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of Ontario

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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 16 April 2014

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(Hansard)**

Mercredi 16 avril 2014

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

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Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 16 April 2014

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 16 avril 2014

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECTION OF PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR LA PROTECTION
DU DROIT À LA PARTICIPATION
AUX AFFAIRES PUBLIQUES

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 6, 2014, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 83, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest / *Projet de loi 83, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les tribunaux judiciaires, la Loi sur la diffamation et la Loi sur l'exercice des compétences légales afin de protéger l'expression sur les affaires d'intérêt public.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further debate? The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm just going to steal the water from my leader here this morning.

Interjection: Wait until we tell him. You're going to get sued.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Do not report me. I hope I don't get sued, because the way this place is going—it is a pleasure to speak to the bill—you can get sued for just about anything, which brings me to Bill 83.

I want to thank the former Attorney General, Mr. Gerretsen, for introducing this bill. Then, he decided he was going to leave the carriage of it to others to carry through. I respect that, because John is not running for re-election, but he's had a tremendous career here, and I've enjoyed the discussions we've had over the years and I've enjoyed his friendship as well. I wish him the very, very best.

Hon. John Gerretsen: I'm not leaving yet.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I know he's not leaving yet—but we're hoping it's soon, John. We're hoping it's soon. I don't mean that in a personal way; I mean that in a collective way, for the good of the province of Ontario.

But it is interesting; this anti-SLAPP legislation, as it's colloquially known, is designed to protect people from being sued by the large and the great and the powerful, in

order to silence them so that they will be afraid to challenge what the large and the great and the powerful are doing. But it is somewhat ironic that we are now in the midst of exactly that. The government introduces a bill to protect people from lawsuits, and what does the Premier do herself, but lodges a lawsuit against the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Mario Sergio: It's not quite the same.

Mr. John Yakabuski: My friend, the minister responsible for seniors—

Hon. Mario Sergio: Go ahead. I heard what you said about me yesterday.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It wasn't about you personally, Mario. That was about any one of the ministers over there. They're not responsible for anything. Mario, you shouldn't take things personally—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Let's get control. You're not talking to him, you're talking to me, and you're not using names, you're using titles. Let's just all stay focused. Thank you.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Very good. I say to the minister not to take things personally in this forum because it's not the way that it was intended; however, people can choose to take things any way they want. Apparently, the Premier takes things very personally when she's criticized.

Since 1867, when this Parliament first convened, it has been the practice of the opposition to oppose and to be critical of the actions of the government; to be critical of members of said governments, since John Sandfield Macdonald to today, Premier Wynne. That is the job of the opposition. It is not necessarily the desire alone—it's not just the desire of the opposition; it is the job of the opposition. We are appointed and elected to do so.

In fact, when we look across the way here and we look at the eagle up above the government benches, it is a reminder to us to have our eyes open, to be vigilant, and to ensure that we are not afraid to criticize and to challenge the government if we see fit.

On the other side, you'll see the owl—

Interruption.

Mr. John Yakabuski: That was the owl, Speaker. That was the owl. Thank you very much.

And it behooves the government to use wisdom.

Now some people would ask, "Is the Premier of the day being wise, when she doesn't like what someone on the opposition says, to immediately go into the realm of the courts to try to extract"—I don't want to say "revenge"; that's a strong word. But to extract—

Interjection: Revenge.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Well, okay, in a minor way. She wants to silence that criticism. She wants to silence that criticism.

Now if this law—I guess the question would be, and I know that the Speaker is wondering if I'm speaking to the bill, and I most certainly am—if Bill 83 was passed—and that's something that we'll have to debate further, I suppose—would it, in fact, prevent the Premier from doing exactly what she's doing?

Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition and my colleague from Nepean–Carleton were served with further papers suing them for \$2 million each for hurting the Premier's feelings.

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes. Hurting the Premier's feelings: \$2 million.

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: You know. So I would have thought the Premier would have thought her feelings were worth more than \$2 million, but in this day in age that's what she went for—\$2 million.

But what it does is, it sends a terrible message to each and every member of the opposition side here today, and each and every member out there in the public that may seek office in this chamber, that may seek to be elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly.

They're going to ask themselves, "Will I be elected?" If the answer to that is a positive one: "Will I be elected on the government side, or will I be elected on the opposition side? If I'm elected on the government side, will I have the wisdom to be able to make those decisions that whether something is said critically is, in fact, a reason to challenge what the opposition said?"—which you have the automatic opportunity every day to challenge what the opposition says—"Or will I be elected on the opposition side, and will I be subjected to a suit from the government side every time I'm critical of the government?" That's a difficult conundrum to be placed in.

You are armed in politics. If you run for elected office and you're elected, you should have already put on that suit of armour; it's called a thick skin. If you have that in politics, you will probably last much longer than those who don't have it.

I say to the Premier: Develop a thick skin so that we can get on with the job of doing what is best for the people of Ontario. The people of Ontario are not served by having barbs thrown back and forth in the Toronto Star or the Globe and Mail or the National Post or any of the newspapers, or Global News or CBC or whatever. They are served by government getting down to the business of doing what is best for the people of the province of Ontario.

0910

Now, we're going to have a budget here on May 1. The minister announced yesterday that the budget would come down May 1. I'm looking forward to that date, because that is going to bring this chamber to a moment of truth, to a moment of decision. There is going to have to be some consideration made. I say to my friends in the third party—

Mr. Rosario Marchese: Which one?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, I always speak to you, Rosie; you're first on my list when I'm speaking to the third party. So they are going to have to quickly make a decision: Are we going to support and enable this government to continue to do the damage they've been doing to the province of Ontario over the past 10 years, or are we going to say, "It's time, Premier. I hope you have a thick skin for the campaign, but it's time to go to the people and seek a mandate"?

You see, Kathleen Wynne has been the leader of the Liberal Party for a year and three months, going on four. It is the tradition in this place for someone who is unelected and has never sought a mandate from the people, within the first year or very soon after, to put their name forward and say to the people, "I am willing to offer my services. You've seen me for the past several months. You've seen how I act. You've seen what I do. You've seen how I sue. You've seen what I do and you've seen how I sue. Now I want to offer you my services to be Premier for the next four years. I'm giving you, the people, the ultimate authority in the province of Ontario, the opportunity to pass judgment on my leadership and my premiership." That's the thing to do.

We'll have the opportunity with the budget. If the NDP decide they want to prop up the government once again, maybe it's time for Kathleen Wynne to say, "It's time to pull the plug myself and get a mandate from the people."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: It's always interesting to listen to the member opposite articulate his perspective. I appreciated the architectural tour. That was interesting. I'll be forever reminded now of the eagle at my back as we soar to new heights and do what we need to do to protect the people of the province.

I want to speak to the bill, because it speaks very well to some of the things happening in Ontario, particularly around developments, when someone has got a legitimate issue that needs some adjudication around things like the OMB and stuff like that, where you can sometimes, based on the size of your wallet, do things that mitigate negatively to the common folk who have a right to protect their interests. What this bill doesn't do is allow anybody to libel somebody else deliberately, and in some cases perhaps even maliciously. I don't think anybody around here would ever want to do anything like that, but we do have to try to do what we can to protect all our citizens from being harmed when someone utters a terminological inexactitude. That's not a good thing to utter anywhere. Mom used to always say, "Always tell the truth. Then you don't have to remember what you said." I thought that was wise.

I want to congratulate the member for his comments, and the architectural tour in particular. That was the most fascinating part of what he shared.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Michael Harris: I, too, enjoyed my colleague's remarks this morning. For folks in the galleries, it was a bit of an architectural history lesson. If they've not already heard, they did get that today.

I want to just provide some brief comments. I know I'll have a further opportunity later on, but I think it's important. I'm going to reference a recent summary judgment update that talks about a recent Supreme Court ruling. It was put together by Cassels Brock and recently published, on January 23, so it's some updated information when it comes to this. I'll just reference it.

"The Supreme Court of Canada"—back in early January—"released a much-anticipated decision in *Hryniak v. Mauldin* ... that calls for greater access to affordable, timely and just adjudication of claims." This case "addresses amendments to Ontario's summary judgment rule made in 2010, and the subsequent interpretation of that amended rule by the Ontario Court of Appeal in *Combined Air Mechanical Services Inc. v. Flesch*" in 2011.

"The court signalled that, in light of the increasing complexity and expense associated with trials, a shift in culture was necessary to allow more cases to be determined by motion for summary judgment. This shift is intended to reflect the 'modern reality' of civil litigation and entails 'simplifying pre-trial procedures and moving the emphasis away from the conventional trial in favour of proportional procedures tailored to the needs of the particular case.'"

Just in summary, this decision "signals what will likely be a substantial shift in the adjudication and resolution of claims in Ontario. Courts are likely to see an increase in the number of summary judgment motions, and we can only hope that litigants will see a corresponding increase in the number of judgments from summary judgment motions."

I would reference this judgment ruling by the Supreme Court back in January as an update to anti-SLAPP.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm pleased to respond to the comments on Bill 83, which is the Protection of Public Participation Act, or, as it's often referred to, the anti-SLAPP act.

I think it's important that we distinguish between libel, when someone knowingly says something that is false about one person, and the purpose of this anti-SLAPP legislation, where you typically have a group of citizens who are talking about something that's in the public interest, perhaps an environmental issue in a community or a planning issue in a community, and the group of citizens comes together to speak out against the environmental issue or the planning issue, and then a corporation hits the citizens' group with a lawsuit. This is what this is meant to prevent, which is big corporations going after citizens' groups that have a legitimate interest in bringing an issue to the attention of the public.

I think it's clear, what the focus is on this. I think it's clear that this is a bill that is meant to protect the right of citizens to speak out on issues.

I think it's also clear—I think we've already had over nine and a half hours of debate on this issue. I think it's time that we move this along to committee, where we can make any refinements that are necessary.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased to stand in support of my colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, because, in short, this legislation provides a method for judges to dismiss SLAPP lawsuits. This is a good idea, because the time has come where we can't let bullying tactics squelch, if you will, the voice of people who are trying to stand up in the best interests of the public.

When I say that, I can't help but think about Esther Wrightman. Esther is from Lambton county. Specifically, she lives near Kerwood, Ontario, in Adelaide township, which is going to be home to some significant development from NextEra.

Esther is right in the middle of a wind project that is subjecting her to a number of concerns—environmental, health, economic; the list could go on. And so, as she raised her voice and spoke on behalf of people who are so frustrated with the manner that the Liberal green energy scheme has failed and has let huge corporations run roughshod, if you will, all over rural Ontario—guess what?—this part-time employee of a local nursery near Kerwood, and a mother of two, has been hit with a lawsuit. Essentially, NextEra is bullying her to cease and desist in terms of how she is communicating her angst, her concern over environmental health and economic issues associated with the failed Liberal green energy scheme, and it is not right.

