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Wednesday 1 June 2016

Mercredi 1^{er} juin 2016

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 1 June 2016

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 1^{er} juin 2016

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WASTE-FREE ONTARIO ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 FAVORISANT
UN ONTARIO SANS DÉCHETS

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 31, 2016, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 151, An Act to enact the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 and the Waste Diversion Transition Act, 2016 and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002 / Projet de loi 151, Loi édictant la Loi de 2016 sur la récupération des ressources et l'économie circulaire et la Loi transitoire de 2016 sur le réacheminement des déchets et abrogeant la Loi de 2002 sur le réacheminement des déchets.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further debate?

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'm proud to rise today, on behalf of my constituents in Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, to speak to Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act. It's an interesting title, because I know there's no such thing as waste-free; I know it's a target that governments and municipalities have been pushing for.

To look after waste is something that's been very expensive. There have been lots of ideas. I know that lots of the better ideas have been stifled by this government over the years as we look through.

As the mayor of South Glengarry, landfill costs were huge, in my day, in some ways rivalling what we spent on roads and bridges. Sometimes we looked at it and really costed it. We didn't feel that the millions we spent on approvals—we questioned the merit or the benefit of it.

We've had the government listen to some of the delegations that came forth and listen to the opposition parties themselves, and I think we had some changes that came through that we were quite happy with, through the readings—third reading.

The new authority must report on its progress in winding down expensive, inefficient agencies such as Ontario Tire Stewardship, Ontario Electronic Stewardship and Stewardship Ontario—lots of stewards there. It just talks about the many agencies there and the trouble that busi-

nesses, which are trying to function, profit and provide jobs in this province, are having.

We saw reports of lavish and wasteful spending by Ontario Tire Stewardship executives on the backs of Ontarians who had no choice but to pay. Ontario Tire Stewardship decided to increase the tax on farm tires by 20 times, creating a massive issue for our agricultural sector.

I know that on the surface it looks like, "Well, farmers will just pay more. They'll eat the cost," but my riding borders on the US and also borders on Quebec. Actually, I grew up in an area that's a mile from the border, and for most of my time before I went off to university, our address was actually Dalhousie Station, Quebec. That's where the post office was, and it caused all kinds of problems as things got a lot more official with health cards, as you can imagine, if you went in and your address was in Quebec. It forced the government of the day to separate post offices based on provincial lines.

I got a call from a tire distributor, Glengarry Tire, in Glen Robertson, just a couple of miles outside my riding, in the Glengarry–Prescott–Russell riding. He said, "What am I going to do? I'm selling to people like my brothers, who go out and buy tires. You're putting a tax on my tires"—it was \$800. "Anybody who wants to avoid the tax drives five miles down to the dealership in Dalhousie, Quebec, and they don't pay it." He said, "I may as well just shut down and move." Those are the issues we're looking at.

When you bring in uncompetitive taxes, businesses, in this case, are forced to do something—I doubt his profit on the tires was \$1,000 or \$800. So does he start selling his product at a loss, or are we really just sending out the message that we don't like his business and he can move? Those are the issues we run into. It's hard to justify to somebody who gives you a call like that. Fortunately, my nephew, who works at Campeau's in Dalhousie, benefits from it, but the taxes don't come back to Ontario, and that's a problem.

Constituents also often complain in my office about extra fees and taxes on purchases. It affects their budget and affects their spending. When you add that to increased power costs and the increased cost of living in Ontario now, it really is bringing more and more people—you know, we have a province that sometimes brags about the jobs it is creating, but we have the largest percentage of minimum-wage jobs in the country. That's Ontario. That's not something we ever experienced before. People on minimum wage are having a very hard time these days.

It's great to see the Minister of Energy come out with a program that helps people on minimum wage, but all that does is make sure that the rest of the population pays, which raises the price for everybody else and then increases the number of people who need help. It's just a vicious circle.

We have to be careful when we put fees on something like recycling, because there's no better way of putting a system in place that allows the distributors—the people who are creating the garbage—the opportunity to save money. If it's just a government-imposed fee that has no impact, there's no incentive for them to look at how to cut costs or cut the waste they're producing. I think that was our clear message: We have to make sure that this bill allows manufacturers to actually cut waste, and if they cut it, they get rewarded for it. That's the way our system works, and it has worked very well. And that's the way our competitors—the people we're competing with—work as well. So it's interesting to see some of these things.

Another issue: The minister must make progress reports available to the House on a regular basis. We just saw recently that the Financial Accountability Officer showed that the government is not forthcoming with information that would enable the public and MPPs to hold it to account. Just a couple of weeks ago, the Financial Accountability Officer issued a letter to the House talking about an amendment that came forth that the government had promised was going to meet his concerns about the cap-and-trade bill, Bill 172, where he had come forth and said that the transparency wasn't there.

0910

The government was able to give out billions—not millions; billions—of dollars in credits and the taxes they were collecting, with no accountability. In the committee I sit on, deputants came through with the same message. We put some amendments, and the third party put some amendments as well—all voted down by the government.

But the really telling part was at the end—the last amendment. The government rushed in at the last minute, put it on the table and told us that they had discussed it with the Financial Accountability Officer and he was very happy with the amendment and that it answered all his concerns. And the next day we saw a letter saying, “Not only does it not answer my concerns, but they haven't even talked to me.” I know we're not allowed to use certain words in this House, but what else could it be? It's mind-boggling that this government would resort to that.

We saw the first debt retirement charge update given by the Minister of Finance in 2012—years late. This was years after it was supposed to be retired—just recently done. Where is this money going? It's like a candy store: Any time they get their hand in the jar, the money disappears. We see that over and over again. The government acted only after the Auditor General issued a report. His job was not to babysit this government, and that's just what we're seeing. This report was years after this has been retired. Why are you still charging it?

It's similar to the Drive Clean test: overcharging, and the tax—much more than the test cost—coming back to the government, which of course is illegal. The government has, in this case, a fee for the service, and they were making tens of millions of dollars off this. That was the real reason they didn't want to cut this. The test no longer has any value.

It was interesting: I was meeting with some of the car companies in my riding just last week, and I asked about some of the regulations they would like to see eliminated. They mentioned Drive Clean. They said, “We're doing it, and the government is paying us for it, but it's a useless program because it just reads the computer.” And there are all kinds of problems if they're going to do a safety check on it through the program—maybe this applies more not to the actual dealers but to second-hand car retailers—and they have to disconnect the battery at one point to do some of the tests. Then they have to drive around for three, four or five hours to drive 500 kilometres to reset the damned computer.

At first I thought that was a little bit of a story, but I bought a new vehicle last year and left the gas cap off for a few minutes, and of course the computer tripped and said there was engine trouble. It took over 500 kilometres to reset that in the summer—it takes longer in the winter-time. Those are the types of things. So now they have to pay a staff member to go out and drive a car around for five hours. That's real time and real money. You're talking about a program that is a complete waste of time, energy and money, let alone putting an extra 500 kilometres on a vehicle, just so they can reset the computer so it passes the test. One has to really think about what's going on here.

We look at the government reports, and look no further back than the gas plants scandal: months and months of the committee trying to get these documents that they were entitled to. Only when the committee went to full-day sessions in the summer were they actually able to pass a motion to release the documents. And then this government, as forthright as they are—months and months of denying until the Speaker ruled that they had to do it; they had to release these documents. Then, when we got the documents, they were redacted, whited out, which again was not allowed.

The ministers talk about progress reports, but you can see why we, in the opposition, are really worried about, “Are they going to be forthright? Are we really going to get any information of substance, or is this just another case of information that we will never see?” It looks good on paper, but again, you have to judge this government by its actions. Past actions should predict future actions, and quite frankly, that would be rather scary.

Other cases of obstruction include the refusal to comply with a committee's request for documents; freedom-of-information rules; and the refusal to disclose key fiscal and financial information.

Making these progress reports mandatory doesn't make them happen. We were hoping that we'd see a bit of a change here. Maybe we will. We'll take the government at its word, and that can be dangerous at times.

Phasing out eco taxes that drive up the consumer process and depress demand—the government is notorious for collecting vast sums of money and being unable to spend it wisely. We see that today, as record levels of revenue—they're well over double the revenue that they collected when they came to power, and yet we still see cuts in health care. We see demonstration schools being closed. We see autism being cut. It's an example that the taxes are there but they aren't being spent wisely. The eco taxes are regressive because they affect everybody, regardless of income.

We need to take some of the burden off the people. They're really challenged in this economy, challenged in making a good living, something that we used to be very proud of, something that we used to see residents from many other provinces come to Ontario for, because it was a land where you would get a job. It's not that way anymore.

The manufacturing industry and the recycling industry have a role to play in ensuring that waste is reduced, and government must stop trying to manage it. Give them a target, let them work towards it and give them a financial incentive if they do a better job or they're able to obtain revenue from it. If they don't do a good job, of course, then they have to pay for it. I think that's really the only way we're going to encourage the ability to get in there and see improvements.

With many different companies coming up with better ideas, it gets infectious. People are comparing company to company. There's that drive to do a better job. If you don't reward them for doing a better job, it takes away that incentive, and unfortunately, the government really has no incentive to ensuring that somebody does a better job. The incentive is hiring more cops to go out there and check. That's really not an incentive, and it doesn't spur the same innovation as we hope to see.

We're looking at driving some competition. The economy thrives on competition; we're built on it. It's a constant pressure from businesses to outdo one another. I think that's what this bill really needs to get at. Let the industry look at ways to improve, and let them benefit from those improvements. When we set rates by the government, it just falls apart.

The blue box, as any recycling program, is a partnership between the municipalities, manufacturers and the recyclers. All parties have a stake in making sure that it's a success. Manufacturers can reduce the downstream costs and improve their environmental credentials by ensuring their product does not go to landfill. If there's a revenue benefit to that, they will work at doing that. They will work in their own stream to bring their product back to themselves so they can reuse the parts, instead of using up a scarce resource.

Recycling firms already have a ready and convenient supply chain for raw materials. As we see, a lot of these materials—for instance, on the tire side, a recycler in my area can't get enough tires. He would take more tires if he could, because he has a market for rubber mats. He sells them all over the world. He even put in a process

that allows him to take the huge truck tires, agricultural tires, that are not that easy to recycle. He put the process in place because he needed more supply, because it was a money-making venture for him. I think those are the things we have to encourage. Instead of looking at a time where we can't get rid of tires, we see now such a competition for them. We're not using it enough to send to the recycling stream.

0920

We talk about some of the issues we had with waste diverters in our riding—I know I'm running out of time here. One of my landfill operators, a large operator, put in place a system to generate electricity from the methane gas that's produced. He would like to be able to generate more electricity because he is flaring off gas, which of course is a carbon source. He has the system in place; the infrastructure is there. He can't get approval from the government, and he's been waiting for months—and, I guess, years—now. One would think, "Maybe the government doesn't need the green energy in this case."

But they turned around in my area and gave out two large wind turbine projects a few months ago, as well as a large solar project. So on one hand we see a solution to their energy costs that is somewhat manageable—there is the ability to delay production of the electricity until it's more valuable to us—but we've gone ahead with a wind project where we have no control on when it produces power. Is that an integrated plan or just confusion? I think that's what we're seeing.

Another recycling company in my riding contracted with the government to handle a lot of recycling. They're trying to add a basic shredder to the process. They can't get an approval from the Ministry of the Environment. It's taking months. They're shredding hard plastic. This is really not an environmental question. Why is it taking months? Their warehouses are filling up with product because they can't recycle it. The market needs it, and the government is on their backs because they're not getting rid of their recycling material. A simple shredder has held up the process for months and months. It just doesn't make sense. It shows, again, the government getting in the way.

When I was involved with the council in South Glengarry, the process to get our licence on a landfill extension took six or seven years and \$5 million on a site that was a long-time landfill site. Eventually, we got approval for it, but it just speaks about the government getting in the way. Precious tax dollars were wasted that could have been put into roads and bridges. In the end, it was just wasted and the time spent. We had many meetings with the ministry, and it was just time wasted.

I see that my time is up. Thanks, Speaker, for opportunity to speak.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Good morning, Speaker. I hope you enjoyed yourself at the baseball game last night.

It's a pleasure to follow my friend from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry. As you know, Speaker, he's a

fan of the Detroit Red Wings and not the Toronto Maple Leafs.

What he's talking about here is some of the provisions that are missing in this legislation—how this bill could have been improved. He's also talking about landfills and what we're doing with the trash we don't get to use in the blue box or the red box or the green box.

Unfortunately, we're seeing more and more valuable farmland in Ontario being used as dumping sites. As municipal councillors, we all know the process and the length of time it takes to go through the process of siting a landfill. Yet we don't seem to be doing much these days to boost recycling efforts.

This bill is a legislative formula more than anything else, as opposed to: We're going to increase the number of recyclable materials we collect, and we're going to force industry to come up with new ways of recycling the products they manufacture. That's where this bill could have made some real headway if we got into the packaging—the over-packaging—of the goods we buy, be they plastic, be they paper or be they a combination of the two.

We do have to cut down on the waste we generate in Ontario, and we do have to cut down on what we're sending to landfills. But more than anything, we have to increase what we're putting into the blue box, because we have to do that diversion as well as anything else.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments? The member for York South–Weston.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Thank you for recognizing me, Mr. Speaker. I wanted just to remind people why this act is necessary. I think it's important that we remember that Ontario generates close to 12 million tonnes of waste each year right now, and that each Ontarian generates about 2.3 kilograms of waste material per day—per day.

Overall, the rate has been sort of stable at 25% for the past decade. We haven't been able to make strides. Through the existing waste diversion programs that we have right now in Ontario, we're able to divert about a million tonnes each year.

We do well on the residential side; 47% of our residential waste is diverted from disposal. However, we don't do as well on the industrial, commercial and institutional side. Those sectors continue to be low. We're only able to divert about 13%.

So, again, why is this act necessary? We need a new approach to effectively increase waste diversion, to keep valuable resources out of the landfill and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from our waste stream. This act would be the pillar of the government's strategy to preserve resources and recover valuable materials from the waste currently lost to landfill.

Producers, as we've heard, would be responsible for recovering the resources. This gives them an incentive to design long-lasting, reusable, easily recyclable products that hopefully will never need to be discarded and will never need to be sent to the landfill. This will benefit Ontarians, our environment and our economy, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Norm Miller: I'm pleased to add some comments to the speech by the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry on Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act. We're in third reading of this bill, and our critic, the member from Huron–Bruce, has been very active on this file.

The Ontario PCs have long championed a plan to increase recycling and reduce waste through innovation and competition among businesses in the private sector. Under our plan, we would set measurable and achievable recycling targets for businesses, establish environmental standards, and enforce the rules.

I think I can say that I did play a role. Many years ago—at least 10 years ago—I had a private member's bill that basically would accomplish the same thing. The bill was called Product Stewardship, where government would set targets for particular products but let industry figure out how to achieve those targets. That's more or less what the government is trying to do with this bill, so I'm pleased that they have both followed on my private member's bill and on the PC policy.

We did ask for a number of amendments, and our critic worked very hard toward achieving those amendments. It is my understanding that many of them have gone through.

I guess it comes down to how the government implements this now. They have not the greatest record when it comes to actually implementing things, but the general idea is a sound one. We wish them well and hope that they actually are able to deliver in the case of this product stewardship, Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: From the outset, I'd like to state that the goals in the act are supportable and welcome on behalf of the Ontario NDP.

Bill 151 enacts the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act and the Waste Diversion Transition Act.

In my role as our critic for economic development, infrastructure and jobs, I've done some research.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): It's a little loud. It's unusual: Usually ministers are quiet, but today they're leading the charge in the noise. I'd appreciate if you could—I'm not sure if you want to be recognized; you're standing up all the time there. I'm not sure what the Deputy Premier is doing. If you want to do a seminar, you might want to go out in the hall.

Continue. Thanks.

0930

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thanks, Speaker. I don't know if you can reset the clock on a two-minute hit, but I certainly would appreciate some leeway.

Anyhow, as I was saying, I've done a little bit of research on my critic file—a lot of research—and I've come across an economic theory out of the United States. I want to give credit to John Fullerton from the Capital

Institute. The theory is referred to as regenerative capitalism. I believe that it's only stated as such because in the United States it's difficult for people to say democratic socialism.

In all manners, this new economic theory is similar to what is happening in the Waste-Free Ontario Act, Bill 151. It calls upon us to recognize the failure of our current economic system as a whole and the paradigm in which the masters of finance rely on all of the resources of the planet to fuel economic generation, whereas that should be reversed. It should be that the finance fuels environmental stability and fuels all the wonderful things that we enjoy and appreciate as Ontarians in our environment.

This gets close to that. We can support it, but it certainly needs some more work. I appreciate the time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I just want to let the member know I let him go over to make up for the not-stopping-the-clock time he was concerned about.

Back to the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry for two minutes.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I thank the members from Windsor–Tecumseh, York South–Weston, Parry Sound–Muskoka and Essex for their comments.

I can just tell the member from Windsor–Tecumseh that if the Leafs would get better, maybe that would encourage the Red Wings to get better and win some more Stanley Cups. I would like to see them do better, but the competition is always good.

The member opposite was talking about the relatively good job that we've been doing at 25%. I guess that's on the residential side. That's really not a very good target. I think we've got to get much higher. The landfill sites are filling up. I see one of the landfills I was talking about with the trouble from the methane approvals. He's taking garbage from Toronto. I don't know if any of it is going to Michigan anymore. It's a relatively large landfill, but it's filling up with truck after truck coming down the 401. These are huge landfill sites, and we'd like to get more and more out of these sites.

I know that in Alexandria, in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, they have a recycling firm. They're always on the edge. It's supported by the municipality. It's an expensive process for a municipality to take on. We have to get industry back involved.

Certainly, 13% on the industry side is dismal. It's something we have to improve on. The only way we're going to do that is by letting them innovate. Let them make the changes. If we're just going to bill them for something that their neighbour does, there's no incentive in getting better because they're going to have to pay the bill anyway, so why waste the money? If they can spend money and save it in the end, that's where we're going to get real results. That's where we need to go for some of these changes.

I think, from talking to our critic, when the bill died last time, they did accept a lot of our changes that they had refused the last time, but there's still more to do with this bill.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's always a pleasure to be called upon in this House on behalf of the good constituents in the riding of Windsor–Tecumseh.

We're back with what we were hoping would be a new and improved Bill 151, the misnamed Waste-Free Ontario Act. We were hoping the Liberals on the committee on social policy would have been able to keep an open mind. We had been hoping the Liberals on that committee would have tossed aside their prepared speaking notes. We were hoping the people who took the time to appear as delegations would walk away feeling their time was well spent.

You know who I really feel sorry for, though, Speaker? I feel sorry for the municipal taxpayers in Ontario. Not all of the more than 400 municipalities offer what we refer to as the blue box recycling program, but it's offered in enough places with reasonable population numbers that close to 90% of the people in Ontario have the ability to use the service should they decide to do so. We certainly encourage everyone to do that because it is the right thing to do.

It's also the right thing that those who produce what is collected in our recycling containers should pay the total cost that municipalities have to put out to provide the collection of those goods. That's fair; that's reasonable; that is the right thing to do. However, as we've seen elsewhere, the producers haven't bought in to that argument entirely yet.

Speaker, in case you're not aware of the situation in Vancouver these days: For years, the mayor and council have been making noises about the growing cost of providing the blue box recycling program. They did the math and they found they weren't getting a fair return. Municipal taxpayers were paying to subsidize the true cost of providing the service.

The theory behind the program of the recycling of waste is that the producers should pay as part of the cost of doing business. That's the intent behind this bill, and a laudable intent it is. That's all fine and good on paper as a theory, but when you go to balance your books at city hall and prepare the collection bills for your homeowners, you discover this thorny issue of a subsidy. Your folks are paying part of the producers' costs. You determine that it can't go on unchallenged, and you send a loud and clear message to the producers, "Hey, buddy. You're costing me money. Pay up." When buddy shrugs and walks away, what do you do?

Mayor Gregor Robertson knew what he would do, and so did my friend Councillor Raymond Louie. I used to serve on the board at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities with Ray; he's currently the FCM president. He's also Vancouver's designated acting mayor and Chair of the finance and services committee. Gregor, Raymond and the municipal politicians told the waste producers, "Enough is enough. We're not going to take it anymore. If you don't pay our total costs for this collection service, you can do it yourselves."

That is what the Liberals and this committee have opened up as a possibility in Ontario. If this bill doesn't go the way the Liberals say it will, watch out. AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, asked the committee to make sure, during this transition, that there was a municipal advisory body included in the framework of the bill, this misnamed Waste-Free Ontario Act. It was a simple request. Municipalities are providing the service. AMO wanted reps from the city of Toronto, from the Regional Public Works Commissioners of Ontario, from AMO itself and from the Municipal Waste Association to be at the table. In other words, they needed a voice while this was unfolding.

They wanted (a) to be paid the total actual cost incurred by all municipalities with respect to the diversion of blue box waste, and (b) the total actual revenue generated by all municipalities with respect to the diversion of blue box waste. They knew these numbers would have to be verified; they also called for that. They wanted to be consulted. And, Speaker, everyone in this room knows that the Liberals make it a point on a pretty regular basis around here to puff up their chests, point to themselves and say, "We have consulted, or we will be consulting, or we are consulting." Sometimes that consulting is actually more insulting because it just doesn't happen.

AMO says, "Folks, we do the work. This is important stuff. You need to listen up before this bill is done." Well, we soon found out at committee that indeed most of the work was done long before the bill even heard from the first delegation. The pretense of consultation, the sham of consultation, was really quite embarrassing. You looked around the room and audience members were just shaking their heads. The industry lords and ladies, time after time, said straight out, "We know what we're doing. We don't need to listen to the municipal voices. We've got this." Well, they may get something, and they won't like it and don't expect it.

I tell you, Speaker, there was a big dark cloud overhead this morning, and it's not going to go away anytime soon. Let's just call it the Vancouver example, the Vancouver experiment and the Vancouver lesson that should have been learned. This bill was misnamed the Waste-Free Ontario Act, and may lead to some major municipalities in this province tossing in the towel if they don't have their costs fully covered. Hey, if they can do it in Vancouver, they can do it here. Think about it.

Municipalities could end up pulling out of this deal altogether, and then what? There are only a couple of choices: More waste ends up in the landfill, or the producers form a monopoly, collect and haul their own paper, cans, tins and bottles as best they can, and the title of this misnamed bill gets changed to the waste generation act of Ontario.

0940

Speaker, we tried at committee. We offered amendments and we tried to convince the Liberals they were heading down a dangerous slope. Municipalities do the work. They're the experts. They know what's involved. They know how to contain the cost. They wanted the

Liberals to recognize this and give them a voice in how this bill was unfolding and improved on a go-forward basis. I don't mind telling you, Speaker, they are disappointed but putting on a brave face. They accept that in theory producers will face full responsibility for the costs of recycling waste from their products and packaging, and it has been a long time coming. They remind us that our municipalities have achieved the highest residential diversion rates in North America, and they will continue to be involved in waste diversion, as 80% of all waste is not diverted.

So yes, AMO, the municipal sector, is keenly interested to start the transition to the new system that builds on their current provision of effective and convenient waste diversion services. Here's a quote for you, Speaker: "Essentially, we just want to get on with the transition, as the current waste disposal act is flawed and we are tired of fighting every year to be paid fairly for the waste diversion services municipalities provided two years ago!!" So every year, they go after the money that was owed to them two years previously. That sentence, by the way, Speaker, ended with two exclamation points. You can read into that as you will.

Before I move on, Speaker, the annual FCM conference is next week in Winnipeg. Raymond Louie's term is over, and he will—you're probably going.

Mr. Steve Clark: No, I'm not going.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: He will be replaced by my buddy from Ontario, First Vice-President Clark Somerville. I served three years on the FCM board with Clark. He's from Halton Hills. Congratulations to both of them for their volunteer service on behalf of all our Canadian municipalities.

Speaker, I should place tongue firmly in cheek here for a moment and thank the Liberal committee members for their fine display of the three Rs during our hearings and clause-by-clause consideration of the bill and our proposed amendments: They certainly recycled the answers on why they were voting down our proposals; they reused them over and over again; and they reduced the contributions from many of our delegations down to a polite "Thank you for coming in and making us aware of your concerns."

Speaker, that's the downside of what happens in a democracy with a majority government. The party in power determines the makeup of a committee, stacks it with a majority of their own members, and lip service gets paid to the concept of public consultation and input from the opposition parties. Legislation which could have been greatly improved slips away with little change. And you wonder why opposition members say they have grave concerns with the next committee that's going to hit the road around here, looking at financial contributions to political parties, because of the Liberals stacked on that committee, and any proposals that they will hear later on in clause-by-clause can simply just be voted down by the majority.

Speaker, let me take a very quick detour. Did you know it's Injured Workers' Day in Ontario? I know you

did. Since this bill is about recycling, let me just for a couple of moments here reuse a poem written by Bill Mahoney, the resident poet of Steelworkers Local 1005 in Hamilton. It's called An Injury to One.

