in with respect to green technology. Samsung has partnered with us to move that forward. We're very delighted with that, and we're particularly delighted because 16,000 Ontarians will gain employment from this investment.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Their promise to create jobs holds up as well as their vow to end political partisan advertising with our dime.

Last week, Dalton McGuinty was caught red-handed taking money from Ontario families and giving it to his own Liberal family for partisan HST ads. Now the Liberals are at it again with a full-page ad that Samsung placed in the Toronto Star, after they cut the foreign company a multi-billion-dollar sweetheart deal.

When the Liberals were in opposition, they said they would make it illegal to use public money to create a partisan impression of the government. In fact, Dalton McGuinty said, "Partisan government advertising is a disease, and I have the cure." So I have a question for you, Acting Premier: Why would you say you would stop partisan ads when you had no intention of doing so?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Well, we did. I know that the honourable member was not in this Legislature when her party was in government. She would have then seen first-hand what partisan government advertising is all about. I know my colleague from St. Catharines who sits next to me even has some examples in his desk of calendars that were put out with members' pictures. There were ads in newspapers. There was a lot of taxpayer money spent by the former government for partisan ads.

When we came to government, we said that was unacceptable. Taxpayers did not appreciate seeing their dollars spent that way, and we stopped that practice. It is

something that we continue to be committed to adhering to. We go to the Integrity Commissioner to ensure—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### MUNICIPAL FINANCES

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Acting Premier. You'll know that municipal leaders from across Ontario are meeting now at the Ontario Good Roads Association. We know that those municipalities are stretched to the limit when it comes to the amount of funding they have to run their own municipalities. Are you prepared today or some time over the next couple of days to give some good news to those municipal leaders and to say that the Ontario municipal partnership fund will not be reduced next year?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** I do look forward to an opportunity to meet with municipalities from my riding and from ridings right across Ontario at the ROMA/Ontario Good Roads Association conference, and they do come with very important issues.

What I have heard from municipal leaders since we've been on this side of the House is that they very much appreciate the investments we have made and the partnerships we have forged. We are known as the government that has uploaded. There was another government that was known as the government that downloaded; we are the government that has uploaded. Municipalities very much appreciate that we have uploaded Ontario drug benefit and ODSP costs. They very much appreciate that we are now paying fully 50% of ambulance costs in municipalities. We have now committed and are paying 75% of the cost of health units for municipalities. We have a very strong partnership with municipalities—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

1120

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Minister, it's quite interesting because municipalities, quite frankly, are spitting mad that the OMPF is going to be reduced next year. For the community of Opasatika alone, they're saying that if you go ahead with the reduction that you're planning, they're going to give you the keys to the municipality. In the case of the town of Hearst, they're saying that with the hit that they take, they can't sustain.

They're not happy with you, Minister; they're upset, and they're looking for this government to do what's right. So I ask again: Is this government prepared to review its decision not to reduce the OMPF next year?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Since we've been in government, we have developed a very positive relationship with our municipal partners. In fact, many of my colleagues are there right now, as we speak, because we respect and value—we have rural municipalities in the city today, for the beginning of this week, and because we value so much what they have to say to us, we are there, listening to their issues.

It is because of that relationship that we have uploaded the hundreds of millions of dollars of costs off the shoulders of municipalities. We have done that because we have gone to ROMA and OGRA, we have listened to what they've said to us, and we've acted.

What I can say is that we will continue that partnership with our rural municipalities, and we will continue to work to ensure that they have the resources they need to provide the services that are so very important to the people in their communities.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Minister, several constituents have approached me regarding what the government has done for the developmental services sector. I understand that we are currently going through difficult economic times. However, we cannot forget about those Ontarians who need our help.

Would the minister tell us what this government has done to date and how it will continue to support the ongoing needs of the developmental services sector?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I'd like to thank the member from London–Fanshawe for his great work when he was my parliamentary assistant and worked on that file.

Our government has made significant progress in making Ontario's communities inclusive for people with developmental disabilities. We have invested over \$500 million in developmental services since we took office. We know we still have to do more, but we are proud of our accomplishments to date.

This government passed new developmental services legislation that will allow us to make some major improvements to the developmental services system. Furthermore, Ontario's last three institutions for adults with developmental disabilities were closed, moving nearly 1,000 facility residents to their homes in order to live and participate in their communities.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** Recently, I have heard concerns regarding the proposed LGIC regulation as a part of the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008, and whether or not direct funding could be used to access residential supports. Would the minister please address this issue so I can inform my constituents about the government's action in this area?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** This is a great question. Our legislation will help people with a developmental disability live more independently, have choice, and help Ontario build a more modern, fair and sustainable developmental services system. The legislation includes direct funding as an option for meeting individuals' support needs, including activities of daily living, community services, caregiver respite and person-directed service and support.

While an individual who receives direct funding cannot use it to purchase a space in a ministry-funded residential setting like a group home, their direct funding could be used to create individualized living and supported arrangements with the families, friends and the community in which they live.

We have made tremendous progress in making Ontario's communities inclusive for people with developmental disabilities—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### DARLINGTON NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** My question is to the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure. Minister, the Society of Energy Professionals said last week that Ontario must get on with the job of building new units at the Darlington generating station. Your current plan is to run the existing reactors at Pickering only until 2020. Rod Sheppard, president of the society, said, "If Pickering only operates to 2020, then something must be done very, very quickly to get" on with new construction. Mr. Sheppard said that the province has wasted time dithering on the decision.

Minister, do you agree with Mr. Sheppard? And what is your plan?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** No, of course I don't. The member knows full well that it is our intention to move forward with the new build. He knows that we've been through a very thorough procurement process. He knows that we're trying to get the best deal for Ontarians, and I think he and all Ontarians would expect nothing less from us than to ensure we get the best possible deal.

This is an important decision; we are going to make sure we get it right. Our intention is certainly to move forward with the new build. We're in discussions right now with AECL and the federal government, and if the minister has an ear with the federal government perhaps he can utilize those contacts as well.

We want to make sure that we do get the best deal for Ontario. We want to make sure that AECL—as the federal government, in the middle of this procurement process, put them up for restructuring, we want to make sure that their future is solidified as well as we move forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Minister, after 2011, we won't be dithering as you are today. This is the number one issue perhaps in Ontario, not just in Durham region.

The new capacity at Darlington will create over 5,000 jobs and even add a reliability factor to the electricity grid that's missing today. Minister, your government did not hesitate to sign a \$7-billion deal with Samsung, and you're not giving Ontario's domestic energy producers the same consideration as your Korean partners.

Minister, when will you come clean with the people of Ontario that nuclear is on and you're going to get on with the new build at Darlington?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Talk about trying to have it both ways—16,000 new green jobs in this province through the Samsung initiative is not good for Ontario, but the investments in nuclear are something totally different.

We are investing in nuclear. We'd think the member would be up commending us for the decision to move forward to the next stage in the refurbishment, which is going to create thousands of jobs in his area of Durham. When we look at the refurbishment of Darlington and the extension of life for Pickering, that's good news for his community. But no, he doesn't get up and talk about that; he tries to talk about something completely different.

You may not care about those 16,000 new green jobs and green energy; you may not understand the need to invest in the new economy; but we do, and that's good news for Ontarians; that's good news for those who are looking for work; that's good news for—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Acting Premier. On Saturday, I was in Brockville, and everyone I met said that they feel this government takes them for granted. One of them was a gentleman named Ron Stewart. He said that the Liberals' unfair HST will force him to lay off from his landscaping and property management business. My question is this: Why is the government moving ahead with this unfair tax scheme without listening to people like Ron?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** To the Minister of Revenue.

**Hon. John Wilkinson:** Thank you for the question. I was just in Leeds-Grenville on Friday, I say to the leader of the third party, and I had an opportunity to meet with many business leaders, who were delighted to hear that under our tax reform, of course, they will be able now for the first time to retain the provincial sales tax, lowering their cost of business. That was very warmly received.

I had an opportunity to speak to the people in Leeds-Grenville, and I said to them, "The question is"—as we had the St. Lawrence as a backdrop—"are we going to have jobs on the other side of the river or on this side of the river?" The most important thing in that by-election is that we have a government that is committed to making sure there are more jobs on our side of the St. Lawrence River. That's why we're moving ahead with our tax reform, because it is cutting taxes for people, some \$10 billion over the next three years, and cutting taxes for business, some \$5 billion over the next three years. That is good news, and it means there will be—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The people of Leeds-Grenville have seen more than their fair share of layoffs already, like 275 jobs at Shorewood Packaging and 200 jobs at Invista. Many families are struggling to get by to this day. McGuinty's new tax might help Bay Street, but

small business owners like Ron are going to get hit, and there is no doubt about it. He's going to have to cut staff as a result. Those are his words, not mine.

1130

Can the Acting Premier explain how it can be good for the region's economy for small businesses like Ron's to be hit by the HST and have to lay off workers when they're already suffering huge job losses in that region?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Minister?

**Hon. John Wilkinson:** There could be nothing further from the truth. I say to the member of the third party that it is important in this debate that we talk about the facts. The reality is that this is something the small business community in this province has been asking for for some five years.

When I had an opportunity to mainstreet in Brockville and I talked to companies like Kinda Electronics and I went to a florist shop and to a restaurant, every one of them was so pleased to understand that, for the first time, they will be able to retain in their business the cost of the PST, allowing them to be more competitive, to be able to hire more people, the ability to reflect that in their price so that they are more competitive. For Ontario to have jobs in the 21st century, we have to accept the fact that we have to be more competitive, not less competitive.

I say to the member opposite that when I had an opportunity to meet with those people and say to people, "Go to [www.Ontario.ca/taxchange](http://www.Ontario.ca/taxchange) and you will find the information"—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** My question is for the Minister of Consumer Services. We are now into the early part of a new year, and many people want to start the new year off right. Some have made resolutions. Resolutions to eat more nutritious food and lose weight are probably the most popular ones for many Ontarians.

When it comes to losing weight, a regular exercise program is a great way to stay in shape, and for a lot of people, joining a fitness club is a way to stay focused and disciplined. Some constituents in my riding have told me that they would like to join a fitness club but are concerned about the commitments involved. Can the minister advise the House what the Ontario government is doing to ensure consumers are protected when signing up at a fitness club this year?

**Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis:** Thank you to the member for Oak Ridges–Markham, who is a great advocate for consumer protection in her riding. She does a great job.

I'm delighted to tell all members of this House that at the Ministry of Consumer Services, we are here to help. In fact, the ministry provides advice and assistance on over 55,000 inquiries and complaints each and every year.

Here are some tips we share with Ontario consumers when it comes to registering at a fitness club: First, re-

member that you have 10 days to cancel your contract. Second, pay your membership on a monthly basis. In Ontario, lifetime memberships are illegal. Lastly, read the fine print and ask as many questions as you can.

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** Again, this question is for the Minister of Consumer Services. I'm glad that the minister, through her ministry, is making consumers aware of their rights when entering into an agreement with a fitness club. That being said, there can be some bad apples out there. I've spoken to a few constituents in my riding who have had specific complaints.

Many in my very diverse riding of Oak Ridges–Markham do not have English as their first language. They are concerned about entering into long-term agreements. I would like to ask the minister: What is she doing to educate consumers on this subject?

**Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis:** Complaints about fitness clubs are among the top 10 complaints each and every year. I am pleased that my ministry has worked hard to ensure that consumers know their rights. Last year, the number of complaints that we received about fitness clubs dropped by 16%.

I believe that consumer education and outreach are central to our prevention efforts. Every year we do a number of things, including producing a Smart Consumer calendar in several languages. We also deliver approximately 100 public education and community events. As well, we distribute consumer-protection-focused articles in newspapers all across Ontario in several different languages.

For more information, I would recommend that anyone go onto our website, the Ministry of Consumer Services, at [ontario.ca/](http://ontario.ca/)—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### NUCLEAR ENERGY

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is for the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure. Minister, in 2006—that's right; four years ago—your predecessor, Dwight Duncan, announced with some fanfare that Ontario would be building new nuclear reactors. Since that big announcement, you've been signing contracts high, wide and handsome at premium prices for energy supply based on politics and intermittency. When might construction begin on these reactors so that Ontario has a secure supply of dependable baseload energy?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'm delighted to respond to that question by saying that our government still is very much committed to moving forward on the new nuclear build. Recently, we've committed to moving forward in supporting Ontario Power Generation in a very significant refurbishment project that's very important in terms of moving forward with our modernization of our nuclear units.

We recognize the need to move forward with the new build as well. We're in discussions with AECL. The member may want us to just take any price that's out

there without worrying about what is in the best interests of Ontarians. That's not the way we do business on this side of the House. We're here to get the best possible deal for the people of Ontario. We will do whatever we need to do to get that deal. We continue to be in discussions with AECL, and I'm confident that we will move forward with this purchase.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The minister should know that if you want to move forward, you've got to get the transmission out of either park, neutral or lost.

Minister, we know that 3,000 megawatts of baseload energy will be leaving the system with the shutdown of Pickering by 2020. We also know that six more units at Bruce and the four existing units at Darlington will have to be taken out of service for refurbishment. While you've waited, waffled and wasted time, the clock has not stopped ticking. The success of our economy is directly related to the security of our energy supply. Thousands and thousands of jobs are at stake. You cannot shirk your responsibilities any longer.

I ask the minister: When will a real decision be made, and when will construction begin on new nuclear builds in this province?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** It's really difficult to sit back and listen to the party opposite, who barely planned energy supply to get them through their term, let alone into future generations. Their record speaks for itself. We're taking tough decisions today to ensure not only that we plan beyond our term in office; we are planning well into the future. We are looking forward 20, 30 years with the decisions we've made. We're supporting Ontario Power Generation, as they move forward with their refurbishment plan in Darlington. That's talking about supplying power 20, 30 years down the road.

We're looking forward to moving forward with the new nuclear build. That is a decision that, if his government were in office, they'd be putting off until after the next election. We're making tough decisions today, but we're doing it in the interests of Ontarians. We're going to get the best possible—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### PENSION PLANS

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** My question is for the Acting Premier. Just as a by-election was called in an Ottawa riding where thousands of ex-Nortel workers live, the McGuinty Liberals suddenly found \$200 million to put into the underfunded Nortel pension plan.