0920

I am so glad, because this is important: With this legislation, if the judge determines that the lawsuit itself was brought in bad faith, damages can be awarded to the defendant as the judge deems appropriate.

We have to enable our people to freely stand up and speak on behalf of the public and their self-interest.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Renfrew has two minutes.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'd like to thank all the members for their comments on my 10-minute speech. I was kind of shocked that it was only 10 minutes this morning, but I guess the bill has rolled into the 10-minute sections.

I maintain my general message on the sad irony that we're talking about this bill on the very day following that the Premier serves my leader, Tim Hudak, and my colleague from Nepean–Carleton, Lisa MacLeod, with \$2-million lawsuits for hurting her feelings.

Anyway, there are mixed messages on this bill as well. I also have lots of people calling me and saying, "You can't support this bill." For example, people in the forestry business are very concerned about having vexatious lawsuits levelled against them to prevent them from doing their job in harvesting trees. You can't build anything in this country without harvesting trees, but there are people out there who believe that we can somehow build buildings out of plastic and maybe straws or

something, or maybe hay; I don't know what they think. The reality is, you've got to harvest trees in order to build things, including the desks that we do our work on here, Speaker.

There are people who have concerns about this legislation and it giving the opportunity to a lot of people who love to try to prevent people from doing their jobs, to institute vexatious suits themselves.

There are two views on this. I hope that we can get this bill to committee so we can hear from all of the stakeholders out there on both sides of the argument, so that when the bill does pass, we've got the most responsible and common-sense piece of legislation possible.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Randy Hillier: It's my pleasure to add to the debate on Bill 83, the anti-SLAPP bill.

It will be quite interesting and ironic if the first-ever use of this legislation would be from the Leader of the Opposition and my colleague from Nepean-Carleton in their upcoming suit and statement of claim by the Premier of the province. It would be quite ironic if they get the opportunity to exercise this in the coming times.

It's good to see the Attorney General in the House, listening to the debate today. I think this is an important piece of legislation. I think it is important for the Attorney General to hear the different comments and perspectives from around the House.

I want to begin by saying that this anti-SLAPP legislation, I believe, is a necessary function out of the dysfunction of our present system. We often see, in this House, legislation that comes forward that really, in essence, puts a bandage on a problem. We do have problems in our legal system—it's getting difficult to even call it a justice system these days. Even the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Beverley McLachlin, has, on many occasions, written and spoken about the dysfunction of our legal system.

I view Bill 83 as one of those bandages that doesn't really look at the root problems that are happening in our legal system, but as some way to try to minimize or mitigate the faults and the failings that we see in our legal system. There's a host of them, but I think we can all recognize some very problematic functions of the system: the high costs for people to seek remedies or to defend against actions, the necessity and the inability for people to defend themselves, always requiring others to advocate on their behalf. This legislation, Bill 83, is one of those bandages to try to minimize the dysfunction.

Another one is the prompt payment legislation that's in the House right now as well. If we had a good, solid, functioning legal system, we would not need to have that prompt payment legislation as well, but contractors are finding difficulty in seeking remedy and finding remedy in the courts.

Mr. Speaker, I have a direct and personal story on this anti-SLAPP legislation which I think is important, and I'd like to share it with the House and with the Attorney General. Back in 2004, before I became elected, a resident of a township in Lanark county—his name is Dr.

Don Page, and people from the third party would maybe recognize his name. He was a long-time member of the NDP, and he ran unsuccessfully for the NDP. He lived in Montague township, and across the road from him there was a tragic fire with fatalities. Don Page lived next door and immediately went to the assistance—did manage to help save the family dog, but there were fatalities in that fire.

Don spoke out and was critical of local government about their response, and the fire department's response, to that fire. In due course—in very short course—the township of Montague laid a defamation suit against Don Page.

Really, Speaker, and for the Attorney General, that was a case where the local government of the day felt uncomfortable with the criticisms of one of their residents and thought a \$50,000 defamation suit would suffice to shut Don Page up.

That was in 2004; the case was finally settled in 2006. At the time, I headed up a local organization called the Lanark Landowners Association, and we raised a substantial amount of money to assist Don and his wife in their defence. They're pensioners and of modest means, and there was no way that they could afford to adequately defend themselves. The system is so broken that for laypersons to defend themselves is really impractical and not effective.

We did raise some money, enough to hire a lawyer for Don, and the judge eventually—actually, by the time it did get to court, the first hearing in court, the judge threw the case out. It was interesting what the judge said in his decision: "In a free and democratic system, every citizen must be guaranteed the right to freedom of expression about issues relating to a government as an absolute privilege, without threat of a civil action for defamation being initiated against them by that government." That was Justice Kenneth Pedlar of the Ontario Superior Court, in his decision about Dr. Don Page. He did go on to say that those members of council who felt that there was a defamation could do so as individuals, but not as part of the government of Montague township.

0930

It was also interesting—and I think this is something that we have to recognize—that sometimes remedies are not immediate and sometimes they may not be apparent. That was the decision in 2006. Shortly thereafter, there was a municipal election in Montague, and four of the five elected positions on that council were not elected in the next round of elections; four of the five were replaced by other people. So there was another remedy that was not so quick, that was not so apparent, but people saw that there was an abuse by that government, by that local government, against one of their own residents, and they took action. They couldn't take action in the courts, but they could take action in that court of public opinion and express themselves.

I would like the Attorney General to think about some of the other problems within the legal system that we could fix or streamline and make more effective so that further pieces of legislation such as Bill 83 and such as

the Prompt Payment Act would not have to come before the House, so that we could actually have a legal system that we could refer to as a justice system that provides remedies, that provides protection and defence by individuals against those people with deeper pockets. How thick your wallet is and how deep your pockets ought not to be the measurement of legal success in this province. I think we can make significant strides in this Legislature bringing forth reforms and amendments to our legal system that actually attack the root of the problems and not just apply more layers of bandages and allow that root, that open gash, that problem to persist and to continue.

I know that Don Page was not the only person who has been affected in that manner. There have been many, many people, and it is a duty and an obligation of us to assist our residents and common, everyday people so that they can find protection and remedy in the courts.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments.

Mr. John O'Toole: I did listen to the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington and I, in some respects, commend him for his work with the Ontario Landowners, giving voice to people. It's like anything else, though; I think it's about finding the proper balance in these things.

The right of the individual to freedom of speech, of course, does not include saying anything you want. There is some responsibility for the things you say—libellous statements and that. Regardless of what side of the issue, whether it's wind turbines or landfill sites or a power plant, whatever—you name it—there's the proponent, who's always viewed to be the bad guy. We saw that in BC in the referendum this past weekend with respect to the pipeline to get Alberta crude to the coast. These are contentious issues, and I think that the rights of people need to be respected. This bill does somewhat go in that direction, but the federal courts have recently made rulings, and the federal government as well has made some changes.

There is a balance that is trying to be found. We can't stall the complete economy of the world, whether it's what's going on in China with rare earth metals or what's going on in other places. We should look to our own ability to resolve disputes. This bill does talk to that, and I've had calls on both sides of the issue.

As the member said, in my riding, he would know that there are several issues. One is the turbine; it's actually an issue. And there's another one: It's a transformer station—both of which I've spoken to Minister Bradley about to try to find a resolution locally as opposed to a legal dispute that's going to cost everybody, including the government, more money.

You should never take on the government, whether it's expropriating highways on the 407 or building a transformer station, because the government is going fight you with your own tax money. So be reasonable. The government, as well as the proponents themselves, need to listen to the concerns of people and find ways of reasonable dispute resolution.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I'm happy to stand here and add a few comments to the previous speaker.

I listened to him very carefully outlining a particular situation. I don't think any of us disagree with him that such situations do occur on a day-to-day basis throughout the province, but this particular bill, Bill 83, has been debated for well over nine and a half hours. To my best guess, there are probably 50 or so members of this Legislature who have spoken to the bill, and I think we all agree on the problems described by everyone who has spoken in the past.

As a former member of city council, I'm totally aware of situations like this. I clearly see that this bill is a move in the right direction. I would encourage all members to allow the bill to go to committee, where it could be debated and amended, if necessary. But at least let's get the business of government done as quickly as possible.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I am pleased to stand today to talk about my colleague's comments on this piece of legislation.

No citizen in Ontario, indeed, in Canada, should be afraid to speak out about something. This anti-SLAPP legislation will help with that. I brought a resolution to the House a month or so ago concerning joint and several liability, which is a similar situation where municipalities are getting very frightened of being sued for actions that they had no control over.

I liked the comments by my colleague here. The way the justice system is set up these days, if you don't have a lot of money, you can't fight these things. It's very difficult. They'll take your house and whatever else you'll have to sell in order to fight these things. It's not fair. We need to have some control over lawsuits in general in Ontario and, certainly, this will help out.

Mr. Rob E. Milligan: This government loves lawsuits.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes, we see that this government does like lawsuits.

I would suggest that this go to committee. It could be improved in some ways. There are those who speak out against it. It was mentioned that the forestry system has some real concerns about this, and I can understand what their concerns are.

However, it seems that those with the deepest pockets seem to win a lot of these things, either because their lawyer is a little bit better or perhaps people just don't want to get involved because they don't want to lose everything they've got fighting for something that, probably, they were right in saying in the first place.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Grant Crack: I'd like to thank the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington for his comments. He understands that improvements do need to be made to Bill 83.

I'd just like the echo the member from Scarborough–Rouge River, and as well, the member from Perth–Wellington just mentioned that it should get to committee. That's where we can make the amendments that are necessary so that we can bring this forward. As the member from Scarborough–Rouge River said, over nine and a half hours of debate, over 50 speakers: I think it's time that we move the bill to committee, do what we need to do and move it forward. It's a good piece of legislation for Ontarians.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington has two minutes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I'll make a few comments for the members from Scarborough–Rouge River, Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, Perth–Wellington and Durham.

0940

I don't know how I can express my disdain for the members on the government side suggesting that debate ought to be cut off, that debate ought to be finished on this important piece of legislation. I understand that we want it to be in committee, but before it gets to committee, it should be ventilated well by debate in this House. Indeed, the very essence of safeguarding the public interest is debate within this Legislature. Without debate, there cannot be any safeguard of the public interest. Here we have two members of this government who are saying, "We've had enough. We've heard enough." Well, I can tell you that they didn't hear the story about Don Page before. They didn't hear those stories, and I think those stories are important to hear.

There's no time in the committee to hear those stories. We've all been in those committees. We have a rapid-fire, 10-minute introduction and presentation by people. There's very little time to ventilate and explore those concepts in detail.

