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Jeudi  
28 mars 2019

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Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott  
Greffier : Todd Decker

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 28 March 2019

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 28 mars 2019

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Let us pray.  
*Prayers.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

FIXING THE HYDRO MESS ACT, 2019  
LOI DE 2019 POUR RÉPARER LE GÂCHIS  
DANS LE SECTEUR DE L'ÉLECTRICITÉ

Mr. Phillips, on behalf of Mr. Rickford, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 87, An Act to amend various statutes related to energy / Projet de loi 87, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'énergie.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

**Hon. Rod Phillips:** Speaker, I'll be sharing my time with the member from Markham–Stouffville.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Markham–Stouffville.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** It's obviously a great honour to be able to rise today to speak to this bill, to speak on behalf of the people of my riding, Markham–Stouffville.

Mr. Speaker, as I've said in other speeches, before we were even elected to government, the Progressive Conservative caucus that was in the opposition was focused on the hydro file—and my colleagues who served then and the candidates who fought so hard in the lead-up to the last election will know—and the reason we fought so hard is that we saw the damage that was being done to the province of Ontario because of the hydro mess that had been created by the previous Liberal government.

Since we got elected, Mr. Speaker, we have been methodically taking a step-by-step approach to bring back our hydro system, to put it back into a system that Ontarians can rely upon, that our small, medium and large job creators can rely upon and, obviously and most importantly, into a system that our taxpayers can rely upon.

For decades, one of the things that helped build our province, one of the things that separated us from other provinces and other states that we competed with, was the fact that we had a strong, stable, reliable and cheap energy sector. It's what drove our manufacturers and it's what gave us confidence in those long winter months. That was an advantage that we lost, not because we had a bad energy sector, colleagues, but exclusively because we had—

**Interjection:** Bad government.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Bad government. For decades, this province was run by a Progressive Conservative government. Colleagues, you'll recall: 42 years of strong, stable Progressive Conservative government in this province that created a magnificent infrastructure; a magnificent infrastructure built on a hydro sector that helped us become—and we've heard it talked about time and time again: Ontario was the engine of the Canadian economy. As we know, colleagues, a strong Ontario means a strong Canada. When Ontario is booming, so too is the rest of the country. That was what we lost because of bad policy decisions.

I'm going to talk a little bit about what this bill does, Mr. Speaker, but I think it's also important to note that when governments make poor decisions, it is the taxpayer who pays the price for it—and it's not just the taxpayer of the province of Ontario; it's across this country. People pay the price for bad decisions and bad government.

In a very real way, as much as Progressive Conservatives have always built the economy and focused on building communities, focused on building a strong economy, an economy that helps pay for health care, an economy that helps pay for schools and post-secondary education, an economy that helps build our transportation and transit infrastructure—the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transportation, who is here beside me, my seatmate, has been undertaking a massive review of all of our transportation infrastructure across the province, and we're starting to see some of the benefits of that.

Over the years, it has been policies that have been built by the Progressive Conservatives, backed by a strong energy sector, that have helped us build and pay for this massive infrastructure and the economy that we've had to pay for it.

I'm going to talk, obviously, about the bill. It's the next step. Where we've gone wrong, in large part, in this province over the last 15 years of the Liberal-NDP coalition government, was that we lurched from ideological solution—or lack of solution—ideological disaster to the next in terms of energy policy. We knew when we got elected—we fought to get elected; we fought for the opportunity. We knew that when we got elected, we were going to have to do something about it. We also realized that we could do one of two things: We could follow the approach that was the hallmark of the previous government; or we could take our time, we could do it properly, we could consult, we could work with communities, we could work with industry, we could work with the sector that helped build a strong Ontario, and step by step we could unravel the bad policies that were put in place, make

those policies that did work—because there were a few that did work—better, reduce the costs to our taxpayers, to our ratepayers, and really sit down with our small, medium and large job creators and find out how we could do things better. That's what we are doing. That's what we are doing with this bill. It follows on the work that we already did on the green energy file and on the Green Energy Act, and I'll talk a little bit about that later on. It follows, of course, on the immediate work that the Premier, the cabinet and the government caucus worked on with respect to eliminating contracts for power that we didn't need. As I said, this is the next step.

This particular bill focuses on three areas. It focuses on energy conservation; it focuses on modernizing the Ontario Energy Board—the first two areas that we talked about; it talks about changes to the rate structure and how we finance some of the bad policies that were brought in by the previous Liberal government.

Let's start talking a little bit about some of the elements of the bill. One of the first things that you'll see in the bill—and I think it's critical to how we move forward—is how we deal with energy conservation. No doubt, there is a role for conservation in the energy sector. It is important. It's something that consumers and all of us focus on daily. Part of the reason why we focus on it so much is because the horrifying cost of electricity that was brought on by the previous government forced Ontarians into looking at different alternatives. There are some programs that work, and there are many others that don't work, and that's what the government has looked at. We looked at how the financing of this was handled. Under this bill, we're eliminating those energy conservation programs that don't make sense; that cost too much; that cost ratepayers more than the benefit that we get back.

Madam Speaker, we're focusing our efforts on low-income and Indigenous communities because we know there is still work to be done there. We know there is still work to be done in low-income and Indigenous communities, so we're going to continue to focus our energy conservation efforts there.

**0910**

We're also working closely with our small, medium and large job creators because we also understand that there is work to be done there. Obviously, despite the fact that we've had tremendous job gains since this government took office—built in part by the hard work, for instance, of the member for Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill and the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade—removing red tape is extraordinarily important. But obviously the high cost of energy is something that we all, on both sides of the House, continue to hear about, and we all focus on that. So we're working closely with that sector as well.

What we're doing in the bill—as you know, Madam Speaker, we've decided that we have to centralize some of these energy conservation programs. We've decided we have to eliminate, as I said, the ones that don't make sense and focus on where the demand is greatest, where the need is greatest, on programs that actually work. We've done

that. But we've also lifted the program up to the IESO. The reason we've done that is so that we could centralize and have a more focused program, a program that allows our local distribution companies access, and we can work through the IESO so that demand and conservation work together and not against each other, as we have seen in the past. Now, the result of this is going to be a savings, colleagues, of some \$440 million—\$440 million. Some will say that it seems to be, you know, common sense that conservation would work closely with generation so that trying to do the right thing doesn't cost you money. That's what we're doing. So it's a very, very important step.

Now, when you talk about transitioning this program, Madam Speaker, let's look at some of the benefits of transitioning this program. It's estimated that by doing this, some of our small, medium, and in particular our medium and large job creators, which we all fight for—in all of our communities, we fight for small, medium and large job creators. But it's estimated that somewhere between \$15,000 and \$30,000 a month could be saved by some of our largest electricity users. Think about that for a minute, Madam Speaker. Think about that for a minute: \$15,000 to \$30,000, not a year, but a month—a month. Think of how many jobs that alone creates.

We have talked a lot about GM, General Motors, in this House. I know, Madam Speaker, you have, obviously, a tremendous passion for your community, and you've been fighting very hard, and I commend you on that. But think of what that means to a large consumer like General Motors. Think of what the savings for them will be. Imagine working with our largest job creators to bring down their costs so that they can invest in Ontario, so that they can create jobs, so that they can support our communities. But then think about the fact that for 15 years we put obstacles in the way of doing that very thing.

Recently, during the debate on Bill 66, a bill that—again, I'll reference the parliamentary secretary for economic development, Michael Parsa from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill. I have the great honour of working very closely with him on a number of files. One of the things we heard during that debate, and I reference it a lot—I was somewhat worried about the undercurrent of the debate. It seemed to me that the opposition, the NDP opposition, seemed to be constantly suggesting that we couldn't trust business, that our job creators were somehow irresponsible. In fact, in one of the responses back to me on one of the questions or the comments that I asked, it was suggested that—I think it was the member for Kingston. He suggested that I had had an opportunity, as a former federal member, to be at the table when we saved General Motors, when the government of Canada worked closely with our American partners to save General Motors from bankruptcy. That was used as an example of why we can't trust business, because they made a decision in Oshawa that many of us didn't like. But that was why we couldn't trust big business.

Well, Madam Speaker, and I know colleagues will agree with me, GM is not just Oshawa-based. While we want to do the best for the workers in Oshawa—and we



will; that's why we're working so hard to create jobs and to get out of the way so that our small, medium and large job creators can create jobs—it completely ignores the fact that across this province—General Motors, for instance, employs over 5,000 people, and in communities like St. Catharines, they employ people. Across this province, they're building engines. But it's not just in General Motors. It's not just for General Motors. It's all the subsidiaries.

The member for Markham–Unionville is here. In his riding, there is a medium-sized manufacturer who has suffered greatly under the impact of high energy costs; barely able to make ends meet because of the cost of high energy prices, not to mention all of the red tape, all of the forms that they have to fill in, the job-killing bills that were brought forward by the previous Liberal-NDP coalition.