My question is this: Will the McGuinty government show the same concern for the 5,000 retirees and 2,500 active workers of AbitibiBowater who learned last summer that the AbitibiBowater pension plan is underfunded by some 25%?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** The honourable member would know that we have heard from and listened very carefully to the retired pensioners from Nortel. They

reminded us of the legislation that we have in place in the province of Ontario. I would also say that Ontario is the only province in Canada that has a pension benefits guarantee fund. The announcement that was made with respect to the Nortel pensioners confirms for them and for the people of Ontario that, through that pension fund, we will support their retired workers to ensure that they are able to receive at least \$1,000 per month. That is what the fund has guaranteed. The honourable member would know that. The honourable member was actually in government when this fund was in place as well.

So I believe that the announcement of which the member speaks very clearly demonstrates that we—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

1140

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** What the thousands of workers in Thunder Bay, Kenora, Fort Frances, Iroquois Falls and Thorold heard is that the government has \$200 million for the underfunded Nortel pension plan. Many of these workers have worked for AbitibiBowater for 30 or 40 years and have contributed to their pension plan. They were told that their pension plan is a sacred trust beyond financial or political manipulation. So their question is this: Will the McGuinty Liberals, who suddenly found \$200 million for the Nortel pension plan, show the same concern for these workers at AbitibiBowater? Or do Liberals only show concern for workers' pension plans when a by-election is called in a Liberal riding?

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** Our government takes very seriously the issues of pensioners, particularly those who are very concerned about the viability of their plans going forward. They are difficult times, and that is why we believe there needs to be a national response. It's certainly not just companies in Ontario that are facing these worries, and that is why our Premier has looked to engage the Prime Minister as well. We believe there needs to be a national response. Many of the companies are companies that have operations not just in Ontario but in other provinces.

Our hand is out there. We want to work with our federal partner because the concerns that the honourable member has identified are very real, they're very important, and we do want to ensure to the best extent possible that the well-being—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question?

#### AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

**Mr. Bruce Crozier:** My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, my constituents understand that healthy eating includes eating fresh, local foods. Foods produced by Ontario farmers are among the finest, safest and best quality in the world. Buying Ontario meat, produce, eggs and dairy products supports Ontario's rural communities and their economies, and helps our farmers get a fair price for their hard work.

Our government took a major leap forward in supporting this movement when it launched a multi-year Pick Ontario Freshness strategy in 2008.

Minister, buying Ontario food also helps to protect the environment, as the food has to travel fewer kilometres, therefore reducing the use of fuel and cutting down on greenhouse gas emissions.

Would the minister please share with this House what our government is doing to promote local foods and our Pick Ontario Freshness strategy?

**Hon. Carol Mitchell:** I want to thank the member for the question. This is such an important question for our ag community, for our rural communities.

The investment that we have made in the Pick Ontario Freshness strategy has made a difference in our communities. When you think about it collectively, why do people want to buy Ontario products? They know they're safe, they know they help our ag community, they know they're good for the environment, they know they're good for their health, and they know they're good for their pocketbook.

We have brought forward a strategy that is going to get the markets open even more. We have had great successes. The brand is recognized and the people want to see more of it. This side of the House is committed to moving forward our strategy in an even bigger way.

I know that I'll have another opportunity to speak to this and we can add even more information.

This strategy is working. It's what the people want, and it's helping our rural communities and our ag community simultaneously.

#### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to correct the answer that I gave to the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. Apparently, I put too many zeros when I answered my question. The monthly TCA caseload in 2003-04 was around 3,000 and not 300,000.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1145 to 1300.*

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### ERIC CZAPNIK

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." That's John 15:13.

I am humbled and honoured to stand with my friend the member from Ottawa Centre to pay tribute to a fallen police officer, Constable Eric Czapnik. Eric was the oldest police recruit in the history of the Ottawa Police

Service, but it was as if he was destined to be a police officer and serve our tightly knit community.

Born in Warsaw, Constable Czapnik immigrated to Canada in 1990. As Police Chief Vern White said, he was everything we could have asked of a new Canadian.

In Ottawa, Eric worked at Johnson's Business Interiors, then followed the footsteps of his father, a 30-year police officer in Poland. In 2007, Eric was assigned to the East Division in Ottawa.

Now he is among Canada's fallen police officers. His loss still haunts us in Ottawa. Over 8,000 people attended his funeral. Schoolchildren lined the streets, reminiscent of the Highway of Heroes. Constable Czapnik is remembered in homes across the national capital. We still think of him and his family. We cherish his service, and we pray for his eternal peace.

The Policeman's Prayer eloquently says:

When I start my tour of duty, God,

Wherever crime may be,

As I walk the darkened streets alone,

Let me be close to thee.

On behalf of Tim Hudak and the official opposition, I offer our heartfelt condolences to the Czapnik family, particularly to Eric's wife, Anna, and his four children.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will remember him.

##### ERIC CZAPNIK

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** It is with great sadness that I rise today in the House, along with my colleague from Nepean–Carleton, to honour the ultimate sacrifice that was paid by Constable Eric Czapnik. Constable Czapnik was lost in the line of duty this past December while working the job that he truly loved for the people of Ottawa.

Constable Czapnik came to the Ottawa Police Service nearly three years ago, as the oldest recruit in the police force's history. Hired at the age of 42 without hesitation, his superiors stated that he was a community-minded individual who truly represented the Ottawa Police Service in a distinguished way.

Constable Czapnik was born in Warsaw and eventually immigrated to Canada. Becoming an Ottawa police officer was a dream that followed the footsteps of his father, whom for 30 years Constable Czapnik had looked up to as a police officer in Poland. Friends, relatives and colleagues all talked about how friendly, well-liked and jovial Constable Czapnik was, how much he loved being a police officer, how much he loved being in Canada, and how much he loved being these things in our city of Ottawa.

The last time an Ottawa police officer was killed in the line of duty was 27 years ago, yet whenever and wherever this type of tragedy strikes, we are reminded of the dangers that our men and women in uniform face—dangers they face on our behalf. Constable Czapnik is a true hero of our community and an inspiration for us all. He lived a life of service and represents a shining

example of the contribution that new Canadians make in our great society.

Our thoughts go out to his family and fellow officers of the Ottawa Police Service. He will be truly missed.

#### LOCAL DEMOCRACY WEEK

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** I'm pleased to share with the members of the Legislature today my experiences with Local Democracy Week, which was recently held here at Queen's Park.

Over 200 students attended with their teachers and participated in a day filled with activities which showcased the important role local politics play in the lives of youth.

By targeting a better understanding of politics and democracy in youth, the purpose of Local Democracy Week is (a) to help youth understand the impact of local politics on their daily lives, (b) to encourage deeper awareness and future use of the opportunities that exist to take part in political decision-making, and (c) to inspire youth to become active participants in civic decision-making by engaging them at an early age.

I was lucky enough to have a group from my own riding, from Father Leo J. Austin Catholic Secondary School, who participated in this event.

Students were able to hear from such speakers as Craig Kielburger and Michel Chikwanine from Free the Children. Their inspiring words set the stage for the political speed dating that followed. We spent an invigorating hour going from group to group of students, discussing political issues of their choice. I can tell you that it was most interesting and definitely mentally challenging.

Students were then taken on an enhanced tour of Queen's Park to see things and even sit in members' seats. I had a wonderful time sharing this experience with students. It was a memorable event at Queen's Park.

#### JIM ARNOLD

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It's a pleasure to rise in the Legislature today to recognize an outstanding member of the Oakville community. For more than 20 years, Jim Arnold has worked as a crossing guard for the town of Oakville, and for 18 of these years, Jim has stood outside St. Matthew's School, which is at the corner of Monks Passage and Nottingham Gate, helping children safely across the road.

Jim's dedication to his job is readily apparent. He knows every student's name and most of the parents as well. Jim is a local hero who is credited with saving the life of a boy who was almost hit by a van being driven, oddly enough, by a distracted driver.

Those are a couple of the reasons why the town of Oakville nominated Jim to be named Canada's Favourite Crossing Guard, an annual award presented by FedEx and Safe Kids Canada.

The award is designed to raise awareness of the important role crossing guards play in our community and how they prevent traffic injuries. Late last year, after supporting letters poured in from students and staff at St. Matthew's, Jim received word that he was one of the three awarded the title of Canada's Favourite Crossing Guard.

I'd like to congratulate Jim on his award and thank him for the dedication he brings to a job that many of us, and certainly many parents in our community, take for granted. After years of leading thousands of children across the road safely, the title of Canada's Favourite Crossing Guard is well deserved by a man like Jim Arnold.

#### CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I rise in the House today to alert members of how serious a problem is being faced by Ontario children's aid societies.

We all know, through our work in our own ridings, that the children's aids are collectively facing a deficit of almost \$55 billion. I understand that Ontario children's aid societies are going to get additional funding of \$26.9 million to help them survive the fiscal challenge—in fact, the Durham CAS's share is \$686,000.

The important part here—this is from our executive director, Wanda Secord, who says, “While this additional funding is a step in the right direction, we must emphasize that it is a band-aid solution.... This first step will merely delay some potentially devastating cuts, and it in no way begins to address the fundamental flaws in the funding framework that put us in this situation in the first place.”

I urge this government to look beyond short-term, temporary measures and address the real underlying framework problems. The government must ensure that not just Durham's children's aid but indeed all children's aids have the funding and resources they need to protect vulnerable children, families and youth.

Each member in the House should be standing up to protect the most vulnerable in their community. I am surprised and disappointed by the McGuinty government's lack of attention to this file.

1310

#### CHINESE NEW YEAR

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I'm pleased to rise to give a special recognition to the many members of Toronto's Chinese communities in celebration of the Year of the Tiger. Yesterday, we had a big celebration at Central Commerce, in my riding of Trinity-Spadina, with performers from the riding and from across Toronto. It was a huge event, with multiple generations of Chinese and non-Chinese Canadians alike coming together for a common goal: to build friendship, share traditions and pay respect to the many people who make up our country.

I've been having Chinese lunar new year celebrations in my riding for a number of years now. This year, what struck me was how these celebrations have become a vital part of not just Chinese culture but Canadian culture.

I want to take a minute to name and give thanks to the artists, singers and dancers who performed yesterday.

Chinese waist drum dancers: Lin Wang, Nancy Xiao, Lisa Goo, Brenda Bin Su, Cindy Cubin Goo, Katie Wang, Linn Song and Lisa Zhang.

There was a vocal quartet called Geese from the North: Art Shen, James Wu, David Chen and Liping Cao.

There were other performers as well: musician Yuan Wang; singers Jing Hue Zhao and Man Fen Shi; soloists Liping Cao and Michelle Lu—Michelle was amazing, by the way; flute player Mr. Zhang; and the dancers from St. Stephen's Community House.

Happy Year of the Tiger.

#### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Canada and the US have signed an important procurement agreement that is good news for Ontario. Our ability to bid on American and international products is vital to our economy. We rely heavily on accessing US markets to sell our goods and services. In fact, as an export-driven jurisdiction, most of our exports are shipped to the United States. Now, as a result of this agreement, we will have even greater access to US markets.

This agreement grants Canadian companies a waiver from buy-American restrictions. Ontario companies will gain access to approximately US\$65 billion worth of contracts. These opportunities will include a wide range of state and local projects, including those from the Departments of Energy and Housing, Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency. Being able to access these contracts will help strengthen Ontario's business, allowing them to expand their work, create more jobs and become more competitive.

That's why our government supports this procurement agreement. We know how important it is for our economy and our Ontario businesses. This agreement is a great opportunity for Ontario that will make our province even stronger and more prosperous.

#### FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** As you know, Speaker, our government is committed to helping Ontario students succeed in school and reach their aspirations, while also ensuring Ontario's long-term economic advantage by building a strong workforce.

To help accomplish this, the McGuinty government is starting full-day learning for up to 35,000 four- and five-year-olds in almost 600 schools across Ontario starting this September. Full-day kindergarten will better prepare our students for grade 1, giving them a better chance at finishing high school, continuing on to post-secondary

education and, of course, finding worthy and good employment later.

This program will start this September for up to 35,000 students in almost 1,400 classes across the province. We will continue to expand that enrolment, which is voluntary, until the program can be fully phased in for up to 240,000 four- and five-year-olds by 2015-16.

Parents will be able to enrol their four- and five-year-olds in an extended daycare program as well.

Programs like full-day kindergarten, as you know, are absolutely essential if we are going to build the workforce we need to compete in the new economy. By giving our kids an early start, we are setting them on the road to success and building a stronger Ontario.

Within my own riding of Etobicoke North, I can tell you that there's extraordinary excitement and anticipation for early engagement of our children.

#### LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORKS

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** I rise today to speak about our local health integration networks.

Conservative members have made some confusing claims regarding the LHINs. For example, they have said that the LHINs received an exemption to the ban on sole-source contracts. This is not true. We found that the rules we inherited from the previous Conservative government regarding these contracts were inadequate, so we made them stronger. Sole-source consulting contracts are no longer permitted under our new rules.

But the members opposite didn't seem to understand that we strengthened government spending rules last year when they referred to the contract for Barry Monaghan. I would like to remind them that the rules governing Mr. Monaghan's contracts were set by the previous Conservative government. We have now corrected those policies to ensure that only the highest standards are followed.

There's one more perplexing claim I would like to set straight: The appointments to the LHINs are not based on donations to the Liberal Party. This is absolutely false, and nothing makes the point more clearly than the case of Mr. Monaghan. His donation history, as documented by Elections Ontario, shows that he once donated to a former Conservative MPP.

I would encourage my colleagues opposite to stop attacking the good people who serve Ontario's LHINs and start speaking out in support of our public health care system.

#### USE OF MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I would remind all the members that when delivering their members' statements, it is to be a members' statement, and the statements should not be used as an opportunity to attack another member or another party for the point of view that they may wish to put across. I would just remind all members of that.



The member from Newmarket–Aurora on a point of order.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Speaker, my point of order was going to be precisely the point that you've made, and I thank you for making it. Members' statements have always been for the purpose of members making statements on matters that relate to their riding and matters of importance province-wide. To have a member stand in the House and to essentially make a statement on behalf of a ministry relating to government business and implicate in that statement a political party or other members in this House is wrong and out of order.