Support the injured workers, heed them when they call;
 An injury to one is an injury to all!
 Far too many are injured when they go to work—
 Then the boss denies their injury, says they're not hurt.
 The owners of industry are greedy and mean—
 They value workers far less than a machine.
 When Jeannie had her accident—they said she was a fake;
 Even though her X-ray showed a major break.
 Could you kindly tell me what more does it take?
 The board wants to retrain Mary, send her back to school,
 But she's been away so long she feels like a damn fool.
 She knows that she could learn new skills, if they just gave her the time;
 But they want to fast-track her—just to save a dime.
 Since George had his accident, he's confined to a wheelchair.
 Some people look right through him as though he wasn't there.
 His wheelchair has become a rolling prison cell
 As his compensation board is putting him through hell.
 Far too many workers are being forced to fight,
 Just to get the benefits that ought to be their right.

Bill Mahoney, from his book *Rebel Rhymes*—he's the Poet Laureate for Steelworkers Local 1005 in Hamilton. Thank you, Bill Mahoney, and thank you, Speaker.

By the way, Speaker, we're all invited after question period today to go out on the lawn and have a bit of pizza. Two injured workers, Richard Hudon and Peter Page, started a bike ride to raise awareness of the situation facing injured workers in Ontario a week ago. They were joined by a long-time advocate for injured workers, Allen Jones.

They started in Windsor. I was pleased to be there at the start, along with my colleague from Windsor West. They hit the road to Chatham, Wallaceburg, Sarnia, London, Brantford, St. Catharines, Hamilton and Mississauga—600 kilometres—and they have asked you and everyone in the House to join them for pizza when we're done after question period. They'll be hosting a rally out there. What a wonderful way to recognize Injured Workers' Day in Ontario.

This bill, Bill 151, was misnamed the Waste-Free Ontario Act, 2016. It actually injures no one, but it is painful to me that the Liberals were not so accommodating to the proposed amendments put forth by the NDP and the Conservatives during the clause-by-clause read-

ing. Again: a bill full of early promise with a title worthy of a small sound bite, but not really living up to its full expectations.

I guess it's somewhat of a metaphor for this government—a government that comes in with a brave promise of a bright new future, an open, a transparent government that's going to work hard on behalf of the people of Ontario. And what do we see? We see bill after bill be time-allocated, debate shut down so the opposition members are prevented from improving it in any way, from bringing the voices of the people we talk to back to the Liberals and saying, "Look, these are people saying that what you have put on the table is not exactly what they were hoping for, and here are the reasons why. Here are the reasons why we don't think this bill is good enough. We want you to listen to them, but instead, we don't have that opportunity, because bills get allocated around here too frequently."

Time and time again we're told this Liberal government was going to be the most open, the most progressive, and the budgets were going to be good, but there are all these poison pills in there. You can't support a budget that's causing so much damage to sectors of the economy, to certain segments, be it in health care, be it in education, be it to the injured workers of Ontario. We have to stand up and we have to say to the Liberals across the aisle, "You could have done so much better. This bill could have been so much improved if you would have listened to the municipal voices in Ontario when they came to you and said, 'We really need to be at the table.'"

They didn't come right out and say, "You can't trust industry on this. You can't leave industry all by themselves. We have to help shepherd this through. We have to be there as an advisory body." We tried. We stood up time and time again to make the case, and indeed, the Liberals said, "We hear you. We're listening, but we're not going to do anything about it, because we have the majority. You can talk all day if you want, but at end of the day, we're going to vote your idea down." And time after time after time after time, that's exactly what they did, Speaker.

0950

I felt sorry for some of my Conservative friends who were on that committee. They worked hard. They came up with—I won't say hundreds; I'll say dozens of amendments. Maybe they got one through; I'm not sure. I think we had just a couple that they accepted, which I found quite surprising, actually, because with a couple of them I said, "Oh, God, are we going to go through this again or should I just withdraw it now?" Then they said, "No, no, no. We're actually going to accept that one," which brightens your day for about 10 seconds. Then when you bring in something really substantive after that and you say, "This is good. This is what we need," they say, "No, we have the majority and we're going to ram it right back at you. We're not going to accept that amendment today."

So the bill is the Waste-Free Ontario Act, and it's a big-sounding name. Who can't support a waste-free

Ontario? No more waste in Ontario ever; no more. It's all going in the blue box. Well, yeah, no, maybe. Uh-uh. Not gonna happen. It's not going to be waste-free at all, Speaker. But it's a good name. It's catchy.

Somewhere there will be a little newspaper clip that says, "The Waste-Free Ontario Act has passed," and people won't read much beyond that. They'll say, "Oh, those Liberals up there, they must be doing something right. Waste-free: no more waste in Ontario." They won't look much beyond the headlines. The sad part of life is, it's not going to be waste-free at all.

The municipal voice: I'll tell you, municipal taxpayers are as upset as anybody else when the tax bill comes. They do not want to pay more of their hard-earned money to subsidize a producer of waste who should be paying the full cost of waste. If you produce a product, Speaker—you might have the factory and whatever it is, maybe a newspaper—you can't just close your door and close your eyes once that product leaves the plant. You have the responsibility to your province, to your country, to your economy, to your environment—this is an environmental bill. You have the responsibility to make sure that your product doesn't pollute the environment.

Behind this bill the focus is full producer responsibility, but the municipalities haven't seen that yet. As I've said earlier, they're tired of subsidizing the cost that the producer should be paying. They don't want to do it anymore. They're not doing it anymore in Vancouver and they don't want to do it anymore in Ontario. They want a better accounting procedure. They wanted a voice at that table, and they wouldn't get it from this Liberal government. The Liberals would not give the municipalities a voice at the table to make sure that they were getting their fair share of the revenue that was generated from the waste collected in the Blue Box Program and that our municipal taxpayers do not have to pay more than their fair share. The producers should be paying the full cost because it is their responsibility to pay the full cost for the products that they produce. That hasn't been happening.

I'm not convinced we're ever going to see it from this Liberal government. They have a lot of friends in industry and a lot of friends behind this bill. They sat and listened and took their concerns into account, more so than they listened to the municipal politicians who were there and said, "You have to start listening to us as well."

Let me just wrap it up, Speaker, and conclude with a simple statement. I know it's not going to impress you at all, but I am disappointed, because the people of Ontario deserve better. Our municipal leaders deserve so much more from this Liberal government, and they feel let down by the way this bill was handled.

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

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: I'm pleased to rise and add my voice to Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act.

Mr. Speaker, this proposed legislation, if passed, would help us to divert more waste from landfills. Studies have shown that Ontario's existing waste diversion programs

can create more jobs than waste disposal, because waste disposal is not labour-intensive. Recycling and resource recovery is more labour-intensive. It requires lots of people. It creates lots more jobs, and well-paying jobs, Mr. Speaker.

During the public hearings at social policy, we heard broad support from a range of stakeholders, including municipalities, producers, service providers and environmental organizations. It has been clear that this bill has broad support from the stakeholders as well as the majority of the members. It is time that this bill passes the third reading and that this proposed legislation receives royal assent and becomes an act so that all the relevant stakeholders can benefit from it, because this is a good bill. It's a good bill for the environment, a good bill for the economy and a good bill for the people of Ontario.

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It's always interesting to listen to the member from Niagara Falls with his—throwing in some of the poet laureate stuff.

With regard to Bill 151—great title: Waste-Free Ontario Act. But the reality is that there are so many things that we could be doing a better job of. In my initial speech on Bill 151, I talked about the ICI sector: industrial, commercial and institutional. There was a little bit of finger-pointing on the government's side when it came to the ICI sector.

The reality is, we could do a much better job if we allowed the ICI to participate in the Blue Box Program. I'm not talking about the products that they use to manufacture; I'm talking about the products that happen just because you have a group of people working in a manufacturing facility, a business. We've lost an opportunity, with Bill 151, to try to work with our stakeholders in a much better way, in a much more inclusive way, and try to incorporate some of the things they've been asking for for many, many years. Bill 151 was the opportunity, the window, to allow that, and we've bypassed that right now.

Our critic, the member from Huron-Bruce, has been working extremely hard to try to bring forward substantive, positive amendments to Bill 151. That's what our role is in opposition. It would have been nice if there had been a little more back-and-forth discussion, but unfortunately, that didn't happen in this case. A missed opportunity, I guess, is what we'll talk about with Bill 151.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Algoma-Manitoulin.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to you. Always nice seeing you in the chair. You keep us in line.

This morning there were two big messages that I took from the comments that came from the member from Tecumseh. I always enjoy sitting with him here in the House. We tend to observe and listen quite a bit in this House. Like many of our colleagues, we do the same thing when we go back to the riding.

The one issue that he did bring up this morning—which wasn't related to this bill but is very important—is

that I hope each and every one of you takes the opportunity to go out and meet up with the injured workers who are going to be out on the lawn. I had the opportunity of actually going to sing songs with them last night and have a bottle of water and some cake with them. I listened to some of the individuals that have been affected through their work, and to their frustration, their desperation, and the shattering of their hopes to provide for themselves. The Women of Inspiration were there for their 10th year, I believe, sleeping on the lawn to show their support for these injured workers. So please take the time, over the course of your day, to go out there and meet up with these individuals.

The major message that I took from the member from Tecumseh is: This is a missed opportunity that the government had to really engage and listen to the municipal leaders who are going to be so affected by this piece of legislation, and a missed opportunity to really engage with them and take some of their comments that they were putting forward. At the end of the day, this is something that will fall on their shoulders once again. They're the ones that are going to be challenged in order to make decisions to maintain the services that they have in their communities. They're the ones that will have to make the tough decisions with regard to their budgets to make sure this happens within their community.

Again, the thrust of this message was the missed opportunity. Is it a step forward? Yes, it is a step forward, Mr. Speaker. But it could have been an opportunity for a much, much greater step. And again, I just need to stress the point that this is a lost opportunity.

1000

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

Hon. David Zimmer: I'm pleased to offer some comments on the Waste-Free Ontario Act. I think it's important, when we're considering the details in the act, that we consider the background premise to the act. That premise or background is that the fact is, Ontario's landfill capacity is projected to last less than 20 years. Increased diversion is necessary to extend the lifespan of those existing disposal sites. Now, 20 years may seem like a very, very long time, but in fact the way our population is growing and the amount of increased waste that is required to be disposed of, I rather expect that when it says the time frame for filling up those landfill sites is less than 20 years, it's probably going to be substantially less than 20 years.

In addition to the necessity of it, I want to comment on the cost savings. On average, disposal remains significantly cheaper than resource recovery. The Blue Box Program is estimated to cost, on average, double the cost of handling waste. The average cost to collect and landfill waste is about \$125 a tonne as opposed to blue box, which is about \$250 a tonne. Recycling may be less costly than disposal, where substantial revenues can be made from the sale of the recycled materials.

Let me say something about the economic benefits. The waste management sector contributes about \$2.1 bil-

lion to Ontario's GDP. This is nearly as large as the contribution to GDP as we get from paper manufacturing in Ontario.

And of course, there are the environmental benefits. In 2013, greenhouse gas emissions from the waste sector accounted for about 5% of Ontario's waste.

These are matters that we must keep in mind when considering this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Windsor–Tecumseh has two minutes.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Sounds like a sentence. Thank you, Speaker.

Let me thank the members from Mississauga–Brampton South, Dufferin–Caledon, Algoma–Manitoulin and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

I think the member from Dufferin–Caledon really hit it on the head when she talked about a missed opportunity. That's what this bill is. It's a missed opportunity that the government could have done better.

For those that may have been listening during my 20 minutes, I said how disappointing it was for an opposition member on the committee to listen to the delegations, to do the clause-by-clause; how disappointing it was when the Liberals stuck to their speaking notes—

Hon. David Zimmer: What?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Stuck to their speaking notes. The thing about it, Speaker, for those who listened to what the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs had to say, he just stuck to his speaking notes. Nothing what he made reference to had any way, shape or form to anything I said this morning. He wasn't listening. He doesn't care. He had his speaking notes, and that—

Hon. David Zimmer: That's because you're all fluff—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Stop the clock. We're not at a football game. If you want to yell, go out in the hall and yell. Thank you, Minister.

Continue.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Speaker. And thank you, Minister. I enjoy your company, as you know, but when it comes time to give two minutes on what somebody just said, you would think somebody would have the somewhat occasional bearing to say, "Yes, I'll listen and I'll say something to what he just said." Nobody did that. Nobody on the government side gave any reference at all to why the municipalities weren't listened to. That was the focus of my 20 minutes.

They didn't listen then; they're not listening now. That's the legacy of this Liberal government. They just don't give a damn. They don't listen to anyone.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): A point of order, the member from Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you, Speaker. I mistakenly identified the previous speaker, and I want to sincerely apologize and acknowledge that his riding is in fact Windsor–Tecumseh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member can correct her record.

Further debate?

Mr. Mike Colle: In reference to Bill 151, the Waste-Free Ontario Act, as a number of members know, it's

quite a complex piece of legislation. It's over 120 pages, with some very significant changes in the administration, the promotion, the establishment of various processes by producers of waste—industrial, commercial and institutional. And for individuals and consumers, it affects their interface with waste and reuse and recycling. It deals with the Environmental Protection Act and how it impacts on waste reduction.

There are numerous complex new mechanisms put in place essentially to update an act from 2002, which tried to introduce the whole notion of waste reduction. As you know, this whole area of waste reduction changes as manufacturing processes change, as new technologies come into play and new public awareness, and as information comes forward from all the consumers, from industry and from local elected officials. There is a multiplicity of partners in waste reduction. It's not just the government; it's not just municipalities; it's all the producers, everything from agricultural products to high-tech products.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we have entered into a new age of instant disposal. You're old enough—or young enough—to remember when we used to go to the corner store or drug store to get tubes for our televisions. Remember? The young pages probably forgot that, but that's what we did. That TV that you bought, that your parents bought and saved up for maybe a year to get, you kept for a lifetime and then you replaced the tubes. Now, as you know, what happens is that if the colour contrast on your new high-def television is a bit off, it gets thrown on the side of the road. Have you ever heard of a television repairman or woman? They don't exist anymore. Everything is disposed of.

I was at the Ingram Drive waste disposal site a couple of weeks ago. I brought my Ford Ranger up there filled with all kinds of stuff from a friend of mine who was closing up his business. You can see the amount of waste that is—they've got a section for electronics, a section for drywall, a section for paper and household garbage. It's ongoing, around-the-clock. In fact, the Ingram Drive site in Toronto is open 24 hours a day now, except for Sundays, because people are constantly bringing yard waste—everything. And then there's the other aspect of it, where you can go get your compost. They were lined up, because it is compost season, a mile down Ingram Drive to get their compost, which is the result of putting in their yard waste.

So there are many complex aspects of this bill. It is an updating of a system that needs updating. The major change here is that there are some real administrative and legal sanctions now to encourage, cajole, and also bring to order an industry that produces millions of products a year. On the production side, they are to have a responsibility. In other words, they just can't keep producing and expecting that the government, the local government—that somehow these big products and the boxes that they come in, whether it be tires or television sets or electronics, magically disappear. Well, they don't. So this bill essentially puts serious sanctions into place to reduce

our waste and to create waste reduction as part of a new circular economy. That's the big change in this bill.

I think there is so much work, as everybody agrees, that has to be done on this front. We are behind, and that's why we need some really strong legislation: Bill 151. Is it going to solve all the problems? No, but it's really needed. I think everybody agrees with this.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think it's time to move on. As a result, I move that this question be now put.

Mr. Steve Clark: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I don't think you can do a point of order before he finishes what he's saying.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): No, not at this point.

Go ahead, finish, please.

Interjection.

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

Mr. Mike Colle: I move that this question now be put, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Steve Clark: No. Absolutely not.

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

Mr. Steve Clark: Not enough time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Would you like to change positions here?

Mr. Steve Clark: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Okay. Mr. Colle has moved that the question now be put. I am satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow the question to be put to the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I believe the noes have it.

All those in favour of the motion that the question be now put, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

I believe the nays have it.

This will be dealt with after question period on the vote.

Vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Orders of the day?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: I move adjournment of the debate.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): No. When you guys know what you're doing, we'll let you know.

It being close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning. And thank you for all the yelling. That really helps.

The House recessed from 1012 to 1030.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Before we begin with introductions, I'd like to remind the members of my request yesterday: If you do not have the members that you're going to introduce, please introduce them during the time period that's allotted, and we'll do the best we can in using that time appropriately.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Toby Barrett: I do wish to introduce Rita and Romas Rickus. They're in the gallery today, and they're the parents of page captain Thomas Rickus.

Mr. Arthur Potts: I'm delighted to introduce student Anna Khouzam to the House today. She's from my riding, and she's here as a student youth councillor.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'd like to welcome and introduce injured worker advocates who are here with us today: Laurie Hardwick, Vern Edwards, Jessica Ponting, Alberto Lalli, Airissa Gemma, Brendan Bohn, Niveda Anandan, James Schneider, Maud Rozee, Hayley McFadyen, Indira Rupchand, Michael McDonough, Belia Berrocal and Brent Marks. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'd to welcome a number of the paramedic services here in Ontario who are joining us for an announcement today. From Halton region: Greg Sage, the chief of Halton region paramedics; and Michael Lawson, president of OPSEU Local 207 and Halton Region Paramedic Services. From Toronto: Geoff MacBride, the president of the Ontario Paramedic Association and the Toronto Paramedic Association; Michael Nolan, the director of emergency services, county of Renfrew, and former president of the Paramedic Chiefs of Canada; Brian Annett, VP of the Toronto Paramedic Association; and, joining all of them, Howard Brown and Laura Casselman from Brown and Cohen.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I just want to introduce my very good friends Roxane Villeneuve, who translates for me in French—not that I need it, of course—and Debbie Jodoin from Ottawa, who chauffeurs me around. Thank you, ladies.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I'm pleased to welcome Nancy Murray Coker to Queen's Park today. She is a proud employee of McMaster University in the school of nursing and is the mother of my legislative assistant, Meaghan Coker. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I do have a couple of introductions. Before we move to the tribute, I would also like to introduce a gentleman who needs no introduction because of his deanery: Mr. Norm Sterling is in the members' gallery—former member Norm Sterling.

Hon. James J. Bradley: We miss you, Norm.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Also, the member from St. Catharines is heckling: "We miss you, Norm."

Mr. John Yakabuski: I have a further introduction, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Yes, I'll come to it.

I would also like to introduce, in the Speaker's gallery, a friend of mine from Alberta who served in six cabinet portfolios over 22 years and, in 2012 to 2015, the former Speaker of Alberta, Mr. Gene Zwozdesky. Gene, welcome.

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke on an introduction.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you, Speaker. In addition to Norm Sterling—almost a father of Confederation—in the members' east gallery today I have Mike

Nolan, chief of paramedic services in Renfrew county. Mike, great to have you here in Queen's Park.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Hi. They're on their way here, but I want to introduce them so I don't disturb you afterwards by introducing guests when I'm not supposed to: Willem Hart and his brother Jonah Hart from my riding of Thornhill, as well as Doug Warren from the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. They were here for the Pride flag-raising.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I appreciate that members are following along with my request from yesterday.

The members now will please join me in welcoming the family of the late Leonard Joseph Quilty, MPP for Renfrew South during the 26th Parliament, who are seated in the Speaker's gallery: his son Pat; his granddaughter Jennifer Quilty and her husband, Jeff Davis; and great-granddaughters Madeline and Amelia Davis. We welcome them to the Legislature for the tribute.

I would now welcome a point of order.

LEONARD QUILTY

Hon. James J. Bradley: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Deputy House leader.

Hon. James J. Bradley: I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to pay tribute to Leonard Joseph Quilty, former member for Renfrew South, with a representative of each caucus speaking for up to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The deputy House leader is seeking unanimous consent to pay tribute. Do we agree? Agreed.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's an honour for me to rise, on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus, this morning to pay tribute to Leonard Joseph Quilty, who served in this House as the member for Renfrew South from January 18, 1962, to the general election of September 25, 1963.

Len Quilty was born in Shamrock, a little hamlet in my county of Renfrew, on March 27, 1920. He was raised on the same farm that his parents, Michael and Margaret, lived on all their lives—a highly respected farmer on an inhospitable piece of land.

I want you people to know that the land up in that part of Renfrew county is not like the flatlands of southwestern Ontario. They don't call it Mount St. Patrick because it's flat. It's a really tough place to farm, but the Quilty family was there for three generations now, because Len's sons, Pat and Mike, have homes on that property today.

He was able to make a living on that farm, meagre though it may have been, because of his commitment and his work ethic, and that really paid dividends for Len in his involvement in his community as well. In addition to farming, he served his community in many, many ways. In fact, he was the secretary of the Renfrew Shamrock Telephone Co. Now, that wasn't a really big one and,

eventually, it was swallowed up by Bell. As Bill McAdam said in delivering one of the eulogies to Len at the service after his passing, it was a very small swallow—and yes, it was.

Len also went on to serve as a tax collector for the township of Admaston and a trustee for that famous one-room schoolhouse in Shamrock, and further, as a trustee for the Renfrew county separate school board.

Len had five priorities in life: family, church, farming, baseball and politics. His family is represented—the Speaker has introduced them today—by his son Pat; his granddaughter Jennifer and her spouse, Jeff Davis; and Madeline Davis and Amelia Davis, who are the great-granddaughters of Len Quilty.

His community service in so many ways and the respect he had among his farming brethren as well—he was one of these people who they went to for advice on farming matters and also business matters. He always had an interest in politics, but that interest was really cultivated more. He became a devout, lifelong member of the Liberal Party, a staunch Liberal.

Applause.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I had to get some applause from the other side. I knew that would do it.

In 1959, he was a Liberal nominee in an election against the mighty Jimmy Maloney, who was a legend in the Ottawa Valley. Len lost that election in 1959, not surprisingly. It was “Old Man Ontario,” Leslie Frost, a very popular Premier of the province, and Jimmy Maloney, a legend himself. He lost that election, but it gave him the foothold that was necessary, because after the passing of Jimmy Maloney on September 30, 1961, a by-election was called for January 18, 1962, against the Conservative standard-bearer, Con Mulvihill, a lawyer from Arnprior. Len eked out a very tight victory: 144 votes.

1040

Hon. James J. Bradley: A landslide.

Mr. John Yakabuski: A landslide. Maybe that’s where the term “Landslide Len” came from. We thought it was Hopkins.

I want to tell you about that by-election in 1962. People in rural Ontario have always taken their politics seriously, and still do. But on January 18, 1962—some people think, “It’s a by-election; it’s not going to be a big turnout. And whoever wins, it’s kind of really a default thing.” Well, the voter turnout in that by-election was greater than the general election of 1959 and greater than the following general election of 1963. So when Len Quilty was elected in a by-election in 1962, everybody in Renfrew South that wanted to vote got out and voted. They chose him as their representative here in Queen’s Park.

Now, when Len got here, he brought with him that same commitment that he had for farming and community service. He brought it here to stand for the people of Renfrew South. One of the things he challenged the government of the day on—and man, do things never change—was bridging that gap between urban and rural Ontario. So I say to the government, was Len Quilty a

politician or a prophet? Because some things just haven’t changed.

In fact, in his inaugural speech, Len Quilty talked about the necessity to extend Highway 417 for economic and safety reasons through Renfrew county. That was 1962. He talked about, “Let’s get Highway 417, a four-lane highway, through Renfrew county.” I say to the Minister of Transportation, who wouldn’t yet have been born in 1962, if you’re not going to do it for me, do it for Len.

In the 1963 general election, Len Quilty, as the incumbent, was challenged by—yes, you guessed it—my father, Paul Yakabuski. My dad defeated Len in that election, in another tight, tight race. My dad always recognized that timing is everything in politics, and he was fortunate to be a candidate for a then also very popular Ontario Premier, John Robarts. Had the roles been switched, things could have been different. We all recognize that politics sometimes is—if you’re on the winning team, it’s always a benefit for that candidate as well.

They faced off two more times, in 1967 and 1971, at which time Len decided, “I’m going back to the farm,” but he never got out of politics, and I’ll touch on that a little later. Actually, I’ll touch on it right now. In 1977, he was elected reeve of Admaston township, his beloved Admaston township, and he became the warden of Renfrew county in 1981. I remember having a conversation with my dad—yes, Premier, at the kitchen table—and he told me how Len Quilty transformed the role of warden in Renfrew county. This was his political opponent, but it never was personal. They were political—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Adversaries.

Mr. John Yakabuski:—adversaries—thank you very much—but it wasn’t personal. He recognized—don’t forget, my dad was the MPP at the time that Leonard was the warden of Renfrew county—and he talked about how Leonard transformed the role of warden in Renfrew county.

With all due respect to those who came before him, it was, in large part, a ceremonial role. But Len, because of his confidence, his political experience and the fact that he had sat here and understood how this place worked, transformed that role into one where the warden actually mattered. Provincial politicians: When Len Quilty wanted to see them, they saw him. People in the cabinet, at the cabinet level, understood that Renfrew county was important and the warden needed to be listened to. That’s how Len transformed that role, and since then, it has been forever changed.

When I first got involved in politics, I made a point of visiting Len during the campaigns and having a little chat with him. I learned much. He was always very kind to me. I had met him many times at different places—usually funerals—over the intervening years, but he was very, very kind to me during those visits.