I do want this government to recognize that there are those failings. This is one little bandage on a very significant problem in our legal system. It's an important bandage. I would like the Attorney General to start looking and seeing and exploring if there are other avenues we can use to actually fix the problems that we've all talked about in this House so that we get to the point where there is no longer a need for more and more bandages on the system.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 83, the Protection of Public Participation Act, because this is a very important issue. This bill will amend the Courts of Justice Act to create a process to determine if a lawsuit is a SLAPP—strategic litigation against public participation—and to dismiss it accordingly. I think that's the important part of it all, so that someone can look at it and stop this from happening. This would ensure that the time and resources of the court system aren't wasted with these lawsuits. But more importantly, it would help to ensure free speech.

Ontario should not allow strategic lawsuits to be used in an effort to shut down debate. Our democratic system

depends on public participation, from voting to petitions to the ability of the people to speak freely about their ideas and their concerns. It's important that the voices of our people are heard.

Community participation is essential. For instance, in my riding of Oxford, we have a great number of individuals and groups who are very concerned about a proposed landfill in Beachville, near Ingersoll. We are concerned about the danger to our drinking water. It is important that we all have the ability to raise that concern publicly. The volunteers with these organizations in the community have done a great job holding events, creating petitions, launching letter-writing campaigns, appearing at town hall council and much more. They've expressed their concerns through news releases, letters to the editor, Twitter and Facebook, and that is a right they should have. They need to be free to communicate with the rest of the community, their elected representatives and the government without fear of a lawsuit, whether that communication is direct or through the media.

I do want to make it clear that this company has not interfered with that in any way, but it would be easy for another company in the same position to use their resources to launch a lawsuit against community groups and try to intimidate them or to bankrupt them into silence.

Unfortunately, in other communities, developers have tried to do just that. When I was deputy mayor in south-west Oxford, our entire council was hit with a strategic lawsuit for voting to continue fighting against a landfill site. It was pretty clear that it wasn't a serious lawsuit when even the member of council who had voted against the continuation was named in the lawsuit, but it didn't prevent the developers of the landfill site from launching the lawsuit.

I know from working with the groups in my riding that they're all volunteers. They are working in their spare time to protect our community, and our drinking water, and I want to commend them for that. This is not something that they do professionally. They are people with full-time jobs, retired people, and stay-at-home moms who have become leaders because they are concerned about our community and the safety of our water.

I also know from working with them how limited their resources are and how difficult it would be if they are faced with a lawsuit. We need to ensure that companies with a lot of resources aren't allowed to silence community groups simply because they don't like what they are saying.

It's not just the community organizations themselves that face financial threat from these lawsuits. Individuals who are named have to worry about their families and their homes. They may face huge legal costs to fight the lawsuit even though there isn't any merit to it. Strategic lawsuits are simply meant to bully and intimidate someone into staying quiet.

Members on all sides of this Legislature said they are against bullying, and yet we now see a lawsuit being used just for that. Mr. Speaker, I don't think we can have a full discussion about this bill and the impact of strategic law-

suits without discussing the situation that has developed in this Legislature. As we all know, several weeks ago the Premier threatened the Leader of the Opposition with a lawsuit if he did not cease his comments and questions about her involvement in the wiping of computer hard drives in the Premier's office. Yesterday, it was announced that she is suing him for \$2 million.

Bill 83 was created based on the recommendation of the Attorney General's Anti-SLAPP Advisory Panel. According to that report, "Strategic litigation against public participation ... has been defined as a lawsuit initiated against one or more individuals or groups that speak out or take a position on an issue of public interest. SLAPPs use the court system to limit the effectiveness of the opposing party's speech or conduct. SLAPPs ... intimidate opponents, deplete their resources, reduce their ability to participate in public affairs, and deter others from participating in discussion on matters of public interest." Mr. Speaker, based on that definition, it appears the Premier's lawsuit is, in fact, strategic litigation against public participation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Point of order, member for Mississauga–Streetsville?

Mr. Bob Delaney: I refer the Speaker to standing order 23(g), paragraphs (i) and (ii), which constrain the member from referring to a "matter that is the subject of a proceeding ... that is pending in a court or before a judge for judicial determination...."

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Order.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You may need it if I decide to throw somebody. Order.

Continue.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, the standing orders of this Legislature direct members not to refer their comments to matters that are in fact the subject of a legal proceeding, and what the member has made mention of is, in every respect, a matter that is the subject of a legal proceeding.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. I'm going to take a five-minute break and decide on your request as a point of order.

Clerk?

The House recessed from 0948 to 0950.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Be seated.

In reference to the point of order by the member from Mississauga–Streetsville, it is true that what he had quoted is in the legislation; however, at the end of the legislation it says, "where it is shown to the satisfaction of the Speaker that further reference would create a real and substantial danger of prejudice to the proceeding."

It's my opinion that the member wasn't doing that, and he may continue.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, can we have some of the time back that the member opposite used? Ten minutes is a fairly short period of time to speak.

Interjections.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: It was running all the time you stood up.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You didn't lose any time, apparently, when I called the five minutes. Continue.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, I know the members on the other side of the House are not happy that I'm raising this issue, but it is directly related to this bill. It's an example of exactly the type of lawsuit that this bill is supposed to deal with: a lawsuit meant to intimidate, a lawsuit meant to make someone keep quiet.

Members of the Legislature are protected from lawsuits when speaking in this chamber. Why should that change when they can use the same reference and take it outside the chamber? I don't believe a member of—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I know you're not happy with it, but at least let him have his day in court, so to speak. Thank you.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, I think it's unfortunate that the Premier has chosen a lawsuit which is so contrary to the very bill that her government introduced and that we are debating here today. I hope that if it passes, this bill will help prevent that type of lawsuit in the future.

It takes courage to continue to speak out in the public interest despite the threat of litigation, whether it is concerns about a local development or questioning an individual's involvement in deleting information on gas plants. I want to commend the Leader of the Opposition for his courage in not being intimidated by the threat of a strategic lawsuit, I want to commend him for putting the interests of the people of Ontario first, and I want to commend him for continuing to work to raise the questions in spite of the threat of litigation.

But it is not a situation that we should be putting the people into. We want an Ontario where people feel free to speak about their concerns. We want an Ontario where people can talk about issues of public interest. We want an Ontario where the Premier doesn't sue the Leader of the Opposition. We should be able to have a free and open debate. We should be able to put forward our ideas, opinions and beliefs without threats of bullying. As the Attorney General said when he introduced this bill, "I think all members will agree that one of the greatest things about living in a fair and democratic society like Ontario's is that we can speak out on matters that are important to us, sometimes having a difference in opinion and issues that we express from time to time." I want to thank him for that.

Mr. Speaker, it is not enough for this government to just say people should be able to speak out, or even to introduce this bill to limit the impact of strategic litigation. To have a conversation, you have to be willing to listen to those who disagree, not just to intimidate them into keeping quiet. To govern, you need to listen to the people even if you don't like what they are saying. Our political system works because we in the opposition ask questions, and because we point out where the government missed the mark, where the government failed. It is what our constituents sent the opposition to Queen's Park to do.

They sent the government here to do a job too. They wanted you to focus on creating jobs and strengthening our economy, to protect health care and education. Instead, you have chosen to focus on a lawsuit.

Instead of talking to their lawyers, the members on the other side should listen to what the people are saying. Mr. Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Hon. Mario Sergio: Speaker, we've had nine and a half hours and 50 speakers. It's time to approve the bill. I hope that everybody agrees with that and we move on with it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Durham.

Mr. John O'Toole: I commend my colleague from Oxford and show great respect for his determination to bring a reasonable opinion on an interesting matter, on Bill 83. I would say he comes with a great deal of experience, as a former mayor, a former minister of the crown, and a valuable asset in Ontario.

What he was saying, in fairness, is that you shouldn't use your power and influence to predetermine outcomes of disputes. I think what we're clearly struggling with this morning is the balance that's needed to make sure that we aren't just a natural barrier to progress in Ontario, which affects everyone from young people to older people.

But we see that going on across Ontario now quite regularly, where the government is sort of forging ahead with a plan that's a failed plan in many respects, particularly the energy file. They have completely messed the file up with Bill 150, and I would say the former minister, George Smitherman, started the whole fiasco.

With the Minister of the Environment here today—there's an issue in my riding. I just think it's a matter of courtesy, and a matter of listening, to resolve many disputes. The transformer station in my riding—I think when they have these public information centres, they are strictly a way of mollifying people, just deflecting them so they don't get a cause and any motion behind their cause. They just go ahead and bully, basically, the outcome. Because when you have a big company like Hydro One against four or five little settlers around an area, and they're going to infringe on their environment, they should take the time, listen to their concerns and address their concerns in a reasonable manner. They've had to hire a consultant. Actually, they're looking at hiring a lawyer now, to take on a decision made by the minister. I'm not part of that dissent. It has been poorly managed by poor GR and public relations—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you.

Mr. John O'Toole: —and it's that simple. They could have solved it without all this fuss.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Hon. James J. Bradley: Mr. Speaker, we have consensus on this bill that should go to committee. I certainly support it going to committee at the earliest opportunity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: I'd like to comment on it very briefly. I understand that the SLAPP legislation—a lot of it began with some demands from the people on the project around Big Bay Point on Lake Simcoe. That's where a lot of the people were basically scared off because of the threat of lawsuits. We completely understand that. There has definitely been some movement over the last few years to create what we call SLAPP legislation.

I know we've had a substantial amount of debate on it, and it will go to committee. I'm sure we're going to hear from all kinds of people, whether it's in the development industry or environmental industry or whatever it may be, either supporting or opposing or, in some cases, amending the bill as well. I think that that's one of the reasons we felt that it should get to committee in the first place and why we enjoy the debate on it, so we have this opportunity.

I do think it's really ironic that we are debating this bill this week, when the leader of the official opposition and our critic have been slapped with a lawsuit, simply because they're trying to voice their concerns. Our job is, we're the official opposition. We are to oppose things we see wrong with the government.

Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you, what I'm hearing in my riding, and what I've heard in a number of visits across the province, is people are telling our party to keep it up, to keep the fight up.

The Premier may have thought she has scared everybody off with this. The reality is, she has kind of opened up a hornet's nest, because people across the province want to know what's going on with those power plants. They want to know what her involvement is. I think she made a really big blunder by putting out that libel suit against Tim Hudak and Lisa MacLeod.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Oxford has two minutes.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I want to thank the members from Durham and Simcoe North for their comments. I also want to thank the minister responsible for seniors and the Minister of the Environment for their comments. I agree with them that the bill should go to committee and have further debate, but that doesn't mean we should cut the debate short in here.

Obviously, from the noise we heard from the governing party as I was making my presentation, it was quite obvious that I was saying things that they hadn't heard before and that had some impact on them. So I guess maybe more debate needs to be had, because there's more to be heard.