I thank you for drawing the member from Mississauga South's attention to that, and, I trust, all members of the government who would be tempted to read a statement clearly prepared by someone else who wanted to make a political point in this House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I thank the honourable member, and I have ruled on his point.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** I beg leave to present a report on the Ontario Clean Water Agency from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Sterling presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations.

Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** I wish to start the debate on this particular matter.

This report on the Ontario Clean Water Agency refers to the December 2008 annual report of the Auditor General. The Standing Committee on Public Accounts held hearings on this report in April 2009, and we completed our work with regard to preparing the report in the fall of this year. The committee made five major recommendations.

I might add that the committee was quite supportive of OCWA, the Ontario Clean Water Agency, which takes care of many of the water and sewage systems, particularly in our small communities where they do not have the expertise or the number of households to justify running them on their own.

One of the major recommendations the committee made, which would go into the future and would enhance the work of all those in the province of Ontario who are engaged in providing us with clean water and taking care of our sewage, was a recommendation that the ministry make data on discharge, bypass and overflow exceedances available on its website. The ministry should provide a report specifying how this data will be measured, in part or in total, and how long it will take to post the data on the ministry website.

It's felt by the committee that if this information became public, then there would be much less chance of these exceedances occurring if everybody in the province knows about them in a timely manner.

With that, I will adjourn the debate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

1320

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** I beg leave to present a report on adult institutional services from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** I will open the debate by stating that the auditor's report of December 2008 contained a section—section 3.02—reporting on our adult institutional services. The committee and the public found that there were some alarming parts to that.

We heard from the ministry in March 2009, and are now presenting our report. The committee made 13 recommendations with regard to our adult services institutions. I want to outline three of those 13 recommendations.

One of them dealt with measures to discourage inmates from gaming the present system that we have. Evidently, inmates are declining to be transferred from facilities in Toronto to other facilities in order to secure two-for-one or three-for-one reductions in their sentences. We want the ministry to indicate to the committee how to discourage this practice.

As well, the committee wishes to have random alcohol and drug testing of inmates, and the ministry is to report to the committee as to whether it is prepared to make a regulation to authorize random alcohol and drug testing of inmates in Ontario, as is practised in other Canadian jurisdictions. If so, the ministry should indicate when it might authorize this.

As well, another very significant problem we have in our institutions is correctional officer absenteeism. I believe that sick days for each correctional officer now exceed 27 or 28. Therefore, we recommended that the ministry indicate to the committee the management targets and time frames of the adult institutional services division for reducing the average number of correctional officer sick days. The ministry is also asked to report this information by each institution, including the actions taken to improve working conditions at facilities with high levels of absenteeism.

These are three of the 13 recommendations that the committee made to the ministry. The committee believes that if the ministry takes action, we will have a better justice system and our inmates will be treated in a more consistent manner. Therefore, we recommend that all members of the Legislature read and support this report.

We look forward to seeing the responses of the ministry to this.

With that, I will adjourn the debate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Sterling has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### ESSENTIAL PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES ACT, 2010 LOI DE 2010 SUR LES SERVICES DE TRANSPORT EN COMMUN ESSENTIELS

Mr. Caplan moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 246, An Act to resolve public transit services labour disputes without strikes or lock-outs / *Projet de loi 246, Loi visant à régler sans grève ni lock-out les conflits de travail au sein des services de transport en commun.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say “aye.”

All those opposed will say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1324 to 1329.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Caplan has moved that leave be given to introduce a bill entitled An Act to resolve public transit services labour disputes without strikes or lockouts and that it now be read for the first time.

All those in favour will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Gerretsen, John	Moridi, Reza
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoskins, Eric	Munro, Julia
Bentley, Christopher	Jaczek, Helena	Naqvi, Yasir
Caplan, David	Jeffrey, Linda	O'Toole, John
Chudleigh, Ted	Johnson, Rick	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Colle, Mike	Kular, Kuldip	Qaadri, Shafiq
Crozier, Bruce	Leal, Jeff	Ramal, Khalil
Delaney, Bob	Mangat, Amrit	Ruprecht, Tony
Dickson, Joe	Martiniuk, Gerry	Shurman, Peter
Dombrowsky, Leona	McMeekin, Ted	Smith, Monique
Dunlop, Garfield	McNeely, Phil	Sousa, Charles
Elliott, Christine	Meilleur, Madeleine	Van Bommel, Maria
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Miller, Norm	Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** All those opposed?

#### Nays

Bisson, Gilles	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Gélinas, France	Marchese, Rosario	
Hampton, Howard	Miller, Paul	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 39; the nays are 7.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I declare the motion carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. David Caplan:** Whether one is a transit user or not, it is very vital to the health and economic well-being of our city and our province.

Since 1974, the TTC has had nine strikes and work-to-rule campaigns, including an illegal walkout in 2006, a two-day strike in 1999 and an eight-day job action in 1991.

If enacted, the Essential Public Transit Services Act will prohibit strikes and lockouts in connection with labour disputes between the Toronto Transit Commission and its employees, and will provide a means to resolve the disputes by arbitration.

This bill will also authorize the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations extending this regime to any other public transit service.

Quite frankly, enough is enough. Citizens all over the city have been left stranded too many times. It's time to regain their trust. I believe that making public transit services like the TTC an essential service will do just that. Reliable public transit services are fundamental to our city and our province as a whole.

### ZERO WASTE DAY ACT, 2010

#### LOI DE 2010 SUR LA JOURNÉE “ZÉRO DÉCHET”

Mr. Kular moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 247, An Act to proclaim Zero Waste Day / *Projet de loi 247, Loi proclamant la Journée “zéro déchet”.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Kuldip Kular:** This bill, if enacted, proclaims the Wednesday of the third week of October each year as Zero Waste Day. The concept of zero waste is to reduce the impact of our everyday lives on the natural environment as much as is humanly possible through conservation and waste reduction.

In declaring Zero Waste Day during Waste Reduction Week, Ontario would be helping to encourage students, employees and each citizen to reduce the waste created through their everyday activities for just one day. This one day of action would illustrate the power we have as individuals and our collective power as a society to protect our natural environment from unnecessary pollution.

## PETITIONS

### TAXATION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It is a pleasure to present petitions on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham. I have a number of varied topics here. I'll just read this first one here; it reads as follows:

“Whereas the proposed harmonization of the Ontario retail sales tax (RST) with the federal GST has the potential to increase costs to many small businesses and their customers; and

“Whereas these added costs would have a devastating impact in difficult economic times, and organizations such as the Ontario Home Builders’ Association have estimated harmonization would add \$15,000 in new taxes to the price of a new Ontario home;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, reject the harmonization of the GST and the RST unless there are exemptions to offset the adverse impacts of harmonization, so that the outcome will be a reduction in red tape, not higher taxes.”

I’m pleased to sign in support and present this to one of the new pages, Jordan.

#### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It’s my pleasure to present this petition from the people of Algoma–Manitoulin, adding their voices to 12,600 people. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the Ontario government is making positron emission tomography, PET scanning, a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients ... and

“Whereas by October 2009, insured PET scans will be performed in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

“Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario, with the Sudbury Regional Hospital, its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through the Sudbury Regional Hospital, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of northeastern Ontario.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the clerks’ table with page Nevan.

#### DOCTOR SHORTAGE

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Again the people of Durham have spoken up, and I have more petitions here. They read as follows:

“Whereas the McGuinty government is conducting a review of the province’s underserved area program (UAP) that may result in numerous communities across rural and small-town Ontario losing financial incentives to recruit and retain much-needed doctors; and

“Whereas financial incentives to attract and keep doctors are essential to providing quality front-line health care services, particularly in small communities” like Cambridge; and

“Whereas people across Ontario have been forced to pay Dalton McGuinty’s now-forgotten health tax since 2004, expecting health care services to be improved rather than cut; and

“Whereas taxpayers deserve good value for their hard-earned money that goes into health care, unlike the wasteful and abusive spending under the McGuinty Liberals’ watch at eHealth Ontario;

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

“That the McGuinty government not reduce or eliminate financial incentives rural communities and small towns need to attract and retain doctors” to their communities.

I’m pleased to sign and support this and present it to Christopher, one of the pages here.

#### IMPÔTS FONCIERS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J’ai une pétition qui nous vient d’un quartier de Sudbury et qui dit :

« Puisque 2009 est une année de réévaluation dans la province de l’Ontario; et

« Puisque les réévaluations seront appliquées graduellement au courant de quatre ans, de 2009 à 2012; et

« Puisque les valeurs imposables pour les valeurs actuelles recueillies dès le 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 2008 ont été obtenues au courant des années de biens immobiliers actifs; et

« Puisque le passage à la phase descendante du climat économique mondial a eu un effet sur le marché des biens immobiliers et, subséquemment, les valeurs imposables dans la province de l’Ontario;

« Nous, les soussignés, présentons la requête suivante à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

« Que le ministre des Finances pour la province de l’Ontario ramène les valeurs imposables à l’année de base du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier 2005. »

J’appuie cette pétition, j’y ajoute ma signature, et je la confie à la page, Sarah.

1340

#### POWER PLANT

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the province of Ontario, through the Ontario Energy Board, has selected a location for a gas-fired electrical generating power station within three kilometres of 16 schools and more than 11,000 homes; and

“Whereas the Oakville-Clarkson airshed is already one of the most polluted in Canada; and

“Whereas no independent environmental assessment”—no independent environmental assessment—“has been completed for this proposed building location; and

“Whereas Ontario has experienced a significant reduction in demand for electrical power” and we don’t even know if the power plant is needed; and

“Whereas a recent accident at a power plant in Connecticut demonstrated the dangers that nearby residents face;

“We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to immediately rescind the existing plan to build a power plant at or near the current planned location on lands owned by the Ford Motor Co. on Royal Windsor Drive in Oakville and initiate a complete review of area power needs and potential building sites, including environmental assessments and a realistic assessment of required danger zone buffer areas.”

I’m pleased to sign this petition.

#### TAXATION

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It’s my pleasure to present this petition from 60 people from the community of Foleyet. Foleyet is very tiny, so 60 people is a big majority of the residents. It reads as follows:

“Whereas Ontario has lost 171,000 jobs since October and over 300,000 manufacturing and resource sector jobs since 2004; and

“Whereas many families are facing the threat of layoffs or reduced hours; and

“Whereas, rather than introducing a plan to sustain jobs and put Ontario’s economy back on track, Dalton McGuinty and his government chose to slap an 8% tax on everyday purchases while giving profitable corporations a \$2-billion income tax cut;

“Be it resolved that” they petition “the Legislature to cancel the scheduled implementation of sales tax harmonization.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Christopher.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty said he wouldn’t raise taxes in the 2003 election, but in 2004 he brought in the health tax, the biggest tax hike in Ontario’s history; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty will increase taxes yet again with his new 13% combined sales tax, at a time when families and businesses can least afford it; and

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty’s new 13% sales tax will increase the cost of goods and services that families and businesses buy every day, such as: arena ice, soccer and baseball field rentals; gasoline; cellphone bills; home heating oil and electricity; gym fees; golf green fees; ski lift tickets; movie theatre and event admission fees; Internet services; boat rentals, fishing licences, charters and wood for the campfire; home renovations; and real estate transactions;

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

“That the Dalton McGuinty government wake up to Ontario’s current economic reality and stop raising taxes, once and for all, on Ontario’s hard-working families and businesses.”

I affix my name in full support.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** There being no further petitions, I just want to take this opportunity, on behalf of the member from Newmarket–Aurora, to welcome students from Huron Heights school in Newmarket and their teacher, Mr. Karl Hamid, to the Legislature today.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I move that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario calls on the federal government to invest in the future success of Ontarians and recognize that Canada’s success depends on a strong and competitive Ontario. Ontario calls on the federal government to support Ontarians in budget 2010 by:

—ensuring current and future transfer payments that support services Ontarians rely on are protected, even as the federal deficit is addressed;

—committing to the renewal of health care funding agreements before they expire and to the growth of health transfers at the real rate of health care expenditure;

—positioning Canada as a global leader on the environment by supporting Ontario’s burgeoning green economy through such things as a cap-and-trade program that will support jobs and investment in Ontario, and investing a fair share in Ontario’s clean energy initiatives;

—investing in our people and positioning them for good jobs by living up to the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement and ending the current shortchanging of new Canadians who come to Ontario;

—continuing to partner with Ontarians by strengthening investments in post-secondary education and training programs that build workers’ skills and knowledge for today and tomorrow; and

—providing stability to the thousands of Ontario families who rely on child care spaces created with federal funding by continuing to fund those quality child care spaces for Ontario children.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Ms. Smith has moved government notice of motion number 172. Debate?

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I rise today as the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs—and am very proud to do so in my first official capacity as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs—to speak to this resolution which is so very important to the people of Ontario.

I want to talk today about the road forward for our province and for our country. As we await the federal budget next week, and they continue to weigh what are tough choices in the 2010 budget and we continue to weigh what are tough choices for our government as we face our 2010 budget, this is an important opportunity to take stock of where we all stand.

The fact is that the horizon looks very different this year than it did last year. Last year was about here and now; it was about protecting jobs. We were urgently trying to do everything we could to protect our economy, our jobs, our hard-working families from the ravages of a brutal global economic storm.

I am proud to say that we worked in partnership with the federal government to create and protect jobs with unprecedented infrastructure stimulus investments and support for Ontario's auto sector. We also worked in partnership with our federal cousins to help enhance Ontario's future competitiveness with the harmonized sales tax. I think it's fair to say it was thanks to this strong partnership that we averted the most ominous projections. This was a significant achievement and it demonstrates just how effective our two governments can be when we put aside any differences and instead focus solely on doing what is best for Ontarians and Canadians.

But today is no time to be satisfied with past accomplishments. Today is no time to take comfort in the sense that the worst of the economic downturn is behind us, because today we face new challenges. Where last year we faced down the here and now, we must now resolve to do what it takes to confront the long-term challenges we all face together. The fact is that those unprecedented infrastructure investments, combined with a significant decrease in tax revenues, means that Ontario, just like the federal government, other provincial governments and, indeed, other governments all around the world, is facing a substantial long-term deficit.