Some 70 employees at this facility: Do you know what they do? They compete to build parts for General Motors. They've built parts for them in the past. Some of those parts, colleagues, make it on to vehicles that, in all honesty, were built or are built in Mexico, but the parts are made here, shipped to Mexico by workers who live in Markham, go to school in Markham, raise their children in Markham, go to the same arenas and grocery stores that we go to.

I had the opportunity to sit down with their chief designer, a fabulous guy by the name of Eddie Ribeiro. He works very hard. He called me because he had heard that the city of Toronto had passed a motion—I believe it was the city of Toronto he was talking about—to ban the purchase of vehicles from General Motors. We had a very long conversation as to what that would mean for them. What would that mean for them if they did this? As I said, a little over 70 employees. He spends a great deal of his time—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I recognize the member from Sudbury on a point of order.

**Mr. Jamie West:** With respect to the member from Markham–Stouffville, I'm excited to learn about this plan for energy. I don't understand what auto parts and auto—is it coming back to electricity? Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I will remind all members to speak to the piece of legislation before them—and to make his remarks germane to the bill.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** And I appreciate it. I think that really highlights the problem that we have in government, doesn't it? How does energy conservation and how does the high cost of energy relate to people making auto parts? Well, of course it does. When the price of energy is so high, guess what happens to that company in Markham? They can't afford to make parts. They lose employees.

When we have ridiculous motions like we saw at the city of Toronto to ban the purchase of cars from Mexico, guess who suffers? Chief designers like Eddie Ribeiro, the people who are working on the assembly line at this Markham manufacturer, the over 1,000 people expected to be working in the member for Markham–Thornhill's riding at the GM engineering centre: That's who suffers when we

don't look at government as a whole, and that's what we are doing.

So when we talk about energy conservation, when we talk about removing \$15,000 to \$30,000 a month from the bill of our small, medium and large job creators, this has a huge impact on their ability to create jobs. It has a huge impact on where they decide to make investments. That's why, in the bill that we brought forward, we took a deep look at energy conservation and we took a deep look at how it could best be delivered. That's why, in the bill, we've decided to move it to the IESO, to involve the local distribution companies, to eliminate those programs that didn't make sense, to focus on our Indigenous communities and our low-income Ontarians, and to bring better value for money in those programs.

**0920**

I appreciate the intervention of the honourable gentleman and I thank him for allowing me—probably just allowing me—to better correlate the two. I do appreciate him giving me that opportunity.

So we move a bit further. I want to get into the OEB for a little bit, the Ontario Energy Board. We are making some changes here, obviously. If there is one board that requires change, it is the Ontario Energy Board. As much as the previous government deserved to be changed, the Ontario Energy Board really is another one of those elements, a vestige of the previous Liberal-NDP coalition, that requires some massive modification.

Ontarians have lost their trust in the OEB. They have lost their faith in the OEB. Every time they open their bill, they are frustrated. And you know what? It's not on the local distribution companies. It's not on my—Stouffville is serviced by Hydro One and Alectra in Markham. I know that others—I'm not sure, Mississauga—

**Interjection:** Alectra.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Alectra as well. They're not angry at Alectra; they're not angry at our local distribution companies, because they understand it's reliable. They do a good job. When you turn on the lights, for the most part, it's there. When there's an outage because of a storm, they're there. The people who work for our local distribution companies work hard. The people who work the lines work hard and they are doing a great job. But again, ideological decisions by the previous government have caused people to have lost faith, so we are making changes to the Ontario Energy Board in this bill.

Madam Speaker, as you look through the bill, you'll see that we want to maintain—we want to restore the independence—I shouldn't say “maintain,” but we want to restore the independence of the Ontario Energy Board, and that's what this bill does. We separate the adjudication functions from the administrative functions, and that's important. It's important because not only does there need to be oversight but there needs to be a clear delineation between the two.

We have heard time and time and time again of the outrageous amount of paperwork that is required for OEB decisions. Time and time again, we've had local distribution companies come to us and tell us that for even the smallest

of applications, thousands of pages have to be put together; thousands of hours have to be utilized in order to get even the simplest of decisions. Obviously, that is unacceptable to the government. I think it's frankly unacceptable to all of us in the House. None of us want our distribution companies—those costs are our costs, let's not forget. When we ask a local distribution company to come before the OEB and they have to provide 100,000 pages of documents, it's us who are paying for it. It's ratepayers who end up paying for it. That's why this bill is making changes to the Ontario Energy Board.

As I said, we're separating the administrative functions from the adjudication functions. We're streamlining the process. We've heard time and time again, as the members on this side of the House and Conservatives on the other side of the House have been going across the province and in their ridings talking about red tape, how we can make things better for small, medium and large job creators. We've also heard from our local distribution companies, the people who provide hydro, that we had to do something with respect to the Ontario Energy Board, and we are. We're moving forward with very important changes. I think the results of that will speak for themselves in the coming months.

It's something that we heard—not only us; we heard for a number of years that something had to be done, and the government has listened and we're moving forward with those changes. We've heard from stakeholders that they really wanted us to focus on independence but also making decisions faster, clearer, easier to understand—the requirements that companies that are appearing in front of the OEB—so that they understand what it is that they are required to present and it is a more focused decision-making process. We've done that. I'm very excited by this because it's part of restoring people's confidence, not only in government but in the institutions that support government. That is just so important for Ontarians. So that is the next step in this bill.

But we also have to look at other aspects. Colleagues on both sides of the House will recall, during the last election when we knocked on doors, the fury over hydro prices. I've often talked about individuals—I've talked about my own father-in-law, an 88-year-old retired Presbyterian pastor who doesn't focus on government too often, but when it came to hydro prices, he knew all about it. He was frustrated and he was angered by it. Make no mistake about it: People don't differentiate; they want governments to do something about it. Whilst it was the Liberals that led us into this, they want us to fix it. We've heard, from previous bills that we brought before the House—and I'm willing to bet, colleagues, that we're going to hear it very soon again: The NDP are going to tell us that we own this; it's now ours. In a very real way, it is. But do you know why? Because we fought for the opportunity to fix it. That's what we did. When you fight so hard to get something, you do it because you want to fix it.

I can appreciate that this is lost, perhaps, on the NDP because they've only had the honour of serving in government once. I think we would all agree that it was

probably the most disastrous close to five years in the history of this province. As disastrous as the Liberals have been, the record of horror under—I've said this a few times—Bob Rae, who I like personally, really pushed me to get into government, to be honest with you. I was so angry and frustrated by the horror of the Bob Rae NDP government that he motivated me to run. Truth be told, when I got elected to the federal Parliament and I saw Bob Rae, I did take the opportunity to go over and tell him, "You motivated me to run." He's a really nice guy, though; I've got to be honest with you. He's a very nice person. I liked him a lot. But by gosh, that five years was a horrible five years, wasn't it, colleagues? We all remember that. Whether you were a small business owner, whether you were a student, whether you were in health care or whether you were in municipal government, it was a disastrous five years. It really was.

**Mrs. Nina Tangri:** Rae days.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Yes, Rae days. If you were a public servant, you got stuck with Rae days and they forced you not to work. If you were in health care, they closed hospital floors. They closed floors of hospitals, colleagues. That was their solution to health care. You remember this. They closed hospital floors—still paid for the lights, paid for the hydro and paid for the beds, but they thought, if they closed the floor nobody would notice that there were no nurses.

**Mr. Jamie West:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I recognize the member from Sudbury on a point of order.

**Mr. Jamie West:** The same concern as prior: I don't see how this relates to electricity. If we want, we can discuss how Mike Harris also closed hospitals.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Thank you. I will remind the member, who does indeed have the floor, that his remarks have to be consistent with the bill, which is pertinent to energy. As I look at the bill, I'll encourage the member to stay the course.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I do promise you—I have 33 minutes, so I want to take the time to truly explain how it all comes together. As I said earlier, I think when we rush things in this place, when we rush policy, that's where we run into mistakes.

The member opened the door to allow me to talk a little bit about the Mike Harris government, so I'm going to take that opportunity to talk about the Mike Harris government. How does health care relate to energy? Well, guess what? Our hospitals pay for hydro. And guess what? They're struggling to pay their bills. Do you know why? Because of the mess. On April 1, they're going to struggle even more because of a carbon tax by the Trudeau Liberals. They're going to really struggle. We heard just this morning that there was a poll in the Toronto Star of how stressed out Ontarians are by the increasing costs to them.

**0930**

The member brought up Mike Harris—not the great Mike Harris that we have sitting here from Kitchener, but another Mike Harris, a Premier. It relates back to energy, and I'm going to explain to you how it all relates back to

energy. I'm going to explain it to you now. I appreciate the honourable member; I know he's raising these points in good faith because he wants to see the connection. As I said, under the Bob Rae government we had hospital closures—not hospital closures, but floors. We have constantly heard this refrain for I don't know how long: Mike Harris closed hospitals. But when you look, did Mike Harris close hospitals? No, colleagues, he didn't close hospitals. You know what he closed? He merged boards.