In Len’s earlier life, as I said, his priorities—he was an avid baseball player, a pitcher for the Douglas baseball team. He loved baseball, and after he quit pitching, he became an umpire. I don’t know whether the other play-

ers liked him as much as an umpire as they did as a pitcher, but he was a very good pitcher.

The last time I saw Len Quilty was at the St. Patrick's celebration at the Dacre centre in 2012. I was just coming in. It was a beautiful day, sunny and warm. It was March, but it was just gorgeous. Mike was wheeling Len out in his wheelchair. Len was having the challenges of age and dementia at this time. Mike said to me later that it wasn't a great day. He didn't seem to recognize anybody, but he wanted to be there for the music and the celebration. As I'm walking into the Dacre centre, Len is coming out, and he looks up and he says, "John Yakabuski. How the heck are you?" So whatever it is—I don't know what effect I had, but I made that day a little better. It sure made my day better, too. I'm glad I have that memory of Len as our last meeting.

Fittingly, that Douglas baseball jacket adorned Len's casket at the public viewing at Goulet Funeral Home. The funeral service was on May 20, 2014, right in the middle of the provincial election campaign. When I drove to the funeral, I was feeling terribly because somebody had done their job on my campaign team. They had campaign signs all the way on the road to Mount St. Patrick's church. My brother and I were picking them up because we didn't think they should be stuck there during Len Quilty's funeral service. We managed to get them up. It was a wonderful funeral, a wonderful tribute to Len to be laid to rest at the same church at which he was baptized some 94 years before.

I talked about his family. I haven't mentioned—I apologize; I should have—his wonderful, devoted, beloved wife, Irene, who passed years before him. They raised a wonderful family.

I remember Father Rick Starks saying that perhaps Len would have the last joke, because the doors were open for the church for people to come in long before the service, and the place was full of mosquitoes. Father Rick Starks made a comment. He said, "Len would just love this. You might not remember what Father Rick Starks's sermon said that day, but you're never going to forget this funeral, because you spent half the time slapping mosquitoes and half the time waving at them." So Len had the last laugh at his funeral.

To paraphrase St. Paul, Len Quilty fought the good fight. He finished the race and he kept the faith, and we're all better off for having known him.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further tribute?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Speaker, you know, it's almost unfair to have to follow the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. He's so good. John, you're so good. Thank you so much for that wonderful tribute. But I will endeavour to do my best, Speaker.

It is an honour and I am honoured to rise, on behalf of the Ontario New Democratic Party and our leader, Andrea Horwath, to pay tribute to former MPP the late Leonard Quilty.

In legislative environments, longevity is often measured, and it's a measure we use to define legacy, and understandably so. The ability to garner the trust of your

community in one election is impressive enough of a feat in its own right, but to do so over multiple elections, in the face of changing times, is something that I think resonates with us all. That's why we think of the PC administration from 1943 to 1985 in dynastic terms and why the current member from St. Catharines is affectionately known as the dean of the Legislature. In many cases it's not accomplishments or achievements that grab our attention, but the time that we have spent here.

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But what happens when this is not your story? How is legacy measured when your tenure isn't a long and storied career, but a short time as an MPP? Time can be a helpful metric, but it can also be a misleading one. No MPP is introduced to public service on the first day he or she gets elected here at Queen's Park. In fact, a seat in these benches is often just one chapter in a story of life dedicated to serving others. At our best, we run because we recognize a need in our communities, and we offer our services and ourselves to the people in an effort to help. This is what we learn when we look back on the life of Leonard Quilty.

Back in 1962, the Conservative machine was still on the rise in Ontario politics, and nowhere was this more true than in eastern Ontario. The growing popularity of the PC Party in the region transformed the riding of Renfrew South from its former Liberal dominance into a new Tory stronghold. But even as the blue wave was gathering strength, Renfrew South faced its own special brand of difficulty. You see, despite the Conservative success, both of its preceding Tory MPPs died while in office. In the first by-election, the Tory candidate won easily, capitalizing on the strength of the PC brand, but one can only imagine the shock and dismay when tragedy struck a second time, forcing a second by-election just five years later.

Leonard Quilty knew he faced incredible odds, but he also knew his neighbours needed someone they trusted to be their voice in a time of political turmoil. A lifelong resident of the Ottawa Valley, he took great pride in the uniqueness of the region and was driven to do whatever he could to help make it an even better place to live and to raise a family. A farmer by trade, Leonard was no stranger to lending a hand to his neighbours, only this time it meant putting his name on the ballot and braving a winter campaign.

In hindsight, Leonard's victory shouldn't have been a surprise. It only makes sense that the people of Renfrew South responded by electing someone driven by a sense of duty to his community—someone who could be trusted to help the riding regain its sense of stability in the midst of challenging times.

Although Leonard Quilty's Queen's Park career was interrupted by the resumption of Tory dominance in the 1963 general election, his relatively brief career as an MPP opened the door for him to return to political office in 1977, when he began an eight-year career as the reeve of Admaston township, a term that included his election as the warden of Renfrew county in 1981.

Leonard's legacy helps us remember that the Queen's Park portion of the journey, while longer for some than others, is but one chapter in lives driven by commitment to public service. It's a reminder that the commitment to community began long before we had the privilege of sitting in this chamber and, if we're as dedicated as Leonard was, will continue long after we leave this place.

Thank you to Leonard's family, represented here today by son Pat; granddaughter Jennifer and her husband, Jeff; and his great-granddaughters, Madeline and Amelia, who are with us today; and son Mike, who is unable to be with us but is watching from home. It is my hope that your memories of your father and grandfather are warmed even further by his commitment to the Ottawa Valley and the legacy he has left in Admaston and Renfrew as a result of his drive to give back to the place and the people who held a special place in his heart.

On behalf of Andrea Horwath and Ontario's New Democrats, please accept our thanks for the life and service of Leonard Quilty.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further tribute?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's truly an honour and a pleasure to rise today to pay tribute to the former member for Renfrew South, Leonard Quilty, and to join my colleagues from across the House. I join the member from Essex in proclaiming that it's a very daunting task to follow the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, so I'm going to try to do my best to honour Leonard here today.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, I was privileged to live in Renfrew county in Eganville. Although I never met Mr. Quilty, I feel, in researching his life and in talking to his friends and family, that I've come to know him, and I hope to share some of that with you today.

On a funny anecdote, if I may, I was on the phone with the editor of the Eganville Leader, Gerald Tracey, the other day. We were deep in conversation about Mr. Quilty and he says, "Oh, Eleanor, there's a phone call for me. It's the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke on the other line." I said, "Well, you tell him it's the member from Burlington calling, and I'm asking about Mr. Quilty." It seems that we were all looking to think about your dad and your grandfather; it's a very important occasion.

First elected in a by-election in 1962, Liberal candidate Len defeated PC candidate Con Mulvihill in an incredibly tight race. At first it seemed Mr. Mulvihill had won the election by a mere 25 votes, but after 1 a.m., it was Mr. Quilty who was declared the victor by, as the member for St. Catharines said, a landslide victory of 135 votes.

Prior to entering public life, Leonard was a wonderful public servant in his community. He was involved in the Kiwanis club, the Knights of Columbus and the Renfrew county school board, to name a few, and he was an engaged member of the Liberal Party throughout his life, "always on the sidelines," said his son Mike, and very much involved in the party.

Mike also told me that his dad was so respected by people throughout the county that the phone would often

ring and Leonard would answer. On the other end would be someone needing assistance and Leonard would listen patiently, ending the call with, "Leave it with me," committing to help in any way that he could. Said Mike: "He was very community-minded, and people counted on him to get things done."

Tough battles like his first election were nothing new to Leonard. After all, he was the only man to have reduced the majority of a Frost Conservative cabinet minister in the previous Ontario election in 1959. While Leonard may not have been a member of provincial Parliament for long, he certainly made good use of his time here in this House. He was a member of six standing committees, including the committees on travel and publicity, education, agriculture, and highways and highway safety.

A farmer by profession—as the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has noted, in a very difficult landscape—he was a big champion of farmers as a consequence, and rural Ontario as a whole.

During a debate concerning margarine one afternoon—and in the early 1960s this was a debate that members may remember was raging across Canada—Leonard stood here in the House and he said, "This afternoon we have heard a great deal in favour of margarine and the colouring of margarine. As a representative of rural people and a representative of an area where there is a great deal of butter producers, I want to tell the House, through you, sir, that the rural representatives are not taking this lying down. If this bill is introduced, we will have plenty to say."

While not afraid to speak his mind, Leonard had a calm method of presentation that had the effect of cooling the temperature during heated debate. His son Mike, a retired OPP superintendent, who, as has been noted, couldn't be with us today, said, "He believed that when you did a job, do it right the first time so you wouldn't have to go back and waste time doing so."

Leonard tackled his challenges head-on and it is clear by his legacy that he never looked back. Even with his get-things-done attitude, Leonard was always willing to work collaboratively, telling his colleagues during his maiden speech that, "I also wish to tell other members of the House that even though I sit in the opposition, it is my intention and the intention of my party to assist rather than resist government," an important ethos that resonates today.

After leaving Queen's Park in 1963, losing in the general election to Paul Yakabuski, the father of the current member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, he remained connected to provincial politics for the rest of his career. He sought re-election in the three following general elections—1967, 1971 and 1975—but unfortunately was unsuccessful in those contests. Len then turned his attention to local politics, becoming the reeve of Admaston township in 1977 and the warden of Renfrew county in 1981.

We lost Leonard on May 14, 2014, at the ripe old age of 94. His legacy of public service remains with us and indeed resonates in his son Mike, who is now councillor

for the township of Admaston/Bromley. Leonard was a man much loved by his family: his wife Irene, his sons Michael and Patrick, his eight grandchildren and his 12 great-grandchildren. He leaves behind a legacy in Renfrew county that will be remembered by everyone. When I asked Mike about his lasting memory of his dad, he said simply: "He was one of the most kind and caring men I ever knew."

To his family, we offer our condolences and our thanks for lending us your husband, your father, your grandfather, your great-grandfather, your brother and your uncle. We join the people of Renfrew county in acknowledging and celebrating his life of serving his community and his province. I thank you for the privilege of allowing me to honour him today, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I would like to thank all members for their kind, heartfelt and thoughtful comments in paying tribute to Leonard Quilty. To the family, we thank you for the gift of Leonard, and we also would like to let you know that we will be sending you a copy of Hansard and a DVD so that you can see the affection in which former members are held by this Legislature. Thank you very much for being here.

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ORAL QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Patrick Brown: My question is for the Premier. I'd like to run down some of the headlines from yesterday. From the CBC: "Liberals Stonewalling Ontario's Fiscal Watchdog." From the Toronto Star: "Budget Watchdog Says ... Liberals Hiding Data from Him." The Canadian Press: "FAO Says ... Liberals Block His Access to Info."

We all know the Liberals don't know how to even spell the words "open government," but you would think they'd actually be able to practise it.

A simple question for the Premier: What are the Liberals hiding from the Financial Accountability Officer?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker. We appreciate the independent and valuable analysis that the FAO does of the state of the province's finances. Ministries continue to meet with the Financial Accountability Officer and his team to share information and answer questions, and we expect ministries to work closely with the Financial Accountability Officer, as is enshrined in the legislation.

Government officials have recently reached out to follow up on some of the issues that the FAO outlined in his press conference yesterday. As the Minister of Finance said yesterday, there is another government-wide directive going across government to make sure that offices within the ministries are responding to the FAO in a consistent and timely manner.

I would just remind the members opposite that we are working within legislation that was drafted and that we worked on with the opposition.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Patrick Brown: Back to the Premier: The government likes to insist that they're open and transparent, but the FAO wouldn't have had to have a press conference to plead for openness and transparency if that was the case. Let me quote the FAO. Stephen LeClair said yesterday, "From day one" the Liberals have "claimed cabinet confidences on almost any future projection."

There is clearly political interference, and ministries are being directed by the corner office to obstruct and block the FAO. LeClair added, "I believe that this is political direction." Based on the Globe and Mail article, we already know the Premier feels that she needs to run all the ministries and pick up their slack.

So my question for the Premier is, will she instruct all the Liberal ministers to be transparent and open, just like you promised?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Just to be clear, requests for information from the Financial Accountability Officer are responded to by non-partisan officials. I know the members opposite don't want to—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. I tried to see if you were going to do this on your own, and I think I'll have to help. If it continues, I'll go straight to naming—not naming; sorry—I'll go straight to warnings and then naming. Keep it down.

Carry on, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It is not the politicians who respond to the requests from the Financial Accountability Officer. It is the officials, who are non-partisan.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Nipissing and the member from Leeds–Grenville, come to order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Finance, come to order.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Given that it is non-partisan officials who respond to the Financial Accountability Officer, I go back to the statement of the Minister of Finance yesterday that there is a directive going across government to ensure that all of those officials understand that we are operating within legislation.

That was put together as a result of a conversation with the opposition parties, in a minority Parliament, and it's consistent with the parameters of the Parliamentary Budget Officer in the federal government.

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

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the Premier: That's clearly not what the FAO said. The FAO said it's political direction that is causing this blocking.

The Minister of Finance has said that the Liberals "will be sending a government-wide directive to all offices to ensure that offices are responding to the FAO in a consistent and timely manner."

But if you do a Google translation, changing English into Liberal talking points, what comes up is that the

government is instructing all ministers to invoke cabinet confidentiality and block the FAO's access as quickly as possible. This isn't acceptable. You say one thing and the reality of your actions are completely different.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier stop hiding behind cabinet confidentiality? If you're not transparent and open, Madam Premier, one of your disgruntled cabinet ministers is going to leak it anyway. Just do the right thing: Be transparent; be open.

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You can get yourself in trouble even when I ask you to sit. And I would direct my recommendations to speak to the Chair, please. Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: The province of Ontario is the first and only province in Canada that has instituted a Financial Accountability Officer. It's been modelled after the parliamentary budget officer, which the member opposite knows all too well. He's making accusations that aren't what Ontario is doing. We have acted in accordance with the legislation that has been passed. It may very well be that in Ottawa—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Dufferin-Caledon, come to order. The member from Leeds-Grenville, second time.

Finish, please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: It may well be that in Ottawa, that's how this member operated with his counterparts in regard to the accountability office, but it's not what we do in Ontario.

We want to work collaboratively with the Financial Accountability Officer for the benefit of openness and being more transparent in regard to the work that we do. That's exactly what is happening. We heard what the Financial Accountability Officer had to say. We are working with him to ensure that he gets the information necessary.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the Premier: Since the government doesn't want to talk about their culture of secrecy and obstruction, let's talk about something else. Let's talk about the disgruntled cabinet minister who leaked the Globe and Mail a copy of the climate change action plan.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: That was Bob Machiavelli.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Action number 13 of the leaked cabinet—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm not going to accept that. If it happens again, the member will be warned.

Carry on.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Action number 13 of the leaked cabinet document said, "Set targets for updating the building code so that new homes and small buildings

built in 2030 are not relying on fossil fuels for their heating and cooling. Expand this requirement to all buildings before 2050."

Mr. Speaker, will the government be taking this action? Will they be amending the building code to limit natural gas? And if they're not taking this action, are they stating here in the Legislature that the document that was leaked to the Globe and Mail entitled "cabinet confidentiality" is actually a falsified document?

Interjections.

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

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I will say to the member opposite—and I made it clear when I was in Alberta—that we are not banning natural gas. We're not doing those things that the member opposite wants to stir up issues around because he doesn't want to talk about climate change. As I said yesterday, like his former colleague in Alberta in the Wildrose Party, he does not want to talk about climate change. He does not want to talk about the reality that we have to tackle this threat to humanity, this threat to the globe. And we have to do it in a responsible way, which is why we will be bringing out the climate action plan.

Of course, there are working documents that the government uses in the run-up to the release of a plan, and we'll be talking more fully about the plan in coming days.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the Premier—and I would note that there was no answer on whether that document was accurate. There was no answer on whether that document was falsified. Frankly, if I'm going to believe the Premier or the Globe and Mail, well, the Globe and Mail has got a much better track record. In terms of the Hydro One fire sale, it was the Globe and Mail that exposed it. The Minister of Education's secret payouts? It was the Globe and Mail that exposed it. And, once again, on the cap-and-trade plan, it was the Globe and Mail that exposed it.

The Liberals say they're not going to ban natural gas, but they can't refute the story in the Globe and Mail. The Liberals claim they're going to expand natural gas, yet they actually haven't provided a single dollar for that expansion. If the Premier was truly committed to natural gas in Ontario, she'd be spending money to expand it, not simply saying that it might happen sometime in the future.

Mr. Speaker, when will the Premier actually spend a single dollar to expand natural gas in the province—

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

Interjections.

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

Premier.

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Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We've been clear that expanding the use of natural gas—and, in fact, I used that

as the example of and the evidence that we're not interested in banning natural gas, Mr. Speaker. There's \$230 million in the budget to expand access to natural gas in our northern and rural communities. The Leader of the Opposition knows that perfectly well. He also should know that the agricultural community came forward with that specific ask and made it clear that that was something that needed to happen. We've responded to that. That process is under way, and that expansion will happen.

But I think, fundamentally, people need to understand that the Leader of the Opposition wants to talk about process and he wants to talk about distractions because he does not want to talk about or support any change that would lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. He doesn't believe in climate change action and he's not supportive of the actions—

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

Final supplementary.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Back to the Premier: The people and businesses of Ontario don't deserve to be strung along. Environmental Defence wrote to the Ontario Energy Board asking for the natural gas expansion to be halted because they know that's exactly where the Liberals are headed.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Finance, second time.

Mr. Patrick Brown: With so much uncertainty, no company would pay millions of dollars to expand natural gas, only to be told they are no longer going to have customers.

Once again, I'm going to go back to the same question I've asked three times to the Premier: Was that document labelled "Cabinet Confidential" accurate, or is that a falsified document? We would like an answer.

Interjections.

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

The member from Renfrew, come to order. Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, come to order. I'll pick you off one at a time. Minister of the Environment, come to order. And now I'm moving to warnings. Thank you.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Despite what the opposition says, we're not forcing anyone off natural gas. We announced in 2015 \$230 million to expand natural gas for northern and rural communities.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a laughing matter. The reality is that climate change is affecting the globe. Climate change is affecting every part of the globe. We have a responsibility to put in place a responsible plan. When that plan is finalized and it comes into the public realm after it has been through cabinet, I look forward to the opposition having a reasonable conversation with us, because this is something that will affect all of us, and it will even more profoundly affect our children and our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren.

The opposition party is not interested in taking action on this front. We are. We are moving forward responsibly. We are going to invest in innovation; we are going to develop technology that will be good and used here in Ontario and around the globe. We think they should be working with us on that.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la première ministre. Right here, right now, in Ontario, we have hospitals that face the risk of imminent breakdown, but the Liberal government won't release which hospitals need that work. The Premier seems more concerned about avoiding bad PR than she is with giving Ontarians the confidence that their hospitals are being properly maintained. Speaker, this is just one more sign of a health care system in crisis. Nurses are being laid off, beds are being closed, and the Minister of Health seems to be making things up as he goes along.

When will the Premier finally look at the facts and admit there is a silent crisis in health care and it's patients who are paying the price?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It is very important that we address the deferred maintenance issues in hospitals across the province, but we have to do that in a responsible way. On top of building new hospitals—the \$12 billion that is in place to build new and renovate hospitals, the \$100 million a year for deferred maintenance: All of that goes to address the challenges that hospitals face in terms of maintenance.

That is the reality of having a large set of assets that have to be maintained on a regular basis. Whether it's schools or whether it's hospitals, there needs to be money that is used on a regular basis to address those challenges. That's the reason we actually increased the amount of money available to hospitals to tackle that deferred maintenance.

We're doing that in a responsible way, and I know that we're working closely with the hospitals in order to make those repairs.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: The health minister says that he won't tell Ontarians what hospitals need maintenance work because "It would give contractors an unfair advantage" if they knew "in advance of their bid what the ministry or the hospital had estimated the cost..." But that's not what the ministry told us. The ministry told us, "Concerns are that contractors currently engaged by hospitals would lose confidence in the facility's ability or intention to pay on current contractual obligations."

Either the minister isn't accurate or the ministry is not accurate. Is the Premier okay with her minister making things up as he goes?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, imagine if you were renovating your house. Would you tell the contractor the amount of money that you're going to be paying them or

would you actually ask the contractor to assess it and negotiate with that contractor?

This is precisely the same issue. Why would we identify hospitals and the amount of money that we believe is required to renovate or maintain? We would actually create a transparent, appropriate bidding process where contractors would bid on the repairs. It's no different than what you would do for your own house—let alone the fact that when we look at deferred maintenance, what we're talking about is what would be required to restore those hospital facilities to their brand new status. In fact, almost all of the hospitals—because they do this on a go-forward basis, it may be that at some time in the future they need to replace a generator. It may be that they have to replace a building that suits a different need. These are the sort of things we're looking at.

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

M^{me} France G elinas: The data that we have is about health and safety. It is about code compliance. It is about imminent breakdowns. Yet, although we have the amounts, we have no idea which hospitals we're talking about.

The government's own data shows that hospitals are overcrowded, the government's own data shows that hospitals are in desperate need of repairs—\$3.2 billion worth of repairs—and the government's own budget shows that hospital funding is not keeping up with inflation and is not keeping up with the growing population.

Yesterday, the Ontario Health Coalition reported that 94,000 people took the time to call on the Liberal government to stop cutting hospital care. When will the Premier listen to Ontarians and stop the cuts to our hospitals?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: We are doing precisely what they're asking. We are increasing funding to our hospitals—\$345 million this year. The third party voted against our budget, which had that allocation. They voted against our budget that allocated \$1 billion more to the health care budget—\$52 billion that we invest. They voted against a provision in the budget that doubles the amount that we allocate to deferred maintenance, from \$50 million a year to \$100 million a year.

If this was such an important issue to them, if it wasn't just some political, partisan spin that they're trying to use here, why didn't they support it in the budget when it doubled the amount of funding that would have gone to deferred maintenance?

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Premier. Saying that the sell-off of Hydro One will build transit isn't true, and anyone who says so is more interested in political spin than facts.

Will the Premier stop the sell-off of Hydro One?

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Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We've been very clear that building infrastructure—including transit—transportation infrastructure around the province is a priority. It's

a cornerstone of our economic plan. That building is happening, and part of that, which we ran on, was looking at the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario and leveraging those assets to invest in new assets. That's what we're doing with Hydro One. Those investments are going to benefit people across the province, including the people in the riding that the member represents.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, yesterday was Hydro One's first private annual general meeting. The sell-off of Hydro One slashes provincial revenue. It will cause the deficit to skyrocket. It will mean hydro rates will go up. When the Liberals try and suggest otherwise, they're insulting the intelligence of everyone in this province.

Will the Premier stop the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I honestly think what insults the intelligence of people in this province is a party that suggests that they can do everything—including building transportation infrastructure—with no way to fund it, Mr. Speaker—absolutely no plan, absolutely no indication of how they would fund any of the things that they suggest; no understanding of how business works, as the questions around the hospitals indicate; no understanding of what it costs to build transit and transportation infrastructure in every corner of this province. That insults the intelligence of people in this province. What we've brought forward is a realistic plan that actually gets shovels in the ground, rail on the roads, and expands transportation across this province.

Interjections.

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

Final supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, selling Hydro One is about one thing and one thing only: It's about the Premier getting a one-time cheque from shareholders so the books will look good in the next provincial election. That's what it's about. It's bad energy policy; it's bad environmental policy; it's bad economic policy. And everybody knows it.

Speaker, will the government admit that they have made a mistake? Will they recognize that they've made a mess of the energy system in this province and will they stop the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Interjections.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: Minister, just two or three: yes, yes and yes—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The reminder you're going to get is not going to be helpful.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I said "Minister of Finance."

Hon. Charles Sousa: It's all about creating greater value for the people of Ontario. The members opposite have failed to recognize that by enhancing the value of this corporation—which is now more valuable than it was before—we still retain, at this point, 70% ownership of

that company. We've made a commitment that we will always be the largest shareholder—

Mr. Paul Miller: We don't own it. We don't own it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: We will always be the largest shareholder. We will not allow any other person or company to have more than 10%. The issue of forgone revenue that the member speaks of is the fact that we are reinvesting it in other projects, in other assets, to gain even greater value. Furthermore, the company is now going to produce even more value and greater dividends for the province, even with the lower ownership.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Ontario continue to own this corporation, and the people of Ontario will benefit as we proceed forward.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Rick Nicholls: My question is to the Premier. Last week I hosted a town hall on natural gas with over 150 residents in attendance. They want answers. Municipalities have stated that they will mobilize against this radical agenda if the government wants to go ahead with its leaked plan.

In my riding of Chatham–Kent Essex and across the province, thousands of jobs depend on the natural gas industry. They need and deserve certainty. So Speaker, is the Premier amending the building code to phase out natural gas?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: We've repeated often in this House that we have, in the 2016 budget, \$230 million to invest in expanding natural gas to rural communities. We also have seen changes in the Ontario Energy Board regulatory framework that make it easier to expand natural gas. Union Gas, at the present time, has five applications before the Ontario Energy Board to expand natural gas—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Huron–Bruce is warned.