There will be some who see this deficit as just too daunting, too big, too scary. Indeed, some in this chamber, in particular, have resorted to all manners of talk of doom and gloom. We do not see it that way. We do not recoil, pull back and hide under the covers. We do not think of all the things that the government should stop doing. Instead, we think of the things that the government must do.

There is no doubt that the deficit presents us with a significant challenge, as it does all levels of government, but Ontarians don't think that this is any reason to throw up our hands in despair. Ontarians know that this is the time to push forward with vision, passion and confidence that we can turn things around. This is the time to come up with new ideas, new solutions and new ways of doing things that will enable our great province and our great country to not merely go back to where we were before the economic storm blew through but to emerge reinvigorated with new goals, new aspirations and an even brighter future. Ontario has a plan to do just that, but we can't do it alone.

Just as we came together to confront the immediate challenge of the global economic downturn, so too do we need to come together with the federal government today to create good jobs and strengthen the things that Ontario families rely on over the long term. Because if one thing is for certain, it's that we can't go back to the way things were before the economic downturn. The reality is that change is upon us, and if we want Ontario and Canada to

remain strong, we must change too. The future success of all Ontarians and all Canadians depends on it. That's why our government has been working hard delivering new solutions. In the past year alone, we have launched a number of initiatives that are going to deliver results now and over the long term.

#### 1350

First off, as I mentioned earlier, we're working in partnership with the federal government to transition to the harmonized sales tax. That will increase our competitiveness by providing businesses with incentives to invest and create jobs. And today, this afternoon, in my riding in North Bay, we are hosting a federal and provincial Ministry of Revenue seminar for small and mid-sized businesses, to help our businesses come to grips with the changes before them and to help them through a stable and easy transition into the new HST, and I'm delighted that the Ministry of Revenue for the province and Revenue Canada representatives are both there to answer the questions of my small and mid-size businesses in North Bay. It's another indication of how both our levels of government are working together to make sure that this important initiative that means so much to the economy of Ontario is provided with enough information for the transition to take place in a very easy way for our employers across the province.

Secondly, we're putting Ontario ahead of the curve in the emerging green economy and attracting new investment, jobs and economic growth, while also protecting our environment, combatting climate change and creating a healthier future for generations to come. Again, a great example in my community of two small businesses that are taking off: one that's installing solar panels on homes in North Bay and another that is creating wind power initiatives around our region. Both are very excited about the government initiatives, about the Green Energy Act, and about all the investment and focus that we've put on climate change and on green energy here in Ontario. We are at the cutting edge, as the opposition knows but is too resentful to actually admit.

Third, we're implementing full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds, to give our kids the strongest possible start in school and create an even better-educated workforce so that Ontario enhances its competitiveness for generations to come. Madam Speaker, here again, as you know, all of the experts have indicated that early learning is so very, very critical to our children and to our future workforce.

I'm incredibly proud to be part of a government that's moving forward with four- and five-year-old all-day learning, because as I look at my niece who is seven and my nephew who is three, I just see what great human sponges they are and how much information they can take in, and I just think that this initiative is going to be so important for all of those young children across the province and for creating a workforce that is incredibly competitive in the world. We know that our strongest resource here in the province of Ontario and in Canada is our workforce, so what better way to invest in that

resource than to be providing four- and five-year-olds with full-day learning?

Finally, we're doing what it takes to provide the highest-quality public services like health care that our families rely on perhaps more than ever when times are tough.

We fully acknowledge that we are going to have to make some tough choices to put our fiscal house back in order, but we will never fail to deliver on the things that our families count on. We will not use the deficit as a reason to shy away from making big decisions or launching new programs that make sense. We will not succumb to the doom and gloom that says government should do less. Simply put, we will continue to push forward with a concrete plan that gives Ontarians some very real reasons to feel optimistic about the future.

And yet we recognize that many Ontarians are apprehensive about the road ahead. They are apprehensive about the federal government and its consideration of cutting health care funding to their communities. They are apprehensive that the federal government has no plan to create a real national child care program, and I have heard, as has the member for Haliburton and as I'm sure many members in this House have, from the local child care providers, who are very concerned about the changes in federal funding to child care and wanting to see the federal government play its fair share in that role across the country. They are apprehensive that the federal government has fallen short when it comes to a comprehensive plan to deal with climate change. And yes, they are apprehensive about their jobs and their future prosperity.

We can, and we must, calm these anxieties, and there's every reason to believe that, working together, we can calm those anxieties, because we're not starting from scratch. We have a history of working together with the federal government to produce great results for Ontarians, results that benefit the entire country.

Those results include much-needed infrastructure investment. You'll know that over the last year and a half we've been investing greatly in infrastructure in all of the communities across the province, and certainly mine has been a beneficiary. We've seen some great investments in roads and bridges in some of my smaller rural communities and a great sportsplex that the city of North Bay has been looking for for the past six or seven years and that is now moving forward, thanks to the partnership of all three levels of government: the federal, provincial and municipal governments.

We're seeing investment in rural areas that we have not seen before that's creating jobs and making sure that our economies locally are continuing to move forward and to thrive.

We've also seen, as a result of our partnership with the federal government, a regional development agency for southern Ontario created, financial support for Ontario's auto sector and enhanced competitiveness with the harmonized sales tax.

We also know that for the past few years we've made real progress in addressing Ontario's fairness concerns and have achieved significant gains for our province. You'll remember, Madam Speaker, that a few years back we did a full-on fairness campaign, and we really did try to bring our federal partners to the table to discuss what Ontario needed and how we were not being treated fairly within Confederation.

We were quite successful in those discussions. A number of examples of the changes that have occurred include the federal government's making changes to the employment insurance program in its 2009 budget that went some way toward addressing the needs of Ontario's unemployed workers. Between 2009 and 2011, Ontario will receive over \$600 million in new labour market funding, which we are using to support unemployed and underemployed Ontario workers.

In 2009, five years earlier than was planned by the federal government, Ontario began receiving the same per capita cash that all equalization-receiving provinces receive under the Canada health transfer. Also in 2009, the federal government made changes to federal programs, including improvements to the national child benefit supplement and the Canada child tax benefit, and enhancements to the working income tax benefit that complement Ontario's poverty reduction strategy. In 2007, the federal government agreed to fund the Canada social transfer on a per capita basis, again providing Ontario with the fair treatment we had been seeking.

We have every reason to believe we can build on these gains and take the next giant leap forward. I believe that the best way to do it is to show Ontarians and Canadians that, regardless of which level of government we represent, we are optimistic about the future and our ability to meet the needs and expectations of the citizens we serve.

This afternoon, I would like to outline six specific ways that we can achieve this partnership, this sense of balance and fairness. First, I want to talk about protecting public services. The federal government needs to ensure that current and future transfer payments that support services that Ontarians rely on are protected, even as the federal deficit is addressed. Ontario has had considerable success in achieving fairness when it comes to federal transfers to the province, as I just outlined.

Ontario and the federal government have worked well together recently to deliver job creation and economic transformation through significant economic stimulus and infrastructure investments, and financial support for Ontario's auto sector. We've seen progress on federal funding to Ontario in key areas such as health care, infrastructure and regional economic development, important programs that affect everyone. We need to acknowledge the vital role that social and health programs, and other services that are partly funded through federal transfers, play in the lives of Ontarians.

The federal government has a responsibility to hold up its end of the bargain in the funding partnerships that we have in place. Now is not the time for the federal govern-

ment to shrink from its responsibility to share in funding these services. Ontarians want to know that their federal government won't use the deficit as a rationale for reducing the services that individuals and families rely on. Ontario wants a commitment from the federal government that it will maintain its promise not to cut transfers to provinces.

While we have a group of young people in our public gallery today—hello; we're glad you're here—I want to talk a little about a couple of issues that I'm sure are of interest to you before you leave. I know that you're not going to stay for the entire speech, but I want to talk about a few things that I know are of interest to future generations and our future workforce.

Let's talk about creating green jobs. The federal government can do so much more to help position Canada as a global leader on the environment by supporting Ontario's burgeoning green economy through things such as a cap-and-trade program and by investing a fair share in Ontario's clean energy initiatives that support jobs and investments.

Premier McGuinty has made building the green economy a hallmark of our government. Our Green Energy Act is putting us in a leadership position in building a green economy, and I'm sure our young people would agree that this is where we want to be. Yes, I'm getting nods from the guys upstairs. Thank you.

We want to be at the cutting edge, and I think we are at the cutting edge. Our Green Energy Act will put Ontario at the forefront of renewable energy and create 50,000 direct and indirect jobs over the next three years—16,000 jobs alone in the agreement with Samsung. These are jobs that these young people here today could be looking to in the future, green jobs that are incredibly important, both for the environment and for our future workforce.

Ontario is already Canada's leader in wind power. Where we had 10 turbines in 2003, we've now got over 670 and counting, producing enough electricity to power 300,000 homes.

**1400**

As I noted earlier, I have one wonderful young entrepreneur in my riding who's working on wind energy and who was in talking to me probably at the time when we only had 10 wind turbines in the province, and was certainly on the cutting edge in our region, and has been talking to me about the need for more transmission lines so that we can harness all of the power that we have in northern Ontario and to help solve the problems of southern Ontario. We're moving forward with that new transmission and with the ability to start to harness the great natural resources that we have in my home area of northern Ontario.

So far the federal government has made significant investments in carbon capture and storage technologies, but fewer comparable investments that would assist in the green transformation of Ontario.

As many in this House would know, the carbon capture and storage technologies are being researched

and mostly are found in the western provinces. We'd like to see the federal government show that similar kind of support to the province of Ontario and our green initiatives, and look at a cap-and-trade program, which we think is incredibly important for the future on climate change.

We want the federal government to invest in reducing emissions by supporting the research, development and commercialization of green technologies, such as smart grid technology, in Ontario.

I note that our young people are heading out for the rest of their tour. We thank you for being with us today, and we hope to see you again some day. Come and visit us as we move forward with our green technology and our green future for Ontario.

The third point I'd like to make is to talk about strengthening health care. The federal government should commit to the renewal of long-term health care funding agreements before they expire and growing health care transfers at the real rate of health expenditures.

Ontario, as you know, is investing strategically to continue to transform the health care sector to meet the future needs of Ontarians, and the results are there for everyone to see. Wait times are shorter across the province. It's easier to find a doctor. Eight hundred thousand Ontarians who didn't have access to a doctor in 2003 have one now. Through Health Care Connect, we're helping to connect doctors and other health professionals with individuals.

In my riding, a few of the issues that I heard so much about when I was first elected now seem to have waned, as far as pressure points in my riding.

I remember in my first couple of years in office having so many calls from individuals who were on wait-lists for hip and knee replacements. I think everyone in this House probably had similar calls from individuals who were in pain and who wanted to have their health issues addressed, but the resources weren't in place to help them. Now we see that wait times for all of those surgeries have been reduced across the province. I no longer get those calls. In fact, I had a friend who jokingly told me last year that he wasn't ready to go when they called him because it happened so quickly compared to what he was expecting. That's a good-news story. I think that we can see a real benefit to Ontarians across the province as we see these wait times being reduced and the strategic investments that we've made through our federal health transfer payments into the province, which have allowed us to really improve the quality of life for Ontarians across the province.

Another pressure point in my riding was the ability to find a doctor. I used to get a lot of calls. I still get some calls. Certainly there are still not enough doctors in our northern region, but we are seeing progress. Through our family health teams and through the addition of various health professionals into these teams, we are seeing families getting health care closer to home and in a much more timely way than they had in the past.

There are also 10,000 more nursing positions since 2003 in the province. Again, an area that I'm pretty

familiar with and very proud of is our work in supporting our nurses in our long-term-care homes. We've certainly seen substantial investments in our long-term-care homes, and we've seen a great deal of increased capacity for our personal support workers, our nurse practitioners and our nursing staff in our long-term-care homes.

So I think the people of Ontario really have benefited from these investments. We want to make sure that the federal health transfer payments keep up to the actual expenditures that we have in the province, and that we are able to maintain those health care levels we've had in the past and that people have come to appreciate and rely on.

We appreciate the federal government's actions over the last few years to address inequities in funding to provinces for health care.

Health is a major priority for citizens across Ontario and across the country—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** —and I know that it is for the people of Simcoe North as well, despite the fact that the member doesn't seem to really want to listen.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Member from Simcoe North.

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Changing demands due to population growth and aging are a common challenge to governments as we continue to ensure the highest-quality services for our citizens. Madam Speaker, I think as you know and everyone knows in this House and certainly across the province, we have an aging population. Our concerns in health care are only going to continue to grow, and we need to be able to manage the demand that we have, and we need to be able to rely on our federal cousins to provide us with the support that we need to ensure that health care is there in our communities across the province when needed. The federal government is a necessary partner to provinces in ensuring our health services are in place across the province.

Our fourth point is the need to support new Canadians. The federal government must live up to the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement by ending the current short-changing of new Canadians who come to Ontario. Immigration in Ontario is critical to our labour force, growth and to our economy, perhaps more than anywhere else in Canada. Despite the 2005 Canada-Ontario immigration agreement, federal spending per immigrant in Ontario is less than in some provinces. During the first four years of the agreement, the federal government has underspent in Ontario by \$193 million. This is incredibly important. That's investment that could be made in a variety of communities that are seeking to increase immigration to their areas.

We have a great area of growth around the GTA, but in areas like mine, in North Bay, we are looking towards the future, and we are looking towards immigration as a possible growth component for our community. The city of North Bay and its economic development office have

really undertaken to bolster the resources that we have available to new Canadians to make it a more welcoming environment. We have a new multicultural centre in North Bay that has been up and running for the last couple of years. It has settlement programs, and it assists newcomers to our community to find the resources they need within our community.

We are providing resources to new Canadians through Web-based enterprises that allow them to see what's available in a community. In mine, we just launched a portal through some federal and provincial funding about a month ago. It was really exciting. There were so many community partners that came out for the launch of the portal, and you get to see how many people are involved in assisting newcomers to the community, to settle in the community.