I used to live for a short period of time in Scarborough. Our local hospital was called Centenary hospital. Well, guess what? Apparently, Centenary hospital was closed. You know why? Because its board merged with Ajax hospital to become the Rouge Valley hospital. So if you're sick, you can still go to what used to be called Centenary hospital in Scarborough or you can go to the Ajax hospital. Both still exist. Both provide excellent care. Thanks to Progressive Conservative governments, they have been expanded and invested in. But the NDP, in their accounting, call that a closed hospital. Why? Because we had the audacity—Mike Harris had the audacity—to merge and reduce the bureaucracy. Wow, holy mackerel. What we did here, colleagues, is we created efficiencies, created a better hospital. And why did we merge those two boards together? I'm getting around to the point, Madam Speaker. Why did we merge those two hospitals together? Because they're connected communities. They were connected communities that worked together often. That's why we merged those two hospital boards together.

Fast-forward to today—in fact, a few years ago—when we started hearing from communities across the province, from hospitals, from schools, from the boards of education. In fact, I think it was the mayor of Oshawa who, if I recall, sent out a letter to the previous energy minister, and I think—and please correct me, colleagues from Durham, if I'm wrong on this. I recall that he sent a letter explaining how difficult it was becoming to provide services to the people of the city because the cost of keeping the lights on was increasing so much. Imagine, communities were starting to worry. You've heard it from us a lot: You had to choose between heating and eating. But now we were having communities tell us, “We can't afford to keep the street lights on.” It's not because we were under-taxing or the community was wasting money. It's not because it wasn't being run properly. It's because provincial government had made a decision without any regard to what impact that would have in other jurisdictions.

We saw this through the green energy program as well, didn't we? We saw this through the Green Energy Act. People come to us and say, “It was short-sighted to cancel the green energy contracts. Why would you have cancelled 700 contracts for power that we didn't need?” Well, because it was power we didn't need, and it was almost \$1 billion worth of contracts that we couldn't afford for power we didn't need. But the most egregious part of that was that it was done without the consent of our local municipal partners. And across the province, I don't think our municipal friends had been more angry as they had been with what was the Green Energy Act. You see time and

time again: a windmill and an unwilling host; windmill, unwilling host; windmill, unwilling host. But did it matter? No, it didn't matter.

We said when we got into government that we have to do something about how the previous Liberal government financed their schemes in hydro. We all knew. The Auditor General herself—I'll read a quote, if I can. This is from the Auditor General's report in 2017. She said that “it was known that the planned financing structure” undertaken by the former Liberal government “could result in significant unnecessary costs for Ontarians.”

She went on to say, “The substance of the issue is straightforward. Ratepayers' hydro bills will be lower than the cost of the electricity used as a result of the electricity rate reduction. However, power generators will still be owed the full cost of the electricity they supply, so the government needs to borrow cash to cover the shortfall to pay them.”

We all knew that. We all thought that. We all heard about that. The Auditor General and the FAO were very clear that the program that the previous Liberal government had put in place was not in the best interests of Ontario taxpayers. Forget the fact, just for a moment, Madam Speaker, that their policies led to horrifying job losses in the manufacturing sector, led to shaken business confidence; all small, medium and large job creators were in fear of making investments in the province. Forget that. If you put all of that aside—obviously you shouldn't, but if you put all of that aside, at its core, the programs that were created in the dying days of the previous Liberal government—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Bless you, member for Peterborough, who had a very successful night, I'm told, at the Special Hockey Day. So congratulations to the member.

But if you set all of that aside, when people ask you what it is that shakes them most about government, it's how the previous Liberal government set up a mechanism, a scheme, to hide the damage that they had done to the hydro system.

They went into panic mode, and we see this all the time with Liberals, don't we? We see it right now federally. My gosh, they get themselves into panic mode, right? They get into panic mode. This is what they think: They put all these plans and schemes in place and you hear, “Don't worry. Forty or 50 years from now, you'll thank us for doing this.”

Well, 40 or 50 years from now, if we weren't elected, there would be no ability to pay for anything. But what was most egregious was that they then set up to cover their tracks—thought nobody would notice. Who was going to notice? Nobody would notice. People don't pay attention. “We can borrow money from here, hide it over here, do three or four”—it was like a Ponzi scheme that they had created: “Confuse people so much and maybe we'll get around it.”

What we've said in this bill is that we have to disentangle this. We sat down and we looked at the reports by the FAO; we sat down and looked at the reports by the Auditor General. We've taken them; we listened to them. We said, “Look. In the financing, going forward, for our

ability to reduce rates for the Ontario ratepayers, we are going to make it clear, easier to understand, and we are going to listen to the officers of Parliament—the Auditor General and the FAO—and we’re going to make sure that we follow it.”

What will that mean for Ontario? Just by following the advice of the Auditor General and the FAO, what will it mean? It will mean \$4 billion in savings for Ontario taxpayers—\$4 billion in savings. That is a lot of money. It’s a lot of money. People ask, “Why was this not done?” When they look at governments, these are just things that really bother people about governments. I take this as something I know we are equally concerned about. I know colleagues on the other side share the same frustration, and it’s probably why the Liberals are down to so few seats. When you take your taxpayer for granted, when you take for granted the people who got you here—but even worse, when you try to fool them by putting in place silly schemes to cover your tracks, people will figure it out. In this instance, they figured it out because of the hard work of the Conservative opposition at the time, and I thank them. I thank the colleagues who were here before I was lucky enough to get elected, because they put this on the table. They helped people understand, and they did a great job of doing it.

**0940**

I know our whip, in particular—just a tower of strength during that. He really set out, often, to us as candidates—if there was any arrogance, I will say, in being a former federal member of Parliament and thinking, “Oh, you know, I have all the answers,” the gentleman from Whitby really helped me understand when I came in, and I know for a lot of my colleagues it was the same thing. You know, he was fighting about—sorry. I’ll just stray a little bit, Madam Speaker, if you’ll forgive me, but it does come back. He was fighting for education. I remember clearly the fight that he was on with education. It was about the costs of education.

Part of the things that he was talking about—he was hearing from boards and administrators across the province that the ability to run schools was becoming extraordinarily challenging, not just because of the policies—again, the ideological policies, on which the debates can wait for another day—but back to the cost of financing and running our education system, the basic building blocks. The member for Whitby was highlighting for us the challenges that people were facing across the province. He and a number of others, as I said, were towers of strength in helping us better understand, as new candidates at the time and as new members, the challenges that we faced.

But we’re going a step further here, too, Madam Speaker. We’re going a step further because we also are going to look at the industrial rate, the—sorry; I’m at a loss for words—rate that our largest industrial consumers pay for hydro. Now, why are we doing that? Obviously, colleagues, we’ve made the first step. We’re bringing down the cost of the bills for our largest consumers, and we’re doing that while holding the line for residential ratepayers. We have to do that, right? We have to do that.

And there are challenges coming forward. We know that April 1—we’re hearing it all the time now. We really are. It’s going to be something, on April 1, when we see the gas prices start to increase by five cents a litre just simply because of a carbon tax, a carbon tax that will have no measureable impact on reducing greenhouse gases. It will have no impact whatsoever on it, in a province that has done a good job of meeting its greenhouse gas targets.

Now, Madam Speaker, I’m going to—it may seem like a stray, but if you’ll forgive me, and I know the member from Sudbury will put me back on track if he thinks I’m straying, as will you, Madam Speaker. But if you’ll forgive me, you will see that there is a correlation between this bill and some of the other things that we are doing. Part of every speech that I’ve given in this House is talking about how government is working together. I know many of the ministers have talked about this in their answers. Government is doing something unique now. We’re actually working together to address issues, because you can’t work in silos. I know that when the member for Etobicoke Centre comes to me and says that they want to put more money into transit and that we need more subways—well, guess what a subway runs on? It needs electricity to run. So when the member for Etobicoke Centre comes to me and says, “We want to make more investments,” I know that I, as the parliamentary assistant, am going to have to work with other members and other colleagues to bring down the costs so we don’t bankrupt the system before it’s even built, and that’s what we’re doing.

The reason I want to talk a little bit about green energy before I get back into the large ratepayers—we’re so close to April 1. I’m really worried about this, Madam Speaker. I really am. I’m worried about this in a community like Stouffville. We’ve seen big shifts in house pricing over the last little bit. We struggle for infrastructure in terms of transit and transportation. Having said that, I was very excited yesterday when the Minister of Transportation and the parliamentary assistant listened to the members of provincial Parliament from York region. We fought really hard, and they listened and they gave us more GO train service, so I want to thank them for doing that.