Finish, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: They have five applications before the Ontario Energy Board. They're working with over a dozen other rural municipalities to expand natural gas into rural communities.

They just don't want to admit that we are investing in rural communities like they never even thought of.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Back to the Premier: Speaker, the Premier's refusal to answer basic questions is a betrayal of the people she once swore to serve. As a matter of fact, the people of Ontario worry about how their Premier is spending billions of their dollars to travel the world to build her own climate change legacy.

Here's what the president of the Canadian Gas Association, Timothy Egan, said with regard to the Premier's agenda: It is "incredibly irresponsible." It will destroy a

proud industry, kill countless jobs, ruin families and drive heating costs through the roof.

Our offices get numerous calls each day about natural gas. People have been scared for weeks because this government is too scared to release the real details. MPPs can't do their jobs and provide answers.

Speaker, why does Premier Wynne continue to turn her back on rural Ontario and ignore their questions? Are you or are you not amending the building codes?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Once again, the opposition doesn't want to accept the realities. The reality that they're accepting is a draft document that was leaked to the media. They accept it as fact. So in the coming weeks, there will be a fulsome climate change action plan in place, and then they can respond. Then we can have the conversation.

We have probably done more consultation with the gas sector than with any other sector, as we lead up to this, over the last year and a half to two years. They have an open door—

Interjection.

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

Wrap up, please.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: We're expanding natural gas, particularly into rural communities. That's a reality they don't want to accept, and it upsets them to see—

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

New question.

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

Ms. Jennifer K. French: My question is to the Premier. New Democrats support a strong public pension plan. We believe that all Ontarians should be able to retire with dignity. This government, however, has taken it upon itself to exclude thousands, if not millions, of Ontarians and their families.

This month, the provinces are set to discuss a potential increase to the Canada Pension Plan, a plan that leaves no Canadian behind. Even the federal government has expressed concerns that the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, which currently leaves out thousands of workers, may prevent a future CPP enhancement.

Premier, will the government support a universal enhancement to the Canada Pension Plan so that every Canadian can benefit?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Associate Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: I want to thank the member opposite for her question. I know that she has been the critic on this particular file.

The member opposite knows full well that Ontario has provided strong leadership when it comes to retirement security in this province. That leadership is something that is moving us forward as we look to implement the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

We have consulted very widely on this policy, and we've received input from all sides: from business, from—

Mr. Paul Miller: You got nothing from the retirees—nothing.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek is warned. I would have gotten the message long ago.

Minister.

1130

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: We are creating a secure retirement savings floor for the people of Ontario so that when they retire, they can retire with dignity.

Our Premier and our Minister of Finance in fact have led national conversations when it comes to the expansion of CPP, Mr. Speaker. We are currently at the table and we remain at the table as we build a stronger retirement system here in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: During committee this week, New Democrats called, as always, for a universal Ontario pension plan, but the government voted down each and every one of our amendments. This Liberal government believes that only some workers in Ontario should be allowed to participate in the ORPP.

Canadians pride themselves on having a public health care system, a public education system and a public pension system that benefits us all. Speaker, it's part of who we are as Canadians.

Now, however, it looks like the Liberals' design of the Ontario pension plan may jeopardize a future CPP enhancement. Premier, does this government actually believe that it has the mandate to redesign the CPP?

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Mr. Speaker, our government believes that after a lifetime of working, Ontarians deserve to retire with dignity and with security. That is what we're building. We are moving forward with the implementation of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

We are at the table as conversations are under way with the CPP expansion, and those discussions, we've always said, will take time. We're part of that conversation.

Mr. Speaker, what is important is that when people retire, they have a predictable stream of income in retirement. That is exactly what they will have with the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. It will bring financial security. It will ensure that when people retire, they can do so with dignity and that they have that lifetime income. That's to ensure that, in fact, when our young workers retire, they will have the retirement security that they don't have today.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. John Fraser: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. Today, June 1, marks the 33rd annual Injured Workers' Day. As the minister reminded us a few weeks ago in the House, despite our progress, too many people continue to lose their lives or suffer an

injury or an illness simply because they went to work. No job is worth a life. No job is worth an injury.

I know that every year, the Minister of Labour addresses injured workers and their representatives when they assemble here. Mr. Speaker, can the minister please share with us what we're doing to improve the lives of injured workers and treating them with the respect and dignity they deserve?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thanks to the honourable member for that excellent question. I want to also take this opportunity to thank all the groups that have come down to visit us here, as they do on an annual basis, at Queen's Park.

Speaker, on this issue, prevention is key. But when that prevention simply isn't working and injuries occur and fatalities occur, those who are injured need to know that they're going to be treated with dignity and they're going to be treated with respect.

We should be proud in the province of Ontario. We've come a long way. The province's annual rate of workplace injuries has dropped by more than 40% in the past decade. We should be proud of that, but we shouldn't be satisfied for one minute with that. There's a long way to go. We shouldn't rest as long as one person is injured on the job. I'm proud of the government's record in this regard, but not satisfied. There's a long way to go. We've got a number of plans in place. I look forward to meeting the injured workers today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to thank the minister for that response. I was pleased to join him earlier this year when we opened an office to assist injured workers in Ottawa.

We all know that many workplace incidents can be prevented. Workplace injuries should never just be seen as a cost of doing business. It's important that Ontario has a workplace culture that protects workers and prevents injuries from happening in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, what steps are we taking to ensure that our loved ones and friends return home safe after a day at work?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you, once again, to the member for that excellent question. We're working very hard at the ministry with partners right around this province to keep the injury numbers down and to eliminate deaths. We've almost doubled the number of workplace inspectors in the province of Ontario to look at health and safety. We've increased the amount of health and safety training that is now mandatory in the province of Ontario. Every single worker in this province must take basic health and safety training before they enter the workforce.

We've got mandatory specialized training for those people who work at heights. Speaker, since last April, 100,000 Ontarians have taken that training of working at heights.

Workers who are new to the job, including young workers—this is so important, Speaker. Young workers are three times more likely to be hurt on the job than

older workers. We need to concentrate on that. At the Ministry of Labour, we're doing exactly that.

I'd ask all members to spread that message through their own constituency offices about the importance of health and safety.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My question is for the environment minister. Speaker, I'm sure you have seen the news that California and Quebec's recent cap-and-trade auction flopped. In fact, only 11% of the allowances were actually sold. Now California is scrambling to make up for this funding shortfall.

Still, the environment minister actually told TVO yesterday that he isn't worried about similar problems in Ontario, even though the government has promised to spend \$1.2 billion in cap-and-trade funds on a lottery list of Liberal pet projects without even raising a dime. The Liberals are spending money they don't have.

How will the government cover the tab for the Liberals' billion-dollar spending spree if Ontario's first cap-and-trade auction crashes, just like California and Quebec's did?

Interjections.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport is warned.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You don't want to take action.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You want to gamble?

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: No, it's the Minister of the Environment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Sorry. Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

This is a market system. There are periods—we've had over a dozen auctions now where they were over-subscribed. The last one was 95%. This was lower. At different points in the compliance period, there will be greater or lesser demand. We are early and far away from the end of the next compliance period. We expect fluctuations, Mr. Speaker.

It is a market mechanism, it is not a politicized system, and it works on supply and demand, which, the last time I looked, was a fairly consistent principle with Conservatives, who like markets and like the market to solve problems. So we're using a market mechanism that is working all around the world. Within the next 12 months, over half the world's economy will be covered by a carbon-pricing system, the vast majority of it the cap-and-trade system that we're talking about: Japan, China, Germany, Britain, California.

It's a market. It will go up and down. We have confidence in markets—

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

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Back to the minister: The truth is that the minister is planning on funding shortfalls, and he said so. He actually told TVO yesterday, "We know in the earlier years, until the market is mature, you'll see more dramatic swings."

I find it unbelievable that the Liberals are willing to write billion-dollar cheques without knowing how much money they'll have in the bank. With no contingency plan in place, the Liberals will once again leave Ontarians with either more debt or more taxes.

So I ask the minister to be clear with the people of Ontario today. Are the Liberals going to plunge Ontario deeper into debt or raise taxes to cover the funding shortfall after their first cap-and-trade auction crashes?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Mr. Speaker, if you needed more proof that all of this money was going to reduce greenhouse gas and for environmental programs, here is your proof: The money is dedicated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is a market system. Money comes in transparently, based on how much comes in at each auction. It goes out. It will be independently reviewed, and it is spent transparently on greenhouse gas emissions. In the years that the market generates more revenue, there will be more revenue spent. This is the difference.

This money is going to programs that the cement industry wants, that homeowners want. It's going to lower heating costs. It's going to help people buy low-carbon vehicles. It's going to make major investments in our auto sector to modernize and continue to support a dynamic auto sector. Liberals have the money to invest in the auto sector. Tories consistently vote against the auto sector—

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

Interjection.

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

New question.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Percy Hatfield: My question is for the Premier. Good morning, Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Good morning.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Today, we're joined by hundreds of individuals and families who have suffered an injury or illness at work and who have felt let down by the Liberal government's mismanagement of our province's workers' compensation system.

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The WSIB is supposed to protect our province's most vulnerable. Instead, over the past six years, the Liberal government has been too concerned with bringing down WSIB's \$12-million debt, and doing so at the cost of those who depend on their benefits to make ends meet. When will this Liberal government stop retiring the WSIB's unfunded liability on the backs of injured workers and their families?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Labour.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh for this very important question and for the courtesy he extended me prior to this question.

Speaker, all injured workers deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. When those injuries occur—we wish they didn't occur, and we do everything we possibly can to make sure they don't—when they do occur, people should expect to be treated, as I said, with dignity and respect.

We've been working with the WSIB in a very progressive way. Earlier this year, we passed legislation that established the indexation of WSIB benefits to full CPI. We're going to index benefits that, oddly enough, were taken away 19 years ago by the very member's same party. We have reinstated them.

We've listened to the concerns. Part of that respect, part of that dignity, is to make sure we understand the concerns of injured workers. That's why today is so important. What we've done in Bill 109 is focus very clearly and precisely on the rights of injured workers in this province. Speaker, we'll continue to do that.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: If life was as good as the minister makes it sound, we wouldn't have hundreds of people on the lawn today saying that this is not the case.

The truth is, under the Liberal government's watch, those who suffer an injury at work and go to the WSIB for help get attacked on all fronts, including reduced claims, premature return to work, ignoring the advice of medical professionals, and that list goes on and on.

Anwar Pierre, who is at the rally at Queen's Park today, is a father with a torn rotator cuff from a picking job received through a temp agency. He's unable to work and he struggles to make ends meet because the WSIB has disagreed with his doctor.

Speaker, I'll ask again: When will this government stop retiring WSIB's debts on the backs of Anwar and our province's most vulnerable workers?

Interjections.

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

Minister?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you once again to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh. He raises a very important question. That's precisely why this House passed Bill 109: simply to focus on improving protections for workers in this province. We changed the way that we calculate survivor benefits. We've made it an offence now for employers to prevent workers from reporting workplace injuries and illnesses. We've increased the maximum corporate penalty from \$100,000 to \$500,000. We've put in a Fair Practices Commissioner to investigate when people have an issue with the WSIB. They have an ombud to go to, Speaker.

It's that simple: You listen to injured workers; you act on their concerns; you make the system work for them. That's exactly what we're doing. I'll be proud today to stand before those hundreds of injured workers and talk

about the track record of this government. It's second to none. This government respects injured workers. This government will ensure that there are practices in place to make sure they get the respect and the dignity that they receive when they need services from the WSIB.

WASTE DIVERSION

Mr. Arthur Potts: My question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. Diverting waste from landfill is an incredibly important issue that many generations of government, many governments past, have grappled with. Quite frankly, we just produce far too much waste, and we don't recycle enough.

Prior to my assuming my role here as the member for Beaches–East York, I worked closely with the recycling industry to expand the materials in the blue box to include box board, wrapping paper and used books. I also worked with a team of people in the beverage and alcohol industry in order to bring the deposit system to liquor bottles in Ontario, thus taking material out of the blue box.

The problem is—it becomes very problematic: Who gets to pay for what's in the blue box? That's why we brought in Bill 151. I know that during the course of our hearings—five days and clause-by-clause—we heard numerous submissions from people across the province about how to improve Bill 151. So I'd like to ask the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change if he could explain to this House the improvements we made to the bill to serve Ontario better.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I just want to give a shout-out to the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, who I heard earlier speaking in the memorial. He did a lovely job.

That spirit of non-partisanship, when we get it in the House, is a good thing, and this bill is an example of that, Mr. Speaker. Members from all three parties worked very hard on this together. I want to give credit to the member for Huron–Bruce, the member for Toronto–Danforth and many other members here on both sides of the House.

This is an excellent bill. The work we did with AMO will relieve about \$117 million in municipal costs. The work we did with Unilever—I want to thank John Coyne, and Bob Chant of Loblaw's—will actually make this much more efficient and more cost-effective for business, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Arthur Potts: Thank you to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change for his excellent work on this file. It has been extremely important that we are listening to parties and representatives on all sides of the House to bring together the best bill we can for waste diversion in Ontario, so this input has been very critical.

I'd also like to give a shout-out to the member for Mississauga–Brampton South, who shepherded the bill through committee and who was extremely important in drawing out some of the commentary in order to ensure that we got all the nuanced stuff right, in order to make this bill as good as possible.

The bill is intended to improve resource efficiency and have the right people in the right place pay for and do the work. That's why we know that recovering just 60% of the waste materials could generate upwards of 13,000 jobs and contribute over \$1.5 billion to gross domestic product in Ontario.

Will the minister speak to how this bill can affect the people in the province on a daily basis and help us improve our diversion rates from landfill?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I want to thank the member for his support. I also want to thank the member for Mississauga–Brampton South, who did an excellent job—she's got a sharp mind for this—and the member for Sudbury, who stole all my bow ties, Mr. Speaker.

This is a remarkable piece of economic work. I want to thank the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure. This is going to help us improve productivity. For example, we collect enough aluminum in Ontario and Quebec to run an aluminum smelter entirely on recovered materials. That means it would only use 5% of the energy it does for virgin materials. Three of our steel mills work entirely on recovered materials. These are huge productivity gains that reduce structural costs in the Ontario economy.

The synergies of this all-in government approach of not seeing the environment as hostile to the economy but seeing one contributing positively to the other—I want to thank the Premier and my colleagues for taking this all-in, holistic approach, integrating economic and environmental policy. I want to thank the opposition parties for working so closely with us and providing the leadership.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Todd Smith: My question this morning is for the Premier. It happened earlier this year for fans of Adele, and even prior to that for fans of Springsteen. This week it happened again, as there was a huge outcry from music fans—it has been deafening, actually—of the Tragically Hip who went online to buy tickets, and those tickets were snatched up in just seconds after they went on sale.

What those fans probably didn't know, however, was that last July, this government changed the ticket resale laws to make it easier for big ticket sellers to gouge customers. For years, these corporate giants have been going to legislatures around the world, trying to change scalping laws so that they can turn the screws on consumers. Last summer, you eliminated the last protection for consumers that there was.

Speaker, what possible reason could the government have for abandoning music fans and concertgoers here in Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Attorney General.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: First of all, I feel sorry for those fans of the Tragically Hip who wanted to go to a concert and have to pay these prices.

In 2010, Ontario amended the Ticket Speculation Act to add additional protections to consumers from unfair ticket reselling practices. The amendment prohibited

related primary ticket sellers and secondary ticket sellers, including brokers and agents, from selling tickets to the same events. The amendment was aimed at ensuring that those who profit from the sale of tickets on the primary market may not also profit from their resale on the secondary market.

We did that. It's a complicated explanation of how to prevent this from happening. But it seems like the technology is always ahead. I said we're going to do what we can—

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

Supplementary?

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Mr. Todd Smith: So it's okay, then, to rip off consumers if it's online but not face to face, according to this government. Late-breaking story on the CBC, Mr. Speaker: For 91 years it's been illegal in Ontario to sell tickets above face value, until last summer.

At that time, when the government changed the law, John Karastamatis of Mirvish Productions said this change catered to big ticketholders like Ticketmaster, StubHub and MLSE: "That's what this new law was all about—to allow these corporations to be able to legally use the same techniques that the so-called street scalpers use."

If Ontario music fans want to know what really happened, I've got 52,700 reasons why this happened. That's how much Ticketmaster and its parent company have donated to the Ontario Liberals in the last two years.

Speaker, why did Ticketmaster end up like the Leafs winning the cup in 1962, and Ontario gets the shaft?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: To the Minister of Consumer Services.

Hon. David Oraziotti: Thank you, Speaker—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The amount of time that's left doesn't bother me at all. Anyone else that wants to speak out—

Mr. John Yakabuski: They won it.

Mr. Mike Colle: In 1967.

Mr. John Yakabuski: And 1962, Mike.

Mr. Mike Colle: It was 1967.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All right. The member from Eglinton–Lawrence is warned and the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned. Anyone else? I'm getting close to being able to name some, and I'm not going to stop.

Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. David Oraziotti: Thank you, Speaker. I want to clarify a couple of things here that the member has raised with respect to this issue. There was a regulation change on July 1, 2015. One of the fundamental issues that was at the heart of this was the fraud that was taking place with systems that were not able to be verified and people getting tickets that were—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Excuse me. The member from Leeds–Grenville is warned. I'm going to pass the test.

Carry on.

Hon. David Oraziotti: Thank you, Speaker. What was done was the important change that was made that allows companies to resell those tickets on the original site with guarantees.

The government does not set ticket prices for the public. That's determined by the marketplace as, most would agree, and what people will pay for them. Our concern around protecting consumers is with respect to the fraud that was taking place and the validity of the tickets, to ensure that an individual actually purchased an authentic ticket.

MERCURY POISONING

Ms. Sarah Campbell: To the Premier: "In the spirit of reconciliation, the Ontario government should do the right thing" and clean up the Wabigoon River system and Clay Lake. That wasn't the NDP that said this, even though we've repeatedly raised the issue of the legacy of mercury contamination of the Grassy Narrows First Nation territory with this government; that was Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day.

"No single act would go further to illustrate that a new era has dawned in our relationship with indigenous peoples and our shared environment," said Dr. David Suzuki.

"Efforts to remediate the mercury have been postponed long enough." That's the Liberal MP for Dryden, the former Indian affairs federal minister, Bob Nault.

Speaker, when will this government do what everyone knows needs to be done and clean up the Wabigoon River so that the people of Grassy Narrows may fish and live off their land without becoming sick?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. David Zimmer: As you know, this report was released the other day. It is with the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change. My office received a copy yesterday. My office is reviewing the report, as is the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change. The report suggests new science. This government is always, always interested in the best science available, the newest science available. We will consider the scientific suggestions and the recommendations in the report after our experts have had a chance to review the report and will comment later on it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Two days ago—the same day the Premier apologized for the province's role in the legacy of residential schools—the Premier said that she hadn't read the report that her government has had since April. And now we hear from the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs that they've only received the report yesterday. This is ridiculous.

Yesterday, the Premier said that she had read the report, but she claimed that the solutions that were proposed in there weren't clear. So let me be clear, because the report is very clear: Determine whether there is an ongoing mercury leak; find out if there are hot spots that

carry contaminated mercury downriver; and inject clay into the river to enhance the natural remediation that's going on. It has been done effectively in other parts of the province, such as Sudbury, decades ago.

We know that it can be done, so Speaker, let me ask this: Why won't this Premier commit to cleaning up the Wabigoon River of its mercury contamination that's making the people in Grassy Narrows sick?

Hon. David Zimmer: Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Not only has the Premier read it; she's instructed me and the Minister of—indigenous relations?

Interjection: Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Aboriginal Affairs—soon to be something even more exciting.

The report is being reviewed right now. It's been read by myself and the Premier. We take it very seriously. It's not a simple report. It asks for determination of sources, which is complex. There are issues of sediment. There are issues around the fact that the Dryden plant doesn't use mercury anymore. There are still potentially other sources, and there's a complex set of issues in Clay Lake.

Chief Isadore Day and I meet every two weeks. We met yesterday. We had a lengthy discussion about that. He's proposing some ideas. He's working with Grassy Narrows First Nation. We will be moving very quickly on this, but everyone agrees on more research to determine which of the interventions suggested and which combinations are best. We're going to get to the bottom of it, and I'll work with you to ensure that we work together on that.

SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Ma question est pour la ministre associée de la Santé responsable des Soins de longue durée et de la Promotion du mieux-être, L'honorable Dipika Damerla.

Speaker, as you may know, yesterday was World No Tobacco Day, an important milestone across the globe and an opportunity for us to consider the impact of tobacco on Ontarians.

Doctors know that smoking is a universal evil, heightening the risk of heart attack, stroke, poor leg circulation, emphysema and multiple cancers. I'm grateful, in fact, that our government has made it a priority to educate Ontarians and to provide support for those looking to quit. For example, the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy has greatly reduced tobacco use and lowered health risks to non-smokers in Ontario. In addition, the government has made many contributions inspired by community organizations, public health units and outspoken individuals, who have worked tirelessly to promote a smoke-free culture.

Speaker, my question is this: Would the minister please update this House on the government's Smoke-Free Ontario initiative?

Hon. Dipika Damerla: I want to thank the member from Etobicoke North, who I know as a physician is a great advocate for this issue. I want to thank him for all of his advocacy.

As we all know, 2016 marks the 10th anniversary of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Through this act and through our work with various contributing organizations, our government has significantly reduced tobacco use in Ontario. As a result of this important work, smoking rates in Ontario decreased from 24.5% in 2000 to 17.4% in 2014, which represents 400,000 fewer smokers—that's 400,000 lives saved.

Our strategy focuses on prevention, protection and cessation. We've invested over \$336 million in this strategy since 2008. More importantly, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to announce that in our recent budget we committed to a funding increase of \$5 million for smoking cessation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Thank you, Minister, for your leadership on this file on the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy. I know that important work, of course, lies ahead in our efforts to make Ontario the jurisdiction with the lowest smoking rates in Canada.

The minister's focus on protection and enforcement, prevention and cessation all have important impacts on the lives of both non-smokers suffering second-hand smoke as well as smokers who are looking to quit.

Yesterday, the minister celebrated the 10th anniversary of Smoke-Free Ontario at an event that recognized the contributions of anti-tobacco champions across the province. While she spoke to the attendees about the need to refresh and update all three pillars of the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy, she also made important commitments to providing new cessation supports for Ontario's priority populations.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Can the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care please inform the House about the smoking cessation supports this government is providing for all Ontarians?

1200

Hon. Dipika Damerla: Once again, I thank the member from Etobicoke North for the question. I know, as a physician, he'll be delighted with some of the changes we are making as we move forward with a new cessation action plan.

This plan includes the establishment of an online cessation hub that is a centralized access point to help tobacco users navigate the system and to find local services and cessation aids tailored to their needs—this will be in place by the summer of 2017—and a centralized access point to help tobacco users find local services.

Starting by the next "quit" season, I am so pleased to announce that we will be providing one "quit line" phone number available to all Ontarians 24/7, which will offer coaching and counselling to help smokers quit. We'll have a number of cessation service networks of coordinated supports, and we look forward to enhancing these.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL

Mr. Toby Barrett: To the Minister of Health: A year ago this Legislature enacted a private member's bill to create a provincial framework and an action plan concerning vector-borne and zoonotic diseases—diseases like Lyme. The law mandates the framework and the action plan within a year of when it was passed. Obviously, the year is now up.

Will the minister please outline to this House and to people affected by diseases like Lyme the required plan to take action?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: We have a Lyme reference group that is comprised of stakeholders on this issue which is working towards issuing a strategy together with the provincial government. We are working on a broader strategy as well.

I appreciate getting a health question, because I feel compelled to address an issue that was raised by one of the member's colleagues earlier this week about the cancer care clinic in North Bay. I'm compelled to because this involves individuals and families who are suffering from cancer who have been shaken because of a rumour that was started by the member from Nipissing. The rumour began with him and was promulgated by him, and there was no truth to it. The president of North Bay hospital, as well as the head of the cancer clinic, had to come forward and publicly deny that there was absolutely—

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): People are taking a risk. There are votes today.

Please finish. You have wrap-up.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, this is so important to the public interest. The member from Nipissing didn't bother to call the hospital, didn't bother to call the cancer clinic, didn't bother to talk to me. He promulgated a rumour which he knew was untrue and it's the crisis—

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

Mr. Todd Smith: He's out of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. I know my job.

The member will withdraw.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I withdraw.

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

Mr. Toby Barrett: Minister, I do ask you to come back to this issue of the deadline for action on Lyme.

I received an email from the mother of a Lyme victim: "The people of Ontario need to know that our health care is like living in a Third World country." Minister, people continue to go to the States for Lyme disease testing and for treatment. We want to know: What is Ontario now doing, as legislated, to help these people? What has been done with respect to testing? What has been done with respect to treatment, prevention, surveillance? What new approaches—we've had a year—do we now see with respect to education and research?

The tick season and the mosquito season is now upon us. Minister, I sincerely ask you: What has been put in place?

Interjections.