Because he took two minutes to bring out his point of order to you, Mr. Speaker, and the clock was running during the time that he was making his point of order, there were parts of my presentation I couldn't get in.

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I want to tell you this: The Attorney General's Anti-SLAPP Advisory Panel found that many people had been intimidated into silence by strategic lawsuits. Their report

said “Many also knew of others who had been sued, or who had refrained from participating in public questions either because they had received a warning that they risked being sued if they did speak out, or because they were afraid of being sued in any event.” The point I was making in my presentation was that in fact that’s what the present situation seems to be, in this House: Every time we hear another step being taken, we say, “But if only they didn’t bother us and say these things anymore, then we would drop the lawsuit.” It seems to me that’s a SLAPP by any name you want to call it. That’s why it’s so important that if they’re going to introduce legislation, they don’t introduce it just so they can bring it forward, send it to committee and we won’t see it again until after they’re through with trying to intimidate and bully the opposition. I take great exception with that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate.

Hon. John Milloy: I’m pleased today to talk on Bill 83, the Protection of Public Participation Act. As members are aware, it proposes a made-in-Ontario solution that would allow courts to quickly identify and deal with strategic lawsuits to prevent the unwarranted silencing of critics and minimize the time and resources wasted by plaintiffs, defendants and the courts on meritless crimes.

I just want to provide some context to how we got here this morning. The bill was introduced on June 4, 2013, and has seen significant debate here in the House. Over 56 members of the Legislature, by my count, have either spoken to this bill or participated in the debate during questions and comments. The bill has been debated, I’m now told, for some 10 hours over the past seven months. Listening to the debate, it’s been clear that the majority of this House is in support of this bill. Yet the official opposition is intent on continuing debate, and their only goal is to delay. The official opposition has been putting up speaker after speaker. Surely this signals there is no true desire to have further meaningful debate on this bill.

I believe it is time that this bill passes second reading and be sent to committee, where the real work takes place. In committee, members of all parties will hear from all stakeholders that have an interest in this bill. In committee, members will have an opportunity to move amendments to strengthen the bill. At the same time, this House can move on to debate other substantive matters. As members are aware, there are a number of pieces of important legislation already introduced, which the government would like to debate and move through the legislative process. We can’t devote the necessary time to these important matters if we’re forced to continue debating this bill—for example, the Youth Smoking Prevention Act, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, the Fair Minimum Wage Act, the Ontario Immigration Act, the keeping Ontario’s roads safe act, and I can go on.

Mr. Speaker, we’d like to spend time debating these pieces of legislation, but we can’t until Bill 83 is dealt with. As a result, I move that this question be now put.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The government House leader has moved that the question now be put. It is up to the discretion of the Speaker to either allow this to happen or not. I am allowing the motion to go forward.

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

Interjection: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I didn’t hear a no.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Okay, we will defer this until after the proceedings—yes.

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

I believe the ayes have it. This will be deferred to this morning after question period.

Vote deferred.

STRONGER WORKPLACES
FOR A STRONGER ECONOMY ACT, 2014
LOI DE 2014 SUR L’AMÉLIORATION
DU LIEU DE TRAVAIL AU SERVICE
D’UNE ÉCONOMIE PLUS FORTE

Resuming the debate adjourned on February 19, 2014, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 146, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour / Projet de loi 146, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l’emploi et la main-d’oeuvre.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I believe when the debate ended, Mr. Natyshak, the member from Essex, had the floor.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to my colleagues who are in the House.

Before I begin, I haven’t had the opportunity to extend my condolences and sympathies to my colleagues in the PC caucus. I know today is a sombre day for you, who are friends and colleagues of Mr. Flaherty and Christine. I just want to extend my sympathies to you.

Bill 146 is titled the Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act. It has several provisions that change some regulations as well as make changes to the Employment Standards Act. We see these changes as a small, minor, but essentially positive step forward to close some of the loopholes in Ontario’s labour statutes.

I’ll go through some of the provisions. Firstly, the bill replaces the current six-month cap on back wages in section 111 of the Employment Standards Act with a two-year limit, while—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): There are seven sidebars going on. I can’t even hear the member from Essex. If you really want to have a meaningful discussion, I suggest you go through those doors at the back.

Continue.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you, Speaker. The first provision that I'd like to talk about is the extended damages provision.

The bill replaces the current six-month cap on back wages in section 111 with a two-year limit, extending the limit in which you can pursue back wages while also removing the \$10,000 cap on damages for unpaid wages. These changes will allow workers to recover a greater proportion of their actual lost wages when employers have violated the Employment Standards Act over an extended period of time.

Let me just work that through: Imagine, as a worker or particularly a young worker—through reviewing this bill, I see a lot of it is focused on young workers and vulnerable workers. So imagine you are in that type of position where you're owed more than \$10,000 in damages, and you have not had the ability or capacity to recover, or to even start to pursue the ability to recover, those back wages past six months. Well, you're out of luck, as it currently stands in the province of Ontario.

When we see this type of change to the Employment Standards Act, we certainly see it in a positive light. I don't think it could be argued by anyone in this House that workers shouldn't have the ability to pursue all of the back wages that they are owed, and rightfully owed, and also to have a flexible amount of time to be able to figure out how to do that, to receive counsel, either through legal counsel or through a whole host of workers' advocacy groups that exist, that are out there to support vulnerable workers, and I'd certainly like to give them a shout-out today. The workers' action centres that exist in our communities all across the province—the folks at the Windsor workers' action committee do great work on behalf of unrepresented or unorganized workers, mainly new immigrants to Canada and to Ontario, and also younger workers, who don't necessarily know their rights and the Employment Standards Act fully.

We see this first provision, the extended damages provision, as something that certainly is a step towards enhanced fairness in our Employment Standards Act as well as something that really can't be argued against in good conscience in this House.

Secondly, another provision is the new temp agency record-keeping and joint and several liability for temp agency workers. I don't know if there is a more contentious issue, at least in my riding, than the prominence of temp agencies and the real explosion that we've seen in terms of temp agencies in our communities. They have, by and large, replaced a lot of the more traditional labour supply mechanisms that we were used to.

No longer do you open up the newspaper in the classifieds and see a whole host of job postings, as we did previously. Temp agencies are pretty much the go-to for companies to seek out temporary labour, and they certainly do that. They do that sometimes in a way that is necessary but, most often, it is access to quick and underpaid or undervalued labour.

1010

It's a really contentious issue in my riding, where I hear stories of people who get a job through a temp

agency, work for 89 days—they hit that 89-day limit—and then are let go, released. The obligations and liabilities on behalf of the company are not there. They're simply thrown back on to the unemployment line. We don't think that's necessarily a productive way to stimulate your economy or to have a stable workforce. It's been quite detrimental to many of our communities, and there's been an explosion there.

The bill specifically imposes new rules on temp agencies. It creates new record-keeping responsibilities for temp agencies to track and record every hour worked by a worker and to retain those records for three years. It also introduces the concept of joint and several liability. In the case of employees sent to work for an employer by a temp agency, this would seem to make sense since, from the employee's perspective, it doesn't matter which business is responsible for the wages as long as one of them ultimately is. In practice, this law will cause employers that use temp agencies to make clear arrangements as to which one of them will be responsible for Employment Standards Act compliance.

Now, of course, this is an issue. There are some grey areas within the contractual obligations as to who enforces the Employment Standards Act, who is responsible upon the injury of a worker and who is responsible for training that worker. We would think that certainly both entities that are engaged in the oversight or the sponsoring of that worker should be held responsible and have some liability.

This provision adds that to our Employment Standards Act to bring both sides to the table and to make it clear prior to that worker actually starting their employment as to who is ultimately responsible, whether it is the temp agency or the employer.

Number three is a new information disclosure requirement, meaning posters and self-audits. It requires distribution of the employment standards poster to every employee, and it adds another tool: the employer self-audit. The self-audit is an interesting wrinkle. It gives the employment standards branch the power to order an employer to conduct a self-audit of its records to determine if it is in compliance with the act or regulations. The employer must conduct the audit and report its findings to the employment standards office.

I think the idea and the concept behind the information disclosure requirements and self-audits is to give us a clearer understanding of the labour market and, in particular, how many employers are actually using temp agencies and what the nature of their work is. As I stated, are they suffering from being hired for very, very short periods and intermittent periods? Are they actually fulfilling their obligations under the Employment Standards Act? And is it very clear as to what the responsibilities are to workers who are given employment through temp agencies?

We think that could be a productive and valuable asset to the ministry, to us as legislators and to those who are in the business of enforcing the Employment Standards Act.

Number four, it introduces new protection for foreign nationals working in Ontario. Protections for live-in

caregivers in the Employment Protection for Foreign Nationals Act are extended to other foreign nationals working or looking for work in Ontario, such as temporary foreign workers. Again, we think that certainly works. That being said, stronger action on this specific provision could have been taken. For example, the proposal in Bill 146 to extend the Employment Protection for Foreign Nationals Act to all migrant workers would provide some protection, but its effectiveness would be limited because it relies on employee complaints rather than proactive enforcement. The act could have included a comprehensive public registry and licensing system for all employers and recruiters, similar to what is in place in Manitoba.

I certainly will make those recommendations if this bill ever does get to committee, and I would hope that we would be able to review some of the other clauses that have been put in place in other jurisdictions that do have maybe a stronger effect in protecting those vulnerable workers who—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I'd like to thank the member from Essex. Due to the fact that it's 10:15, we will continue the debate at another time.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): This House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Michael Harris: I'd like to welcome Debra Lacoste and friends here today to see page captain Nicholas Lacoste, from the great riding of Kitchener-Conestoga, in action. She is in the members' gallery along with her friends. Welcome to Queen's Park and good luck, Nicholas.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's absolutely my delight to welcome to the House this morning folk from a great school, City View Alternative. We've got James Bryers, who's a teacher; Sapphire Newman; Tessa Hill; Luca Soldovieri; Gwendolyn Elbourne; Edwin Huang; and Murley Herrle-Fanning, all here to witness what goes on this morning.

Mr. Monte Kwinter: I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today Gillian Unger, mother of page Samantha Unger, her aunt Honey Unger and her brother Spencer Unger. Today, Samantha is a page captain. Welcome.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the students from the Islamic Foundation, from Scarborough-Rouge River. They're sitting in the gallery above us. They're here to observe question period and to enjoy the day.

ORAL QUESTIONS

POWER PLANTS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is to the Premier. Each day, as we sit through the justice committee and

re-read the OPP ITO, it becomes more clear that Premier Wynne could have either been complicit in or ignorant of the alleged destruction of email documents over the \$1.1-billion cancelled gas plants.