The members for Markham–Unionville and Markham–Thornhill and myself have fought really hard for some transit, for some extra GO transit infrastructure, and we got that. We also were fighting for some improved infrastructure. The minister of culture was fighting for some improved infrastructure for the roads, and we got that.

Coming back to what’s about to happen, the carbon tax on the 1st of April: Why we are so frustrated and why we’re so nervous about this, Madam Speaker, is because Ontarians have paid our price, haven’t we? We’ve done our part.

We’re doing our part when it comes to greenhouse gases and meeting our Paris targets. A couple of years ago we were told that meeting the Paris targets was—we had to do it. Come hell or high water, we had to meet those Paris targets. Guess what? Ontario is meeting those targets. How are we doing that, colleagues? The Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Premier,

and the other members of cabinet and caucus have been focused on this. How can we do this without costing people more money? How can we do this without putting more money onto the hydro ratepayers, as the previous government did?

Do you know how we did it? Again, because of Mike Harris. You know what Mike Harris did? Not this Mike Harris, but I know he's going to continue on that. Mike Harris decided that we shouldn't be burning coal anymore, that it was a dirty fuel, that it would not make sense for the province of Ontario to burn coal—it was causing smog days—when we had incredible assets like Bruce Power, Darlington and Pickering. We had to revitalize those assets. We had to bring them back into production and bring them back to efficiency. Premier Mike Harris understood that that was the way to a clean environment. He also understood that that was the way to baseline, dependable, cheap power—through our nuclear industry. He made those investments.

He made the commitment, and as so often happens—I know, colleagues, sometimes it could be frustrating as Conservatives—the hard work and the lifting is done by a Conservative government and it takes the Liberals so little time to ruin everything that we have done. Whether it's federally or provincially—I know as a federal government; and my colleagues who were in Parliament—we left a balanced budget. Canadians' taxes were at the lowest level they had been since the 1950s. Imagine, since the 1950s, we balanced the budget, cut taxes to the lowest since the 1950s. We made the most massive investments in infrastructure in Canadian history, and in three short years, “sunny ways” has led to “shady ways.” It is a disaster, and guess what? The same crew that was here is actually there.

But it was Premier Mike Harris who set Ontario on the path to a greener economy, a greener future, and a healthier future for all of Ontario, Madam Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Yes, I know all sides of the House are clapping for this and they're excited about it. They're maybe not so loud in the NDP benches, but I know that they really feel the same way.

The reason that is important, Madam Speaker, is because the previous government thought it would be funny, and that nobody would notice if they tried to hide it on the electricity bills. “We're going to say we're doing our part but we're going to hide it in the electricity bills; nobody is going to notice.” Guess what? When you open your bill and it went from \$110 a month to \$150 a month, you noticed. And when you're in a rural area and your bill went from \$100 to \$700 a month, you know what? You kind of notice. Do you know what you did—what I think everybody would do: You looked and said, “Well, how the heck did that happen?”

So, the first thing you do—I know I'll take some blame for this. The first thing I do when my hydro bill goes up is I call my daughters down and I say, “Listen, what the heck is going on? Turn the lights off.” I say “close the lights,” but I'm told I'm not supposed to say “close the lights.” It's

not open and close the lights; it's turn them off. I call them down and I say, “Listen, turn the lights off. You can't leave the lights on all night. You can't go to school and have your bedroom light on.” But lo and behold, they then say, “No, it wasn't me. I had my lights all turned off.”

Then you dig a little deeper. You call your hydro company and say, “What the heck? I know that I'm not using more. I started looking at my results, and what the heck?” The price is going up despite the hard work. I've got my timer set to wash my clothes in the middle of the night. I'm getting up at 6 o'clock to put them in the dryer before the rates go up. In the middle of the winter, I'm hanging them all over the basement—we've all done this. Your clothes are strewn everywhere. Your kitchen table has clothes—

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Melanie is really proud of you.

0950

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Yes.

They're strewn everywhere. This has been the reality of the province of Ontario.

One of the wealthiest jurisdictions in the world has been impoverished by dumb decisions.

We have seniors who are getting up in the middle of the night to cook dinner for the next day. This is incredible.

Imagine: You want to have some people over for dinner. Your bill is getting a little bit high. It's winter, so you're up all night cooking, you're freezing it, and then you're welcoming them the next day. Or you just don't have people over until it's summer and you can host them outside, because you can't afford to cook in the province of Ontario in the wintertime; it's too expensive for people.

That wasn't the legacy that Premier Harris, Premier Eves, Premier Miller and all of the Conservative Premiers—Robarts and Davis—left. They left us a strong, stable nuclear sector which was responsible for base—and I know we're going to hear this a little bit later on, as well. It's a shame I only have 11 minutes. At the close, I might ask for unanimous consent to continue for another hour, Madam Speaker.

Let's look at nuclear just for a second, because it ties in to what we are doing in meeting what the FAO and the Auditor General asked government to do very vociferously—and colleagues on both sides know this. We had an electricity sector—and we still do. Our nuclear is providing us with electricity at some of the lowest costs—6.8 cents. That's what we're paying. Pickering is running at an efficiency level that is absolutely incredible. This gives us the economic advantage. When you look at Ontario's nuclear sector, this is clean. This is something we should be proud of. I know that we're proud of it. I encourage all members to take a tour of Pickering; if you've ever been to the Kennedy Space Center, this is the equivalent. What Ontario has accomplished in nuclear is absolutely incredible. Yes, our American friends might have put rockets in space and a man on the moon, but Ontario has the solution—and we have proven it—to make our environment cleaner.

The reason why we are meeting our targets is not because of silly schemes that we hide on the electricity bill;

it's built on the backs of the men and women in our nuclear sector, and we should be proud of them for that. We should be selling this across the country. We are in the absolutely ridiculous position in this country where we buy energy from other jurisdictions. Imagine, we purchase oil, for example, from Venezuela and Saudi Arabia. That's unacceptable. But when you look at our nuclear, what are they doing? Medical isotopes come from our nuclear. Cobalt-60 and the gamma knife come from nuclear.

When you look at a recent Ontario Chamber of Commerce report, and I encourage all members to get this report, it talks about the massive amount of investment that comes from our nuclear industry—some 60,000 jobs, 700 companies are participating in the refurbishment, \$5 billion of economic activity. And what does that give us? It gives us the lowest energy prices in Canada. It helps our small, medium and large job creators. It makes the difference when you're investing. And do you know what? It is the nuclear industry that killed smog days. It is the nuclear industry that allowed us to build more transit and transportation. That is the sector that will give us all of the benefits that we need, going forward, and we should be very, very proud of that; I know I am, and I know my colleagues are. Regardless of whether we agree or disagree on it, I would hope that the members opposite would agree that the men and women who work in this sector—it's something that we should all be proud of.

I know it's going to probably be referenced and I know some would suggest, on my side, to not talk about it, but I can't not talk about it. I read yesterday a little bit of the Environmental Commissioner's report, and I know it will probably come up. If you ever needed to know why we needed to cancel a position, read that report, colleagues. Read that report. In that report, it talks about how some of the things that we're doing on energy conservation will cost taxpayers. I don't know where this commissioner has been. I don't know what the commissioner has been looking at, but some of the same policies that the commissioner is actually asking us to continue on, some of these inefficient policies, are what have cost Ontario taxpayers billions and billions and billions of dollars. It is what has killed our competitiveness. It's outrageous. And when you go through some of the findings in this report, as a taxpayer, as a ratepayer, as a small, medium or large job creator, you will look back and you'll say, "Thank goodness the government had the good sense to eliminate a partisan position," because that's what it had become.

I encourage everybody to read some of what the findings are and compare it to what the government has done. You will be frustrated. The one good part of it, which I found really astonishing, was that I believe in the report she did cite the fact that Ontario purchases oil from other jurisdictions.

I have just a few minutes left.

Why does this frustrate me? And it is in the context of this bill. Because we will hear that oil is bad now. We buy oil, colleagues, from Saudi Arabia and Venezuela. I don't know anybody who wants to live in Venezuela right now; I truly don't. When you see what the socialist government

of Venezuela has done to their country, one of the richest countries, flush with oil—they're impoverished. They don't have hospitals that function; they don't have food for their people. They are impoverished.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** And we get it from Saudi Arabia.

It would be a lot easier, colleagues, you know—one of the largest owners or suppliers of oil is, guess who? Canada. Guess from where? Alberta and Saskatchewan. I hear this from people: "Why do we not have oil independence right here in the province of Ontario?"