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

Minister?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: The issue of Lyme disease, and the broader strategy as well for dealing with similar zoonotic diseases that are prevalent in this province, is an issue that's extremely important to me as a public health doctor, and it's extremely important to the ministry. We're working hard. We have a reference group that is comprised of many stakeholders.

I want to commend, as well, the member for Algoma-Manitoulin. I'll be meeting with him next week, I believe, and a number of stakeholders specifically on the issue of Lyme disease. I want to commend him for his proactive work and advocacy on this issue. It's extremely important.

We have a reference group which is doing their hard work, working towards updating our provincial strategy. Mr. Speaker, I won't be satisfied until we have a strategy that reflects the best clinical guidelines and the best evidence and science available so that we can provide individuals who are at risk of or suffering from Lyme disease—whether that's acute or chronic—the best possible care in this province that they can get.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Windsor-Tecumseh on a point of order.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: On a point of order: I stand to correct my record. Earlier today, I said that the unfunded liability at the WSIB was \$12 million. We know the unfunded liability, the unfunded debt load, at the WSIB is \$12 billion.

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

The Minister of Finance on a point of order.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, I beg your indulgence. This is not an introduction which I missed earlier today, and I appreciate the order that you provided yesterday.

I just wanted to congratulate today our page captain, Julia Michaud, who's doing a great job, and I just want—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm sorry; that's not acceptable. Thank you.

The member from Haldimand-Norfolk on a point of order.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Speaker, I recognize it is after 12 o'clock. Could I ask for a special dispensation for a late show on a recent question?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Haldimand-Norfolk is correct that after the hour of noon, it needs a request for unanimous consent to issue a late show. Therefore, on behalf of the member from Haldimand-Norfolk, he's seeking unanimous consent to put forward a late show. Do we agree? I heard a no.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Earlier, when I was speaking to the issue of deferred maintenance in hospitals—this is a point of order, Mr. Speaker—I had erroneously indicated that the annual spending on deferred maintenance by my ministry is \$100 million. In fact, the annual spending on deferred maintenance from my ministry is \$175 million annually.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I would also take this moment to simply say to you that I will be strict on what I told you yesterday. I do not want any tricks being played. We are not going to do this anymore. We're going to simply say that introductions are done during those two times in which you're allowed to introduce, and I'm staying firm with that, as are my deputy speakers.

DEFERRED VOTES

SUPPORTING ONTARIO'S TRAILS ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR LE SOUTIEN AUX SENTIERS DE L'ONTARIO

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 100, An Act to enact the Ontario Trails Act, 2016 and to amend various Acts/ Projet de loi 100, Loi édictant la Loi de 2016 sur les sentiers de l'Ontario et modifiant diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1208 to 1213.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On May 31, 2016, Mr. Coteau moved third reading of Bill 100. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gélinas, France	Moridi, Reza
Anderson, Granville	Gravelle, Michael	Munro, Julia
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gretzky, Lisa	Murray, Glen R.
Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Bailey, Robert	Harris, Michael	Natyshak, Taras
Baker, Yvan	Hatfield, Percy	Oraziotti, David
Ballard, Chris	Hoggarth, Ann	Pettapiece, Randy
Barrett, Toby	Hoskins, Eric	Potts, Arthur
Bisson, Gilles	Hunter, Mitzie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Campbell, Sarah	Jones, Sylvia	Sandals, Liz
Chan, Michael	Kiwala, Sophie	Sattler, Peggy
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Coe, Lorne	MacCharles, Tracy	Smith, Todd
Colle, Mike	MacLeod, Lisa	Sousa, Charles
Coteau, Michael	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Crack, Grant	Mangat, Amrit	Takhar, Harinder S.
Damerla, Dipika	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
Del Duca, Steven	Martins, Cristina	Thibeault, Glenn
Dhillon, Vic	Martow, Gila	Thompson, Lisa M.

Dickson, Joe
DiNovo, Cheri
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad
Fedeli, Victor
Fife, Catherine
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Fraser, John
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne

Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McMeekin, Ted
McNaughton, Monte
Meilleur, Madeleine
Milczyn, Peter Z.
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul

Vanthof, John
Vernile, Daiene
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yakabuski, John
Yurek, Jeff
Zimmer, David

Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Fraser, John

Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McMeekin, Ted
Meilleur, Madeleine

Thibeault, Glenn
Vernile, Daiene
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

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

Nays

MacLaren, Jack

McDonell, Jim

Nicholls, Rick

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 92; the nays are 3.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

WASTE-FREE ONTARIO ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 FAVORISANT UN ONTARIO SANS DÉCHETS

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

Bill 151, An Act to enact the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 and the Waste Diversion Transition Act, 2016 and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002 / Projet de loi 151, Loi édictant la Loi de 2016 sur la récupération des ressources et l'économie circulaire et la Loi transitoire de 2016 sur le réacheminement des déchets et abrogeant la Loi de 2002 sur le réacheminement des déchets.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1216 to 1217.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On May 17, 2016, Mrs. Mangat moved third reading of Bill 151, An Act to enact the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 and the Waste Diversion Transition Act, 2016 and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002.

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

All those in favour of Mr. Colle's motion please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Baker, Yvan
Ballard, Chris
Bradley, James J.
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika
Del Duca, Steven

Gravelle, Michael
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzie
Jaczek, Helena
Kiwala, Sophie
Kwintar, Monte
Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina

Milczyn, Peter Z.
Moridi, Reza
Murray, Glen R.
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Oraziotti, David
Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq
Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Sergio, Mario
Sousa, Charles
Takhar, Harinder S.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Bisson, Gilles
Campbell, Sarah
Clark, Steve
Coe, Lorne
DiNovo, Cheri
Fedeli, Victor
Fife, Catherine
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne
Gélinas, France

Gretzky, Lisa
Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Michael
Hatfield, Percy
Jones, Sylvia
MacLaren, Jack
MacLeod, Lisa
Mantha, Michael
Martow, Gila
McDonell, Jim
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Norm
Munro, Julia
Natyshak, Taras

Nicholls, Rick
Pettapiece, Randy
Sattler, Peggy
Scott, Laurie
Smith, Todd
Tabuns, Peter
Taylor, Monique
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vanthof, John
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Yakabuski, John
Yurek, Jeff

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 53; the nays are 41.

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

Mrs. Mangat has moved third reading of Bill 151, An Act to enact the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 and the Waste Diversion Transition Act, 2016 and to repeal the Waste Diversion Act, 2002. 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.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There are no further deferred votes. This House stands—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Oh, sorry. The member from Haldimand–Norfolk on a point of order.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Could I ask for unanimous consent for a late show on the Lyme disease question?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It being after noon, the member from Haldimand–Norfolk is seeking unanimous consent to have a late show. Do we agree? Agreed.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Nipissing on a point of order.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I stand on a point of order. Yesterday during question period I spoke of a rumour in the city of North Bay. It turns out it's not a rumour; it was a fact.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's not a point of order, and the member should know so.

There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1222 to 1500.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Haldimand–Norfolk has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care concerning Lyme disease.

This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

ANNUAL REPORT, FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I also beg to inform the House that today I've laid upon the table the 2015-16 annual report and executive summary from the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario.

ANNUAL REPORT, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Again, I beg to inform the House that I have today laid upon the table the 2015-16 annual report from the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Han Dong: Speaker, I recognize my former colleague, and your former colleague as well: Mr. Chris Yaccato is in the House. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome. Also, my former employee.

The member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I take great pleasure in introducing to the House my new constituency assistant in Windsor: Corinne Allsop is here. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome. Thank you for being here.

Introduction of guests? The member from Trinity–Spadina forgot somebody.

Mr. Han Dong: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, it must be the pillar.

I recognize my other old colleague: Ferd Longo is in the House as well. Good afternoon, Ferd. Welcome to the Legislature.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm pleased to rise on behalf of my constituents in Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock on the issue of long-term care.

Just recently, I received 500 letters from Frost Manor about the crisis in our long-term-care system. There's underfunding for beds, understaffing in homes, and I am

frustrated that people are continuing to suffer. In June, we recognized the 32nd anniversary of Seniors' Month, and I am disappointed that our families have suffered 13 long years of inaction.

There are 24,000 seniors without access to a nursing bed. The wait-list will skyrocket to 50,000 in the next six years. In Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock alone, there's over 800 on the wait-list, and in the Peterborough area, there's over 2,700 on their wait-list. Thirty thousand beds have yet to be rebuilt to modern standards, and the government has yet to commit to funding the building of any new beds. I've been calling on the government to release the capacity study to rebuild outdated beds and nursing homes, add beds and eliminate the shamefully long wait-list.

The ongoing shortfalls are a direct result of this Liberal government's incompetence, squandering \$11.4 billion every year just to service the debt that they built. That money would represent enough to cover the cost of hiring extra nurses and personal support workers, providing an additional four hours of care and would address every person on the wait-list. In fact, it would be enough to fund our entire long-term-care system three times over.

The needs of our elderly patients and caregivers must become a priority for this government. The time for action is now.

MIKE ROHRER

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's my sad duty to report to you that we lost a member of Tecumseh town council last weekend. Councillor Mike Rohrer was just 45. He'd only been on council for a couple of years, but he had been a political activist, a community builder and a good friend for a long, long time.

I guess I first met Michael in 1995. He was 23. He was the Conservative candidate running against a Liberal by the name of Dwight Duncan. We all know who won that race. Another loss in 1999, despite doubling his votes—but you know what, Speaker? Mike was such a great guy, he had such an engaging and charismatic personality, that he and Dwight became good friends and remained so.

I used to bring Michael in as a Conservative or Canadian Alliance analyst on my political panel at CBC Windsor. As a reporter, I covered him in dozens of local stories. He was a commercial real estate appraiser.

When he was 28, he was the youngest-ever appointee to Ontario's Assessment Review Board. Opposition members roasted him because of his political connections, but connections were what Mike Rohrer was all about. No matter wherever he went, with whomever he met, he was always upbeat, always had a smile or a joke. He brightened your day. He really was larger than life. But at his core, Mike was a family man, and in those blended and extended families, Mike was the centre of the universe.

My condolences to Dee, daughters Hannah and Grace, and son, Michael. Kids, your dad was a very special person, and we're going to miss him, too.

ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mrs. Laura Albanese: June is Italian Heritage Month in Ontario, a time to highlight the contributions of Italian Canadians to our society.

This is the sixth year that Italian Heritage Month activities will be carried out in Ontario. The festivities were kicked off last Sunday at the Italian National Day event at Casa Loma, renamed Castello Italia for the day, which the Premier, myself and many other MPPs attended, together with about 4,500 people.

Tomorrow, June 2, Italians around the world, including Ontario, will be celebrating the 70th anniversary of Italian Republic Day. On June 2 and 3, 1946, Italian citizens were called to vote in a referendum to choose which form of government their country should adopt. They chose the republic over monarchy. This was also the first occasion in which Italian women were allowed to vote in a national political election.

Mr. Speaker, for many years, we have been hosting an Italian flag-raising here at Queen's Park. This year, we will be celebrating on June 10.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the minister responsible for seniors, Mario Sergio, who, together with two members of the opposition parties, introduced the Italian Heritage Month Act in 2010. Through this act, the province of Ontario recognizes the important contributions Italian immigrants have made in building Ontario's communities and the economic, political, social and cultural achievements of Italian Canadians throughout our province.

Italian Heritage Month is an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about Ontario's rich history.

DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. Todd Smith: I come from a region with a big heart, and never was that more evident than over the past couple of weeks.

When Canada has needed the people of the Quinte region, we've stepped up for Canada, and when the people of Fort McMurray needed us, we packed for Fort Mac. The people of my region have donated over \$130,000 to the people of Fort Mac since the wildfires started, but they also took it a step further. It was my honour to work with Max Haggarty of ITS transport, Joe Shunock, Furball's Choice and the Belleville and Prince Edward county fire departments to pack a big rig with supplies for the people who made it out of Fort McMurray but who are stuck in camps in northern Alberta, in towns like Redwater, Bonnyville, Wandering River and Slave Lake.

Not everybody made to it Edmonton or Calgary, and those who didn't were in desperate need of supplies. We made our goal to fill a big rig with 26 skids of food, baby supplies, toiletries, pet supplies and other essentials. We got 29. For two weeks, volunteers manned the old Electrolab warehouse in Belleville and received thou-

sands of items to send to the folks who lost everything in the fires.

I can't thank them all, but I'm going to try: Susan Smith; Carol and Dennis Hubble; Gord and Twila Adams; Lisa McLennan; Laurie Massicotte; Matt Helm, Ryan Turcotte and the guys at the Belleville fire department; Stephanie and Carlos from Furball's Choice, who got this whole effort started; and finally, the people who opened their wallets and reached into their pockets just a little deeper every time they visited a local grocery store.

And now that kindness is on its way out west. I was told this morning that that transport truck is headed west through Thunder Bay on its way to Alberta. We thank everybody for their efforts in Pack 4 Fort Mac.

INJURED WORKERS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I rise today on behalf of the NDP caucus to recognize the hundreds of injured workers and their families and allies who have come from across the province to rally here at Queen's Park, just as they have done every June 1 for more than 30 years.

In particular, as MPP for London West, I want to acknowledge the London and District Injured Workers Group and give a special shout-out to friends I made last Friday who stopped in London during the second annual Justice for Injured Workers Ride. These four cyclists began their journey in Windsor on May 25 and arrived in Toronto today as a means of raising awareness of injured workers' fight for fair and just compensation.

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Since November 2015, they have been supported in that fight by the OFL and more than 20 health care professionals who have come forward to expose the WSIB's shameful treatment of injured workers and to urge a formal investigation by the Ontario Ombudsman. These medical experts have confirmed that the WSIB is denying legitimate claims, forcing workers to return to work too soon, cutting benefits, and revictimizing the very workers it is supposed to protect.

Speaker, any Ontarian with knowledge of what the WSIB is doing to injured workers should contact the Ombudsman now. If the Liberals won't listen to injured workers and health care professionals, maybe they will listen to the Ombudsman.

ROTARY CLASSIC SUPERHERO RUN

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: This past Sunday, Batman, Spiderman and Wonder Woman ran in the 30th annual Rotary Classic Superhero Run in Cambridge.

This run is called the Superhero Run not just because the people dress up as superheroes, but because what this organization does is truly heroic. All of the proceeds of the fun run are donated to the local KidsAbility Centre for Child Development branch, which provides services for children with physical, communication or developmental disabilities. These services are vital to many of

my families in Waterloo region: services like speech therapy, physical therapy and supports for children with developmental disabilities.

It was a perfect day to attend such a great event, although it was hot running in superhero masks. There was both a 2.5-kilometre and a five-kilometre run; tons of entertainment for the little ones, including a bouncy castle, face paints etc.; and there were prizes for the top child fundraisers. The top boy and girl each won a brand new bicycle for their support of KidsAbility. Linda Kenny, executive director of KidsAbility, and her staff were delighted, and celebrated the great turnout of over 400 runners and the over \$30,000 raised.

I want to thank Waterloo region police chief Bryan Larkin, this year's honorary chair, as well as Kristen Danson and Don Daggett, who were co-chairs for the Rotary Classic Superhero Run, for their and all of the other volunteers' efforts in organizing this year's event.

PORTUGUESE HISTORY AND HERITAGE MONTH

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I would like to recognize today as the beginning of Portuguese History and Heritage Month in Ontario. During the month of June, we embrace the Portuguese culture and heritage through many joyous festivals and celebrations. On June 10, we also celebrate Portugal Day, or Dia de Camões, where we commemorate the death of Luis de Camões, who passed away in 1580. Luis is considered Portugal's greatest poet, as he wrote about the historic Portuguese explorers who travelled to North America and Canada from as early as the 15th century. Also, 2016 marks the 515th anniversary of the arrival of the Portuguese explorers in Canada.

The vibrant Portuguese community has contributed so much to the growth and development of our province from the 15th century onwards, and it continues to excel in our society today. For instance, hailing from the great riding of Dufferin–Caledon is Woolwich Dairy. A proud Portuguese family by the name of Dutra had the best goat cheese in Ontario and across Canada, and as a result they had a positive impact on the Ontario dairy industry throughout rural Ontario. That's just one example of many.

I encourage all Ontarians to join the celebrations and festivities so that they too can experience Portugal's vibrant culture. I've already started to do so. I had the opportunity to visit the Portuguese Pioneer Museum in Toronto a couple of weeks ago. We need to embrace their heritage and the success of their growing in the spirit of their culture in Ontario. Next week we celebrate with a flag-raising, and I hope to see you all there.

QUEST FOR GOLD ATHLETE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Mrs. Amrit Mangat: It is a privilege to share good news from my great riding of Mississauga–Brampton South. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport has announced that four of my constituents will receive

funding through the Quest for Gold program, which each year helps to support athletes' success. Athletes bring pride to our community and serve as examples of what can be achieved through courage and determination and by setting the bar for our personal goals high. Through this, they are inspirational to all of us.

The Quest for Gold program will help these young people afford the cost of training and competing in ice hockey, rugby, curling and basketball events at the provincial, national and international levels, even as they pursue non-athletic careers.

I would like to congratulate Courtney Birchard, D'Shawn Bowen, Brenda Holloway and Jahmal Jones for all their hard work, diligence and success, and for being a great example to our youth. We are proud of you, we will be watching for you, and best of luck in your sporting endeavours.

GRANT DOKIS

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: I'm so pleased to rise today to say thank you to Constable Grant Dokis, who recently retired after 30 years of service with the Greater Sudbury Police Service. Constable Dokis started his career in policing as the service's first First Nations officer. Constable Dokis worked as a plainclothes officer, on patrol in the tactical unit and as the aboriginal liaison officer.

But that wasn't all that he did. He was instrumental in creating the aboriginal liaison unit with the Greater Sudbury Police Service, which, at the time, I believe was one of only three in the entire province. Constable Dokis also helped establish the MKWA police ride-along program. The program was named after the bear and the protection that the bear gives. Since 2005, hundreds of students in Greater Sudbury have spent the day riding on patrol with officers, learning about the role a police officer plays in our community and building trust.

But he wasn't done there. He sat on several committees, including the multicultural and multiracial relations, aboriginal homelessness and gang resistance strategy committees, as well as the missing and murdered indigenous women committee in my community of Sudbury.

Also, Constable Grant Dokis was a great hockey player. I had to play against him a few times. With that, I'm sure he'll have a lot of time to spend with his family and play a little bit more hockey.

Thank you, Grant, for your service.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Trevor Day): Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr44, An Act to revive 1733387 Ontario Corp.

Bill Pr45, An Act respecting the Boys and Girls Club of Niagara.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed. Carried.

Report adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SENIORS ACTIVE LIVING CENTRES ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR LES CENTRES DE VIE ACTIVE POUR PERSONNES ÂGÉES

Mr. Sergio moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 209, An Act to revise the law with respect to funding active living programs that are primarily for seniors / *Projet de loi 209, Loi modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne le financement des programmes de vie active qui s'adressent principalement aux personnes âgées.*

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Hon. Mario Sergio: I'll make my statement during ministerial statements.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice with respect to private members' public bills.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that the order of the House dated November 20, 2014, referring Bill 41, An Act to establish the Lung Health Advisory Council and develop a provincial action plan respecting lung disease, to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills be discharged; and

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That Bill 41 be instead referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy; and

That the Standing Committee on Social Policy meet in Toronto at its regularly scheduled time on Monday, June 6, 2016, for the purpose of public hearings on Bill 41; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 41:

—Notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire; and

—That the deadline for requests to appear be 12 p.m. on Friday, June 3, 2016; and

—That the Clerk of the Committee provide a list of all interested presenters to the subcommittee following the deadline for requests.

—That the Clerk of the Committee be authorized to schedule all interested presenters, if all requests received by the deadline can be accommodated.

—That each member of the subcommittee or their designate provide the Clerk of the Committee a prioritized list of presenters chosen from the Clerk's list, should the number of requests exceed the number of time slots available.

—That each witness receive up to 10 minutes for their presentation followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

—That the deadline for written submissions be 6 p.m. on Monday, June 6, 2016.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that the order of the House dated November 20, 2014, referring Bill 41, An Act to establish—

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense. Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

SENIORS' MONTH

Hon. Mario Sergio: Before I delve into my statement, I have some wonderful guests that I would like to introduce as part of my statement. I want to start with Sue Hesjedahl from the Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario, Shilpi Majumder from the Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors, and, of course, Speaker, I introduce all of my staff—I won't go name by name, but Ferdinando Longo, my chief of staff.

I'm going to go into my statement, Speaker, and it's a privilege to rise today. June in Ontario is Seniors' Month. For 32 years now we have taken this month to recognize and celebrate the contributions that seniors make to our communities and our province. The theme of this year's celebration is "Seniors Making a Difference," which is entirely appropriate since they do make a difference in so many different ways.

In my role as minister, I can say with pride that this government has made a difference for seniors as well. Our action plan for seniors laid the foundation for investment to help seniors stay active, safe and engaged in their

communities. With programs such as our Age-Friendly Community Planning Grant Program that invested \$1.5 million in 56 projects over the past two years, and the Seniors Community Grant Program that funded 544 projects benefiting over 116,000 seniors in its first two years alone, this government has made seniors a priority. But I think we can all agree the priority today is about celebrating and cherishing the people who helped get us where we are, who helped build all that we have. That's what Seniors' Month is all about.

It is therefore very fitting that earlier today I introduced legislative proposals that, if passed, would modernize the Elderly Persons Centres Act. The Seniors Active Living Centres Act, if passed, would help us to ensure that Ontario's network of 263 elderly persons centres can continue providing this province's seniors with social and recreational programs, as well as health education and support services, under a modernized law with a new name: Seniors Active Living Centres.

Speaker, an extensive review and consultation process led us to the conclusion that these centres fulfill an important role but need to be modernized. The Elderly Persons Centres Act hadn't been reviewed since 1966. This legislation would, if passed, give the program greater flexibility to be more responsive and to potentially reach beyond the approximately 100,000 seniors it serves each year.

If passed, it would help the centres build strong partnerships and strengthen the services they offer to seniors, fostering the locations as community hubs that provide a central access point for a range of health, social and cultural services.

It would also allow the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat to leverage innovation in the sector through partnerships and investment opportunities with post-secondary institutions, First Nations or retirement homes.

There are more than two million seniors in Ontario today, and this number is expected to double over the next 25 years. These centres will be even more important for seniors in the years to come. It is more important than ever that we continue working hard together to make the province of Ontario the best place to grow old.

Speaker, all the best to everyone during Seniors' Month.

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Hon. Brad Duguid: I'm honoured to rise today to recognize National Access Awareness Week here in Ontario, which runs until June 6.

We're joined in the gallery today by a good friend of many of us here, Joe Dowdall. He is with the International Union of Operating Engineers, an important part of our partnership council, which has made recommendations. It's chaired by Bob Stark—I think that Bob was a deputy minister in this government at some point in time—with a number of champions of accessibility, both in the private sector and in the accessibility community, to provide

us with advice on ways we can increase employment. I want to thank Joe for being here, and I know that a number of his team are here as well. They're at a reception with our former Lieutenant Governor, David Onley, which is taking place right now.

This is an important week, Mr. Speaker, which celebrates people with disabilities and raises awareness about supporting access in all of our communities. It's a week that puts the spotlight on the cultural shift we're experiencing; one where all people can participate equally in our society.

To this end, I'd like to recognize again the members of the Partnership Council for Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities. They've recently completed their mandate to advise our government on how to encourage this cultural shift, which is so important, and to help us find more opportunities for people with disabilities.

I'd like to welcome the members who are here, Joe in particular, and I want to thank them very much for their hard work. I can assure them that their hard work will result in very tangible steps forward that our government will certainly take.

Last year, we marked the halfway point in our commitment to making Ontario an accessible province by 2025. We've come a long way in making our province more inclusive. We're a global leader in accessibility: first in the world to move to a modern regulatory regime that mandates accessibility, first in the world to require staff to be trained in accessibility and first in Canada with legislation that sets out clear goals and time frames for compliance. We're the only jurisdiction in Canada that has enforceable standards at all.

Although all of this sounds great, I also know that we have not done enough yet if we're going to get where we need to be by 2025. National Access Awareness Week helps to raise awareness, and helps to continue promoting that cultural shift that's so important.

We need communities, businesses and individuals across Ontario to understand that inclusion is important for building a strong society and developing a dynamic economy. The 2010 Martin Prosperity Institute report outlined that an inclusive Ontario would result in a \$7.9-billion increase to gross domestic product. Mr. Speaker, that's \$7.9 billion—not million, but billion—that that would add to our economy.

There are 1.3 billion people with disabilities across the world. That's an emerging market the size of China. Think about it: That's a huge economic opportunity. More than \$150 billion is lost in tax revenue annually due to the limited inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workforce.

1530

The story here is clear, Mr. Speaker: Fostering inclusion is worth it. That's why I was encouraged to see many municipalities across Ontario working to show why inclusion matters. For example, the city of Kawartha Lakes is hosting a Map-a-thon so that visitors and residents can find accessibility features at city facilities and outdoor spaces.

The town of Milton is hosting an event for local business owners to raise awareness about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and creating accessible workplaces.

The town of Ajax has a variety of activities planned, including presentations to local schools and helping Scout groups learn how they can earn accessibility awareness badges.