Here are the indisputable facts: She co-chaired the campaign that cancelled them. As a member of cabinet, she signed the contract. She said that the cancellation cost \$40 million when it cost \$1.1 billion. The global password for Peter Faist was open well into her transition and, as the OPP said, it was immediate; it was between February 6 and March 20. Her assistant, Brianna Ames, had her computer wiped after February 11. And Peter Faist worked for her up until two weeks ago.

The secretary of cabinet told us that she could have launched an internal investigation into this. Why didn't she? Is she afraid of—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, let me just say, as I have said before in this House and before committee, that I have taken responsibility for mistakes that were made around the relocation of the gas plants.

When I came into this job, I knew that there needed to be an opening up of the process. I asked the Auditor General to look at the situation. We opened up the scope of the committee. I have appeared before the committee twice. We have put hundreds of thousands of pages of documents in front of the committee. We've changed the rules around the retention of documents.

We have opened up the process. It's very clear that the allegations that are in front of the public at this point are about the former Premier's former chief of staff, whom I did not direct and who was not part of my staff.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: That's convenient, to talk about the one individual where there is an OPP ITO. But we do know other information; I listed it in a chronological way, in an orderly manner.

But the cabinet secretary appeared yesterday at the justice committee, and he said that he and this Premier spoke about passwords for the former Premier's computers. He also said that he spoke with Monique Smith, the former transition chair for Ms. Wynne.

Given that the OPP say the transition happened immediately, she and her transition team would have noticed, after they gained access to those passwords, that the hard drives were wiped.

So I ask the Premier one more time: Given what we know—that you knowingly withheld information from this assembly on the \$40 million—how are we supposed to believe you now, and why didn't you hold a probe into this matter? Is it because you and Monique Smith know a little too much and you're afraid of it coming out?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the government House leader will want to comment on what was or

was not said at committee yesterday. But let me just say, on the issue around the passwords—and this is important—that the member opposite has her facts completely wrong again.

On May 7 last year, the justice committee asked for all gas plant documents in the Premier's office. On May 21, my office delivered 30,000 documents, and here is what my chief of staff wrote to the committee, which the member would have seen:

"I am writing on behalf of the Office of the Premier in response to the motion passed by the Standing Committee on Justice Policy on May 7, 2013....

"[O]n May 9, we were advised by Cabinet Office IT that the email accounts of 52 individuals formerly employed"—formerly employed—"in the Premier's office could be accessed. A search of those accounts was conducted by my office and any available records, applicable to the committee's motion, have been included. I have enclosed with this letter a list of the 52 individuals."

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The facts speak for themselves. I sat in committee; the Premier didn't. The secretary of cabinet told us yesterday that he spoke with the Premier about the passwords for the former Premier's office. He said that he raised red flags with her transition chair, Monique Smith. One of her staff, as I indicated yesterday, had her computer wiped. Another one, who did the wiping, remained on payroll with the Liberal Party up until three weeks ago.

No one believes the Premier on this. She said in this House that it was a \$40-million price tag. It's a \$1.1-billion price tag. She can sue the Leader of the Opposition, and she can try to sue me, but she can't sue the truth. It will come out.

Again, I ask her—and not the third-rate Herb Gray from Dollarama; I'm asking her—will you tell us why you have not decided to call an internal probe? Or will you call a judicial inquiry, barring that?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Excuse me.

Interjections.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I insulted him. I withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. You're ahead of me. Now we're going to do it properly. Would the member please withdraw?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I withdraw.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And the member from Leeds–Grenville will withdraw.

Mr. Steve Clark: I withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm going to try to finish this round by indicating to you that, on both sides, while questions are being put—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'll wait until I have the attention of the people who I need to hear this.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'll wait. Thank you.

While the question is being put, I'm hearing heckling from one side, and when the answer is being put, I'm hearing heckling from the same side.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government House leader, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. John Milloy: If I can begin, I just want to say that I am very, very proud to be compared to the Right Honourable Herb Gray, a man of great integrity and an outstanding public servant. The honourable members across the way can compare me to him any day of the week.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk about Mr. Wallace's third appearance at the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. He made a number of things clear. First, he confirmed that it was the chief of staff to the former Premier who requested the access codes. He confirmed that had he known Mr. Livingston was serious about the request, he would have taken very different steps. He confirmed that the public service's response to committee document requests was done in good faith. And most importantly, Mr. Wallace confirmed that he had not briefed Premier Wynne on the deletion or destruction of emails from the former Premier's office. He confirmed that he did not brief Premier Wynne's transition team.

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POWER PLANTS

Mr. Victor Fedeli: My question is for the Premier.

Last week at question period, I stood here and said, "Many of your cabinet ministers stood in this House and said one thing about the gas plants, knowing the complete opposite to be true...." You stood up and told the Legislature that what I said wasn't true.

Well, Premier, minister after minister stood and said, "You have all the documents," but we didn't have all the documents.

Other ministers, including you, told us the total cost of cancellation was \$40 million, but the Auditor General told us it was \$1.1 billion.

Premier, you're telling the Legislature one thing when the complete opposite is true. We bring the facts to this House; you say they're wrong. Why are you perpetrating false allegations?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock.

Be seated, please. Thank you.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I am not. What I am doing is I am answering the questions that have been asked of me.

All of the members opposite know this: When I came into this office, I knew there were unanswered questions about the relocation of the gas plants. I knew that we needed to provide documentation in response to com-

mittee requests. That is what we have done, Mr. Speaker—hundreds of thousands of pages of documents. The committee has had the ability to call dozens of people before it and to ask questions and to have the answers from those people.

We knew the process needed to be opened up; during my leadership campaign, I said that I was going to do that. I have done that.

There is now an independent OPP investigation under way. We need to let that investigation unfold, and the committee will continue to do its work.

I hope at some point the committee will be able to write a report. I look forward to that. In the meantime, they have their work—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Well, Premier, there are so many scandals, so little time.

Our leader, Tim Hudak, and the member from Nepean–Carleton dig deeper into your scandal, and you try to silence them. The member from Aurora has done a remarkable job of exposing your Ornge air ambulance scandal, and you point fingers instead of answering questions. The member from Barrie has exposed the financial scandal unfolding over the Pan Am Games. I bring the truth about our finances to the Legislature, and you accuse me. Whenever a member of the PC caucus presents more of the facts and brings the truth forward, you lash out with personal attacks and make false accusations.

What are you afraid of, Premier? What are you hiding?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please.

Be seated, please. Thank you.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I actually have a profound respect for the way this House should operate. I have a profound respect for the role of the official opposition and for the third party.

Mr. Speaker, had I believed that there wasn't a need for more openness, then during my leadership run I wouldn't have proposed that we open up the process. I knew that there were questions being asked that needed to be answered. That's why we opened up the process.

Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely my belief that the opposition and the third party have a very important role to play in terms of shining a light on issues that are of importance to the people of Ontario. But in every case, I believe that dealing with facts and dealing with evidence is what their modus operandi should be.

I am interested in debate; I want there to be debate. I want there to be healthy debate based on facts.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please.

Be seated, please. Thank you.

Final supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: You continue to say, "We made mistakes." Well, Premier, there's no mistake. This was

all done by design. The gas plant scandal documents proved you signed the go-ahead for Project Vapour. It was your signature that approved a blank cheque in order to reach a deal. Your signature moved the gas plant from the public court to private arbitration—this was to keep the result secret. Then you told us it was only \$40 million because you buried most of the costs in the hydro bill. It took the Auditor General to show us the extra billion dollars owed by the taxpayer.

Premier, how can you continue to pretend you know nothing of the gas plant cancellation when it was you and you alone who started the whole process?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, we have to deal with facts. The fact is that I was part of a cabinet—

Interjections.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The fact is that I was part of a cabinet that took collective action to implement a promise that had been made by all parties. That's the fact.

I just want to use an example. When we talk about mistakes that were made, here's a mistake that I think was made. I believe that in the initial decision around relocating the gas plants, placing the gas plants where they were and then relocating them, the community was not consulted, was not taken into account in the way that it should have been. There was not a process that engaged community and allowed for that input. We've changed the rules so that that can't happen again, so that communities will be involved. That's what I mean by learning from past experience.

POWER PLANTS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Yesterday, Peter Wallace, the secretary of cabinet, described the plan to bring in outside Liberal operatives to destroy computer records as "stupid." He told the committee that, when it came to political record-keeping, it was the incoming Premier's responsibility to check with her predecessor.

Did the Premier ever talk to Dalton McGuinty about email deletions, computer wiping or record-keeping and, if so, what did he tell her?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As the leader of the third party knows, the allegations on those issues that have been made were made about a staff person, the former chief of staff, of the former Premier. I learned of the nature of those allegations at the same time that she did. I've been very clear that the person against whom the allegations are laid never worked for me and was not part of my staff.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, when Dalton McGuinty left office, there was a blaze of publicity around hidden documents, deleted emails and possible contempt of the Legislature. It's pretty hard to imagine that this wasn't a top-of-mind issue for pretty much everyone. Did

the Premier's chief of staff discuss record-keeping in the Premier's office with David Livingston and, if so, what did he learn?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Here was what was top of mind on this issue for me when I came into this office: How are we going to open up this process so that we can make sure the documents that are being asked for, the questions that are being asked are going to be answered?

We talked about how do we open up the scope of the committee. We talked about whether we should ask the Auditor General to look at the situation. We did that. We opened up the scope of the committee.

So it was top of mind, and as I've said many times today, yesterday and before, in my leadership run, I knew that we needed to open up this process. That's what I've done, that's the commitment I made and that's exactly what I followed through on.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I think the Premier is trying to be a little bit deliberately obtuse here.

The Premier served with Dalton McGuinty for over a decade. She was his campaign co-chair. She signed off on the gas plant decisions and pledged to uphold the legacy of Dalton. Is she seriously claiming that no one on her team asked basic questions about the scandal that chased Dalton McGuinty from office?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The preamble to that question basically says I was part of a government and I was part of a cabinet that took action on a promise that had been made by every party in this House. We implemented the relocation of the gas plants, which was a promise that was made by all parties. I have said that's the case. I was part of that cabinet. We did act on that, because the initial process of locating those gas plants was not what it should have been. The community was not consulted in the way that it should have been, Mr. Speaker. There needed to be a different process.

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Two things on my mind when I came into this office: We need to open up the process and make sure that the questions that are being asked about the relocation get answered; we did that. The second thing was, we need to change the process going forward, and that is what we have done.

POWER PLANTS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. Peter Wallace told the Standing Committee on Justice Policy that he began talks with Monique Smith, the head of the Premier's transition team, on January 22, before David Livingston asked for a password to wipe computers in the Premier's office. He said they discussed the situation with the gas plant scandal.