**Miss Kinga Surma:** A sustainable economy.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Sustainable, from a reliable source, clean. Thankfully, I know that this is something the Premier has been focused on right from the beginning. This is what makes it so good to be a Progressive Conservative in this caucus. It's not just about lurching from one issue to the next. It's about four years of government, it's about looking at what's best for Ontarians, and it's about putting together something that is not only good for Ontarians but is good for Canada. The Premier has said we have to tear down interprovincial trade barriers. The Premier has said we want oil. But there are those, especially in the opposition, who fight against it, that somehow it's better for our refiners in New Brunswick to be refining foreign oil than it is to be refining Canadian oil. Obviously, I disagree with them there.

Madam Speaker, let me just, again, summarize where we are and where we've been and where we're going. As I said at the beginning, this is another step. We heard yesterday on Bill 66 that it was an omnibus bill—was it yesterday or the day before? Sorry. Now, this is a 28-page bill, colleagues. Bill 66 is a 28-page bill. Imagine that Bill 66—the NDP says it's an omnibus bill. It's too much for them. They can't handle it. It's too much. But I guarantee you, they're going to get up and say, "Well, you don't go far enough. It's just another little step." They're going to call for omnibus action in energy, but the problem with doing that is that it doesn't address the infrastructure—not just what creates energy. It doesn't address the infrastructure deficit that we have in terms of the reliability, and people's feelings that the government is doing the right things. We have to do things in a structured fashion, and that's what this bill does.

**1000**

So the Green Energy Act that we repealed? The reason we did that first was because it was for power that we didn't need, that people didn't want, that was too expensive. And we moved forward. We moved forward with the Green Energy Act, making some changes there. We moved forward with Bill 66, making changes there. The minister has moved forward with this bill, and in this bill we start to tackle some of those issues that will give Ontarians more faith and trust in not only government but in the institutions that support it.

We're listening to the Auditor General and the FAO. That's why we're changing and eliminating the Liberal scheme. There's no point in calling it anything else; it was

a scheme. It's a scheme that cost billions of dollars for Ontarians.

**Interjection:** It still is.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** And it still is, exactly. It's costing billions of dollars, but what we're doing will save \$4 billion. That's good news.

We're transforming the Ontario Energy Board so that it is clear, it is concise, it is dependable and people know what they have to do, so that our distribution companies aren't spending hundreds of thousands and millions of dollars for hundreds of thousands of pages of reports that it doesn't need. We're changing it. We're making it independent again, separating administration from adjudication. Because that's the right thing to do.

We're looking at energy conservation and we're saying what works and what doesn't work. The programs that don't work or have already succeeded to the point that we don't need them anymore? They're being eliminated or folded; they're being brought up to the IESO. In the process of doing that, we are saving \$440 million on top of the \$4 billion that we're saving. When taken together, this is an important next step.

Will there be more, Madam Speaker? I know you've been waiting for the conclusion to see if there will be more. Yes, there is going to be more.

**Interjection:** Stay tuned.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Stay tuned, exactly. There is more to come, because you don't disentangle 15 years of schemes and bad policy overnight. If you do it overnight, guess what? It will be wrong. The hallmark of strong, stable, Progressive Conservative governments for 42 years was doing the right thing—

**Mr. Michael Parsa:** Common sense.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Common sense, for a change. Doing it right and doing it in a fashion that our partners understand: work with people, work with communities, work with our municipal partners, work with those who are helping to fund the programs and services that we do, and by doing that, the light at the end of the tunnel is finally here. People are optimistic again. They trust their government and they know that we will do all that we can to put more money back in their pockets and give them a strong, stable economy.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's intriguing to hear the parliamentary assistant talk about this bill. Some of my colleagues intervened about the fact that the parliamentary assistant was meandering all over the global map in his comments, and that's because in the end there isn't a lot to talk about with this bill. It's pretty thin. We've got a bill that takes the failed and bankrupt so-called Fair Hydro Plan that the Liberals put forward, a massive borrowing of money to reduce hydro rates, and it's been whitewashed, it's been relabelled—given the Premier, I'm sure "labelled" is the correct term—and put back on the table. We're going to be borrowing billions of dollars to deal with hydro prices, without actually addressing the underlying problems of privatization, overinvestment in gas

plants, a failure to actually assess in a critical way the Liberal business plans on nuclear refurbishment. It is an empty plan.

On top of that, the Ontario Energy Board changes don't deal with the fundamental problems that we on this side have been raising now, literally, for decades. I referred to the Ontario Energy Board under the Liberals as a glove puppet for the Minister of Energy. It has been downgraded to a sock puppet—so not as fancy, but it's the same thing. Do you address the fundamental issues as to whether or not the Ontario Energy Board can criticize and assess crazy policies coming forward from the government? The Fair Hydro Plan—there was no hearing when that came forward, the "fair" hydro plan.

The parliamentary assistant can tell us: Would such a crazy plan be subjected to OEB referral or assessment in the future? Not from anything I've seen there. However, it does look like there are going to be a lot more positions available for failed Conservative candidates to be appointed to. Instead of a board, we've got a board of directors and a commission. To my mind, Speaker, this speaks to a bankruptcy of thought, not to an addressing of the issue.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Deepak Anand:** It's always a pleasure to rise in the House and talk about the wonderful things we do here. What a wonderful morning, listening to the member from Markham–Stouffville on an important issue. Member, I can tell you, we're willing to listen to you for another hour. You were amazing. You know, I just want to say you are a champion on this file.

Madam Speaker, the question is, why are we talking about it? Why are we talking about this bill? Why are we talking about energy? The reason is because Ontario's economy relies on energy. It relies on electricity that we produce for goods and services. It's a \$15-billion industry and accounts for 8% of Canada's GDP. That's why we're talking about it.

Bill 87, the Fixing the Hydro Mess Act, is an important piece of legislation. After the previous government neglected their duty to Ontario, they left behind a large mess. Our government is dedicated to working on cleaning up this hydro mess. What we're trying to do is we're trying to increase the transparency in our electricity system and make life more affordable for all Ontarians. We made a promise when we got elected to make the province affordable, and that's what we're doing. That's exactly what we're doing. We're making sure that we are having a centralized, conservative approach in order to reduce costs in the inefficient program that the previous government introduced. We need an approach to conservation and energy efficiency that focuses on targeted programs and initiatives that benefit those who really need it.

Madam Speaker, we are going to save \$442 million for our taxpayers. We want to create jobs. We believe in prosperity for every Ontarian. These results are based on facts. This is the right thing to do, and I'm thankful to the minister for doing this.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Jamie West:** I want to thank the member for Markham–Stouffville, the parliamentary assistant, for his comments. I also want to apologize for interrupting twice. I'm just excited to learn about how we're going to fix electricity, how we're going to fix hydro. We began talking about auto parts and Mexico and Bob Rae, and I was lost on it. In one of the comments, he said that the hospitals weren't closed. The hospital I was born in and many people in Sudbury were born in, Sudbury General Hospital, doesn't exist anymore. We used to have the General, we used to have Laurentian; now we have Health Sciences North. I know the government is focused on math, so two; take away one; one.

But I am excited about electricity and hydro and how we're going to fix this because, like all of us, we heard this at the door. All of us heard stories of people waking up in the middle of the night to do laundry or run the dishwasher, hang their clothes and cut costs, and prices going up and up—and it has to get fixed. We know it has to get fixed. That's why I kept saying, "Let's get back on track," because I want to figure out how we're going to fix it.

In Sudbury, we're a mining town—nickel capital of the world. We have the Big Nickel. One of our concerns with mining is the high cost of electricity. You take a smelter like Glencore, who has an electric furnace—imagine tonnes and tonnes of molten metal electrically heated and the cost of electricity that will be.

You take any of our mines—we have dozens of mines in Sudbury. You take any of those mines and you think of the cost of running your hoist, your skip to bring things up and down, to bring the cage to bring the workers down. You think of the cost that it takes to bring ventilation underground. Everything you breathe has to be brought from the surface, and running those fans is their biggest cost. It's killing us. It's killing us in the OMA in Ontario to pay for electricity. That's why I'm excited about this, because it has to be fixed.

I know the government isn't in favour of electric vehicles, but mining is in favour of electric vehicles because it's going to reduce health costs for diesel particulate matter when we get rid of diesel equipment. It's going to reduce the amount of ventilation so they will have to pay less for electricity, bringing air down to replace the air that's being used by diesel equipment.

It's very important, and I apologize again to the member for interrupting.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> Gila Martow:** On parle ce matin au sujet du soi-disant « plan d'hydro équitable ». L'adjoint parlementaire vient de nous parler—il est aussi mon voisin, le député de Markham–Stouffville, juste à côté, dans la région de York, à côté de ma circonscription de Thornhill. On comprend qu'on veut améliorer la transparence et la responsabilité de notre gouvernement. C'était notre plan, c'était une promesse et c'est ce dont on discute aujourd'hui. On travaille très, très fort pour le faire.