Today, the David C. Onley awards will be given to individuals and organizations who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in creating awareness of accessibility and disability issues in their communities. I'm proud of today's winners for stepping up to the plate to build a more accessible province for future generations.

Recently, my ministry supported the Accessibility Innovation Showcase. It was the second annual event of its kind, designed to highlight technologies that are helping to create a more level playing field in our homes and in our businesses. Forward-thinking companies know that increasing accessibility with disruptive technologies and inclusive hiring practices can grow businesses and will grow our economy. They know that hiring the best and brightest includes drawing from diverse talent pools.

Earlier this spring, we launched Rate Drop Rebate, a partnership with leading financial institutions that is encouraging businesses to hire people facing barriers, including people with disabilities. The rebate is expected to help up to 1,100 people find jobs while supporting up to 500 businesses.

Ontario is working to better connect people with disabilities to the labour market and engaging and supporting their employers. As part of our commitment from the 2016 budget, we're developing a provincial employment strategy for people with disabilities.

Our accessibility action plan focuses on three key priorities: engaging employers to hire people with disabilities; building on our accessibility laws and standards; and promoting Ontario's cultural shift to build awareness of accessibility.

Next, we're working with businesses and other stakeholders towards an accessibility certification program which would make it easier for people to identify accessible businesses and organizations. This program, modelled on the LEED designation for environmental sustainability, would help raise awareness of what accessibility looks like in our society.

Through an open and participatory process, seven proposals were put forward for an accessibility certification program, and we received over 200 public comments on them. I'd like to thank all the individuals and organizations who took the time to participate in this important process.

We're now looking at all the prototypes and considering how a certification pilot could be developed. I'm confident that the accessibility certification can help strengthen Ontario's culture of inclusion, increase job opportunities for people with disabilities and grow our economy.

Finally, we're also working with stakeholders to develop an online platform where anyone can rate a

business based on their accessibility. I hope to make that announcement in the near future.

We're committed to breaking down barriers and raising the profile of accessibility. We know that accessibility is far more than just building ramps. It's about the small things you don't see, like getting people to places that they need to be on time and comfortably on accessible, seamless transit—something that, in the greater Toronto area, we have yet to achieve—or making sure we provide information in ways that meet everyone's needs, which is so important.

Access Awareness Week is a chance to show what we've done, and also focus on what we can do to empower businesses, enlighten communities and embrace inclusion.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Statements by ministries?

It is time for responses.

SENIORS' MONTH

Mr. Bill Walker: I'm pleased to mark Seniors' Month on behalf of Patrick Brown and our Progressive Conservative caucus. Today, we pay a special tribute to senior citizens across Ontario and honour the many contributions and sacrifices that they have made to help build this great province. It is also a time to think about how we should be paying back our seniors after they have given us a lifetime of service and supporting them by way of making Ontario truly the best place to retire in comfort and dignity.

As all of us are aware, the number of seniors in Ontario will double over the next two decades. So, as aging is set to become the most important issue facing our society, we're dismayed to see this government cut our seniors' essential services and programs. At a time when we should be investing to keep our seniors healthy, active and engaged, this government is instead:

—cutting their physiotherapy, which means seniors are no longer receiving the care they're entitled to through their OHIP physiotherapy providers;

—cutting home care for seniors who want to stay at home;

—cancelling seniors' tax credits, such as the Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit, that help them live independently at home longer;

—hiking hydro bills and essentially asking seniors to pay for the government's 13 years of financial mismanagement; and

—trying to sneak in higher drug costs at a time when seniors are living with more complex health needs.

For the many Ontarians who have loved ones in long-term care, we do applaud that the province has listened and developed a strategy for Alzheimer's and dementia care. But more needs to be done, as we have 24,000 seniors without access to a nursing bed in Ontario today and a wait-list that will double to 50,000 seniors in just six years. And even those who have access to a bed—many of them are not up to the standards that families would expect.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to hear from concerned families who are calling for proper oversight and protection for long-term-care residents. This is something the government continues to fail to do, as highlighted in successive Auditor General reports. The fact that the government is not providing the oversight that they promised to provide is simply unacceptable.

Speaker, we believe seniors deserve better. I ask the government to stand up for seniors and commit to building the needed nursing beds that would see the elimination of the beds backlog, to fix home care and to make proper investments so the system is equipped to handle our seniors' needs today and in the future.

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: This week marks National Access Awareness Week. National Access Awareness Week was developed by the esteemed Rick Hansen after his Man in Motion World Tour. This week, we are all challenged to recognize barriers to accessibility and plan for their removal.

National Access Awareness Week has four objectives: assess the accessibility of services and facilities; set measurable goals; make practical improvements; and celebrate achievements.

I believe Ontario has made great progress when it comes to accessibility. This is thanks to the work of local accessibility champions and individuals like Rick Hansen and our former Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable David Onley. However, there is clearly still much more work to be done.

I have had the privilege of meeting with David Lepofsky, chair of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance. David is a true champion of accessibility and has produced the measurable results that are a goal of access awareness week. However, sign on to Twitter and use the hashtag #AODAFail and you'll see how many barriers to accessibility are present in everyday activities.

Key to the AODA Alliance is improved implementation and enforcement of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. They have been clear that if the government is to meet its goal of making Ontario accessible by 2025, significant changes need to be made. Their recommendations include providing direction on accessibility requirements, introducing an education accessibility standard, and giving the Ministry of Community and Social Services the responsibility for the act. The needs and goals have been identified. Now it's time for real change.

Today we are joined by recipients who are receiving the David C. Onley Award for Leadership in Accessibility. I would like to congratulate the recipients and thank them for their dedicated work to improving accessibility in Ontario.

As we recognize National Access Awareness Week, let's continue the important work of making Ontario accessible for all.

SENIORS' MONTH

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I am honoured to provide a ministerial response as the critic for seniors' affairs, on behalf of the Ontario New Democrats and our leader, Andrea Horwath.

June 2016 marks the 32nd anniversary of Seniors' Month in Ontario. It is a time to celebrate and recognize the important role that seniors play in our communities. It is also a good reminder that we have a shared responsibility to ensure that seniors in our communities and families enjoy safe, active and healthy lives.

In my hometown of London, we have incredible organizations and volunteers who work very hard every day to improve the lives of all seniors. Today I want to highlight one particular month-long campaign organized by Meals on Wheels. Meals on Wheels London is inviting all businesses and organizations to support seniors through an office campaign in the month of June. Local businesses can help provide food security to even more seniors and people right here in London. Participating businesses will be made the featured Business of the Day, and as there are 22 business days in the month of June, they hope to fill every one of them.

Meals on Wheels London has also created a list of suggested activities for businesses to show their support, including offering staff a dress-down day and donating the proceeds; and ordering lunch from the local Subway, where every lunch purchased will provide a nutritious meal to three other people who are struggling with basic food needs in our community, and Meals on Wheels staff will even deliver your meals personally.

1540

As you can see, I am not alone in my belief that it is our shared duty to make sure Ontario seniors are living with dignity and in their own homes as long as possible. We need to ensure that they have access to the supports that they have paid into their entire lives, and that those supports are available to them when they need them. Let our approach be measured with wisdom, kindness and gratitude for the lifetime of contributions they have made.

This Seniors' Month, I ask everyone to take the time to reflect on the seniors in your families and communities. Reach out and let them know how important and valued they are. Celebrate their determination, pride and dignity by fighting to protect those who have already fought for you.

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Ms. Sarah Campbell: It's an honour to rise today to speak in celebration of National Access Awareness Week. Bringing together 23 national partners and eight corporate sponsors participating in National Access Awareness Week, the main focus of this week is on the issues of education, transportation, housing, employment and recreation.

National Access Awareness Week is intended to raise public awareness of the barriers faced by people with disabilities, to encourage communities to assess the level of accessibility in their jurisdiction, and to plan for the removal of barriers. For many, access means more than just removing physical barriers; it means changes in attitudes and support that allows people with visible and invisible disabilities to be part of community life. People with learning, developmental and psychiatric disabilities or other invisible impairments should not be forgotten when we strive for equal access.

I would like to highlight some of the great work undertaken by the accessibility advisory committee for Kenora, in my riding of Kenora–Rainy River. This committee is tasked with highlighting the positive changes for people living with disabilities that have happened in the city, as well as bringing awareness to work that still needs to be done. Two years ago, the StopGap community ramp project brought together volunteers in Kenora and encouraged businesses to have small ramps built for their storefronts to increase accessibility for people who wanted to visit their stores.

Speaker, while we are all celebrating National Access Awareness Week, it is important to remember that there needs to be legislation in place to give those living with disabilities full equality. Here in Ontario, we have the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Unfortunately, this Liberal government has failed to implement adequate and timely standards, and 2025 is the target year for completion. We know that 60% of the private sector is not compliant with filing the required reports and is perhaps not even compliant with doing the work that they need to do by this period of time. I think that as legislators, we need to make sure that the AODA is implemented and audited regularly, and to ensure compliance, because without compliance, we don't have inclusion for the thousands of people across this province who are living with disabilities. My hope is that all of us as MPPs will take it upon ourselves to ensure that everyone in the province has full and equal access to community life.

PETITIONS

STRAY CURRENT

Mr. Rick Nicholls: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas stray current has adverse effects on animal and human health; and

“Whereas the livelihoods of many Ontario livestock farmers including dairy farmers have been jeopardized or completely lost due to stray current issues;

“Whereas the Ontario government should regulate the occurrence of stray current with legislation in order to ensure that all parties involved or affected have a clear process set out to eliminate stray current;

“Whereas the issues of stray current can be addressed through changes in both the policy and practice of the provincially regulated electrical distribution and electrical service industries;

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

“For the government of Ontario to fully commit to addressing the issues of stray current by promptly calling Bill 161, an act to eliminate ground current pollution act, (2016), to committee and having the bill proceed promptly to debate at third reading, and then on to receiving royal assent.”

I approve of this petition and I will hand it to page Jacob.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have a petition signed by hundreds of Londoners that was presented to me last week by Ange Thompson of the Hydro One Not for Sale coalition in London. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the provincial government is creating a privatization scheme that will lead to higher hydro rates, lower reliability, and hundreds of millions less for our schools, roads, and hospitals; and

“Whereas the privatization scheme will be particularly harmful to northern and First Nations communities; and

“Whereas the provincial government is creating this privatization scheme under a veil of secrecy that means Ontarians don't have a say on a change that will affect their lives dramatically; and

“Whereas it is not too late to cancel the scheme;

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

“That the province of Ontario immediately cancel its scheme to privatize Ontario's Hydro One.”

I couldn't agree more. I affix my name and will give it to page Sulin to take to the table.

GO TRANSIT

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Cambridge, Ontario, is a municipality of over 125,000 people, many of whom commute into the greater Toronto area daily;

“Whereas the current commuting options available for travel between the Waterloo region and the GTA are inefficient and time-consuming, as well as environmentally damaging;

“Whereas the residents of Cambridge and the Waterloo region believe that they would be well-served by commuter rail transit that connects the region to the Milton line, and that this infrastructure would have positive, tangible economic benefits to the province of Ontario;

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

“Direct crown agency Metrolinx to commission a feasibility study into building a rail line that connects the city of Cambridge to the GO train station in Milton, and to complete this study in a timely manner and communicate the results to the municipal government of Cambridge.”

I agree with the petition, affix my name and send it with Colleen.

CHILDREN’S IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the province of Ontario has a plan and/or action to amend the legislation under the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) regarding religious and conscientious exemption regulations;

“Whereas the proposed and/or tabled amendment requiring ‘education sessions’ interferes with our informed consent rights as specified in Ontario’s Health Care Consent Act, 1996, specifically ‘Elements of consent’ 11(1)3, ‘The consent must be given voluntarily’ and 4, ‘The consent must not be obtained through misrepresentation or fraud;’

“Whereas the proposed and/or tabled amendment interferes with our constitutional rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms;

“Whereas vaccines are injected, complex biochemical compounds that carry a risk of injury and death;

“Whereas the province of Ontario and the government of Canada take no responsibility for vaccine injuries and deaths;

“Whereas education sessions are a waste of limited health care dollars that could be better spent elsewhere;

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

“Cease the passing of any legislation under the Immunization of School Pupils Act that would require Ontario residents who have made a religious or conscientious decision to exempt their child from any or all vaccinations under the act:

“(1) to submit to an ‘education session’ or

“(2) to submit to any other coerced and/or forced measures under the ISPA.”

Thank you very much for allowing me the time to present this petition.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Mr. Percy Hatfield: A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: \$15 and fairness.

“Whereas a growing number of Ontarians are concerned about the growth in low-wage, part-time, casual, temporary and insecure employment; and

“Whereas too many workers are not protected by the minimum standards outlined in existing employment and labour laws; and

“Whereas the Ontario government is currently engaging in a public consultation to review and improve employment and labour laws in the province;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to implement a decent work agenda by making sure that Ontario’s labour and employment laws:

“—require all workers be entitled to a starting wage that reflects a uniform, provincial minimum, regardless of a worker’s age, job or sector of employment;

“—promote full-time, permanent work with adequate hours for all those who choose it;

“—ensure part-time, temporary, casual and contract workers receive the same pay and benefits as their full-time, permanent counterparts;

“—provide at least seven (7) days of paid sick leave each year;

“—support job security for workers when companies or contracts change ownership;

“—prevent employers from downloading their responsibilities for minimum standards onto temp agencies, subcontractors or workers themselves;

“—extend minimum protections to all workers by eliminating exemptions to the laws;

“—protect workers who stand up for their rights;

“—offer proactive enforcement of laws, supported by adequate public staffing and meaningful penalties for employers who violate the law;

1550

“—make it easier for workers to join unions; and

“—ensure all workers are paid at least \$15 an hour.”

I agree, Speaker, and I’m going to give it to Waleed to bring up to the desk.

ELDER ABUSE

Ms. Soo Wong: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas today, there are more seniors 65 and over than children under the age of 15, both in Ontario and across Canada;

“Whereas there are currently more than two million seniors aged 65 and over—approximately 15% of the population and this number is expected to double in the next 25 years;

“Whereas Elder Abuse Ontario stated that between 40,000 and 200,000 seniors living in Ontario experienced or are experiencing elder abuse;

“Whereas research showed that abuse against seniors takes many forms and is often perpetrated by family members; ...

“Whereas Bill 148, if passed, will require regulated health professionals to report elder abuse or neglect to the public guardian and trustee office;

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

“That the members of the Ontario Legislative Assembly pass Bill 148, An Act to amend the Substitute Decisions Act, 1992 and the Regulated Health Professions

Act, 1991, requiring health professionals to report any reasonable suspicion that a senior living in the community is being abused or neglected to the public guardian and trustee office.”

I support the petition, and I give my petition to page Nava.

RAIL SERVICE

Mr. Victor Fedeli: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas both the Canadian government and the Ontario government need a transportation policy, plan and investment that include transporting both passengers and freight by rail; and

“Whereas this is essential for our competitiveness in the world economy, for reducing carbon emissions and for socio-economic connectivity; and

“Whereas we must stop the abandonment of rail and support the safest, more efficient and least polluting mode of transportation: trains; and

“Whereas without rail as part of northern Ontario’s transportation system, most of our communities are not sustainable;

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

“That the government of Ontario provide reliable, safe, all-season, accessible and affordable passenger train service throughout northern Ontario connected to Toronto and Ottawa.”

I agree with this petition, sign my name and give it to page Daniel.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Michael Mantha: “Whereas Ontario’s growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

“Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

“Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients’ access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

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

“The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario’s doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario’s families deserve.”

I fully agree with this petition. I present it to page Katelyn to bring down to the Clerks’ table.

HOME INSPECTION INDUSTRY

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the home inspector industry remains largely unregulated; and

“Whereas homeowners are increasingly reliant on home inspectors to make an educated home purchase; and

“Whereas the unregulated industry poses a risk to consumers;

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

“To protect consumers by regulating the home inspection industry and licensing home inspectors.”

I agree with the petition, sign my name and send it with Ariane down to the table.

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My petition is a petition to stop the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

“Whereas the Liberal government has brought forward a payroll tax in the form of a mandatory Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP); and

“Whereas internal Ministry of Finance documents show that the Liberal government are aware that the ORPP will increase the cost of doing business in Ontario and kills jobs in the province; and

“Whereas the government’s plan would force the cancellation of many existing retirement plans that have better employer contribution rates; and”

“Whereas organizations including the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Fraser Institute and the C.D. Howe Institute agree that the ORPP is a poorly thought out plan that will not help Ontarians; and

“Whereas low-income earners will have their retirement savings clawed back under this scheme; and

“Whereas Ontarians cannot afford another tax on top of their already skyrocketing hydro bills;

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

“That the Ontario government immediately stop the implementation of the ORPP.”

I support this petition, affix my name to it and give it to page Julia to take to the table.

LYME DISEASE

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Ontario does not have a strategy on Lyme disease; and

“Whereas the Public Health Agency of Canada is developing an Action Plan on Lyme Disease; and

“Whereas Toronto Public Health says that transmission of the disease requires the tick to be attached for

24 hours, so early intervention and diagnosis is of primary importance; and

“Whereas a motion was introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario encouraging the government to adopt a strategy on Lyme disease, while taking into account the impact the disease has upon individuals and families in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease consistent with the action plan of the Public Health Agency of Canada, taking into account available treatments, accessibility issues and the efficacy of the currently available diagnostic mechanisms. In so doing, it should consult with representatives of the health care community and patients’ groups within one year.”

I support this, will affix my signature and give it to page Waleed to deliver to the table.

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I have another petition here called “Planning for Ontario’s Future,” and it’s addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas it is absolutely crucial that more is done to provide Ontarians retirement financial security which they can rely on;

“Whereas more than three million Ontarians rely on the Canada Pension Plan alone, that currently does not provide enough to support an adequate standard of living;

“Whereas the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan will provide the safe and stable retirement that Ontarians need;

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

“That all members of the Ontario assembly support a plan to move forward with an Ontario-made pension retirement plan that will provide a financially secure retirement for Ontarians.”

I agree with the petition and send it down to the table with page Thomas.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr. Jim McDonell: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Ontario has a duty to care for and ensure the safety of Ontarians in need of residential care; and

“Whereas alleged abuse and mistreatment occurrences, as recorded in the Serious Occurrence System, almost doubled between 2008 and 2013; and

“Whereas many residential care facilities lack proper closed-circuit video monitoring of common areas where episodes of abuse are most likely to occur; and

“Whereas it is imperative to prevent the occurrence of client abuse and mistreatment in residential care through proven measures;

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

“To consider implementing a policy requiring comprehensive closed-circuit monitoring of residential care facility common areas and provide all forms of assistance, including financial, to allow residential care facilities to roll out appropriate video monitoring systems on their premises.”

I agree with this and will be signing it and sending it off with page Mélina.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Dog Tales is a world-renowned dog rescue in King City, Ontario, that specializes in the care, rehabilitation and adoption of abused, abandoned and neglected dogs. Since opening in 2014, Dog Tales has found homes for more than 500 dogs in need;

“Whereas Dog Tales employs a full-time staff of 40, including experts in dog care, rehabilitation and training, and has an operating budget in excess of \$1 million per year;

“Whereas the Ontario Dog Owners’ Liability Act prevents certain breeds from being owned or housed within the province which has resulted in the unnecessary euthanasia of thousands of innocent dogs and puppies, despite numerous studies proving that this legislation has not been effective in reducing the overall number of dog bites in the province since implementation;

“Whereas sections 6(d) and 20(2)(e) of the Dog Owners’ Liability Act allow the provincial government to designate bodies within Ontario so that dogs affected by the legislation can have a place to go when in need;

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

“Direct the Lieutenant Governor in Council to grant Dog Tales a designation under the Dog Owners’ Liability Act that will allow breeds affected by Ontario’s breed-specific legislation to be housed at their rescue for transition to out-of-province adoption or permanent sanctuary.”

I support this petition and send to it the desk with Katelyn.

1600

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The time for petitions is over.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Orders of the day. Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. David Oraziotti: The government calls order G186.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker): Order G186, third reading of Bill 186, An Act to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. Ms. Hunter.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome some guests that are here today: Scott Clausen, who is an actuary—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Excuse me. We're going to stop that process of introducing people in the afternoon. We've been directed that that's not to continue.

Interjection: It's in her speech.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You have to move it first, right?

Interjection: It's part of her speech.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Oh, okay, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely.

Interjection: It's not out of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I don't need any extra help.

Minister?

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: I move third reading of Bill 186, An Act to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. Is that what you need me to say?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): This has been a great day for confusion.

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION
PLAN ACT (STRENGTHENING
RETIREMENT SECURITY
FOR ONTARIANS), 2016
LOI DE 2016 SUR LE RÉGIME
DE RETRAITE DE LA PROVINCE
DE L'ONTARIO (SÉCURISER LA RETRAITE
EN ONTARIO)

Ms. Hunter moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 186, An Act to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan/ Projet de loi 186, Loi établissant le Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The minister has moved Bill 186. Minister?

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

It's my pleasure to rise in the House today for the third reading of Bill 186, Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Act (Strengthening Retirement Security for Ontarians), 2016.

I'd just like to take a moment to welcome a number of people who are here today: Scott Clausen, who is an actuary and partner at Mercer; J.P. Provost, who is the global leader for their international consulting practice; and David Knox, who is a senior partner at Mercer and who flew in all the way from Australia.

I really welcome you here. Thank you so much for joining us today and listening to this very important debate.

I would like to begin by thanking the members of this House for their thoughtful debate that has taken place on this very important piece of legislation. I especially want to thank the members of the Standing Committee on Social Policy for their feedback and their contributions to the legislative process.

In particular, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the member for Cambridge, my friend and colleague Kathryn McGarry, for her leadership in steering this bill through the committee process. Thank you so much.

The work of the committee has spearheaded some of the most important amendments that bring more clarity to employers and to employees, such as including a definition of "employee"; adding a definition of "remuneration" that can be applied to the comparability test; and amending the bill to offer more clarity for plan members.

Thank you, MPP McGarry, for your leadership, and to all the members of the committee.

Finally, I'd like to give my thanks to the groups that took the time to share their valuable insights with members of the committee during public hearings.

Since taking on the role of Associate Minister of Finance responsible for the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, my mandate has been clear: to help strengthen retirement security for all working Ontarians.

Mr. Speaker, we know that too many Ontarians are not saving enough for retirement. Two thirds of Ontario's workers do not participate in a workplace pension plan. The proportion among young workers is even higher, at 75%. Three out of four workers aged 25 to 34 do not participate in a workplace pension plan.

For many workers today, permanent and full-time employment with pension benefits is no longer a possibility. When combined with longer lifespans, low personal savings and an average CPP benefit of just over \$6,900 per year, the result is a growing gap between what Ontarians need to save for a secure retirement and what they will actually have to spend in retirement. That's where the ORPP comes in.

I would like to quote Sheila Block from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, who said, during the committee hearings on this bill, "The ORPP is the most significant improvement in retirement security since the introduction of the CPP in 1966." This was mirrored by Hugh Mackenzie, who said that the ORPP "represents a great start in the evolution of our retirement" income "system towards one consistent with the needs of today's employees."

Mr. Speaker, we know that the ORPP will provide far-reaching benefits, both for individuals and the economy. It will allow for more spending in our communities and in our local businesses. It will mean a decreased reliance on social services, and it will provide a greater quality of life for retirees.

For nearly two years, I've heard this sentiment echoed over and over again. Throughout the plan design process, our government met with thousands of Ontarians. I led extensive consultations on key design features of the plan, where I travelled to more than 10 communities throughout the province and received over 1,000 written submissions. I spoke with employers, associations, labour groups, pension experts, individuals, families and, of course, retirees.

The consistent message I heard was that people are concerned about their ability to save for their retirement.

They're also concerned about the next generation: their children and grandchildren. They want to know that they will be able to retire with the security and dignity that they deserve after a lifetime of work.

As we heard from the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, or CARP, during the committee hearings, "While many, in fact most, of our members would not be in a position to benefit from an increase to either a CPP or an ORPP plan, there was strong, strong support for such an enhancement, with less than 10% of our members feeling that the younger generation is saving enough, many of them being concerned about their children and their grandchildren...."

In Windsor, for example, I heard from a retired teacher who spoke passionately about the value that a secure pension has had for her. For her, life happened. She became a widow at 57. Without a pension, she would not have been able to make ends meet. But because she made contributions all those years, today she has a pension she can rely on.

What I also heard is that Ontarians want their government to show leadership on this issue. This was reiterated in the committee hearings on Bill 186. Representatives from Unifor told us, "The ORPP is a solution to the retirement income crisis. The Ontario government should act now to avert a retirement income crisis, and the ORPP is well suited to address the risks in retirement income and the changing workplace conditions that have created the current crisis in retirement income."

Mr. Speaker, that is why we're moving ahead with the ORPP. If we fail to take action now, many of today's workers will see a drop in their standard of living in retirement. The impact of a future generation of seniors retiring without adequate savings would place pressure on social services. It would lead to less spending in our local communities. That's not good for people, that's not good for business and that's not good for the economy.

The ORPP would help shrink the retirement savings gap. It will expand pension coverage to over four million Ontario workers. It will provide those workers with a predictable stream of income in retirement paid for life.