What steps did the Premier's transition team take to ensure records would actually be protected?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, again, I think what I will do is quote what the secretary of cabinet said yesterday

at committee. He was asked by the member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton, "Did you provide updates to anyone not perhaps in the Premier's office, to any minister's office or anyone affiliated with any of the ministers?" Peter Wallace said, "No, I did not."

Mr. Speaker, I know that the leader of the third party knows that during the transition period, we were very engaged in getting ready for going forward with governing. She knows that because my staff were meeting with her staff. We were working to set up the committee, as I said in answer to previous questions. It was top of my mind that we open up a process that would allow the questions that were being asked to be answered. That's what we did. I made that commitment and followed through on it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The secretary of cabinet told the gas plants committee that one of the things he raised with Monique Smith was record retention. I quote: "So we had broad conversations around the issues in front of the Legislature; about document production by the public service; about the absence of document production by others...."

Now, can the Premier tell us what the head of her transition team relayed to her about this conversation?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that the government House leader is going to want to speak to the committee process yesterday. But just let me say this: The leader of the third party knows that we have changed the rules around document retention in my office. We have trained the staff to know what to retain and what not to retain.

So, again, it was very much my concern that we put in place the structures and the rules to make sure this situation did not arise again, whether it was the initial situation of the location of the gas plants or the way documentation was dealt with. We changed the rules. We've made it clear what those rules are, and in the process of doing that have provided the information that has been asked for by the committee.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier continues to claim that she's as surprised as anyone by the allegations, investigations and wasted billion dollars. But the people stuck paying the bill for this mess know that she's not just an average citizen. She sat at the cabinet table. She headed up the campaign team. She signed off on the gas plant cancellations. She and her team were briefed on what was going on.

Why won't the Premier simply tell us what she was told and when?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, that member was the leader of the party that made the exact same promise going into the last election and fails to provide us with the costing and the work that she did.

But let's talk about what Mr. Wallace said in front of the committee yesterday. Two important points: In terms

of his discussions with the transition team, “We did not express any advice with respect to the management of political records or the hard drives or the emails associated with the former Premier’s office.” That was his discussion with the transition team.

But what is equally important is that Mr. Wallace, in his testimony, spoke about the commitment of the current Premier to make sure that necessary documents, documents that had been requested, would be provided to the appropriate legislative committees, and that she made openness part of her hallmark as she became Premier: another important point that Mr. Wallace made yesterday.

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Mr. Monte McNaughton: My question this morning is to the Premier. Premier, following up on my questions from yesterday about possible illegal Liberal donations, the Toronto Sun has reportedly been speaking with Mr. Barry about what you said was a clerical error since October. During this time, no adjustments have been made in the official records at Elections Ontario, and none of the seven Liberal entities, including your chief of staff or your Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, have returned any of the nearly \$11,000 in potentially illegal donations.

Premier, a true clerical error does not occur multiple times over multiple years and does not occur in donations totalling nearly \$11,000. Premier, was it because James Barry was illegally funnelling money to your Liberal Party that you decided to reward him with an appointment to the board of governors for the College of Trades, or was there another reason?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I don’t think the answer changes from yesterday. The rules surrounding political donations are obviously a very important part of the democratic process. We need to make sure that those rules are in place. My understanding is that Elections Ontario has been asked to look at some questions about some particular donations. My understanding is that that process is ongoing. Of course we’ll work with Elections Ontario if they have any questions. That is what I said yesterday, and it stands today. We will work with Elections Ontario as they undergo this investigation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: You can spin this all you like, but the facts remain. Seven Liberal entities, including your chief of staff and your Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, have accepted nearly \$11,000 in potentially illegal donations, violating the Election Finances Act. Premier, this is not a clerical error. James Barry is a key public figure and heads the IBEW, a key donor to both the Liberal Party and the largest single donor to the Working Families Coalition. This organization has top-notch legal advice and has a sound understanding of Ontario election law because, as

you know, they use its loopholes to fund the Ontario Liberal Party.

Premier, is it because James Barry’s IBEW is funding the Working Families Coalition that you have refused to take the necessary steps to remove him from the board of governors at the Ontario College of Trades, or are you protecting him for yet another reason?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Training, College and Universities.

Hon. Brad Duguid: All we have here is, a complaint was made to Elections Ontario. Elections Ontario is looking into the complaint. The person and the organization that Elections Ontario is looking into has said that there was a clerical error. The member refers to that as something else because he obviously has more information than he’s telling us, because Elections Ontario is looking into this matter right now.

I think we have to also correct the fact—because he should know better than this: James Barry is not a political appointment. Those appointments are made by the appointments council of the Ontario College of Trades. They appoint him to the position on the board of governors there. It’s not a government appointment whatsoever.

I suggest that when the member gets up to slur other people’s reputations, that he at least—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Stop the clock. The member from Simcoe North will come to order.

POWER PLANTS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: My question is to the Premier. Every time it seemed there was a chance to get answers, the Premier seemed to be looking the other way. She claims she didn’t learn about the allegations of computer wiping until March 27, even though members of her staff had their computers wiped a year and a half ago. She never asked the secretary of cabinet for a briefing on email deletions. She claims she has never seen the report on the internal government investigation into computer wiping.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of the Environment, second time. The Minister for Rural Affairs, second time.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: This raises the question: Is the Premier more interested in getting answers or advancing her own deniability?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government House leader.

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Hon. John Milloy: I thank the member for his question. He’s pointing out exactly what we’re saying over here: that it was a former member of the former Premier’s staff, Mr. Livingston, who is the topic of the

investigation by the Ontario Provincial Police, and that the current Premier was not involved.

I'll remind him of his words yesterday in front of the committee. This is what the member said to Mr. Wallace about his interactions with Mr. Livingston: "In making your decision ... were there any points in time where you had contact with or you provided updates to information to anyone in the current Premier's office?"

Mr. Wallace: "No."

"Did you provide updates to anyone not perhaps in the Premier's office, to any minister's office or anyone affiliated with" any in the minister's office?

Mr. Wallace: "No, I did not."

Mr. Speaker, this is a police investigation about Mr. Livingston. These are serious accusations; they are unfounded. We should allow the OPP to do their work.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That's exactly the problem: Getting answers on \$1.1-billion scandals means asking the tough questions. The Premier claims she wanted to fix the problem that led to the actions that the secretary of cabinet called "potentially criminally stupid."

How does the Premier expect to fix the problems if she won't ask the tough questions: how \$1.1 billion was wasted and how key information was destroyed?

Hon. John Milloy: Let's go right back to the beginning: There were 21 gas plants that were sited in the province of Ontario. Two of them were done in error; there were mistakes made about where they sited. Every single party in this House said it was a mistake and that they would cancel those were they elected in government—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. Thank you.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, it was this Premier who opened up the process, who helped facilitate the provision of hundreds of thousands of documents to legislative committees. I can tell you that as House leader I received direction that we have as broad a committee as possible, with broad powers and scope. It has been this Premier who has been looking forward and finding out ways that these types of mistakes will not happen again so that the proper siting of power plants happens in the future.

FLOODING

Mr. Grant Crack: My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. I think everyone in this House would agree that it has been a very long winter, but the sun is shining, and spring has actually arrived.

That means that several small and rural municipalities across Ontario need to be on watch for potential flooding caused by rapidly melting snow and/or heavy rainfall. Just last Thursday in eastern Ontario, the city of Belleville declared a state of emergency due to high water levels. Just yesterday the municipality of Centre Hastings and the municipality of Tweed also declared states of emergency.

Can the minister tell the House about the current situation in Belleville and in the municipalities of Centre Hastings and Tweed, including the efforts that are under way to assist these communities?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I thank the member for the question. Indeed, flood season is upon us and the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management is ready to respond to any potential emergency and prepared to provide assistance when it is needed.

The office has been in contact with affected and potentially affected communities. Unfortunately, as the member mentioned, we all know that Belleville has been hit hard with high water levels since last week due to the spring melt and precipitation. The Moira River has overflowed, affecting approximately 70 homes thus far.

I want to take this opportunity to commend the people of Belleville. So far, they have handled the situation locally, bringing forward over 500 volunteers to sandbag affected homes. This demonstrates determination, compassion and resilience.

Both Centre Hastings and Tweed have declared emergencies on a precautionary basis as well. The emergency management field officer has been in touch with these communities, and we are working with them to offer any assistance and advice that we can provide as a ministry.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Grant Crack: Thank you, Minister, for the update. It's good to know that the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management is prepared to respond to any emergency and able to assist when needed.

Like Belleville, Centre Hastings and Tweed, many communities across Ontario, unfortunately, may face the exact same situation. Rapid flooding can cause severe property damage and threaten the lives of several Ontarians. To avoid risk, it is always best to be prepared and be ready to act when facing a situation like this.

Once again, can the minister tell us what information is important to share with those living in communities across our ridings and how they need to prepare ahead of a potential spring flooding season?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I want to assure the member and all members that we will continue, of course, to work with local communities to ensure that they have all the assistance they need.

I had the opportunity yesterday to speak with the member from Prince Edward-Hastings as well, and I gave him my personal assurance that we will be there working along with him, in his community, to make sure that the communities are protected and they have the assistance they need.

Speaker, we all have a personal responsibility when it comes to making sure that we are prepared for these types of emergencies. We are expected to prepare to take care of ourselves and our families for a minimum of 72 hours.

Being prepared is a three-step process: Make a plan, build an emergency kit, and be informed. I encourage everybody to go to emergencymanagementontario.ca for more information.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My question is to the Minister of Energy. Earlier this week, a renewable energy approval was issued for Jericho Wind Inc., a project owned by NextEra Canada, clearing the way for building 92 new turbines in the municipality of Lambton Shores.

But this isn't the only new approval. Over and above that, in February, an ERT dismissed the appeal of the Kerwood Wind Inc. project, approving 37 new turbines in the county of Middlesex. Also in February, another ERT dismissed an appeal of the K2 Wind project in Huron county, approving 140 turbines. This is happening at the same time as European jurisdictions are abandoning wind projects because they don't work.

Ontario does not need the power. The soaring costs of electricity are making living in Ontario unaffordable.

Minister, in light of all this, why do you keep approving new turbines?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please.

Be seated, please.

Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member for Huron–Bruce, but her information tends to be somewhat inaccurate. These are existing contracts that have been awarded to proponents, and she is suggesting that we ought to have cancelled those projects. She is suggesting that we cancel them all, the same as one of her other colleagues suggested, at a risk of \$20 billion—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Carry on, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: They say we shouldn't—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Just as soon as I get quiet, someone decides to—now he is warned, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Again.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Speaker, the member is basically saying that we should cancel existing contracts. Cancel contracts? Have you heard those words before over there?

We have examined the proposal—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Prince Edward–Hastings will withdraw.