The portal provided them with all kinds of really practical information, so that if you logged in from anywhere in the world, you could find out what you needed to know to arrive in Canada or arrive in North Bay in the middle of February. It would tell you what the weather was like. It would tell you what kind of daycare was available, what kind of health care was available, what social services were available, what kind of welcome you could look to receive, what job opportunities were available, what companies were based in North Bay, and what types of employment and education were available in North Bay. We have both Canadore College and Nipissing University, which provide some excellent post-secondary education. We also have the North Bay Literacy Council, which provides assistance in basic literacy and numeracy for those who are coming and feel that they have a language barrier as they move into the workforce. And we have a number of partners that come together in providing workforce support. In the area, we have Yes! Employment Services. We have a number of social agencies that combine to provide particularly new Canadians with the support that they need.

Just last week, I was at the International Food Fest up at Nipissing University, which is in support of the World University Service of Canada, and that was a great celebration. It was a partnership with our multicultural centre to celebrate all the different nationalities that are present in our community, either on the university and college campuses or in our community itself, at large. It was a great opportunity. There were 600 people there. There was some great food, as it was an international food festival. But it was also a great opportunity to see how diverse our community is and what supports are there to help them.

We know that it's incredibly important that that \$193 million that was underspent by the federal government in Ontario could have been spent to assist more people to find their way to places like North Bay or help other communities, such as those in Simcoe or in Parry Sound–Muskoka, to develop their Web portals and to become more visible to potential new Canadians, and also to provide those communities with more assistance to welcome new Canadians across the province.



We need to renegotiate the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement, and we want the federal government to devolve settlement and language training services to Ontario to ensure better services for the newcomers. Again, we feel that there isn't a need for duplication of services or for different organizations to be working at cross-purposes. We need to streamline those services to ensure that we are using the precious resources that we have to their fullest extent, but as well that we are ensuring that it's one-stop shopping for those new Canadians and that they can find all of the services they need without too much difficulty. Because as we all know, going to a new place is challenging, and we want to make sure that they feel as welcome as possible in Ontario and certainly as welcome as they would in any other part of the country, which is why we want to make sure that Ontario gets its fair share through the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement.

**1410**

Another area that I was hoping to speak to a little bit while our young people were still with us—oh, we've got some even younger people on this side; welcome to the House today—we want to talk about skills training. The federal government needs to continue to partner with Ontarians by strengthening investment in post-secondary education and training programs that build workers' skills and knowledge for today and tomorrow. While our visitors today are probably a little young to be entering into skills training, they will someday be looking at the trades, we hope, and at a variety of educational opportunities in Ontario, and we want to make sure that those educational opportunities are available to them.

We're proud of the investments that we've made to strengthen post-secondary education and training as part of our Reaching Higher plan. We will create more than 15,000 new graduate spaces by 2011-12. There are 120,000 apprentices learning a trade today, nearly double the number that existed in 2003. Again, I can attest to the validity of these numbers and to the investments that we've made, because at Canadore College, we are seeing our apprenticeship programs burgeoning and we are also seeing new graduate programs invested in at Nipissing University, both of which I'm very proud to see happening.

Since 2003, 100,000 more students have been attending our colleges and universities. That's a tremendous increase, and those numbers will only grow in the future. We are seeking greater federal support for post-secondary education funding in recognition of our growing enrolment costs. As we continue to see our numbers climb in our post-secondary institutions, we know that the costs will also increase with those enrolments. We need to make sure that the investments are there and that our students are getting the proper education they deserve through these post-secondary institutions.

As I said earlier in the address, we know that our workforce is one of our most important resources. While we are starting early with four- and five-year-old full-day

learning, we also need to make sure that our older students have what is needed to continue their education and to make them into the strongest workforce we possibly can.

Despite what we have accomplished together, Ontario workers will now benefit from increased federal spending for worker training programs. Ottawa's support for post-secondary education as a whole has been slipping across the country relative to the rising costs of post-secondary education. As I said, more needs to be done. Federal support should ensure today's students get the training they need to be skilled workers tomorrow and help keep Ontario and Canada globally competitive.

At Nipissing University and Canadore College, we have seen some substantial investments made through our provincial funding, and some as well through the infrastructure funding that we saw through the partnership of the federal and provincial governments. I was delighted to see that more is being spent on Canadore College and on Nipissing University. We are making a substantial provincial investment in the library at Nipissing University and Canadore College, which is a joint library because my two institutions are co-located—I think the only institutions across the province that are co-located—which provides a great synergy as well as a great melding of resources and support to both institutions.

I'm particularly proud of our learning library at Canadore and Nipissing because Nipissing University has historically been ranked one of the best schools in the country by students in the "smaller university" category, and the one mark on every scorecard that ranks low is the library. So they have come together at Canadore and Nipissing to work to invest in this learning library for both schools, which are on the same campus.

They came to me a few years ago very committed to this project. It was wonderful to see both institutions clearly indicate that this was their top priority for infrastructure moving forward. I was delighted to be able to announce in 2008 that we were moving forward with the project, and as I drove by just last week, I saw the scaffolding and the walls going up. It's going to be an incredible asset to the campus and to the whole community, because our local, small rural libraries are also hooked up to the university library through a province-wide program. I know that our small libraries really appreciate the resources and the assistance that they get through the larger university and college library. It's a great partnership; it's a great investment. I really think we need to push the federal government to continue to invest in what is the future of the country and the future of this province, and that is our young people and our post-secondary education.

Finally, I want to speak to child care. The federal government needs to step up and provide stability to the thousands of Ontario families who rely on child care spaces created with federal funding by continuing to fund those quality child care spaces for Ontario children. I know you agree with me, Madam Speaker, because I've

heard you speak passionately on the child care issue before. This is an important issue to all Ontarians. We think the federal government should step up to the plate and pay their fair share on this particular file.

Support for Ontario families, especially working parents with young children, in these challenging economic times is a priority for our government. Expanded child care will enable working parents to more fully participate in the labour market. We were able to provide stability in the child care sector this fiscal year through additional provincial funding and by using the last federal payment under the old early learning and child care agreement.

It is absolutely critical that the federal government initiate new funding measures to support provincial child care spaces. I'm sure you've heard from your local child care providers. I know I've heard from mine. I think I've got a meeting scheduled next week with the local child care coalition. They are pushing hard, and they want to make sure that the places they have in place now will be there in the future for the children who need them and for the families who need them. I think we all know, through our four- and five-year-old learning program, that we are going to free up some child care spaces because we'll have more children in a different program. But, certainly, we need the federal government to step up to the plate and support the child care that they initially put in place. It's not something that they should be able to walk away from. This is incredibly important to families across the province, and I want to ensure that they are coming to the support of families across the province and, by extension, across the country.

I want to make one thing very clear: This is all about recognizing that Canada's success depends on a strong and competitive Ontario. I know we've made this point time and again. Ontario is a driving force in Canada. Other provinces may disagree, but I think we recognize that in having the bulk of the population and having a large manufacturing base and a large financial base, Ontario is the driving force in Canada, and with our success comes Canada's success. We need to ensure our success by ensuring that the federal government is making investments in an appropriate way in Ontario, ensuring that we can continue to provide the services Ontarians need in the six areas that I've discussed, as well as a variety of other areas where we know the federal government plays an important role.

Today, however, I am focusing on the six areas of transfer payments, child care, climate change, post-secondary education, and immigration. These are areas that are of key importance to us and where we feel the federal government can make substantial investment and can assist the province in providing the services that our citizens have come to expect across the province. We believe that it's about all levels of government resolving to do what it takes to invest in the future success of Ontario families. Perhaps more than that, it's simply about accepting the fact that we're all in this together and we need to find a way forward together.

Ontarians need to see the right signals from the federal government. As you know, next week the federal government is coming out with its throne speech on Wednesday and its budget on Thursday, March 4. We look forward to listening to both of those addresses and to seeing what direction the federal government is planning on taking. Specifically, however, we hope to see in the federal budget some recognition of these six primary issues, as well as other funding opportunities for the province.

We've been working very closely with the federal government over the last couple of years, as we've made substantial investments across our communities. As well, I should note that we've worked with all three levels of government. The municipal governments have been very much involved in many of the infrastructure funding programs that we have introduced over the last couple of years in partnership with the federal government. So in probably the majority of our funding programs, we've worked with all three levels of government together, and that has really allowed us to move forward with a number of projects that otherwise would not have moved forward.

I've talked in this House before about a community in my riding, the township of Chisholm. It has 18 bridges, all of which are in different states of disrepair. Certainly, with the rate base that Chisholm has, it could not afford to repair those bridges in any kind of timely manner. With the investments that we've made in partnership with the federal government and the municipality, they've been able to move forward on a number of urgent projects and have been able to kind of profile and prepare for the coming bridges and other projects that they have in the queue. It has given them some hope.

#### 1420

I have to say that when I was first elected, one of my more memorable trips to Chisholm was a visit with the mayor, as well as the head of public works, where we put on our rubber boots and walked around a number of these bridges so that I could get a first-hand look at the decay and the need. It was very telling. Some of these bridges are the main link for individuals in Chisholm to the main highways and into communities, and their main link to getting their groceries and getting their health care. They are very important links in our rural communities. And Chisholm is not alone; there are rural communities across the province that are facing similar cases, not of despair, but certainly they were feeling a great deal of concern about how they were going to address these needs.

I know the Rural Ontario Municipalities Association is meeting today in Toronto. I'm sure that my colleagues are hearing concerns again from our rural municipal partners about some of the infrastructure issues. But certainly I know, because I spoke to a couple of my colleagues this morning who were in meetings, that they're also hearing some thanks from our rural municipalities who recognize that without the investments we have made across the province, they would not be in the position they're in today, which is to be opening new bridges and roads, making repairs and providing the services they

need to provide to their taxpayers in the municipal and rural areas across the province.

Ontarians, as I said, need to see the right signals from the federal government. We need to see the federal government recognize the fierce urgency of the situation, just as it did when we were in the midst of the economic storm last year. Last year, everyone recognized that we were in the here and now, that we needed to address the situation we faced immediately, that people were losing their jobs and that people were feeling incredibly uncertain about the future. We came together and made investments in infrastructure that created jobs in communities across the province and kept our economy moving forward.

Now we see ourselves coming out on the other side of the economic storm, but we can't lose sight of the fact that we all face a long-term burden and we need to address that. While we do recognize that the federal government has wanted to address its deficit, it also cannot lose sight of the fact that it needs to continue to make investments in the province and in the programs that Ontarians have come to rely on.

We need to see the federal government face the urgency of the situation. Ontarians accept that all levels of government are going to have to make some tough choices on the long road to recovery, but they don't accept the idea that the deficit is a reason to shy away from the positive things their governments can do. That is why the McGuinty government will continue to look for opportunities to partner with the federal government, and we will also continue to stand up for the fairness that Ontario deserves.

So as I spoke today of the programs we partner in with the federal government, and have partnered in, I also spoke about the fairness that we think we are entitled to. We have done great things on infrastructure, and we've done great things working in partnership with the federal government on a number of programs. But we also want to ensure, as we move forward with the HST and as we move forward with these infrastructure projects that are creating jobs and creating economic activity across the province, that in those areas where the federal government has fallen behind—where we know they've fallen behind and we know they need to step up to the plate—we need to make sure they are not falling behind on transfer payments and that they do not see their role in deficit reduction as one that would allow them to reduce their deficit on the backs of provincial governments and on the backs of provincial programs that rely so heavily on transfer payments. We want to protect our public services. We feel that the federal government needs to ensure that current and future transfer payments that support our public services are protected.

We want to make sure that health care is there when needed in every community across the province. We want to ensure that our young people are receiving the education they deserve across the province. We think that early learning for four- and five-year-olds is incredibly important. We don't want to come away from that; we

want to move forward with that, because the children of the province are the future and their education is incredibly important for the future well-being of the province and for the economic development of the province.

We want to ensure that our post-secondary education continues to be funded at the level that is required. We want to make sure that we are at the cutting edge of post-secondary education and that we are continuing to graduate young people who are at the cutting edge of their fields.

Madam Speaker, let me just digress for a moment and tell you about an experience I recently had. As Minister of Tourism for the last year and a half, I was very much involved in preparing for Ontario's presence at the Vancouver Olympics. One of the things we are showcasing at the Olympics is some new technology that was developed by the students at Sheridan College. It's called Sheridan 3D. It's an incredible gaming opportunity. The students at Sheridan have partnered with BlackBerry and with a manufacturer in Ontario that manufactures 3D screens that don't require 3D glasses. We were showcasing this in our pavilion in Vancouver. It was a really great way to showcase how Ontario technology and our Ontario students have come together.

Through the Sheridan College program, we are graduating some incredibly bright students and some incredibly digital-savvy students who are on the cutting edge of their field. Those graduates and the programs that we've developed across the province have allowed us to attract investments like Ubisoft, a major gaming company worldwide, which has found Ontario as a good place to invest and to grow because we have this workforce here that's available to them that is at the cutting edge of their field.

We were delighted to be able to showcase the students of Sheridan out in Vancouver to the world. I think it's a wonderful opportunity to indicate to the world that we are at the cutting edge and that our students are getting that state-of-the-art education that's required to make us as a province, and them as a workforce, competitive in the world.

Again, on the federal front, we want to make sure that they are continuing to strengthen our health care by providing us with the resources that we need to continue to deliver on the results that we have delivered on. I think we spoke about this earlier, but I want to emphasize it. The wait times are shorter. We have people who are finding doctors a lot quicker. We have more nurses out in the field. We recognize that we have challenges ahead in the health care field, particularly with an aging population. We need to be ready for that, and we need to partner with the federal government to ensure that our health care services are available across the province.

I want to, just for a moment, talk again about green jobs and creating green energy in the province. Our Green Energy Act is putting us in a leadership position in building a green economy. We are first in class in North America with our Green Energy Act. We are attracting investment from around the world because of the table

that we have set with our Green Energy Act and other investments that we've made in renewable energy across the province.

As I said, even in my small community of North Bay, we see those investments starting to pay off when we see young entrepreneurs taking charge. I had one professor at Canadore College who has been harping at me for quite some time about investment in green energy in the college so that they can prepare the workforce for the future who will need to go and implement the green energy technology that's being developed today. Certainly, that's a forward-thinking professor and someone who's going to take the college far.

Through our Green Energy Act, we will be creating 50,000 direct and indirect jobs over the next three years. This is incredibly important for our young people. They're very concerned about the environment. The blending of our green energy initiatives together with the job creation, I think, is going to create some incredible employment that our young people are looking for. A happy workforce is the best workforce. We're going to have young people who are engaged in jobs that they are excited about and that they know are at the cutting edge of technology around the world.