On sait que tous les francophones en Ontario sont comme nous autres. Les familles sont inquiètes de leurs

emplois futurs et des emplois futurs de leurs enfants et de leurs petits-enfants aussi. Elles sont inquiètes du coût de la vie et aussi du coût de l'électricité ici en Ontario. L'adjoint parlementaire a discuté de nos métros—on dit « subways » en anglais, mais on dit métro à Montréal et en Europe. Les métros fonctionnent avec de l'électricité. On vient d'entendre que pour notre « mining sector » aussi, ça prend de l'électricité. Alors, ce ne sont pas seulement nos maisons et nos écoles et ici à la législature. Ça prend de l'électricité pour avoir une bonne vie pour nos employeurs, nos employés et toutes les familles ici en Ontario. Alors on travaille, et on devrait travailler peut-être plus fort, pour être certain que le futur de l'Ontario sera très, très fort.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I return to the member from Markham–Stouffville for his two-minute reply.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank all of my colleagues for their comments.

To the member for Sudbury, you probably know that the hospitals were merged in the 1990s, but the hospital that you referenced was closed, actually, in 2010 by the previous Liberal government.

Having said that, I want to focus a bit more on what the member for Sudbury said. I appreciate all of the comments from my colleagues, but I think the member for Sudbury really hit the nail on the head in terms of what we want to accomplish and why it is so important that we begin to disentangle what we saw in the energy sector by the previous Liberal government. When he talks about mining and the importance of mining and job creation in Sudbury, he's right; he's not wrong. When you look throughout the north, he's right; they're not wrong: It's hydro, it's the cost of electricity, that has stood in the way of so much of what is happening and what could happen in unleashing the potential of the north.

We have people coming to us, saying that they want to set up, but it's the unreliability of the infrastructure in the north that we have to focus on, and we'll do that. We'll have disagreements, I'm sure, on how we get there, but ultimately, we all agree on the fact that we've got to bring more jobs and opportunity. It's the way we'll pay for the hospitals. It's the way we'll pay for education.

When the member talks about electric vehicles, it's not that we're against electric vehicles; I drive one myself. But we have to have the infrastructure in place so that we can actually charge the vehicles in the north. It is the right way to move, but it has to be affordable. It has to be done in a way that Ontarians can afford; it has to be transparent.

By working with members such as yourself and members from all caucuses, we can unleash the potential in the north. We can work on improving our mining infrastructure. We can improve and reduce the cost to our taxpayers and our ratepayers. I know, fundamentally, that's what we want to accomplish.

I appreciate that you brought me back on track when I strayed, and I guarantee you that we will continue to work not only for the people of Sudbury but all of the north to get this done.



**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Thank you.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands in recess until 10:30 today.

*The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I would like to begin by introducing some very special guests who are with us in the Speaker's gallery: my riding office staff team, one of whom has worked with me for almost 29 years, which has to be a record of patience: Judy Brownrigg, Karen Thomas, Janice Howie and Marnie Mainland. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Monte McNaughton:** I'd like to welcome to Queen's Park today Danielle Marie Wood, who is from London. Danielle has been shadowing me this morning. She's also the daughter of Robert Wood, who is up in the Queen's Park press gallery this morning, from Loonie Politics. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell:** I'd like to welcome four Thunder Bay OPSEU members who work for corrections: Brad Slobodian, Joe Lozer, Ed Arvelin and Mike Lundy.

**Hon. Caroline Mulronev:** I'd like to welcome the Honourable Peter Van Loan to Queen's Park today.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** All the way from Timmins, we have people from corrections here who are OPSEU members: Chantal Breton, Ken Steinbrunner, Wayne Stack and Chris Jackel.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Please join me in welcoming Mike Lundy, the OPSEU co-chair of the health and safety committee in corrections, and Chris Jackel, corrections officer co-chair of the ministry employee relations committee, or MERC, as we like to call it. They are joined by excellent corrections staff from across Ontario, here today for their lobby day. Thank you, and welcome.

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** I'd like to welcome Rachel Ginsberg, a University of Toronto social work student.

**Mr. Jamie West:** Along with my colleagues, I want to welcome OPSEU corrections here—in particular, friends of mine whom I've known for years: J.L. Roy, Ken Steinbrunner and Len Elliott.

**Mr. Terence Kernaghan:** It gives me great pleasure to welcome Laurie Nancekivell and Len Elliott from London, as well as Eddy Almeida and Warren "Smokey" Thomas, as well as all of the OPSEU members who work in corrections. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I know that we're welcoming folks from corrections today but specifically those on the MERC team, and health and safety: Chris Jackel, Chad Oldfield, Scott McIntyre—of course—Mike Lundy, Gord Kiernan, Janet Laverty and everyone else who does important work across the province. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I'd like to welcome to the House Ronny Yaron, from my home riding of Spadina-Fort York.

## PREMIER'S COMMENTS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I wish to call the House's attention to what I'm about to say. Yesterday, March 27, 2019, at 9:50 a.m., the member for Timmins, Mr. Bisson, submitted a notice of his intention to raise a question of privilege. The notice alleges that an answer given by the Premier during question period on December 5, 2018, was deliberately misleading and therefore a contempt of the House. The government House leader, Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, also provided me with a written submission in response to the notice that the member for Timmins sent to my office. I am now prepared to rule on the matter without hearing further from the members, as standing order 21(d) permits me to do.

The member for Timmins, in his notice, alleges that the Premier's response—that the Premier was not involved in the appointment of Ron Taverner as OPP commissioner, found on page 2815 of the debates of December 5, 2018—was contradicted by the Integrity Commissioner's report of March 20, 2019.

The notice further alleges that the Integrity Commissioner found that the Premier's staff and the former secretary of cabinet were involved in the appointment process and that the principle of ministerial responsibility stipulates that the Premier must therefore have had knowledge of this and thereby could not lay claim to having had no involvement in the process whatsoever.

I wish to first comment again on the importance of timeliness when raising a question of privilege or contempt. These questions must be brought to the House at the first available opportunity. As the fifth edition of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms states on page 25, "Even a gap of a few days may invalidate the claim."

I also refer members to Speaker Levac's ruling of April 21, 2015, on page 267 of the Journals, where he categorically rejected a notice to raise a question of privilege because it related to events from four days previous and therefore did not meet the test for timeliness.

The issues raised by the member for Timmins relate to the Integrity Commissioner's report from seven days ago. I have serious concerns about the timeliness of this notice; however, I will address the substance of the notice this time. But having just now reminded the House of the timeliness requirement, I want to make it clear that it is very unlikely that I will be presupposed to be so accommodating in the future.

I now turn to the test for determining when a member has deliberately misled the House. Previous Speakers have adopted and enunciated the McGee test for determining whether a member has deliberately misled the House. The test is set out on page 775 of the fourth edition of McGee's Parliamentary Practice in New Zealand as follows:

"There are three elements to be established when an allegation is made against a member regarding the member's statement: the statement must, in fact, have been misleading; the member must have known that the statement was inaccurate at the time the statement was made; and the member must have intended to mislead the House."

As Speaker Carr elaborated on June 17, 2002, on page 102 of the Journals: “The threshold for finding a prima facie case of contempt against a member of the Legislature, on the basis of deliberately misleading the House, is therefore set quite high and is very uncommon. It must involve a proved finding of an overt attempt to intentionally mislead the Legislature. In the absence of an admission from the member accused of the conduct, or of tangible confirmation of the conduct, independently proved, a Speaker must assume that no honourable members would engage in such behaviour or that, at most, inconsistent statements were the result of inadvertence or honest mistake.”

This ruling was followed by Speaker Levac on April 29, 2014, on page 422 of the Journals.

It’s important to note that the member for Timmins does not allege that the Premier was involved in the appointment process, nor does the member allege that the Premier had actual knowledge of the actions of his staff and the former secretary of cabinet, only that the principle of ministerial responsibility stipulates that the Premier has knowledge of these actions, even if only vicariously.

In my view, the McGee test requires the member to have actual knowledge that a statement was inaccurate at the time that the statement was made. If a member does not know that a statement was inaccurate, I cannot see how that member could have been found to have overtly and intentionally misled the House. Furthermore, to find that stipulated knowledge can form an adequate basis for contempt would contradict Speaker Carr’s ruling that an admission or tangible confirmation is usually required for such a finding.

Furthermore, the principle of ministerial responsibility as described on page 30 of the third edition of the House of Commons Procedure and Practice only requires ministers to be accountable for their staff’s actions. The principle does not stipulate that ministers have knowledge of their staff’s actions at all times.

Finally, even if the Integrity Commissioner’s finding did contradict the Premier’s statement, I am not convinced that there is adequate, tangible evidence to support a finding of prima facie contempt. Therefore, I do not find that a prima facie case of contempt has been established.