Mr. Todd Smith: I will withdraw.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Greenville will come to order. The member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex will come to order. The member from Huron–Bruce will come to order. The member from Northumberland–Quinte West will come to order.

Finish, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The Leader of the Opposition introduced a bill that would give the Minister of Energy, under his government, the right to cancel 255 renewable contracts—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Minister, your Liberal government cancelled two gas plants to save seats in the last election, but you refuse to listen to the people of Ontario on wind energy. You refuse to listen to the facts. You refuse to follow the lead of other jurisdictions around the world that are abandoning expensive wind projects.

Minister, when will you do the right thing and implement an immediate moratorium on industrial wind turbines? When are you going to do this?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please.

Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the opposition party, through various members, including the leader, continues to suggest—not only suggest, but introduce legislation that would give the minister the authority to cancel—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Prince Edward–Hastings is warned.

Finish, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, out of respect for the opposition, I decline to say anything else.

LONG-TERM CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Yesterday the minister implied that she had no role to play in addressing the over-prescribing of antipsychotic drugs to seniors in our long-term-care homes; it was not herself, but physicians who did the prescribing. She said this in spite of a 2007 report from the Auditor General directing her ministry to address this issue, and in spite of evidence that the province and the government need to do a better job caring for people with dementia.

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My question is simple: Does the minister still think that the problem lies solely with our physicians?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm happy to have the opportunity to clarify that, in fact, that is not what I said. I would happily share the transcripts from the scrum that indicated that we are all in this together. We all have a role to play.

Long-term-care homes are where many of our loved ones end their lives. We want the very, very best care for them. We really are making progress when it comes to providing non-pharmaceutical care for people, particularly through Behavioural Supports Ontario; I'd be happy to talk more about that.

We've also established three centres of learning and innovation—one at Bruyère in Ottawa, one at Schlegel in Kitchener-Waterloo and one here at Baycrest in Toronto—where various research projects are under way, one of them specifically dealing with the appropriate use of pharmaceuticals when it comes to behaviour.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France G elinas: The reality is that the use of antipsychotics as chemical restraints is not because physicians don't know better; it is because of systemic problems. The minister is in charge of our health care system; therefore, she is the one in charge of fixing the problem, not failing our seniors.

It is deeply concerning that the minister would rather point fingers than take a leadership role and face this growing crisis. Can the minister tell Ontarians what it is going to take? Or, as some people say, how many people will need to die before she accepts responsibility for this issue and takes a leadership role?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I accept full responsibility, and we collectively are working within the health care system to deal with this issue. Let me give you a couple of examples of Behavioural Supports Ontario having demonstrated results. In one home, behavioural incidents have dropped by 75%, with a decrease of 90% to 95% in physical injuries to staff, due to Behavioural Supports Ontario.

One resident would start screaming loudly randomly throughout the day, which was very distressing for him, for residents and for staff. The BSO team, through behaviour mapping, identified that he really liked Cheezies and Coke, but he wasn't able to verbalize that that's what he wanted before he got angry. So, any time he gets agitated, they now offer him Cheezies and Coke. His outbreaks have been virtually eliminated, through non-drugs.

There are many, many success stories that do not involve those drugs, and we are working to bring those throughout the health care system.

TOWING INDUSTRY

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Speaker, to live in Mississauga is to spend a lot of time on the road in one's car, and that's why it's not surprising that—

Interjection.

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Oh, sorry. My question is to the Minister of Consumer Services. To live in Mississauga is to spend a lot of time on the road in one's car, and I get my share of complaints from constituents: everything from potholes to auto insurance to tow truck issues.

Therefore, Minister, I was happy to hear that you have tabled new legislation to bring greater consumer protection to drivers in Ontario by addressing some of the many concerns that have been raised over the years with regard to towing services. As has been pointed out in the past, this sector also plays a role in perpetuating auto fraud, which leads to higher insurance rates.

Minister, can you please share with the House how this legislation is going to help my constituents?

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I'd like to thank the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville for this great question. There was tons of discussion about this item yesterday and today in the media.

We have nine million licensed drivers in Ontario who are concerned about insurance rates, and the member is

quite right in stating that fraud in the auto insurance industry is one of the reasons for high insurance rates for drivers in Ontario.

Our Bill 189, the Roadside Assistance Protection Act, intends to address concerns that towing operators contribute to the inflation of rates. There are stories of unscrupulous operators taking advantage of stranded drivers, stories of steering claimants to particular storage and body shop organizations, and stories of motorists' vehicles being towed to a location 20, 30 or even 50 kilometres away. Drivers involved in traffic collisions or in need of roadside assistance should feel confident that the tow truck operator will be treating them fairly, and that is what our legislation will do.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Dipika Damerla: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. As a member with one of the major 400-series highways running through my riding, I hear on a repeated basis concerns and issues with tow trucks and their operators on our highways, specifically what happens when a car is being towed and after it has been towed. That is why I was pleased to hear that there will now be specific legislation to address the issues that my residents and others have raised.

It's really important to ensure drivers are aware of their rights and that they know what to expect when their vehicle is being towed, as it is a moment of vulnerability, especially if it is after an accident. Unfortunately, this moment of vulnerability is also an opportunity for those with unscrupulous intentions to take advantage of stranded drivers.

Minister, can you please share how Bill 189 will ensure drivers and operators are better protected?

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: There are about 1,200 towing operators in Ontario and 3,000 tow truck drivers. Most of them provide good service. They keep our roads free and clear by removing vehicles, including those involved in collisions, and they do it in a timely manner. However, there are concerns, and Bill 189 intends to bring clarity and accountability to the towing industry so Ontario drivers are better protected and safer on our roads.

This legislation, if passed, would do numerous things. First, it would amend the Highway Traffic Act to require all tow truck drivers in Ontario to register under the Ministry of Transportation's commercial vehicle operator's registration system. They are currently not registered. The legislation would also require disclosure and the tow truck drivers to obtain approval from consumers before charging for towing and storage services. Prices would have to be posted—itemized invoices. Alternative payments, not just cash, would be required, as would access to towed vehicle contents. This will strengthen consumer protection in Ontario.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Bill Walker: Mr. Speaker, my question, through you, is to the Premier.

On March 6, I hand-delivered a letter to you and your Minister of Infrastructure, as well as the Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, asking all of you to review a proposal by Georgian College to invest in the relocation of the Marine Emergency Duties training program to the Owen Sound campus. This investment would be a key source of jobs for the communities and region that depend on the marine industry.

Premier, will you invest in the education sector, in jobs and in rural Ontario, and commit to providing funding to this valuable program?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I apologize. I was speaking to one of his colleagues when he started the question, but I heard the last part of it.

The investments that we have made in post-secondary education in rural Ontario and urban Ontario are unprecedented. We have been there for our post-secondary students. We have been there for our post-secondary students in the north. When you look at the program expansions we have seen and the work we have done with universities like Lakehead and Laurentian and others, when you look at the work we have done with our colleges in terms of outreach, and when we look at some of the outreach that those institutions are doing throughout rural Ontario to encourage young people to get access to post-secondary education, it's not by accident that we have increased access to post-secondary education by 161,000 students.

I'll say more about that in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Bill Walker: My question will again go back to the Premier. Sadly, none of the four had the time to actually respond to me. And I was talking about the Owen Sound campus.

Premier, in your BLT leaked budget, it suggests you are prepared to provide 3.5 million public dollars to a private firm called Cisco, yet you have given no such support to a public institution; that is, Georgian College. If this particular training program does not receive your help to move to Owen Sound, there is widespread concern you will, in fact, drive the marine industry out of Ontario to the east and west coasts.

It's a fact: The relocation of the Marine Emergency Duties training centre and program to the Owen Sound campus is a no-brainer and will ensure jobs remain in Ontario, as well as the future of the campus in Owen Sound. Premier, once again, will you commit to supporting what is in the public interest and invest in moving the Marine Emergency Duties training program to Georgian College in Owen Sound?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The responsibility for determining course and program offerings for students across this province comes from our colleges and universities. No government has done better than we have in terms of meeting that demand. That's why we've seen 161,000 new students gain access to our post-secondary system right across this province. You know, that is the largest

increase in students in any 10-year period in the history of this province, including when Bill Davis set up the college programs.

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Mr. Speaker, we'll continue to work with our post-secondary partners as they bring forward ideas in terms of better meeting the needs of our students and better meeting the needs of our economy. We are working towards differentiation within our post-secondary system, which is a first, to ensure we can do an even better job of doing that.

But he is going to have to do his work with Georgian College, and Georgian College will then approach us with course-offering proposals.

THUNDER BAY GENERATING STATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Northerners, like all Ontarians, will be paying through the nose for the Liberal \$1.1 billion gas plant scandal. To add insult to injury, a government that reneged on a promise to convert the Thunder Bay generating station to natural gas is now refusing to allocate sufficient biomass supply to enable the plant to provide the energy that Thunder Bay needs.

Does the government have any plan whatsoever to ensure that Thunder Bay residents and businesses have the energy they critically need?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: We've heard this question about 15 times. About two or three weeks ago, we arranged a meeting with the Ontario Power Authority and other people from the provincial government with all of the members of the committee who wanted to come. Mr. Speaker, they got answers to all their questions. They went away reasonably satisfied. They agreed to have an additional meeting.

I want to read a quote from Scott Travers, president of the Society of Energy Professionals: "This is great news for northern Ontarians and demonstrates the foresight of the Wynne government. The biomass conversion will save jobs and provide clean energy. In the longer-term, it also means that Ontario will be able to see the benefits of its mineral wealth through development of the Ring of Fire."

Mr. Speaker, it was the right decision when we made it; it's the right decision today. I think the leader of the third party should get her facts straight.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister, I stand, you sit.

Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Experts have criticized the recent government announcement for a partial biomass conversion of the Thunder Bay generating station. They say that the biomass supply approved so far is too small to supply the energy required by northwestern Ontario, even in the short term, never mind the energy needs flowing from future mining developments.

Why was the government willing to waste \$1.1 billion to hold on to their political power instead of the power needs of northwestern Ontario?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I have been working very closely with my colleagues from Thunder Bay, both Ministers Mauro and Gravelle. We have arranged meetings with the committee, the Ontario Power Authority and the Independent Electricity System Operator. They had all the technical people in the room. All the technical information indicated it was the right decision. It's very doable.

And on top of it, Thunder Bay is the last coal generation in the province of Ontario—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.
New question?

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Mr. Speaker, my question, through you, is to the Minister of Rural Affairs. Ontario's small and rural communities have many unique and diverse challenges when it comes to economic development and small business growth—places like Schomberg, Nobleton and Vandorf, in my great riding of Oak Ridges–Markham.