Our federal government has made significant investments, as I said, in some technology that is mostly situated in our western provinces. We want to see the federal government come to the table and support technology and green ideas that are being developed right here in Ontario. We feel that we are entitled to that share of our green energy investments from the federal government. We are at the cutting edge. We are a jurisdiction that's moving forward together with a number of other provinces, but we want to see the investments spread out fairly across the country and not just in the west.

Again, support for new Canadians is incredibly important, as well as skills training. We want to see those investments being made in the future of our citizens of Ontario. We want to make sure those who choose to situate themselves in Ontario are not treated unfairly or at a disadvantage to those new Canadians who find themselves attracted to other provinces. We want to ensure that we have the resources available to attract new Canadians to Ontario and also the resources available to help support them once they're in the community because, as you know so well from your area of Toronto and as we know in other remote areas, it's incredibly important for our citizens to feel welcome and comfortable when they find themselves in a new jurisdiction. So we want to ensure that jurisdictions across the province have the supports necessary to attract new Ontarians to their communities.

I think it's a very important debate to have. It's very important that we, at this time—about a couple of weeks out from the federal budget—take a position and take a stand, and we let the federal government know that we have enjoyed the partnerships that we've worked on together, that they have benefited the province. But we want to continue to bring them to the table with us to

make the investments that are needed because we need all levels of government resolving to do what it takes to invest in the future success of our families. We need to know that they will be there and that they recognize the urgency of the situation, and that in the midst of the economic storm we've just come through, we need to continue to make those investments to ensure that we are well positioned as a province and as a country to take advantage of all future economic opportunities that are available. That's why the McGuinty government will continue to look for opportunities to partner with the federal government and also continue to make our stand for fairness for Ontarians.

**1430**

I appreciate the opportunity today to speak to this important issue. As Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, it's incredibly important for me to work with the federal government and also to engage the federal government in discussions on areas that I think are of incredible importance to the province; I feel that's my main role. I appreciate the opportunity to share some of our concerns and points of view with members of the House today, and I look forward to hearing their perspectives as well.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** It's my pleasure to join the debate. On behalf of the Ontario PC caucus, I rise to oppose this latest parliamentary tactic of the McGuinty government.

Dalton McGuinty has stooped to a new low in trying to deflect public attention from the sorry record of his Liberal government. It's bad enough that the McGuinty Liberals have allowed public money to be diverted into the pockets of Liberal-friendly consulting firms with eHealth and other scandals; now they're trying to deflect the public's attention from this government's embarrassing lack of action.

We just need to look back to October 2008, when we had an emergency debate on the economy. We debated that motion for some eight days: October 8, 9, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22 and 23, some 15 hours and 40 minutes. In part, the government motion read that "just as Ontario families do when finances get tight at home, the Ontario government should make adjustments..." That was October 2008. They still haven't made any adjustments. They talked about their five-point economic plan. Somehow that has disappeared off the radar. We haven't voted on this yet. That was October 2008. That's what a joke that government resolution was, and this one is more of the same.

It's just a tactic, because they didn't really plan on being here. They really planned on being prorogued but then didn't have the courage to actually do it. So here we are, and we have the whole week to debate this government resolution every afternoon. Government is about taking responsibility and making decisions. This McGuinty government needs to take responsibility for their own actions instead of trying to shift the blame to another level of government.

I think I'll deal with one point from the last speech before I get on to some of my notes. The last speaker was talking about the Green Energy Act and all the new jobs

they're creating. They promised a million new jobs. I remind the Speaker that their promises don't always come true. We have had it with promising not to raise taxes and with other issues, but they promised a million new jobs. What has actually happened in the last year? Well, we've lost 177,000 jobs in the past 16 months.

I think the one sure thing about this government's energy policy is that the price of energy is going up; I think you can count on that pretty clearly. What's that going to do? It's going to scare a lot of jobs away from this province and make it less affordable for seniors and others to stay in their homes.

We have a big, new mining development happening in northwestern Ontario, and what do you read about? They might be doing the smelting operations for this huge, new mining site in Manitoba because the energy prices are more reasonable. Don't you think other businesses are going to be thinking the same thing as McGuinty drives the cost of energy up to new heights in this province? Businesses make rational decisions, and if they see that we're the most expensive jurisdiction in the country, they probably aren't locating here.

Going back to my notes, let's consider this government's record on the economy. Dalton McGuinty has created a \$25-billion deficit. That means that each and every hour of the day, the Liberals are spending \$2.8 million more than they collect in revenue. While we were listening to the government blame Ottawa for their problems, Ontario's families saw more than \$2 million tacked on to the Ontario debt. In fact, it's been 123 days since they confessed they would run a \$25-billion deficit. Dalton McGuinty said he needed time to think before he would come up with a plan. His lack of action in that 123 days added \$8 billion more to the provincial debt.

Now, 123 days later, Dalton McGuinty emerges from his thinking place, and this is the best he can come up with: a non-binding resolution that goes to Ottawa, with hand held out, asking the federal government to dole out more welfare to a proud province that was once the economic engine of Confederation.

This is not a plan. It's a lot of things, but it's not a plan. It's an admission of failure by the McGuinty Liberals. It's a silly wedge resolution to divert attention from the awful job they're doing running the economy of this province. It's a feeble attempt to divert public attention from Dalton McGuinty's own failings. It's "wag the dog."

The Liberal caucus must be embarrassed to be standing up here, taking part in the Premier's silly antics. I'm sure I speak for them and others in this chamber when I say that I find this whole spectacle to be a joke. It is bad enough that Dalton McGuinty is wasting so much of the taxpayers' money with nothing to show for it; now he's also wasting the precious time that this Legislature has to deal with serious issues.

Instead of wasting this week on a non-binding resolution, we could and should be dealing with job losses, the increasing tax burden and Dalton McGuinty's out-of-control spending, the huge burden of red tape that has

been created in this province. But instead, we're wasting time on this stunt.

Why has Dalton McGuinty asked the Liberal caucus to go along with this stunt? What will it accomplish? He's doing it because he doesn't have a record his caucus can defend. He doesn't have a plan for the future. He doesn't even have a legislative plan for the rest of this week, and he lacks the courage to prorogue. So picking a false fight with Ottawa is his last hope to deflect public attention away from making Canada's worst government look like it actually stands for something.

This resolution will not do anything to address the hundreds of thousands of manufacturing job losses Dalton McGuinty has presided over. This resolution will do nothing to control the reckless spending that has the Liberals on course to double Ontario's debt—that's right, double Ontario's debt. When the McGuinty government came into power, the debt was \$140 billion; it's on track to be \$290 billion by 2012.

The McGuinty government is mortgaging our future. They're creating taxes for the future for our young people, and that is something that came out loud and clear recently in the pre-budget consultations.

This resolution fails to mention or address the impact of the massive new job-killing tax grab that is coming our way on July 1. This resolution fails to address the worries of Ontario's businesses being frozen out of this government's preferential subsidies to foreign companies like Samsung and Ubisoft. We heard that at the pre-budget consultations from the government's own expert witness. Dr. Warren Jestin from Scotiabank was there, and what did he say? What was his advice to the government? Don't pick winners and losers. Well, that's exactly what they're doing. They're picking winners and losers, and they're creating an extremely high-cost energy structure for this province.

In short, this resolution passes the buck for more than six years of failure. It is an attempt to wag the dog. It is an attempt to blame Canada. Blaming the federal government for your problems has been a pastime in other provinces, but never here—not before Dalton McGuinty.

Ontario families understand that the federal government has to come up with an action plan that helps the whole country recover. They understand that the federal government has managed recovery successfully in most jurisdictions across the whole country. They understand that most of the provinces have taken an inward look at how they spend tax dollars, and they've found new ways to improve their own economy. The McGuinty Liberals, however, followed the admission that they had a huge spending problem by going out and spending some more.

Ontario families who are struggling with their mortgages, who have tapped out their credit cards, don't go out and buy new cars. They don't understand Dalton McGuinty or why he hasn't adjusted his spending. Spending has increased some 65% since 2003, when Dalton McGuinty took power, despite what he said in the October 2008 emergency debate. They don't understand why, after making self-serving announcements and using

taxpayer money for partisan ads to get all the credit, the McGuinty Liberals are asking Ottawa to pick up the tab. Ontario families are proud Canadians—too proud for this kind of stunt.

**1440**

People used to resent Ontario because we were too wealthy; we were too powerful; we were too successful. We were calling the shots. Who would have predicted that the day would come when it would be the Premier of Ontario's time to whine, when Ontario would actually end up being a have-not province begging for crumbs from other provinces?

The Ontario PC caucus sees this resolution for what it is. We see Dalton McGuinty trying to deflect attention and blame Ottawa. We see Dalton McGuinty forcing his backbenchers to criticize the federal government rather than participate in real solutions here at Queen's Park. We see it for the embarrassing shame it is, and that is why the Ontario PC caucus will be voting against this resolution.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** It has been eight years that I've been here in this House listening to all manner of debate, and I really don't understand this debate at all. I don't know where it's going. I don't know why the government has come up with it—other than as, possibly, a time filler.

I agree with my colleague from Parry Sound—Muskoka: We're waiting for the prorogation. There's nothing to do, so we're going to debate another government, we're going to debate a wish list that we want from another government, we're going to cast aspersions on another government, and we're going to pretend we're friends with another government. There are a whole bunch of things going on here, and I really wonder why we are wasting the time of this Legislature on what I consider to be such a frivolous motion.

Quite honestly, when I read this, I started to chortle; I started to laugh. I started to wonder, "What is this government doing and why are they doing it?" There are five major planks, and some of them are more silly than the one before. The first one is that they're going to ask the federal government for a renewal of health care, "a real rate of health care expenditure." They're going to ask that the federal government continue to give additional monies at the real rate of health care expenditure increase. I would think that that's not an unreasonable thing if the Ontario government had any intention of doing that itself. We know that they do not.

Members of this Legislature who sit on the finance committee had the pleasure of going across this province in eight locations over a similar number of days—although we did get snowed out of Dryden. We listened to 175 deputations. We got another 50 or so deputations from people who could not fit into the time frame because we were oversubscribed.

A great many of those we had to listen to, a great many people who came forward, were hospital adminis-

trators, people who sat on boards, doctors, people who were members of the LHINs, and they all talked to us about this government's plan. They all talked about the constraints that were being put upon them. Every single one of them confirmed that they had been told by members of the government, by the finance ministry, by the Ministry of Health, to expect either a 0%, a 1% or a 2% increase and that they should budget for each of those eventualities: 0%, 1% or 2%. Every single one of the LHINs, the doctors, the hospital boards and anyone who knew anything about it at all said that it was going to cost 3.5% to 4% for status quo, and every one of them told us that even in the best-case scenario, a budgeted 2% was going to mean cuts. It was going to mean services being taken away in respective municipalities.

Some of the hospitals came forward and told us what they would have to cut and what they expected would have to happen. Some of them talked about reduced nursing positions; some of them talked about programs that weren't going to be made available anymore.

In my own riding, we have a wonderful hospital with a CEO of whom we are proud, and I think the Minister of Health is probably proud as well. Although I've not heard her talk about Mr. Devitt, he's quite a good hospital administrator. When other hospitals find themselves in difficulty, as one in Scarborough found itself in, the province of Ontario, through the then Minister of Health, sent Mr. Devitt out to try to get their house in order, because he seems to know quite a bit about what he's doing.

I was very pleased to see, when the list of how much money people who are CEOs across Ontario and who are in the hospital business make, Mr. Devitt was towards the bottom. When I had a meeting with him, I asked him this question: "How is it you only make half as much as the CEOs of some of the hospitals who are not nearly so efficient?" And he told me, quite frankly, he thought he earned enough money and that when his contract is renewed each year and the board of directors of the hospital want to give him an increase, he eschews it. He says no. He said he makes enough money and he's happy with the amount that he makes. But I digress a little there.

He told me that, as well, they are having to make real choices at Toronto East General Hospital. The real choices they are making are not what they want to make, not what they would make, but he is budgeting at this point for a zero increase. He doesn't believe that there may be 1% or 2%; he thinks it's going to be zero.

One of the actions that Toronto East General Hospital has taken is to announce the closure of its physiotherapy unit on April 1, the beginning of the new budget year: a program that has been in effect in Toronto East General Hospital for a generation, a program that is used primarily by people who don't have insurance, who are poorer, and who came to the hospital in the first place usually for an operation or for something that requires them to have physiotherapy. He told me that in a perfect world, if he thought he was going to be getting an increase, he would keep that unit open, but in the reality of getting zero or

even 1% or 2%, its days are numbered and it's going to be closed. And that is exactly what is happening.

So I wonder how this government has the temerity to stand here and, in a motion, ask the federal government to subsidize Ontario at a real rate of health care expenditure when they have no intention of doing that themselves, when they are not committing to 3.5% or 4%, when they are committing to 0%, 1% or 2%. I don't know how I can vote for that. I don't know how any person in the Liberal government can vote to ask a federal government to do something more than what they are willing to do themselves.

That turns me to the second one. I read it and I shook my head. I often wonder about the gall of this government and the spokespeople in the government for proposing it. They are asking that the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement be honoured. That would be a good thing, to honour it, I'm sure. I'm sure the federal government has attempted to honour it in whatever way it could in the past. But the Ontario government has been one of the weak sisters of Canada when it comes to immigration and immigration policy.

Section 92 of the British North America Act and section 93 of that same act set out what the jurisdictions are of the federal and provincial governments, who does what within Confederation. It has remained unchanged since 1867. There are certain avenues that are exclusive to the federal government, there are certain ones that are exclusive to the provinces, and then there are two that are shared. One of them is agriculture, and that's why we have an agriculture minister in Canada and an agriculture minister here in the province of Ontario. The second one is immigration, which is why we have a federal minister of immigration and a minister in Ontario responsible for immigration as well.

Notwithstanding that, we do virtually nothing when it comes to the immigration process in Canada, virtually nothing, but we always have one thing that we do, and that is to ask the federal government for more and more and more money for our immigration program, which we will not fund ourselves. Virtually everything that is done immigration-wise in this province is done with federal dollars, virtually absolutely everything. The province of Ontario spends no money on immigration itself. It simply takes the transfer of federal dollars and spends it on federal programs or doesn't spend it on federal programs.