I want to thank the member for Timmins for his submission and the government House leader for his response.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My first question is to the Premier. Yesterday, the Premier revealed his intention to scrap long-established plans for GTA transit projects, some of which are already under way. Can the Premier share with us what estimates the government or Metrolinx have provided with regard to how much this rewrite of plans will delay these projects?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker, we have been waiting for decades—10, 20, 30 years—to get transit

built in this city and into the GTA. Finally, we have a government that is listening to the people. We’re going to deliver transit faster, better and less expensively than any time before. We need to get the city moving. We need to get the GTA moving. People need to get to work. They need to get to school.

**1040**

We will build a transit system like this province has never seen before. We’re putting tens of billions of dollars—tens of billions of dollars—into the largest infrastructure transit plan ever in North America. We look forward to having the Leader of the Opposition on the new subway trains. We’ll go from one end to the other, and I just can’t wait until we get it built. We’ll get the shovels in the ground.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The city of Toronto has estimated that moving the Eglinton West LRT line underground would add as much as \$1.32 billion to the cost of that project, and that’s just one of the projects that the Premier is tinkering with.

Can he tell us how much the people of Ontario will be paying for his rewrite of plans for projects that are already under way?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for York Centre will come to order.

Premier, respond.

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker: We aren’t going to make the same mistake that the Liberals and the NDP have done in the past when they built the Spadina line. Just the stations alone ran over \$1.2 billion.

We have a fiscally prudent minister—as a matter of fact, the best Minister of Transportation you could ever ask for. I love the Minister of Transportation when he comes up to me yesterday saying, “We have so many projects on the go, so many announcements, fixing transportation infrastructure around this province.”

We’re going to just hit them one after the other after the other, no matter if it’s the \$1.2 billion that we invested in Ottawa for their LRT that’s going to go 44 kilometres and 25 stops—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Response.

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Thank you.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, everyone from transit experts to the city of Toronto itself say that rewriting transit plans, especially when projects are already well under way, will inevitably add billions more in costs and more delays. And it’s families across Ontario that will be stuck paying the bill and waiting in gridlock.

Is the Premier hiding those details or does he just not know how much it’s going to cost and how much longer it’s going to take?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition I’m sure is not worried about other areas of this great province, but the people of Etobicoke and Scarborough and the downtown relief line—that’s over a million people that have been ignored.

The people of Scarborough, the Scarborough line, since I was there, has been changed 11 times—11 times—and hundreds of millions of dollars have been wasted. In the last nine years, when we got it approved by the federal and provincial governments and the municipality—there are no shovels in the ground. There's none whatsoever.

Now we're going to get the shovels in the ground. We're going to make sure that we have an Eglinton line that extends all the way out west, not to ignore the 350,000 people in Etobicoke and then the 630,000 people that live in Scarborough that have been starved for transit. Help is on its way.

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier. Speaking of the relief line, the Premier has indicated that he plans to use a so-called alternative delivery method for Toronto's long-awaited and desperately needed relief line.

Can the Premier tell us whether "alternative" in this case is another term for privatization?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker: It's not another terminology for privatization. It's about technology. I know maybe the opposition wants to live in the past, in the antiquated system, but there's new technology that's out there all around the world. We have a great minister, we have a great head of Metrolinx, we have an incredible minister of Infrastructure Ontario: That's why we can deliver it, again, faster, better and less expensively. We are going to build the greatest downtown relief line. As a matter of fact, when they showed me the plan, my jaw dropped. I thought, "Wow, this is thinking outside the box." Again: less expensive, faster and better. That's what the people of Ontario and the GTA are going to look forward to.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The city of Toronto and TTC officials say the province has "not given us any specifics whatsoever" about what the plans entail, what it's going to cost and how much the new plans will delay this long-awaited project. The Globe and Mail calls the Premier's plan a "scheme so ill-considered it could have been developed between courses of a boozy lunch...."

Can the Premier tell us when the relief line will be completed under his new scheme and who will own it—or does he even know?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Boy, the Globe and Mail. That's amazing. "A boozy lunch": I don't even drink, Mr. Speaker, so it must have been a lot of booze at that lunch.

Through you, Mr. Speaker: We are going to get transit built, plain and simple. We're going to build subways. People want subways. We're thinking 50 years down the road. We don't think about a band-aid solution for five years or 10 years. We're going to build an incredible transit system. When you go on the subway, you see that same transit plan that's been around since I've been in high school, the one line, then another line up. We're going to have lines all over the GTA, all over Toronto.

We're having a line going up to Richmond Hill, we're having one going out to the airport, we're having people in Scarborough getting transit, and we're going to have a spectacular, spectacular downtown relief line.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The people of Toronto deserve an end to gridlock, but the Globe and Mail and other transit experts say that the provincial blueprint will result in less new transit built more slowly and more expensively. All the Premier is offering with his rewrite is more delay, higher costs and another generation stuck waiting for reliable transit—and he won't even tell the people of Ontario, the ones paying the bill, Speaker, how much it's going to cost in time and how long it will be delayed. When are we going to get those details from the Premier of this province?

*Interjections.*

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

Premier.

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker: I just can't wait until the minister unveils this plan. It's absolutely incredible. I'm biting my tongue today. It's going to be so exciting. It's going to serve millions of people around Toronto and the GTA.

When you go on the street and you talk to people, they tell you, "I don't care who builds it; we need it built." For the last 30 years we've seen nothing built. We saw one line built and it went billions of dollars over budget. Again, when we have a prudent fiscal conservative like the Minister of Transportation watching every single penny, it's going to be on time, on budget, faster, cheaper, and it's going to be better—the best transit system you've ever seen.

#### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also to the Premier. Last night, the assembly passed a motion put forward by the member for Hamilton Mountain calling on the government to scrap their scheme to remove support for Ontario's children with autism and develop a new plan, in consultation with parents, that meets the needs of children and is evidence-based. Will the Premier abide by the majority vote that was taken here in the Legislature yesterday afternoon?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

**Hon. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you very much, Premier, for the opportunity to respond to this. We announced last week that we were going to listen and consult with parents and experts to bring in a strong needs-based model, which is what the motion called for. We felt that in the spirit of the request the opposition had asked for, based on the announcements that we had made the week before, we're in alignment.

Our hope, and why we thought it was important for this debate yesterday to be respectful, was to take the temperature down and not continue to fan the flames of rhetoric, which the opposition has been doing for the past six weeks.

We feel that our plan, which will be implemented on April 1, will clear the wait-list of 23,000 children in the next 18 months. We're going to a direct funding model. We are going to extend a grace period of an additional six months for existing contracts. We're going to expand the choice of what parents can spend their annual child budget on, and we're going to remove the income test. I don't know what the opposition could argue with.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, even members of the Premier's own party were unwilling to stand and defend the Ford government's plan last night. They know that the Premier and the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services' plan is an indefensible disaster. That's the problem. That's what parents know, that's what we know and that's what we talked about yesterday afternoon: to try to derail that disaster and put something else in place that actually does the job for families and children with autism.

1050

Will the Premier listen to the advice of parents, the experts and the members of this assembly, stop defending the indefensible and develop an entirely new plan that is truly evidence-based and meets children's needs?

*Interjections.*

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

The question has been referred to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

**Hon. Lisa MacLeod:** Thanks to the Premier of our province, we'll now be spending more money on autism services than anywhere else in Canada or North America, with an over \$600-million budget in this ministry alone. We're going to continue to work with the Minister of Education, as well as the Minister of Health, to expand our services so that we have better wraparound supports in place.

But I have to ask the New Democrats, when we came forward with the plan that was based on severity of need and based on consultation, and answered their request in their opposition day motion, which they acknowledged yesterday in their speeches, why they can't take yes for an answer?

They were supportive of clearing the wait-list until this government made that commitment. They were supportive of going to a direct funding model until this government made a decision to do that. They were supportive of expanding choice until this government made the decision. They didn't like the income test; we removed it. They've asked us to consult parents; we're doing that. Why can't they take yes for an answer, Speaker? That's the question.

## POLICE SERVICES

**Mrs. Nina Tangri:** My question is for the Premier. Our government for the people has remained committed to public safety across this great province. The daily duties of a police officer are dangerous, and the brave men and women of our police services deserve our respect and support.

The previous Liberal government's legislation, Bill 175, represented a significant step backwards for policing in Ontario at a time when the government, the police and the people should have been partners in the name of public safety. It demonstrated to the people of Ontario that the previous Liberal government did not respect the work police do to keep us all safe.

Mr. Speaker, could the Premier please explain how the Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act will make Ontario safer and treat police with fairness and respect?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker: I want to thank the champion from Mississauga-Milton—an incredible, incredible MPP, just an absolute champion.

The Liberals and the NDP, if they had it their way, today the people of Ontario would be living with a deeply flawed piece of legislation that ignored the everyday realities of the difficulties when it comes to the jobs of our dedicated police officers, our hard-working men and women who put their lives on the line every single day to make our communities safer. The least thing we could do—all parties—is support our police.