As we've previously announced, employers and employees would contribute equally to the plan to ensure fairness. Each will contribute up to 1.9% of their earnings on a maximum annual income of \$90,000. ORPP benefits would be earned as contributions are made, and the level of benefit would depend on the length of time an individual contributes to the plan and their salary during those years.

The ORPP will aim to replace 15% of an individual's pre-retirement earnings after 40 years of contributions. Together with the CPP, this would provide a strong retirement income floor that people can rely on.

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The ORPP will also offer a survivor benefit. Importantly, unlike the CPP, the ORPP survivor benefit would be payable not just to a surviving spouse but also to a member's designated beneficiary or estate, if the member was single. The advice I heard from the seniors' secretar-

iat advisory committee was that many of today's retirees and seniors are single women, and that we need to ensure this plan is fair to them.

On issues such as the self-employed, we know there is still progress to be made. I've heard from self-employed workers that they want to be enrolled in the ORPP. For example, I heard from a successful lawyer who told me she wanted to be in the ORPP. Although she has an RRSP, she saw much of its value disappear in 2008. She reflected on the confidence that the ORPP would bring, knowing that her contributions would accrue in the background and provide security when she retires.

Mr. Speaker, current rules under the federal Income Tax Act do not allow for the self-employed to be enrolled in the ORPP. We are working closely with our federal partners on this issue, and the bill allows for the enrolment of the self-employed for future accommodations once they are made.

To ensure benefits are there for members when they retire, the sustainability of the ORPP is critical to our government. Ontario is a world leader in creating strong public sector pension plans. In developing the ORPP, we've built on the expertise and best practices of our internationally recognized plans to ensure that the ORPP is top-performing.

Bill 186 lays out clear rules to ensure the ORPP's sustainability for generations to come. Both benefits and contributions will be indexed to inflation to ensure that they maintain their value over time.

At the same time, we know that employers and employees need time to prepare for the ORPP and that businesses need certainty as they make their preparations. That is what Bill 186 provides, Mr. Speaker. By enshrining the plan's design details, this bill delivers on our commitment to give employers and employees the clarity they need to prepare for the launch of the ORPP. Together with regulations, the bill provides the key pieces of information that employers need as we move forward with implementation.

It also reinforces our commitment to begin enrolling employers in the ORPP in January 2017, with contributions starting on January 1, 2018, for large and medium-sized employers. Small employers will have until 2019 before they begin making contributions. For all three groups, contributions will be phased in over three years, starting at 0.8% in the first year, 1.6% in the second year and, finally, 1.9% in the third year. Employers that already have a registered workplace pension plan that doesn't meet our comparability threshold will have until 2020 before they begin making contributions.

This phased-in approach is similar to that taken by the federal government when it increased CPP premiums in the 1990s. Pension expert Keith Ambachtsheer has pointed out that during that period the national unemployment rate actually fell from 9.6% to 7.6%.

Mr. Speaker, last year our government passed the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Administration Corporation Act, 2015, to create the ORPP Administration Corp. The ORPP AC is the independent, arm's-length body that

will be responsible for administering the pension plan and managing the plan's investment for its beneficiaries.

Through a strong accountability and transparency framework, the board of directors and management team of the ORPP Administration Corp. will be fully accountable to plan members. Accountability measures include annual reporting, annual meetings that are open to members of the plan, and strong financial control.

The government will not determine where and how ORPP contributions are invested, and they will not form part of the government's consolidated general revenues. Instead, these funds would be held in trust by the ORPP Administration Corp. for the benefit of the members of the plan. Bill 186 reaffirms this.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, if passed, will not only expand pension coverage to millions of Ontario workers; it will bring financial security and drive economic growth for generations to come. The Conference Board of Canada's cost-benefit analysis of the ORPP tabled last December confirms that both the economy and Ontarians would be better off with the ORPP. In the long term, it would be expected to add billions of dollars to the economy while providing a cost-effective means of helping individuals save for retirement. This legislation is another significant step in our journey towards ensuring that by 2020, all eligible Ontario workers would be covered by a comparable workplace plan or the ORPP.

Ontario has long been a champion of strengthening the retirement income security system and is pleased that the federal government shares this commitment. We're continuing to work collaboratively with the federal government, provinces and territories to make progress on a CPP enhancement that addresses the needs of future retirees. But we also know that we need to make progress now to ensure Ontarians can achieve the retirement security they deserve. That's why we're moving forward with this important piece of legislation.

It is critical for the future well-being of Ontarians and our economy that we take action now to ensure that future retirees can achieve financial security in retirement and that Ontario's economy remains strong. We must ensure that Ontarians are confident in their ability to retire with dignity and security. The ORPP is an integral part of the government's economic plan to build Ontario up and deliver on its number one priority to grow the economy and create jobs.

The passing of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Act (Strengthening Retirement Security for Ontarians), 2016, is an important step in modernizing the retirement income system in our province. I am asking the members of this assembly to support this important legislation for future generations of retirees and for all working Ontarians.

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

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'm pleased to have the opportunity to make some comments today on the ORPP.

I want to begin by talking about the fact that pensions are a relatively new invention. If you go back to the time

of our grandparents and 100 years ago, people simply worked until they died, and they had no security whatsoever. About 50 years ago, people recognized the opportunities that pensions might provide for people. As a result, you have the creation of the Canada Pension Plan and the kind of contribution that it has made for people subsequently.

The circumstances of then and now are worth comparing. People worked and retired, and their life expectancy was so much different than it is today that the investment of an individual's pension plan wasn't expected to spread out over decades. In my own family, my father-in-law retired when he was 62 and lived to be 90, so he certainly was a beneficiary of this kind of security. And there was a return on investment of 6% to 8%, and in some years much higher than that.

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But today the circumstances are very different. We live much longer. We retire earlier. And I don't need to emphasize, I don't think, the importance of a low return on investment. The parameters in which we're operating are certainly very, very different. The demographics—people have forecast that there would be such a demand on pension plans because of the number of people reaching senior designation, so many more today than there were 10 years ago or that there will be in another 20 years.

The issue of pensions, then, has become very much in the public mind with concerns over unfunded liabilities. While the government wants to look at the defined benefit pension plans—and many of the examples used, of course, are people who have defined benefit plans—those are the ones that then can easily become ones that carry huge unfunded liabilities. And who pays for those? Well, ultimately, in the public sector it becomes the taxpayers' responsibility.

But in the meantime, there have been a myriad of plans that have evolved over the last 50 years that speak to different needs of people. For instance, the RRSP provides a defined contribution. It also then provides options and, a particularly important theme, choice in being able to make decisions of your financial future on your own.

TFSAs are another example of that opportunity to make a choice. One of the things that people need to recognize is the fact that they can take those RRSPs or TFSAs, use them for their own purposes and pay back in. There's a flexibility that makes them quite different than that which we see in a pension plan like CPP.

With the aging population, obviously new pressures have come along and people have to have taken a greater interest in financial literacy to be able to have a sense of what their positions are and what they can do. The insecurity—and the previous speaker made reference to the crisis in pension, but that kind of language obviously is designed to make people start to worry about whether or not they have enough, whether their future is secure. It's into that atmosphere that the idea of an ORPP was introduced by the government.

There are a couple of things that we need to understand about the ORPP. One of the key ideas in this is that

they're mandatory, so everyone should have an at-work pension. It sounds great, but the question then becomes: Who pays? In this environment, in the ORPP, the workplace is the mandatory payer along with the employee. Certainly when people began to understand what the ORPP stood for, they began to become somewhat concerned. That concern has only grown and grown since it was first introduced.

The ORPP, then, from its very beginning, was mandatory—a mandatory amount, 1.9%, by the employer and by the employee. It's interesting, in the conversations that I had with employers—and this has been a piece that has been around for almost two years—the employers would say to me, "Oh, that's a great idea." And then I'd say, "Well, you will be 50% of the contribution." "Oh, no, I can't afford to have 1.9% for every employee." And employees themselves, when they discovered that they had to make a contribution of that nature, were equally concerned.

When people began to look at what 1.9% meant to them and their business, in many, many cases, people realized that they had to find the money somewhere, and the somewhere would be fewer hours—cutting hours for employees—or, in fact, laying off workers. As I recall, the chambers of commerce and the various business groups were able to look at that with greater and greater concern as it became more widely understood.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce put together an open letter to the government, and had over 150 signatories, to express their concern, because they recognized as they consulted with their own membership that this was going to cost jobs. It was a significant number of jobs, in the thousands of jobs, and, obviously, without a job, you can't be paying into a pension. The very people that would be the beneficiaries of an ORPP would, in fact, find themselves with the door firmly shut in their face. So the chambers of commerce, then, did send this open letter to the government to beseech them, quite frankly, to look at an alternative way, because this would cost jobs.

Then, as I say, as word spread, members of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, and the portfolio managers, just to name a few, began to get together and recognize that they needed to educate this government into the realities of such a project. One of the things—after the question of actual job loss, which I can't overstate—is the absolute contradiction of what the proposal purports to do. It just seems impossible to understand why they wouldn't appreciate that 18,000 people in the first year would lose their jobs.

There also was the question of some places already had a pension. Well, then the government introduced—they'd already introduced the notion of mandatory, that everybody is going to have this. Then the next piece that had to be understood: what was designed to be comparable? I'll have more to say in a moment about that.

I think it's really interesting to look at some of the messaging that the government provided on this. For something that has not yet happened, it's quite remarkable how many hundreds of thousands of dollars have

been used in advertising and sort of softening up the public for this. The initial advertising was simply, "Everyone should have a workplace pension." On the surface, that seems like a good idea. But then the question of who pays—well, you do.

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The next part of the advertising was seniors running along and jumping over a water course, because they need a bridge to carry themselves into retirement. But, of course, what the ad did not say was that if you are retired, you would not be eligible for this retirement project.

The latest one that I saw was a senior explaining to what appeared to be a grandchild the merits of a pension, because not too many 16-to-18-year-olds are interested in pensions. In fact, even much older people sometimes think that it's something that they'll look at some other time.

So we have the messages, then, that the government has used to try to make sure that people understand the idea of the pension, but there are certain things that come along every now and then that you need to understand a little more than that one-liner about a workplace pension.

There are a couple of examples that I want to give you. One of them was a study by McKinsey that found that only 23% of Canadians are inadequately prepared for retirement, and they happen to be in the wealthier cohort. Also, lower-income retirees are best protected by existing programs, including CPP, Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Further, the McKinsey study never took into account home ownership, non-tax preferred accounts, family assistance or inheritance—the latter estimated to be worth \$1 trillion over the next 20 years.

I want to pause and look at some of the things that are said in that piece I just gave you, because if I talk to my constituents about their retirement, they'll usually turn and look at their house and say, "There's the thing that I have the most amount of money in and the most equity." Many people are living in their homes as retirees with their homes paid for. To not consider that is disingenuous. I think that it's important to look at a broader perspective than the one suggested by the government.

So their suggestion, the ORPP, is not only something that will cost jobs, but it also—as, again, a part of the whole picture—makes companies in Ontario less competitive. We already have the largest subnational debt in the world. We have the highest hydro rates. We have an infrastructure deficit. We have people poaching Ontario businesses out of Ontario, people who are paid to poach businesses out of Ontario, each one of which is then a blow at being competitive. It's not hard to see why the business community has looked at this in a unified voice and said, "We can't do this."

One of the suggestions that has been offered is that, as the numbers will demonstrate, there are certain pockets of people that have more difficulty than others in terms of senior financing. So I think that we need to look at who those people are and what kinds of things that actually would help. It's a balanced approach that would be needed to ensure that the Ontario Retirement Pension

Plan does not undermine any existing plans and disadvantage workers and investment—which, as I've just explained, are all on the chopping block with ORPP.

The very real risk is that Ontario workers will be worse off if employers with already attractive pension plans find themselves unable to continue those plans if they are required to offer the ORPP.

This job-killing payroll tax hinders the ability of the private sector to do what it does best: provide job opportunities for people and strengthen our economy to attract investment.

The pension investments must be made with the best intentions towards the highest return, free of political interference and free to invest anywhere across the world. Pension plans are supposed to be done in the best interests of pensioners and must not be restricted.

I want to pause there because there's a line from the budget of 2014 that contradicts what I just said. It says, "By unlocking value from its assets and encouraging more Ontarians to save through a proposed new Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, new pools of capital would be available for Ontario-based projects such as building roads, bridges and new transit."

The reason that I think it's very important to keep that in mind is that it contradicts what I have just said about pension investments. Pension investments have to be made in the best interests of pensioners. Investment in infrastructure has to be done in the best interests of infrastructure-building. Those two things aren't the same. The pensioner wants a high rate of return. The infrastructure investment is looking for the best bang for the buck. Those are two opposing trends, and the notion that this will be used to provide what they refer to as the "new pool of capital" is chilling indeed.

The ORPP is an idea to achieve a hidden motive, when you look at this. Despite what the government studies say, there is no need for this mandatory payroll contribution.

The plan is unneeded for four fifths of workers who have already sufficient savings for adequate retirement, as shown by Statistics Canada and McKinsey studies, taking into account all forms of savings. Instead, the plan will hurt many families with new taxes as they deal with child-rearing costs and invest in housing equity, which is the most important retirement asset in later life.

There are pockets of individuals who need support, as I mentioned earlier, such as low-income single seniors facing a poverty rate of 20%. A minority of households with modest incomes below \$60,000 do need additional support. Any pension reform should be targeted, not necessarily broad-based.

The plan unnecessarily extends to many upper-income households with up to \$180,000 in income when two earners retire. This is well beyond any reasonable notion of what is meant by "middle class," since most upper-middle households have the means to ensure a good standard of living.

The plan hurts the middle class. Yet many middle-class individuals will bear much higher tax rates on plan benefits, especially in the \$73,000 to \$90,000 range, as

Old Age Security payments are clawed back. It's hard to believe that this would have gone unnoticed.

The plan provides a poor return to savings for low-income Canadians, who will be provided little personal income tax relief for contributions, yet face a walloping personal tax on benefits with personal taxes and reductions in the Guaranteed Income Supplement.

The personal tax treatment of the ORPP is uncertain. If it is treated similarly to other retirement savings plans under the income tax, the ORPP will provide comparable returns to annuity plans for many middle-income households. If the pension contributions are treated similarly to CPP, only a tiny tax credit based on the low-income tax rate is provided as relief, making the ORPP savings a poor investment for many Ontarians.

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Although it is argued by the government that the ORPP will increase savings, it is quite the contrary. There will be a significant reduction in private savings, as many US and Canadian economic studies have suggested in the past, including a recent one done by the well-respected economist François Vaillancourt at the Université de Montréal.

Equally, the Fraser Institute went back and looked at what happened to savings patterns after CPP was first introduced and savings dipped. People had the idea that they had put away the amount of money they had set aside for savings, and so they dropped by a full per cent their savings as individuals now that they had the CPP.

Ontario had better options that would have or could have avoided many of the issues I've listed. It could have created a voluntary pooled savings plan with automatic enrolment. This, of course, is the PRPP, the pooled registered pension. The pooled registered pension plan is one that is open to people in the provinces where that complementary legislation has been passed. It is certainly something that people in Quebec and Saskatchewan and other places outside Canada that have similar pooling have been able to take advantage of, and they have seen the benefits that come from that.

The other point the government has made about the question of administration—and they compare apples and oranges when they talk about an RRSP, because it could be a group RRSP; it can have very efficient administration costs. This one, while they look at it as being economic to administer, has some inherent problems in terms of administration. One of those is the fact that it will have to keep track of people who come in and out of the province, pay for a while, leave and come back—just keeping track of the monies that they will have accumulated.

It can also be said to be a similar problem for young people who may have part-time jobs. By the way, this starts at age 18, so they may have a part-time job and then find themselves employed when they finish school where there isn't an ORPP. Then they go away and then they come back. They may be in and out during the course of their working life. That will certainly create some costs to administer.

There's also the problem of companies that have employees in Ontario and employees in other provinces and the kind of expense that they will incur from that. There are issues, then, with the cost of administration.

The other thing I suggested a few moments ago is that we have the term "mandatory," and the other term that is important to understand in this is "comparable," for those companies that have defined contribution pensions that the government determines are comparable. So they will be developing plans and obviously costs incurred in doing that.

Taxpayers will be on the hook for shortfalls, as someone has to bear the risk with downturns in the economy. Sometimes people forget that when we talk about the government paying for something, that's actually the taxpayer paying for something.

At the helm of this administration agency for the ORPP and in control of the pension are individuals with historic ties to political figures. Despite having no experience in pensions, the new CEO will receive a significant bump in pay to set up the flagship pension plan. In addition to his base salary of \$525,000, he will be eligible for an annual performance bonus of an additional \$131,250. Joining him is the new senior vice-president of communications and public affairs at the ORPP Administration Corp., who will be earning \$300,000.

The appointment of these two Liberal insiders, who have a track record of exorbitant salaries, cost overruns and close ties to the Liberal government, does little to quell fears about the efficiency of this organization—there's a \$20-million loan from Ontario taxpayers—and about the estimated \$800 million the ORPP will run up, in its first years, in administrative costs surrounding this pension scheme.

All of this, in an ideal world, would be for nothing. With the federal government and the Ministry of Finance enthusiastically working on a CPP enhancement—the government has continued to make these decisions despite the fact they have kept the door open for the pension plan to be floated in with the CPP as well.

I mentioned the whole issue about the mandatory nature and the fact that we could look at other forms, the PRPP being one. It was three years ago when I brought forward Bill 50, An Act to require the introduction of legislation to allow for pooled registered pension plans. Obviously, as a person with a private member's bill that was picked up in the following budget, I was very pleased to see that.

I think the current government is making a choice in the ORPP that is going to be very costly. The PRPP offers opportunities to businesses and employers, and it is superior in that it enables its members to benefit from the lower administration costs that result from participating in a large, pooled pension plan. It's also portable, so you can move from one employer to another or you can move from one province to another. The investment options within a pooled registered pension plan are similar to those for other registered pension plans so its members can benefit from greater flexibility in managing their savings and meeting their retirement objectives.

A group that represents manufacturers and exporters has approached the government to halt the implementation of its new provisional pension plan until a federal review of the Canada Pension Plan is completed. It harks back to the point I made at the beginning about the coalition of businesses that had asked the government to rethink the ORPP. I was certainly pleased that there was provided a one-year change in the process of bringing the pension plan forward.

The Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters have been one of the voices that has reported that the costs of administering the Ontario pension plan could be avoided by working with Ottawa.

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The government must realize that manufacturers play a key role in ensuring the strength of the Ontario economy. The request from the CME to wait for a formal review of the CPP expansion makes sense and certainly has been echoed by Ian Howcroft, Ontario's vice-president at the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters. Howcroft continued to state that mandatory cost increases put manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage, especially those manufacturers who compete with other jurisdictions. He continued, "Employers already offering pension plans should be exempt from further increases associated with either an ORPP or a CPP change." As I mentioned, it was in February that the current government pushed back the rollout dates to give larger businesses more time to enrol.

Right now, Canada's economy is growing but is weakened by a collapse in commodity prices and a lacklustre global economy. If we look at the information that our Financial Accountability Officer has presented us with, obviously we have a lot of problems and certainly issues that have to be dealt with. I mentioned earlier that we have the largest subnational debt and our interest obligations total \$11.4 billion.

The administration costs of the pension plan are expected to range between \$130 and \$200 per member, per year, so a worker who contributes \$800 per year will lose up to 25% of their contributions off the top in fees alone. That doesn't sound like a very good return on investment to me. Ontarians won't be saving more; they will just be losing more off their payroll stubs.

The Premier has said that a mandatory pension plan will be good for the province, yet recent studies show that 90% of small business owners are opposed to the ORPP. An employee making \$45,000 a year would pay just shy of \$800 toward the ORPP, with their employer contributing an equal amount. While larger businesses may be able to absorb these added costs, smaller businesses will be forced to either reduce the size of their workforce or the hours those employees are able to work.

The creation of an Ontario-only pension plan will risk any immediate and future federal government stimulus in Ontario.

I find it very helpful to examine the impact on the different socio-economic groups. The poor will be squeezed most by a payroll tax as they struggle to make ends meet. Middle-income earners will take home fewer

savings for RRSPs, TFSA's, a down payment on a home, mortgage repayment or their children's education. Seniors will never draw a meaningful benefit. As for the well-off, it is hardly a public policy concern if some wealthy people are less affluent in retirement.

But I think we have to understand that there are far more concerns than people have generally recognized in this initiative of the government and the fact that—who does it benefit? Well, it doesn't benefit the poor. It doesn't create more stability for the middle class, who run the risk of clawbacks as well as the poor. As we said, the more affluent—not too many people are going to be concerned about that.

I want to just take a couple of minutes to come back to the term I mentioned, "comparable." The government has made a decision that there are certain pensions in the private sector that they deem comparable. This then has led to another cottage industry, I might say, of the different businesses having to decide what comparable means in their particular position.

To give you one example, a defined contribution pension of 8%, split equally then between the employer and the employee at 4%, may be greater than most pensions—many are at 3% and 3%. An employer has to make a decision, obviously with his employees, if he's going up or he's going down, or opt out into the ORPP where people have no choice and they have no say in what happens to their money. So these are serious questions that people need to understand in understanding how complex this is and what it really means for them.

I want to take the last moment to talk about the groups that came to make submissions to the public hearings. There were nearly 40 different groups that came to the public hearings. But the interesting thing about it was that not one expert testified before the committee who offers a service or competes with other jurisdictions or produces an item or a good—in other words, these are the people who meet payrolls on a regular basis, make sure they're competitive, make sure that they're able to stay in business. Not one of them made any positive comments to support this initiative—not one. No experts who are in the business of meeting a payroll, providing goods and services to the public—not one of them was able to do that. I think that that's something that we also need to think of in a very sobering way.

I want to finish in the last moments that I have and say that my constituents are law-abiding people who work hard and pay the bills. They want to hear a jingle in their pocket, a dream or some hope. They don't want to feel the hand of government reaching deeper into their pockets. They want to be able to make some decision to spend or to save.

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm pleased to rise today to speak on Bill 186, An Act to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, or the ORPP. As you might be well aware, this is actually the third bill in a series of four to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan.

The plan was originally proposed to mirror the CPP and to provide security for two thirds of Ontarians without a workplace pension plan. But now, unfortunately, the government's watered down version will provide a pension to those without a workplace pension plan—or not provide a pension at all because so many are going to be excluded on the basis that they have a retirement or pension plan that this government has deemed to be comparable.

Speaker, we're going to get into what happened in committee and delve into what we heard from those who presented or sent in submissions shortly. But, first, I would like to recap why we're even here and why this conversation is so important to have over and over and over again. We're talking about retirement security. We're talking about dignity in retirement, predictability and peace of mind in retirement, and even the ability to retire at all for many people.

People are unable, in today's economy, to keep up with bills, rent, housing, child care, transit and paying for life's unexpected surprises. Mr. Speaker, they say that the things that are sure in this life are death and taxes. Those are the only things that are sure in this life, but I'll add a third. I'd say death, taxes and surprises, because life is full of unexpected surprises, good and bad, but I've learned from personal experience that they're usually expensive. And when there already isn't enough money to make ends meet or get ahead, there certainly isn't any left over for the unexpected. That also means that there isn't money left over for a rainy day or, oftentimes, for retirement.

1700

I understand the need for people to be educated and for increased financial literacy, but it galls me to no end to hear some people's simple solution or simple answer that says that if we just teach people how to save, then we wouldn't be facing this financial savings crisis. That's nonsense. It is never that simple.

People whose only option is precarious, part-time work cobbled together to fill a work week know how to stretch money, but they can't make it out of thin air. This notion that people would be able to save if only they knew how—that's insulting. People who are living hand to mouth often can stretch a dollar farther than some of our colleagues can travel on their vacations, I would wager. But they can't do anything about the unaffordability of skyrocketing hydro bills. They can't do anything about the unaffordability and cost of transit, child care or the lack of affordable housing.

People who are working full-time should be able to make enough money in Ontario to pay for a basic existence—full stop. And that speaks to fair—

Applause.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Full stop.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Full stop, okay. Full stop and clap. Thank you.

That does speak to a fair, dignified living wage as well, which is something that we've talked about often in this House. But it also speaks to the fact that our system

is broken, if someone who works their whole life and contributes to our society then finds themselves at the end of their working years and they are totally unable to stop working because they can't afford to.

Defined benefit pension plans provide the kind of stable and predictable income stream that people need to be able to make plans to participate in their economy. People's needs and lives don't actually stop at retirement. In fact, their needs go up. Their costs increase. Their health care needs increase. They're going to want to continue after retirement to buy food or pay for housing and transportation, maybe even catch a movie once in a while, spoil the grandkids or travel occasionally. They might want to continue to shop at local stores, go to local restaurants, take golf lessons or learn to kayak. They might want to go see a play, but to keep money in their local communities, and they want to feel secure enough, with a confident income stream, to be able to do it. I don't know why this is such a wild notion nowadays. This shouldn't be something that people can't expect.