**1450**

I ask the members opposite, if you're going to ask the federal government to do a better job in terms of immigration, please be prepared to do it yourself. I have stood in this House now for some eight years, and I have asked successive governments, first the Conservative one and then, for the last six years, the Liberal one, why don't we do something that we are entitled to do under the British North America Act? Why don't we get seriously into the immigration business? Why don't we do what the province of Quebec did all those many years ago back in 1978? We have done absolutely nothing when it comes to helping people who choose to immigrate to this country

and particularly those who choose to immigrate to Ontario.

In 1978, Quebec came out with its own act, which they were entitled to do under the articles of Confederation. Within the four walls of that act, the Quebec government can select its own foreign nationals who seek to come to live permanently in Quebec and can choose its own immigrants. They have a grid system which they have developed in order to choose the immigrants who they believe will best make a contribution to the province of Quebec, who will be able to acculturate into the province of Quebec and who are needed by the province of Quebec, be they doctors or lawyers or nurses or nuclear scientists or business people. They choose their own immigrants.

We do not do that here in the province of Ontario. So all the time when Liberal members stand up here and say, "We're not getting immigrants. We're not getting the kind of immigrants, we're not getting immigrants with the right skills"—it's because we don't choose them. If you really want to do it right, then we should be choosing our own, just like Quebec does.

The second thing they do in the province of Quebec under the 1978 act is that they have the authority for temporary admissions. That is for people who are coming here as students, people who are coming here on work permits, people who are coming here for medical reasons. They help to choose their own. Because they do, they are much more spectacularly successful in recruiting foreign students who are going to legitimate and recognized schools.

They don't have a problem like we have here in Ontario with the fly-by-night schools. I just read about one this past week, a fly-by-night school that takes all the money off these poor foreign students who think they're coming here for a decent education. What do we do here? We set it up with the Ministry of Labour and we do some stuff and we talk about it, and we only act upon complaint, and we do nothing at all.

Or those who are here on work permits: What is to determine what people we need here for short duration? Quebec knows exactly what they need and how to act on it. We don't do any of that at all.

They have a program of integration that would make ours look like really small potatoes. If you are lucky enough to come to the province of Quebec, you are truly integrated into that society under the terms of the Quebec act. You are truly integrated, and there are monies set aside within that act for the integration of new immigrants. They offer financial assistance in the province of Quebec to lure the right people to come to their province who will help build their economy and make sure that their social structure and infrastructure continues to work.

They also have something which is remarkable. In this province, you can go out and you can hang a shingle on the door and say, "I'm an immigration consultant"—"I am a consultant, and I am going to rip you off of every dollar you ever earned. I'm going to offer you a service

that is absolutely worthless for tens of thousands of dollars”—and there is nothing that anybody can do about it. In Quebec, you can't do that because they have their own act, their own enforcement, and they also work hand in hand with the licensing authority. We license people in the province of Ontario, but we do a pretty poor job of enforcing who gets a licence, how they get it and whether or not they need a licence at all.

I'm saying all these things to say that here we have a government with the temerity to come forward and say, "We want more money for immigrants," but a government that hasn't done anything that they have within the power of the legislation, within the power of the Constitution, to do, and that is to come out with our own act, to have our own selection criteria, our own temporary admissions criteria, our own integration of immigrants, our own financial assistance to those immigrants and our own inquiries, wrongdoings and enforcement activity against those who would rip off and cheat prospective immigrants. I think that that's what we need to be doing. If this government was asking for money from the federal government to do that, to set it up, or if this government was willing, even for a minute, to exercise what they can do to truly help new immigrants to this province of Ontario, instead of just mouthing the platitudes, I might be supportive.

The next thing we go on and see is the investments in post-secondary education. This is laughable. Ask for money from the federal government for education, which is a provincial responsibility under the British North America Act. I would gladly take some money from the federal government, but I don't know why they're going to give money to the province of Ontario. Why would they possibly give money to the province of Ontario? We have the dubious distinction, of all the 10 provinces in Canada, of having the highest post-secondary fees for people to go to college and university. We are number 10 when it comes to how much we expect from our students. When those students were here earlier, I wanted the minister to start talking about why Ontario has the highest fees of any place in Canada. I also wanted to ask her why we have the highest per capita ratios between professors and teachers and students. We have the dubious distinction in Ontario, under this government, of having probably the worst possible scenario for people who want to go on to higher education. We make them pay the highest fees and we give them the worst quality of education—not in terms of the professors who work hard or the schools that try, but in terms of the ratio of students to professors, it is the worst, and we're number 10 in that too. So here we are, a government that's not doing its responsibility; a government that is happy for us to be in 10th place and asking the federal government to give us some more money. I think this too is laughable.

We have a woefully underfunded community college system as well. On the finance committee, as we travelled across Ontario, people came from literally every community college to tell us that the community colleges, even more so than the universities, are under-

funded and that they desperately need money if they are to provide the kind of education that this province needs in terms of future development and in terms of financial stability for the people of Ontario.

They also said something else, which this government has always failed to act on: Ontario stands alone in not recognizing education that people have, not only from foreign jurisdictions but even jurisdictions within Ontario. People came forward from the community college system, and indeed from some of the universities, to say that Ontario needs to set up a structure whereby we can look at what credentials a person has. Say, if they went to community college and they have two or three years of community college, they're expected to start over in a similar course in a university if they want to get a university degree. British Columbia, which has set the standard, and some of the other provinces, including Manitoba, now recognize that time spent at a community college is applicable in part, at least, towards a university degree. So that if you finish a two-year program in a community college and then discover that, really, what you would like to do is go on to university, you don't have to start at the beginning; you are awarded usually at least one full credit year into university, so that you would start in second-year university. That would save the province a lot of money. This province is determined not to do that, and then they have the temerity to go off and ask the federal government for more money when they're spending money and forcing students to spend money where it need not be spent.

The government has also gone on to talk about child care spots. Again, I don't know where this government gets the nerve to say what they're saying in this motion. They are asking the federal government for more money for child care. Now as you know, I am a great advocate for child care. I believe in child care. I believe that for all those subsidized units that are out there waiting, there should be a child in place, and parents should have every reasonable expectation that their children have the best possible start by attending child care.

#### 1500

I believe that women who are not able to get into the workforce would be able to if there was a subsidized child care rate similar to what they have in the province of Quebec, and if we had a system that recognized that working women, in particular, have an opportunity to avail themselves of that child care.

This government four years ago sat down with the federal Conservative government and accepted \$63.5 million a year for four years for a Best Start program. They knew that the program and the funding for the program were finite. They knew that it was going to last four years and four years only. They accepted the \$63.5 million over a four-year period rather than accepting the money in a lump sum, and they did so for a Best Start program. They negotiated that four-year agreement, and they signed on the dotted line. They signed knowing that it would end in four years. Now they're talking about wanting to have some more money from a government



that told them four years ago that there wouldn't be any at the end, notwithstanding what is happening in terms of the economy, notwithstanding that the federal government has a huge deficit of its own, but this program was intended only to be a four-year program.

Within that four years you'd think that this government could have done something. You'd think they could have spent a couple of dollars of their own money on daycare. But they didn't. What they did is they took the \$63.5 million and they doled it out, pretending all the while and making laudatory speeches here in the Legislature about the wonderful job that the Liberal government is doing around daycare. Well, it was pretty easy: You spent somebody else's money. That's all you did for four years. You didn't put up any provincial dollars. You didn't open up any daycare spaces with your own money. You spent federal money that you knew was finite and was going to cease on April 1 of this year.

Now the chickens have come home to roost. You took the credit. Now I guess you're going to have to take the blame, and the blame is coming pretty fast and pretty furious. Child care centres are starting to close. They have empty spaces. They have declining revenue. They are looking with fear and trepidation at April 1, knowing full well that many of them are going to go out of business.

Last year, the government came across with \$18 million in bridge financing. Is that going to happen again? Because if that's all the plan this government has, to plug the holes with \$18 million worth of financing, that is not much of a daycare policy.

We've already seen the fallout. We've seen what happened in Windsor. The city council of Windsor has shut down all of its eight places. They have put 118 child care workers out of work. They have closed down hundreds of spaces and subsidies. They have sent them off to either private or not-for-profit agencies and told the parents they were going to have to get used to it. They have said the municipality can no longer afford to do it because of the fact that there is going to be no money flowing through from the federal government.

We've also seen what has happened in the city of Toronto. There have been a couple of recent articles I would like to quote in the last few weeks about this. The first one comes from the Toronto Star, an article entitled "Subsidy Cuts Mean Fewer Daycare Spots," February 8, 2010, by Laurie Monsebraaten. She quotes Beaches-East York Councillor Janet Davis, who is my councillor where I live. She is a good councillor and a child care advocate. She says, "'What we are facing in child care is the perfect storm,' said Beaches-East York Councillor Janet Davis, chair of the city's community development and recreation committee.

"'If the province doesn't step up in the budget, all the gains we made in the last decade will be lost,' she said. 'We'll be back to where we were in 1995.'"

This article also quotes one of my colleagues here in the House from York South-Weston, and I quote again from the article: "Liberal MPP Laura Albanese's York

South-Weston riding (which includes ... wards 11 and 12) faces the biggest subsidy loss in Toronto with 573 spaces in peril.

"New provincial fee subsidies for children up to age four will help municipalities adjust to all-day kindergarten, she said, but the details are still being worked out.

"However, with a \$24.7-billion provincial deficit, Ontario can't afford to replace the federal money, set to expire April 1, she said.

"'I know (children and youth minister Laurel Broten) is talking to the federal government and we're calling for them to step up,' she said."

So here it is: A provincial MPP on the government side says that there's no money in the budget and they're hoping that the federal government will come across with the money. She also knows full well that she is going to lose 573 subsidized spots in her riding alone, the most in all of the city of Toronto.

The article goes on to state, "The federal money is part of \$252 million in child care funds Ontario received from Ottawa in 2006 when the Harper government cancelled a previous \$5-billion national child care plan. Instead of spending all the money that year, Ontario spread it over four years to support about 7,600 new child care subsidies. The last \$63.5 million instalment runs out April 1."

Other articles on the same thing: From CBC News, "7,600 Daycare Spaces on the Line: Ontario Child Care Advocate." This is dated February 4. "The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care says 7,600 spaces for low-income families could disappear across the province this June, along with 1,800 child care jobs."

Parentcentral is a website, but I'm also quoting again from the Toronto Star. Laurie Monsebraaten, social justice reporter, has some good quotes as well: "Parents won't be the only ones to suffer, warns the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care.

"More than 3,000 child care sector jobs would be lost, causing a ripple effect that would suck more than \$148 million out of Ontario's economy...."

It concludes with the last couple of paragraphs, which say:

"The \$148-million calculation is conservative because it doesn't include the economic impact of an estimated 3,480 parents who would lose their jobs because they would have no other childcare options, says the analysis by the Centre for Spatial Economics. Nor does it include the cost of parents who may be forced to rely on welfare.

"The federal money is part of \$252 million in child care funds Ontario received in 2006 before Prime Minister Stephen Harper cancelled a \$5-billion child care plan."

There we have it. The government of Ontario has spent the last four years spending federal money that they knew was finite. They spent the last four years not spending any of their own monies for child care spaces, and in the end, when it all comes home to roost, when the federal money runs out, the only plan they have is to

stand there and ask for more, which, in my humble opinion, is as unlikely as can possibly happen.

We have something which is not in here, and I had to try to think about what was being proposed. Here we have a provincial government going cap in hand to the federal government like some character out of a Dickensian novel asking for more, gruel plate in hand. What is going to happen down there at the Good Roads and the small rural municipalities when they come with their gruel plate in hand, when they pass resolutions saying they want more from the Ontario government? This government and this Premier have already said to them that there will be no money available for municipalities this year, that some of the programs are not going to be there; that the subsidies that have been given in the past are not going to be there. They've said as much to the city of Toronto and they've said as much to every small, rural municipality in this province. They have said to some of them that they're going to cancel programs which literally will take them out of action. My colleague from Timmins—James Bay asked today about two municipalities—Smooth Rock Falls and I believe the other one was Opatatika—asking about what they're going to do. They said they're just going to hand the provincial government the keys to the town.

**1510**

What are you going to do if they pass resolutions? Are you going to treat them the same way the federal government is going to treat this one? Because that's exactly what's going to happen. It does no good to go to a senior or a higher level of government and ask them for money you know they don't have. And if you want to keep all of these things going—if you want to keep the schools going, if you want to keep the immigrant services going, if you want to keep the child care spaces open, if you want to keep the municipalities operating, if you want to keep all of that stuff operating—then we're going to have to do it ourselves.

That's what the motion should be today. That's what the budget should be in Ontario in another few weeks or a month or whenever it is: How do we go it ourselves? How do we make it happen? How do we get a government that is active, that makes those changes that are necessary and finds the revenues to do it without going cap in hand to the vagaries of the federal system—without having the municipal governments at the same time seeing that they have to do what they need to do and not always going cap in hand to the province. We need to make sure that's what we are doing.

This is a useless motion. I don't even know how the government had the nerve to put it forward. I don't know what they expect is going to happen with it. The only thing that I can think of—there are only two possibilities. The federal government says yes to some funds and everybody on the government side dances and says, "Look at this. We've delivered. We can do this. Hooray for the money." Or, in the more likely alternative, the federal government says, "No, there isn't any," and this government, when it comes time for the budget towards

the end of March, can stand up and say, "We had great plans, but the federal government won't give us any money. We would have done all these wonderful things if we had the money, but we don't, so now they're all being cut." I think that's the scenario that this is setting up, the scenario that this motion is going to fail to turn any heads in Ottawa.

This motion is not going to bring the billions of dollars that Ontario needs, and then this government, this finance minister, this Premier are going to stand in this House towards the end of March or the beginning of April and say, "In the absence of federal dollars, these are the cuts that we're going to make."

I don't want to be part of that. I don't want to be part of that process. I want this government to stand on its record and to stand on what it is going to do on budget day. Tell me what we're going to do. Tell me how we are going to do it. Tell me how we're going to raise the revenues. Tell me how we're going to do it without going cap in hand. That's what we want to hear. I don't want to be any part of this process of going like some Dickensian character to Ottawa and asking for more. That's not the way to run a government.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate?