There are currently a number of programs designed to assist rural municipalities with these challenges, including the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund and the Eastern Ontario Development Fund. One program that was very popular in my community was the Rural Economic Development Program.

We cannot stand by and do nothing while other jurisdictions are competing for jobs. We need to give our local municipalities funding to help them grow their local economy.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Rural Affairs, what action are you taking to support our rural communities?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank my colleague, the hard-working member from Oak Ridges–Markham, for her question this morning. A short time ago—it seems like just a few months ago—I had the opportunity to be with her to tour the Markham Fair to take a look at what's going on in that wonderful community. Ensuring that rural communities are able to attract good jobs and grow is the top priority for me and my ministry.

The Rural Economic Development Program is paying great dividends. Since 2003, we have invested more than \$167 million in 468 RED projects, creating more than \$1.2 billion in economic activity and, more importantly, creating more than 35,000 good-paying jobs throughout rural Ontario.

The RED Program supports high-value, low-cost projects, which are the foundation of building good jobs and prosperity in rural Ontario. They show off innovation—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Hon. Jeff Leal: It's a great program.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Yes. You'd better sit down.

Supplementary?

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Thank you, Minister, for your response. The Rural Economic Development Program has a strong record of job creation and economic growth, one that many municipalities are familiar with, including those in my riding.

I know the Rural Economic Development funding has enabled an innovative partnership between four companies in Woodbridge and Markham that have strong roots in rural Ontario. But recently, Mr. Speaker, we have heard criticisms from across the floor on Rural Economic Development application guidelines. Through you to the Minister of Rural Affairs: Could the minister please clarify how Rural Economic Development Program guidelines benefit rural Ontario?

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the member for her supplementary question.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I've always believed that you stand on the shoulders of others, so when I became the Minister of Rural Affairs, I looked at the great work that was done by the member from Oxford when he was the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. I simply followed his guidelines in terms of the RED Program to make sure that the eligibility he established would be applied through the RED programs that I note.

When the wonderful member from Oxford was the minister, he provided RED funding to the city of London, the city of Ottawa, the city of Hamilton, the city of Cornwall and the city of Toronto. He did so because there were agricultural entities in those communities that were buying products for the surrounding rural areas. It was a good decision back then; it's a good decision today. We'll keep investing in rural Ontario.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

Mr. Michael Harris: My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, in my hand I'm holding a letter from the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association that threatens its members with a loss of benefits if they volunteer as a firefighter in another municipality.

The letter ignores the vital role that double-hatters play in providing leadership, training and expertise to volunteer forces serving in rural communities. Instead, it narrowly focuses on the provincial union's constitution, which can be used to dismiss and punish full-time firefighters who dare to volunteer where they're needed the most.

Minister, do you have a plan in place to ensure rural municipalities can keep double-hatters volunteering in their communities, or will you just continue to stand by and watch more firefighters walk off the job?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I appreciate the question and I give my word to the member opposite that I look forward to working with him on the issue he is raising. I have not seen the letter that he's referring to, but I can say with definite confidence that we on this side of the House—and I'm sure all members—respect the work that firefighters do every single day.

In my role as Minister of Labour and now in my current role as the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, I've had ample opportunity to spend time with our firefighters, be they professional firefighters or volunteer firefighters, to appreciate the work they do, day in and day out. When there is a fire in our community, as we're all rushing out, they're the ones who are rushing in that—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi:—circumstances, saving lives every single day. We salute them and we thank them for the work they do.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Harris: Again to the minister: I'll send the letter over with a page for your viewing.

As you know, the safety of rural communities in Waterloo region has already been thrown into jeopardy as a result of the provincial union's intimidation tactics. In fact, three double-hatters have already handed in their resignation letters in the Waterloo region, and more are on the way.

Minister, I hope you can understand why this is a major issue of public safety. Double-hatters play a vital role in providing the leadership needed to keep rural communities safe. Minister, will you step up to the plate and present a plan to keep double-hatters volunteering where they're needed the most, or will you do what the Liberal Party always does and turn your back on rural Ontario once again?

1130

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: With all due respect to the member opposite, the safety of our communities and the safety of our firefighters is not an issue between rural Ontario or urban Ontario. It's not an issue between the Conservative Party or the Liberal Party. That is an issue about making sure that members of our community are safe every single day. I will not debase the debate here by getting into these artificial cleavages that have been created by the party opposite, that this is somehow an assault on rural Ontario. On this side of the House, we'll continue to work hard to make sure that members of all communities across the province, as one Ontario, are protected every single day. We work with our firefighters to make that happen.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la première ministre. April 1 has come and gone. That's the day the Horse Racing Partnership Plan was supposed to kick in, striking a five-year agreement for continuation of horse racing in Ontario. Despite this deadline, Sudbury

Downs, the only track in northern Ontario, still does not have an agreement, leaving the track owners, the trainers, the groomers, the vets, the farmers and everybody else who works at or around Sudbury Downs in limbo. Families are at risk of having to sell their farms, and employees don't know if they have a job.

When will the Premier deliver on the promise that she made a year ago in Sudbury to the people of Sudbury that she wants a vibrant horse racing industry in Sudbury?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the member opposite, if she is following this issue, knows that the negotiations are ongoing. She knows that we actually have put horse racing on a sustainable path forward. It surprises me that the third party would think that returning to a process that was not transparent, that was not accountable, would be the right direction to go. We're not going to go there. We have committed \$500 million over the next five years to make sure that horse racing around the province has a future. There are ongoing negotiations. My expectation is that we will have good news and that we will have racing at all of the tracks in the province.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary question?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Those words are becoming harder and harder to believe. There is no agreement, and the racing season is supposed to start in a couple of weeks. Horses don't just happen in northern Ontario. They have to know that they have a future. The future of Sudbury Downs, the livelihood of the people who depend on it—all of this is still up in the air a couple of weeks before racing is supposed to start. Why? Because the government is missing the deadline that they announced a year ago.

Business needs stability to operate. Horse racing families need to know that they have a future. Right now, what we have is a self-fulfilling prophecy that, if you leave them in limbo long enough, they will all leave the area. There won't be horses to race in Sudbury Downs because you will have waited too long. Will the Premier act before it is too late to strike an agreement with Sudbury Downs, the only track in northern Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The premise of that question is ridiculous. The member opposite knows that Sudbury Downs is a summer-meet track and that the dates would not be announced until later in April. That's the expectation year-over-year. The member of the third party knows that the negotiations are ongoing. I believe that she's taking advantage of this moment, because the agreement hasn't been signed, it hasn't been finalized, to ask this question, but she knows full well that the negotiations are under way. She knows that the race dates would not be announced until later in April. We look forward to that.

That agreement won't be in place because of the questions she has asked. The agreement will be in place because of the process that we've put in place, because of the money that we are investing in the horse racing industry and the commitment that I made to have a sustain-

able horse racing industry in the province. That's what we are going to have.

Mr. Rob Leone: Point of order.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We have with us in the gallery the member from Cambridge for the 36th, 37th, 38th and 39th Parliaments: in the members' west gallery, Mr. Gerry Martiniuk. Welcome.

I suspect that the member from Cambridge's point of order was not a point of order but to steal the Speaker's thunder, so I stole it from you.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Huron–Bruce has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Energy concerning approvals of wind projects. This matter will be debated on Tuesday, April 29 at 6 p.m.

DEFERRED VOTES

PROTECTION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR LA PROTECTION DU DROIT À LA PARTICIPATION AUX AFFAIRES PUBLIQUES

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 83, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest / Projet de loi 83, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les tribunaux judiciaires, la Loi sur la diffamation et la Loi sur l'exercice des compétences légales afin de protéger l'expression sur les affaires d'intérêt public.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We have a deferred vote on the motion by Mr. Milloy that the question now be put on the motion for second reading of Bill 83.

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

The division bells rang from 1136 to 1141.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Would all members take their seats, please? Thank you.

Mr. Milloy has moved that the question be now put.

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

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Forster, Cindy	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Fraser, John	Milloy, John
Balkissoon, Bas	Gates, Wayne	Murray, Glen R.

Bartolucci, Rick	Gerretsen, John	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Gélinas, France	Natyshak, Taras
Bisson, Gilles	Gravelle, Michael	Oraziotti, David
Bradley, James J.	Hatfield, Percy	Piruzza, Teresa
Campbell, Sarah	Horwath, Andrea	Prue, Michael
Cansfield, Donna H.	Hoskins, Eric	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Hunter, Mitzie	Sandals, Liz
Colle, Mike	Jaczek, Helena	Sattler, Peggy
Coteau, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	Leal, Jeff	Singh, Jagmeet
Damerla, Dipika	MacCharles, Tracy	Sousa, Charles
Delaney, Bob	Mangat, Amrit	Tabuns, Peter
Dhillon, Vic	Marchese, Rosario	Taylor, Monique
Dickson, Joe	Matthews, Deborah	Vanthof, John
DiNovo, Cheri	Mauro, Bill	Wong, Soo
Duguid, Brad	McMeekin, Ted	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fife, Catherine	McNeely, Phil	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Meilleur, Madeleine	

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnott, Ted	Jones, Sylvia	Pettapiece, Randy
Bailey, Robert	Klees, Frank	Scott, Laurie
Barrett, Toby	Leone, Rob	Smith, Todd
Chudleigh, Ted	MacLaren, Jack	Thompson, Lisa M.
Clark, Steve	McDonell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Dunlop, Garfield	McKenna, Jane	Wilson, Jim
Hardeman, Ernie	McNaughton, Monte	Yakabuski, John
Harris, Michael	Milligan, Rob E.	Yurek, Jeff
Hillier, Randy	Munro, Julia	
Jackson, Rod	Nicholls, Rick	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 62; the nays are 28.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

PROTECTION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACT, 2014

LOI DE 2014 SUR LA PROTECTION DU DROIT À LA PARTICIPATION AUX AFFAIRES PUBLIQUES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Gerretsen has moved second reading of Bill 83. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? The Attorney General.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): So ordered.

There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until Thursday, April 17 at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1146.

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. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Del Duca, Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Holyday, Douglas C. (PC)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
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
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Economic Development, Trade and Employment / Ministre du Développement économique, du Commerce et de l'Emploi
Hudak, Tim (PC)	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
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Milligan, Rob E. (PC)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Piruzza, Hon. / L'hon. Teresa (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	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
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Agriculture and Food / Ministre de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Vacant	Brampton–Springdale	

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COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Laura Albanese, Steve Clark
Mike Colle, Joe Dickson
Rob Leone, Amrit Mangat
Taras Natyshak, Jerry J. Ouellette
Michael Prue
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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

Chair / Présidente: Laura Albanese
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Soo Wong
Laura Albanese, Steven Del Duca
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Douglas C. Holyday, Mitzie Hunter
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