I promised that we would talk about what happened in committee, so let's do that. I know you've been waiting with bated breath. I want to talk about the committee process. I want to share some of the submissions from groups who want the ORPP to be a strong public pension plan that benefits the most people. They actually don't want a watered down, halfway plan that seeks to appease Bay Street people, who I would say don't give a tinker's cuss about those who struggle in their retirement.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: A tinker's what?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Cuss.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: A tinker's cuss, yes.

Over and over again, we heard from those who want the plan to be the best version it can be to support workers in Ontario. So I'll start first, Mr. Speaker—not just because you're in the chair, but I'll share the remarks to the standing committee regarding Bill 186 from the United Steelworkers. Some highlights:

"The United Steelworkers represents roughly 70,000 workers in Ontario....

"Today, only 40% of Ontarians have workplace pensions. In the private sector, less than 25% of workers have a workplace pension plan. Reliance on private savings to fill the gap is falling short, which is why the initiative to have a government sponsored retirement option is timely and necessary....

"If no national consensus on CPP enhancement is reached, we feel that retirement security can be strengthened in Ontario through the ORPP. We are disappointed, however, that the design and implementation of the ORPP eschews the principle of universal coverage and we fear that Ontario's actions will undermine universal expansion of CPP going forward....

"Ontario should amend Bill 186 to expand coverage of the ORPP to all workers."

They continue: "First, universal coverage would enhance retirement benefits for ORPP members through increased portability of benefits. Trends in job turnover rates show that workers will have an average of about five employers over their working life. Universal cover-

age would mean that workers' earnings in all of their jobs would be covered by the ORPP. Indeed, seamless portability is one of the most efficient and equitable aspects of the CPP design.

"Universal coverage would also reduce administrative complexity both for employers and the plan itself because the rules and administration would more closely mirror the CPP. Universality would spread investment and longevity risk which would enable the ORPP to better predict the plans, contributions and benefits. Expanding the ORPP to cover all workers would also provide more flexibility for existing pension plans."

The last little bit from the Steelworkers: "From our perspective, the real reason for exempting comparable plans is pressure from the entrenched financial services industry. We urge the government to reconsider these exemptions and, at the very least, rebuff pressure from the financial services industry to expand these exemptions to include pooled retirement pension plans or other inferior financial products."

Mr. Speaker, a little bit about universality: The strength of a pension is in its size. The more people contributing to the pool, the larger the pool and the greater the money in the pool that is able to grow and ultimately provide the most benefit to the most people in retirement.

Our strong public systems should be universal, be it health care or a strong public pension plan. It comes down to fairness and equity but also about strength and shared benefit. Universal programs underscore the importance of shared values and benefits across the province and, really, across the country.

Because I know you've been waiting for this, I have another submission that I'd like to share. These are a couple of highlights from Unifor in their submission to the standing committee. They say: "The workplace is changing. Fewer Ontarians today can expect to stay with one employer and collect a pension plan from that employer at the end of their work career. Instead, employees will have numerous employers and retire with a piecemeal of retirement savings accounts. Their savings accounts will be transferred to their bank and subject to expensive retail banking fees. The growth in precarious work means no pension for too many workers, especially young workers and immigrant workers.

"Workers today can no longer rely on employers for retirement security. Individuals, particularly low- and middle-income earners, are not well equipped to deal with the risks in saving for retirement. The financial institutions have not come up with an effective retirement savings product."

The Ontario Regional Council "holds the ORPP as a necessary plan should the CPP enhancement be delayed or fail....

"Universality is essential to an efficient, cost-effective, smoothly administered plan. Already we are seeing the complexities that arise when employers with comparable plans are exempt from the ORPP. There will be a cost to review and to enforce the comparable plan exemption; there is also the potential for Ontarians to lose their

entitlement to ORPP benefits if the comparable plan exemption is not properly administered.

“Our preference is for a universal ORPP.”

I have another one for us. This is from CUPE, and this is part of their submission on Bill 186: “It will come as no surprise that CUPE Ontario does not support certain elements of the current design of the ORPP. We are absolutely supportive of the fact that the ORPP is a defined benefit plan, which provides the greatest income security for workers. The most significant problem, however, is the fact that the ORPP is not universal....

“In the absence of an expanded CPP, there is room for a provincially based program with the important proviso that it be possible to fully and seamlessly integrate a provincial pension with the existing CPP if and when the national public pension is eventually expanded....

“The ORPP should not be created in a way that would prevent universal expansion of the CPP. Nor should the ORPP be used as a tool to shape a CPP expansion that has non-universal elements to it....

“Universality is the single most effective way to build long-term, broadly based support for a social program like a public pension. It also reduces the potential for opposition to such programs because everyone is seen to gain a benefit from them. Universality is also the most viable model for a public pension. It provides the largest pool of resources and the simplest structure. Carving some workers out of the ORPP will mean a less efficient plan, with more resources dedicated to administration costs, including the cost of enforcement. The universality of the CPP bears this out. It was virtually the only contributory pension plan not subject to political attack since the most recent financial crisis.”

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One more—oh, good. This is from the OFL, a submission to the standing committee, also on Bill 186. This one is short—short and sweet:

“Universality of the ORPP is the key feature and primary factor that will deliver improved retirement security to Ontario workers.

“Developing ‘carve-outs’ in the form of comparable plan exemptions is fraught with complexity, adds increased costs associated with plan reviews, unnecessary enforcement and excessive administrative pressure in determining exactly what denotes a comparable plan.

“The OFL is steadfast in our insistence that the ORPP be universal.”

Mr. Speaker, are you getting the theme? It is indeed universality.

However, when presented with actuarial analyses, principled arguments, and clear and measured historical examples of the success and positives of universality, this government just kind of ignored and disregarded that. In the face of all of this evidence of why this would be the best plan going forward, they are knowingly creating administrative challenges and designing the opportunity for employers to undermine the effectiveness of the plan and thereby the future benefit and stability for their employees. That’s absurd, but that’s maybe just from where I sat at committee.

I have another piece of a submission here. This, however, is in support of defined benefit plans and why it’s so important to recognize a defined, steady benefit.

This is from OPTrust: “We strongly believe in the value offered by the defined benefit pension model and its ability to provide adequate replacement income in retirement. There is no doubt that Bill 186 is timely legislation. Increasingly, small and medium-sized employers are abandoning workplace pension plans. Larger employers are turning from defined benefit to defined contribution pension plans, shifting the responsibility to employees to make investment decisions they may not be equipped to make.”

I’m also going to take a moment and share some thoughts from Hugh Mackenzie.

First, I realize that I’m using other people’s words here, and I have the opportunity to share my thoughts in this debate. But we hear from the government that they have consulted extensively, and I’m sure that that is true. However, when they take the opportunity to share some of the opinions of those with whom they have extensively consulted, it’s always glowing. I wanted to take the opportunity to say that these are groups that represent a number of plan members, workers across the province. They support a strong public pension plan, but they are making suggestions, real suggestions, on how to improve this and make it the best plan, and it’s just totally unheeded and completely disregarded, and it’s very frustrating.

Anyway, here is one more submission, from Hugh Mackenzie and Associates, economic consultants. He has been involved with the pension system in Canada for more than 30 years, incidentally.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That’s a long time.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: A very long time. This is a man who knows about pensions.

He has said, “Canadian workers need an expanded public pension system to support their retirement income needs.

“Ideally, that would take the form of a meaningfully expanded Canada Pension Plan.

“The ORPP is a second best.

“Having said that, I want to address two issues which, if dealt with, would not only make the ORPP better but would give us a plan that could be easily integrated into a future CPP expansion—universal coverage and portability ... universal coverage as a fundamental principle for the design of the ORPP. Despite this principle, apparently persuaded by current pension plans’ concerns about the complexity of integrating their plans with the ORPP, the government decided to exempt what would be deemed to be ‘equivalent plans.’

“While I don’t agree with the government’s decision, I at least understand the logic behind enabling DB plan sponsors to avoid the complexity of integration. But in a bizarre and illogical move”—I’m going to read that again, just because I like that line. He says, “But in a bizarre and illogical move, the government decided to extend its ‘equivalent plan’ exemption to DC plans with a total contribution rate of 8% of earnings or more....

“The exemption”—

Ms. Catherine Fife: Good line.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Oh, it was a great line.

But he goes on; there's more: "The exemption for those 'equivalent' plans makes no sense. For a DC plan, accommodation of the ORPP is breathtakingly simple. A DC plan sponsor who wishes to avoid an increase in costs can do so simply by reducing employee and employer contributions to the DC plan by 1.9% of pay. Not only that, this would be one of those rare instances in employment relations in which the employees are unquestionably better off, and employers are no worse off. Employees get a significantly better benefit for the same cost; and employers' costs remain the same.

"In my view, it is difficult to justify not eliminating the equivalent plan exemption for DC plans. It is even harder to justify a system which, as it currently stands, allows DC plan sponsors to keep their employees out of the ORPP without their consent.

"On this issue, my specific recommendation to the committee is that it amend Bill 186 to remove any reference to the granting of 'equivalent plan' status to DC plans," hear ye, hear ye.

Mr. Wayne Gates: What was that?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: "A bizarre and illogical move"; that's what it was.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the committee process—I appreciate what it could be; I get frustrated by how it plays out. But I very much valued the input from those in the know.

During clause-by-clause consideration, which is, you are well aware, when we take a look at all of the proposed amendments and the government shoots them all down—I beg your pardon: the opposition amendments.

What we did as the NDP was put forward amendments that reflected the input of those who weren't just in earnest—they are the experts; they know what they're talking about. We put forward amendments on their behalf. We tried to take this pension plan back to the strongest version it could have been, to make it universal by, as we have been asked to do, scrapping any references to comparable and exempt plans. However, as I'm sure you've guessed, the Liberals weren't having it. They've obviously already made their commitments to Bay Street.

We wanted the maximum number of people to be in the plan. That was the goal. Every Ontarian should be given the opportunity to retire with dignity. However, since this government was not willing to abandon their comparability framework, we fought for amendments that would make it so that any plan that was not defined benefit, or DB, could not qualify to be considered exempt—because they aren't comparable.

The government stuck to their message of flexibility. We heard the word "flexibility" over and over. I will say that I thought it was ridiculous, because what we should have been arguing for was stability and predictability, not flexibility. For predictability and security: That's what we should have been arguing for.

We're talking about income in retirement. We're talking about benefits in retirement. This government is

willing to introduce flux and instability and, as they said ad nauseam in committee, flexibility. You know what? This is my own interpretation, but I think "flexibility" is Lib-speak for the ability to create loopholes and work-arounds to make their friends happy. This has nothing to do with benefiting Ontarians.

DC plans should not be considered comparable. There are good DC plans out there, but even the good ones do not provide a steady, guaranteed stream of retirement income, and therefore they cannot provide the stable benefit of a defined benefit plan. They aren't comparable. They aren't DB plans, so they shouldn't be considered comparable.

We also brought forward an amendment about multi-employer pension plans. These plans can be DB or DC plans, or a combination. The benefits are a target; they aren't fixed. They're not guaranteed; they could be reduced. Clearly, they shouldn't be considered comparable and, therefore, exempt—also an amendment that was shot down.

This government is leaving so many significant details to regulation. Here in this Legislature, we have debate—sometimes worthwhile, but we have the opportunity to weigh in and to bring voices from our communities. We have debate. We have committee. Sometimes, that process seems futile, but it still is an open process that the public can access.

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But when it comes to regulation, these are decisions and details that will not be hammered out and worked out in debate or in committee. They will be made potentially in backrooms or at kitchen tables—I don't know—with napkins. I have no idea with this government. But we will never know, because it's not part of the open public process. It isn't subject to public input or scrutiny.

Now, we agree with leaving the fine-tuning and small details to regulation. We don't have to hash out every single detail in every single piece of legislation. But when it comes to the important pieces, the broad strokes, that should not be done on napkins at kitchen tables. Anyway, I'll move on.

PRPPs, or pooled registered pension plans: You might remember hearing about them. In fact, there were members of this House who supported them. However, these are investment vehicles; they aren't pensions. We've fought this out in debate already. PRPPs, while approved in legislation, don't exist yet. They aren't a thing. They don't exist yet in Ontario, and already this government is saying that they can be considered comparable and therefore exempt.

I just don't have words sometimes: They don't even exist, but they already can be considered comparable and therefore exempt. They are similar to DC plans, but they go one step further: Employer contributions are not mandatory. If employer contributions are not mandatory, how on earth is that a pension? It isn't. Therefore, how can it be considered comparable? It shouldn't.

Mr. Speaker, secure retirement is not going to be through Harper-style PRPPs, which have significantly

expensive administration fees that benefit insurance companies and banks more than retirees. Like I said, we already had this fight in debate, but here we are again.

The government goal should be for the secure and predictable benefit of future plan members, not buddies of the financial elite. And it shouldn't matter who is related to whom. It just shouldn't.

We also put forward an amendment to revert the maximum pensionable earnings back to what the government had initially committed. They had originally said \$90,000 in 2014 dollars instead of 2017. Basically, back in August 2015, the government said the calculation of pension benefits was said to be based on a maximum of \$90,000 in 2014 dollars—which, by the way, if they had stuck to that, would have been nearly \$93,000 in 2017 dollars. They changed the year to 2017 dollars. It just shaves a little money off of the future benefits right out of the gate—or, actually, because we're not out of the gate, before we even get out of the gate.

During committee—we had this conversation in committee—they had the audacity to say it would have a “small impact,” not a “meaningful impact,” and that they've “consulted extensively.” Well, Speaker, I highly suspect that no future retiree was consulted, that there was no one who said, “Sure. Go ahead. Tweak the numbers to sneak a little off the top of my future benefits. Shave a little off now to limit the growth potential along the way, so that I'll never miss out on what I couldn't earn, because this government felt the need to manipulate my future benefits.”

It's just by a smidgen, but I'm sure you'll agree that there's no way that future retirees would say “Sure. Your sneaky manipulation isn't going to have a meaningful impact, so go ahead.” No. It's just one more example of just a little fine-tuning, but not for the benefit of Ontarians.

Our goal should be for a strong, public, universal pension plan. We should be looking at ways to make it better, stronger, of more benefit; this government has chosen not to. I will never understand how this government can be so short-sighted, especially when we're talking about a program that is designed for the long haul. This is a long-range plan, one of the precious few that I have seen since being elected. It is a long-range plan to benefit people in the long term, but somehow this Liberal government has managed to find ways to shortchange Ontarians before we even get started.

However, Mr. Speaker, there is still time to make it better. We will be back for the fourth piece of ORPP legislation sometime soon. We can look forward to having this conversation all over again, because pensions and pension security, retirement security, is always going to be a very important topic that we need to focus on—keep having these conversations, and bring more of the public into them and, hopefully, hold this government to account so that we ultimately end up with the strongest and best public pension plan we could.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim McDonell): Further debate?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: It's a pleasure to rise today on behalf of my constituents in Cambridge to add a few comments to the debate regarding Bill 186. As the minister said earlier, I was able to work along with the Associate Minister of Finance and sit in on the committee to take it through clause-by-clause. So I'm very happy to stand up today to talk about Bill 186.

As we've heard before, this government made the ORPP one of the pillars of our economic plan because we believe that every worker deserves to have a secure retirement and that the ORPP will help to close the retirement savings gap for the two thirds of Ontario employees who don't have a workplace pension plan.

It's interesting, Speaker. There are many families that face unforeseen circumstances. The best planning in the world, and the best savings plan in the world, sometimes don't account for a sudden catastrophic illness or catastrophic injury, where their future has changed and they're unable to continue to save for retirement—job losses, children's illness.

One of my patients who I worked with fairly closely in a community many, many years ago was a woman who had a very good job. She had no family, so she was on her own. She had a very, very good job and ended up with a long-term chronic illness, and she was unable to continue to work. She ended up in poverty in older adulthood, without a secure retirement plan.

As her nurse, I was trying to assist her into what living circumstances she could afford to go into. She could probably have managed in a retirement home with a little bit of help, but she was unable to pay for that. It was a sad situation, and it made me realize how important it is to ensure that everybody has a secure retirement.

There is a great economic benefit to ensuring that people are retiring with enough savings to manage right until the end of their life, to ensure they've got the things that they need. That contributes billions to our economy. The cost of doing nothing will be that lost revenue, and it ends up that that is a burden on our society, as taxpayers, when we have to support those folks.

I wanted to take just a couple of moments to talk about comparable plans.

I know that there have been some comments in the House about universality. I know that our Associate Minister of Finance did a lot of consultations around Ontario. She was in Cambridge for a first consultation and then she came back to sit with our chamber of commerce for a round table, for a question-and-answer, regarding retirement security.

The government previously outlined, Ontario workers participating in comparable plans will be exempt from participating in the ORPP. That came from our extensive consultations a lot. There are many workplace pension plans that were comparable to or better than the ORPP, and these employers wanted the flexibility built into the plan to ensure that they were able to continue to offer a superior pension plan, they thought, to their employees. So that is built into Bill 186. Anyway, we made the decision and we will be continuing to work with the

companies as we go forward, to test that comparability into future plans.

I just wanted to wrap up, Mr. Speaker, and say that I was very, very happy to see this file go forward. To add the comments to third reading of the ORRP is a real privilege. I think that it really does build on retirement savings for many people in my community of Cambridge. I'm very, very happy to see this going forward, and I really commend the Associate Minister of Finance for the work that she has done on her file.

1730

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to join the debate today on Bill 186, strengthening retirement security—third reading for this bill.

I do want to thank the member from Oshawa. I think she gave a very compelling blow-by-blow account of what happened at committee. I had the great fortune—or misfortune, depending on how you see it—to chair that meeting, and some of those amendments that came forward.

Quite honestly, the debate on pensions, and the integrity of those pensions, in the province of Ontario has been watered down to a level that will not serve the people of this province. I want to tell you a little bit of why I'm saying that.

Several members from the government side of the House have gotten up and they have said that the people of this province aren't going to be able to manage savings in the future; they're not going to be able to put that money aside and ensure that economic security is a reality for them in the future—and I want to tell you why.

Obviously, we support a provincial pension plan, but we support a universal pension plan, which this is not.

There was a motion in a private member's bill that came to the floor of this Legislature back in 2010. It was brought forward by our leader, Andrea Horwath, who made this proposal almost six years ago now, Mr. Speaker. At that time, the Liberal government did not support us.

Instead, we have a revised, modernized, reformatted, broadened definition of an Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, which I think the member from Oshawa has accurately described as something that is not universal. The entire goal of bringing forward a pension plan for the province of Ontario would be to ensure that it encompasses the workers in this province.

There are two issues at play here today at the third reading of this important piece of legislation. One is that the state of employment in the province of Ontario, the new reality for workers of all ages in the province of Ontario right now, is precarious, part-time, contract work and not a livable wage of a \$15 minimum wage, which we have proposed. Especially in the city of Toronto, it's quite interesting, Mr. Speaker. Also, something that a lot of people don't know—and I think it's important for the people of this House to hear—is the state of a lack of stable work in the public sector.

There's this one article from 2015: "Public Sector Workers Feel Sting of Precarious Jobs, Data Shows."

There used to be a time in this province and in this country when the service of people who worked in the public sector was valued. There used to be a time. I know that because in my office there is a certificate, signed by Brian Mulroney, to my father-in-law, Walter, for 31 years of service in the national defence department. It's a certificate signed by a Conservative Prime Minister. It's right in my office. Actually, that used to be the reality. To enter the public service used to be thought of as a way to not only demonstrate your values and your principles as a worker, but on the other side of the coin, you were recognized as someone who was building a province up, or building a country up, and doing good in the province of Ontario.

But in today's Ontario, for those people who are trying to save for a long-term pension, long-term savings, it's quite astounding.

This article goes on to say, "Despite its vow to tackle precarious employment, almost half of the Ontario government's own job postings last year were for temporary positions, data obtained by the Star shows.

"In a province where around one third of all jobs are insecure, a full 44% of the 10,682 jobs posted and filled at Ontario ministries" around 2014 "were temporary or seasonal, according to documents accessed through a freedom-of-information request. Those figures exclude student summer jobs."

Some people say, "Well, it's okay. Students don't have to work full-time." We have the highest post-secondary education rates in the province of Ontario, but they don't need full-time work.

You'll be interested to hear this, Mr. Speaker: Six ministries hired more temporary than permanent employees last year, including correctional services; community and social services—which has its own set of problems, we know that; and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. It is despicable that a ministry which is responsible for training our future workers in the province of Ontario who contribute to our economy is part of the problem. Of the 300 job postings for provincial correctional officers, not a single position was permanent.

This is the reality of the province of Ontario. So what does this government do? It brings in—you could describe it as a pseudo Ontario retirement pension plan. When they first started this plan and when they first sold it to the people of this province and when they first ran on it in the election, the language around it was really quite strong. The language at the time was that every employee in the province of Ontario would be part of this Ontario Retirement Pension Plan—this was in August 2015, and they were very clear—or a comparable workplace pension plan. We should have recognized at the time that little loophole, the little get-out-of-jail-free card that was there.

Then they changed it in January 2016 to "every eligible employee." So the ground is always moving on this pension plan. The legislation confirms that a number of groups will have neither a workplace pension nor be

part of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan going forward. To her credit, the member from Oshawa fought hard at committee to hold the government to account and to try to hold the line on who would be eligible for this pension plan, because this is the reality for people in the province of Ontario.

The suggested definition of employee that would be broad enough to make it clear that many different types of workers will be able to participate, such as part-time, seasonal, temporary, contract, federally regulated employees and self-employed workers—a lot of people don't understand that federal employees wouldn't qualify as well.

The province of Ontario right now is not a friendly place for an average worker. It truly is not.

We actually had a really important debate at our provincial council this last weekend, because it's very much tied to this so-called sharing economy, which really is not about sharing anything. The sharing economy is a by-product of precarious, contract, temporary work. The people who are entering the sharing economy are not true entrepreneurs; they are people who are trying to survive an employment reality in the province of Ontario which is hostile, where the employers win every single day despite the review of the Employment Standards Act.

Just on the issue of the rights of workers in the province of Ontario, there is a reason why there were a thousand people out on the front lawn of this Legislature today fighting for their rights as workers. One of the speakers today said, "When people get injured on their jobs, there are very few options for them." Even the option that exists for them, which is WSIB, is not a good option.

Last night, I met with the folks that travelled 600 kilometres by bike. They were going to camp out on the front lawn of Queen's Park—God love them—and they were there to tell us the reality of what they experience as workers when they are injured. Never mind getting a job, keeping a job, staying safe on a job; they wanted to tell us how hard it was to fight for their rights as employees even when they contributed to WSIB and even when the law says that they have certain rights when they are hurt or injured in the workplace. There's a reason why they travelled 600 kilometres and told us their story. It's because that system is a broken system. It is broken.

The fellow that I did speak to who lost his leg at the work site has had to consistently fight for his rights to maintain those disability payments. That's heartbreaking. People do not choose to be injured on the work site. They don't go to work one day and say, "You know what? I'm just going to get injured today and then fight with WSIB for the rest of my days." This is not a conscious decision.

You put that into the reality of what the province of Ontario is today, where you have people working multiple jobs to make ends meet. You have contract workers who are genuinely afraid to speak out, in a culture of fear, when they are faced with unsafe working conditions. You have people who work full-time and still

cannot pay their bills because this province still does not have a living wage. These are predominantly women and they are predominantly from marginalized communities. These are vulnerable workers. You stick that into this context of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan—we talk about comparability—and you look at all the ways that this government has wiggled out of the integrity of the true intention of what a true universal pension plan should be for the people of this province, and you have what we have before us today, which is a flawed piece of legislation which will not help people save for the future.

As we have heard from very small businesses—because there has been a lack of clarity. Businesses have been very clear with us, especially through the budget committee. They want to know the rules of engagement, and they need those rules so that they can plan.

I'll leave you with this one thing, just as a final thank-you to the critic from Oshawa, who tried to amend this piece of legislation. New Democrats tried to make it stronger. We fought hard at committee to try to build some integrity into this piece of legislation.

This is from GENMO. This goes back to the private member's bill from the member from Oshawa. It says, "While governments at all levels discuss and debate the need to provide improved income security for seniors the focus is on ... pooled registered pension plans, ORPP, enhanced CPP. Meanwhile, the 1.5 million Canadian families who are dependent on their private defined benefit pension plan are left exposed to potential financial disaster."

You have a piece of legislation which is weak and you have a plan going forward which leaves workers at risk.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate? Seeing none, Ms. Hunter has moved third reading of Bill 186, An Act to establish the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

Those opposed, say "nay."

I believe the nays have it.

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

We have a deferral. Pursuant to standing order 28(h), this will be dealt with after question period tomorrow.

Third reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Orders of the day?

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Je propose l'ajournement des débats de la Chambre.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I believe she tried to trick me, but I believe that was adjournment of the House.

The minister has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

This House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1744.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

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

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Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
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	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Brown, Patrick (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
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	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
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
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
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 Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
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 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
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
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 Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
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	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
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Vacant	Scarborough–Rouge River	

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Steve Clark, Vic Dhillon
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Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Peter Z. Milczyn, Julia Munro
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

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permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Joe Dickson, Jennifer K. French
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Bill Walker
Jeff Yurek
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Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Marie-France Lalonde, Gila Martow
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