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** I'd like to thank my colleague, Minister Smith, for bringing forward this motion—a motion about partnership for prosperity. As the federal government prepares its next budget, I agree that it's critically important that Ontario makes its priorities clear. So I'm pleased to talk today about our future: that of our government, our province and our country.

The fact is, the road ahead looks very different than was previously anticipated. Last year we were facing a devastating global economic downturn and we did everything we could to protect our economy, our jobs and our hard-working families. We worked in close partnership with the federal government to deliver record levels of infrastructure stimulus investments and provided support for Ontario's transition in the manufacturing sector. We also worked in partnership to help improve Ontario's competitiveness, in large part through the introduction of the harmonized sales tax. This strong partnership has helped us as a province minimize real threats and has averted some bleak projections.

This was a big achievement and it demonstrates just how effective our two governments can be when we work together for Ontarians and Canadians. But, indeed, there is more to do. We cannot be merely content with the past accomplishments. Today we face a new challenge. Our government, like others across the country and around the world, is facing a substantial long-term deficit. The deficit presents us with a significant challenge. There's no doubt that we're going to have to make some tough choices. Even so, this is no time to cut back on the scope of our ambitions. Instead, this is the time to come up with new initiatives and modern solutions that will enable Ontario and our great country to emerge even stronger.

Ontario's plan is to do just that. As referenced by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, in the past year alone we have launched three big initiatives that will deliver results in the short term and over the long term:

(1) We're working in partnership with the federal government to enable a harmonized sales tax that will increase our competitiveness by providing businesses with incentives to invest and create jobs. Despite what you may have heard, there is broad consensus across Ontario on this point. Municipalities, for example, will benefit. Peel region estimates that the HST will save over \$330,000 for the Peel Regional Police alone. The independent truckers association is also in favour, because they recognize it will be a huge incentive to grow their important industry.

(2) We're putting Ontario ahead of other jurisdictions—our competitors—in advancing the emerging green economy. We're attracting new investment, new jobs and economic growth while protecting our health and environment. We're building our economy by improving our water and our air and by fighting and combating climate change. It also goes a long way to protect future generations. For example, in Clarkson, in Mississauga South, we've seen huge investments in the transition from traditional automotive manufacturing to emissions-free production of recycled batteries to support electric cars.

(3) We're implementing full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds. Experts agree that this will give our kids the strongest possible start in school and create an even better-educated workforce which, in turn, helps Ontario enhance its competitiveness and improves our next generation. All the while, we're doing what it takes to provide the highest-quality public service. Services like health care are critical to our families, especially when times are tough. As an example, since I first arrived in this place in October 2007, Trillium Health Centre, in the great riding of Mississauga South, has seen a new fracture clinic, an increase in base funding, more beds, greater support to reduce ER wait times and a brand new, more modern hospital wing.

At the same time, however, we recognize that these are challenging economic times. That's why it's so important that our colleagues in the federal government don't cut health care funding for Ontario. We fully acknowledge that we are going to have to make some tough choices to put fiscal matters in order. But we will not use the deficit as a reason to avoid making those tough decisions or launching new programs that are necessary for our future prosperity.

A strong Canada needs a strong Ontario. This great province is still our country's economic powerhouse. Despite these extraordinary challenges, Ontario remains the single biggest net contributor to the federation. Ontarians have stood proudly and have shouldered a heavy weight during these tough economic times. And yet, we recognize that many Ontarians are concerned, and they're concerned about where we're headed. Will the federal government consider cutting health care

funding to their communities? Will the federal government provide a concrete plan to create a real national child care program? They're worried that the federal government has come up short when it comes to progressive plans to deal with climate change. Our economy and our collective confidence depend on stronger signals that support investments and offer real returns, and the best way to do that is to show Ontarians and Canadians that we can work in partnership to build a stronger province and a stronger country.

The minister outlined for you some of the specific ways we can achieve this partnership, this sense of balance and fairness. First off, protecting public services: The federal government needs to ensure that the current and future transfer payments that support the services Ontarians rely on are protected, even as the federal deficit is addressed.

Secondly, strengthening health care: The federal government should commit to the renewal of long-term health care funding agreements before they expire and growing health transfers at the real rate of health expenditures.

Third, creating green jobs: The federal government can do so much more to help position Canada as a global leader on the environment, by supporting Ontario's leading green economy through such things as a cap-and-trade program and by investing in Ontario's green energy initiatives that support jobs and investment.

Fourth, supporting new Canadians: The federal government must live up to the Canada-Ontario immigration agreement by ending the current shortchanging of new Canadians who come to Ontario.

Fifth, skills training: The federal government needs to continue to partner with Ontarians by enhanced investment in post-secondary education and training programs that build worker skills and knowledge. This investment offers hope and ability.

Lastly, boosting child care: The federal government needs to step up and provide stability to the thousands of Ontario families who rely on child care. Federal funding must continue to fund those quality child care spaces for Ontario children.

This is all about recognizing that Canada's success depends upon a strong and competitive Ontario. All levels of government must resolve to do what it takes to invest in the future success of our families. But perhaps more than that, we're all in this together and we need to find a way to move forward together. Our governments have worked in partnership over the past years to deliver a host of tangible results for Ontario's economy, so we have every reason to believe that we can build on these gains and take the next giant leap forward. But Ontarians need to see the right signals from the federal government. Ontarians need the federal government to embrace the urgency of this situation, just as it did when we were in the midst of the economic storm last year. Times remain volatile.

The Ontario government welcomes the opportunity to continue partnerships with the federal government. We

will continue to stand for fairness for Ontarians. It's essential. We are still the largest net contributors, and we deserve our fair share.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Further debate? There being none, the government House leader has moved government notice of motion number 172. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

"Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request that the vote on the motion by Minister Smith be deferred until February 23." That's by the government whip.

*Vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** Orders of the day.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I will move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** We need a minister to move adjournment of the House.

**Hon. Leona Dombrowsky:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Cheri DiNovo):** The Minister of Education moves adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I, therefore, order that the House be adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

*The House adjourned at 1525.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Aggelonitis, Hon. / L'hon. Sophia (LIB)</b>	Hamilton Mountain	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)</b>	Sudbury	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
<b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Carroll, M. Aileen (LIB)	Barrie	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism and Culture / Ministre du Tourisme et de la Culture
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
<b>Crozier, Bruce (LIB)</b>	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
<b>DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)</b>	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)</b>	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough–Centre	Minister of Energy and Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Énergie et de l'Infrastructure
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)</b>	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB) <b>Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (LIB)</b>	Oakville Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Gélinas, France (NDP) <b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Nickel Belt Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Kenora–Rainy River Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Hoy, Pat (LIB) Hudak, Tim (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB) <b>Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Johnson, Rick (LIB) Jones, Sylvia (PC) Klees, Frank (PC) Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock Dufferin–Caledon Newmarket–Aurora Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB) Kwinter, Monte (LIB) Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB) Leal, Jeff (LIB) Levac, Dave (LIB) MacLeod, Lisa (PC) Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton York Centre / York-Centre Glengarry–Prescott–Russell Peterborough Brant Nepean–Carleton Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP) Martiniuk, Gerry (PC) <b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	Trinity–Spadina Cambridge London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB) <b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNeely, Phil (LIB) <b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Orléans Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC) Miller, Paul (NDP)	Parry Sound–Muskoka Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
<b>Mitchell, Hon. / L'hon. Carol (LIB)</b>	Huron–Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Moridi, Reza (LIB) <b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	Richmond Hill York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Murray, Glen R (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)</b>	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres
		Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées
		Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
		Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)</b>	Nipissing	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Perth–Wellington	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu
<b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	
Vacant	Leeds–Grenville	
Vacant	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	

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

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Garfield Dunlop  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Robert Bailey  
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson  
Jim Brownell, Kim Craiton  
Bob Delaney, Garfield Dunlop  
Phil McNeely, John O'Toole  
Khalil Ramal  
Clerks / Greffiers: William Short (pro tem.), Sylwia Przewdziecki

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

Chair / Président: Pat Hoy  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laura Albanese  
Laura Albanese, Wayne Arthurs  
Toby Barrett, Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Eric Hoskins, Pat Hoy  
Norm Miller, Charles Sousa  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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

Chair / Président: David Oraziatti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Helena Jaczek  
Helena Jaczek, Kuldip Kular  
Amrit Mangat, Rosario Marchese  
Bill Mauro, Reza Moridi  
David Oraziatti, Joyce Savoline  
John Yakabuski  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Laura Albanese, Michael A. Brown  
Howard Hampton, Ernie Hardeman  
Rick Johnson, Lisa MacLeod  
Yasir Naqvi, Leeanna Pendergast  
Jim Wilson  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Douglas Arnott

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeff Leal  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Ted Chudleigh  
Christine Elliott, Peter Kormos  
Jeff Leal, Dave Levac  
Leeanna Pendergast, Lou Rinaldi  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial

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

Chair / Président: Bas Balkissoon  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Khalil Ramal  
Bas Balkissoon, Jim Brownell  
Bob Delaney, Joe Dickson  
Rick Johnson, Sylvia Jones  
Norm Miller, Michael Prue  
Khalil Ramal  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Norman W. Sterling  
France Gélinas, Phil McNeely  
Jerry J. Ouellette, David Ramsay  
Liz Sandals, Peter Shurman  
Norman W. Sterling, Maria Van Bommel  
David Zimmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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

Chair / Président: Michael Prue  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Paul Miller  
Bas Balkissoon, Mike Colle  
Kim Craiton, Gerry Martiniuk  
Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch  
Michael Prue, Tony Ruprecht  
Mario Sergio  
Clerks / Greffiers: Trevor Day (pro tem.), Sylwia Przewdziecki

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

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon  
Sophia Aggelonitis, Vic Dhillon  
Cheri DiNovo, Linda Jeffrey  
Sylvia Jones, Jean-Marc Lalonde  
Carol Mitchell, Shafiq Qaadri  
Elizabeth Witmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions / Comité  
spécial de la santé mentale et des dépendances**

Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Christine Elliott  
Bas Balkissoon, Christine Elliott  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, France Gélinas  
Helena Jaczek, Sylvia Jones  
Jeff Leal, Liz Sandals  
Maria Van Bommel  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial







Continued from back cover

**Local health integration networks**

Mr. Charles Sousa .....9412

**Use of members' statements**

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....9412

Mr. Frank Klees .....9413

**REPORTS BY COMMITTEES /  
RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

Mr. Norman W. Sterling .....9413

Debate adjourned .....9413

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts**

Mr. Norman W. Sterling .....9413

Debate adjourned .....9414

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS /  
DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

**Essential Public Transit Services Act, 2010, Bill 246,  
Mr. Caplan / Loi de 2010 sur les services de  
transport en commun essentiels, projet de loi 246,  
M. Caplan**

First reading agreed to.....9414

Mr. David Caplan.....9414

**Zero Waste Day Act, 2010, Bill 247, Mr. Kular / Loi  
de 2010 sur la Journée “zéro déchet” , projet de loi  
247, M. Kular**

First reading agreed to.....9414

Mr. Kuldip Kular.....9414

**PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

**Taxation**

Mr. John O’Toole .....9414

**Diagnostic services**

Mme France Gélinas .....9415

**Doctor shortage**

Mr. John O’Toole .....9415

**Impôts fonciers**

Mme France Gélinas .....9415

**Power plant**

Mr. Ted Chudleigh .....9415

**Taxation**

Mme France Gélinas .....9416

**Taxation**

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette.....9416

**Visitors**

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....9416

**ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

**Federal government policy**

Hon. Monique M. Smith .....9416

Mr. Norm Miller.....9424

Mr. Michael Prue .....9426

Mr. Charles Sousa .....9430

Vote deferred.....9432

## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 22 February 2010 / Lundi 22 février 2010

### Use of question period

Mr. Peter Kormos.....	9399
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	9399
Hon. Monique M. Smith .....	9400
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	9400

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Joe Dickson .....	9400
Mr. Robert Bailey .....	9400
Mr. Paul Miller.....	9400
Hon. John Milloy .....	9400
Mr. Charles Sousa.....	9400

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### Ontario economy

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	9400
Hon. Leona Dombrowsky .....	9401

#### Provincial debt

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	9401
Hon. Leona Dombrowsky .....	9401

#### Hospital funding

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	9402
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	9402

#### International trade

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	9403
Hon. Leona Dombrowsky .....	9403

#### Aboriginal land dispute

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	9404
Hon. Christopher Bentley.....	9404
Mr. Ted Chudleigh.....	9404

#### Social assistance

Mr. Paul Miller.....	9404
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	9404

#### Youth employment

Mr. Bob Delaney.....	9405
Hon. Harinder S. Takhar .....	9405

#### Government advertising

Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	9405
Hon. Leona Dombrowsky .....	9405

#### Municipal finances

Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	9406
Hon. Leona Dombrowsky .....	9406

### Services for the developmentally disabled

Mr. Khalil Ramal .....	9406
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	9406

### Darlington nuclear generating station

Mr. John O'Toole.....	9407
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	9407

### Taxation

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	9407
Hon. John Wilkinson.....	9407

### Consumer protection

Ms. Helena Jaczek.....	9408
Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis .....	9408

### Nuclear energy

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	9408
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	9408

### Pension plans

Mr. Howard Hampton .....	9409
Hon. Leona Dombrowsky .....	9409

### Agri-food industry

Mr. Bruce Crozier .....	9409
Hon. Carol Mitchell.....	9410

### Correction of record

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	9410
-------------------------------	------

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

#### Eric Czapnik

Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	9410
------------------------	------

#### Eric Czapnik

Mr. Yasir Naqvi .....	9410
-----------------------	------

#### Local Democracy Week

Mrs. Christine Elliott.....	9411
-----------------------------	------

#### Jim Arnold

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	9411
------------------------------	------

#### Children's aid societies

Mr. John O'Toole.....	9411
-----------------------	------

#### Chinese New Year

Mr. Rosario Marchese .....	9411
----------------------------	------

#### International trade

Mr. Joe Dickson .....	9412
-----------------------	------

#### Full-day kindergarten

Mr. Shafiq Qadri.....	9412
-----------------------	------

*Continued on inside back cover*