We know we support the police. I can't say the same for the other parties. But when it comes to Bill 175, it shows very clearly that we're going to support our police across this province, because we have—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mrs. Nina Tangri:** I thank the Premier for his support of our men and women in uniform.

Over the past 15 years, we witnessed the previous Liberal government fail to respect the profession of policing. It is great to see our government act on its commitment to restore the relationship between the government, the police and the people to one of mutual respect. As a member of this government for the people, I am proud to stand here today and know that we have kept another promise we made to the people of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, could the Premier please tell us more about how our government's Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act will provide better support to our police officers and keep the people of Ontario safe?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker: I have to apologize. I said Mississauga-Milton. I meant Mississauga-Streetsville. I apologize to the MPP.

My friends, it's very clear. It's very clear that the police need our support. You see, they need support nowhere else more than in mental health. When I sat down with the OPP association—there were about 50 members. They weren't asking for more money, they weren't asking for anything else; they were asking for support in mental health.

We have seen over the last year, Mr. Speaker, eight OPP officers take their own lives. That is unacceptable here in Ontario. I have said from day one the leadership of all police departments across this province has to start listening to the front-line police officers. Police officers may see an accident on the highway, and it sticks in their mind forever. Some of these terrible stories I've heard from these police officers—they're absolute heroes. I love our police, and we're going to support them 1,000%.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** My question is for the Premier. Experts have been calling for a Toronto relief line for over a century. It's 2019, and the relief line is ready to proceed. The route has been chosen; the environmental assessment is complete. All we need now is funding. But instead of moving forward, this Premier is taking us back to the drawing board and delaying this project yet again.

A century is enough. Why are you making commuters and transit riders wait even longer for the relief line?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Jeff Yurek:** Thanks to the member opposite for that question. On June 7, this government was elected on the promise to upload the subway system and to expand and build transit for the GTA and Toronto, and that's what we're doing.

We have hired special adviser Michael Lindsay to work with the city of Toronto on a new partnership that would deliver the expanded role and create an integrated transit system across the GTA, including Toronto. Mr. Speaker, we came to terms of reference with the city. We're currently working through that program.

We have such a great plan for the city of Toronto and the TTC. It's going to be wonderful getting people actually moving through the city and getting value for the taxpayers' dollars as we go forward with our downtown relief line, our extension on to Yonge, the Eglinton West and, of course, going into Scarborough, where they desperately need some transportation.

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

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** Back to the Premier: A responsible government would work with municipalities to move forward with transit projects and not create chaos. We now have no idea when the relief line will be built. We have no idea how much it will cost.

**Hon. John Yakabuski:** You guys have never known about costs. You haven't had a thought about costs in your lives, or a care.

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** We don't know whether it will be integrated into the rest of the TTC. We don't even know what technology you're going to use. Torontonians don't want another Union-Pearson Express boondoggle. This has been done before.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Todd Smith:** That was the Liberals.

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** Premier, can you commit today that the relief line will move forward as planned, will be fully integrated into the TTC, and that riders will only have to pay one flat fare to ride?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry will come to order. The government House leader will come to order. The member for Etobicoke Centre will come to order.

Response.

**Hon. Jeff Yurek:** Thank you again for that question. Mr. Speaker, I think the NDP are the only people who think the current system is working today. If you would ask every rider going on the TTC, they want expansion to

be built. The city has been unable to build any expansion projects. They got one over the last 15 years. It gets mired in the municipal politics.

We are looking at uploading that system, getting the plans put together, putting the funding together and getting the proposals and the expansions built. We are turning plans into projects, as opposed to sitting with just plans in this city. At the end of the day, we are going to commit to building the relief line, the Eglinton West, the Yonge extension and, of course, into Scarborough, because the people of Toronto, the riders of the TTC, expect and need better, and we're going to deliver that as a responsible government is going to do.

INFRASTRUCTURE  
PROGRAM FUNDING

**Ms. Lindsey Park:** My question is to the Minister of Infrastructure. This week, I was very pleased to hear that the minister was in Peterborough with the Minister of Transportation and the member for Peterborough-Kawartha to announce \$1.62 billion in funding allocated for transit infrastructure in municipalities outside the GTHA. This is part of a much larger program dedicated to making life affordable, making Ontario open for jobs, and I might add that it's good for the environment, too.

This is big news for the people of small-town Ontario. Providing the right infrastructure in the right place at the right time shows our commitment to not only putting the people first but also returning our budget to balance.

Will the minister please tell us more about this great program?

**Hon. Monte McNaughton:** I'd be happy to tell you more about this program. I'd like to begin by thanking the member from Durham for that question this morning.

1100

Mr. Speaker, our government is putting people first. This month, I launched \$30 billion in funding that will make life better for people right across this province. The Investing in Canada infrastructure program will help keep our roads safer, make our commutes easier and keep communities healthier. It will create and protect good jobs right across Ontario.

The Wynne Liberals promised infrastructure with absolutely no plan to pay for it. That was made clear when we inherited a \$15-billion deficit. It's not surprising that their federal cousins, the Trudeau Liberals, are following the same playbook. They promised infrastructure spending that a Senate committee recently described as "short-sighted."

Our government isn't making empty promises. We announced this program after a careful province-wide review to make sure that we got it right. We will make the right infrastructure investments at the right time and in the right place.

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

**Ms. Lindsey Park:** This is encouraging news from the minister. When our government invests in smart infrastructure, we're creating jobs, growing the economy and shaping the future for hard-working families in Ontario.

While the Trudeau Liberals have been criticized by the Parliamentary Budget Officer, the Auditor General and the Senate committee, our government for the people is making investments to make Ontario open for jobs with a fiscally responsible approach.

The Investing in Canada infrastructure plan is built to address the needs of communities and delegate funding through several different streams. Would the minister tell us more about the streams announced thus far?

**Hon. Monte McNaughton:** Once again, thank you to the honourable member for that excellent question.

Mr. Speaker, on March 12, we launched this program with the opening of the rural and northern funding stream. Our government believes in supporting small, rural, northern and Indigenous communities in making crucial infrastructure investments like roads and bridges.

This week, as I said, I launched the transit stream with the Minister of Transportation. That's \$1.62 billion for public transit in municipalities outside of the GTHA. Shorter commutes mean more time spent with families and more goods transported. That means healthier communities and that means more jobs and economic growth right across Ontario.

Our government is listening and has heard the infrastructure needs of our municipalities. We are serving the needs of the people, bringing the province back to balance and showing that Ontario is open for jobs.

## HEALTH CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Everyone in health care appreciates the work that Cancer Care Ontario does. They provide clinical and medical advice and education for patients and their loved ones. They do the strategic work to ensure that patients across our province receive some of the best-quality care in the world. Cancer Care Ontario took this province from providing passable cancer treatment to having province-wide procedures and a system in place to ensure that cancer patients receive treatment in a timely, equitable, cost-efficient manner, and the outcomes are there to prove their success.

Will the minister commit today to reconsider her legislation and not dissolve Cancer Care Ontario into the super-bureaucracy?

**Hon. Christine Elliott:** I thank the member very much for the question. I can assure you that Cancer Care Ontario is going to continue to do its excellent work. I absolutely agree with you that they are excellent at dealing with cancer care in Ontario, making sure that there is excellent equity across the province and making sure that they look at innovations, new procedures and so on. They will continue their work. They have excellent care in cancer and also in dealing with renal indications.

The reason why Cancer Care Ontario is now being headed by Ontario Health doesn't mean they don't continue to do their work; they will. But because they have such a great model, that model can be used for chronic dis-

ease management in other areas, such as in diabetes management, which is in need of some infrastructure, and certainly in mental health and addictions.

There's a lot of work that needs to be done. Cancer Care Ontario provides an excellent model for that.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** In British Columbia and in Alberta, health centralization wasted billions of dollars and patients suffered for decades, yet the government of Ontario is happy to blindly follow down the exact same path.

Given the minister's confidence in this plan, can she please guarantee that no patient receiving cancer treatment or services and no patient receiving renal treatment will have their care disrupted by the upcoming merger of Cancer Care Ontario into the new super-bureaucracy?

**Hon. Christine Elliott:** Again, I can assure the member that patient care and patient safety is our utmost consideration. That is why we are bringing forward this plan to make sure that we centre care around patients, families and caregivers, that their needs are always first and foremost in our thoughts and in our plans, and that we will connect care for them, because that's not happening now.

You will know that, often, when people are discharged from hospital and requiring home care, they don't know, by the time they go home, who will be providing the care, what care they will be receiving and when they will be arriving. We are going to connect that care.

With respect to your comments about centralization, in fact, we are doing the opposite. We are releasing the boundaries so that local care providers can provide the care that is needed in their communities—not to be dictated by the Ministry of Health, but to be planned and organized locally, because health needs are different in different parts of Ontario, from northern Ontario to Toronto and every other part. We are actually directing care at the local level to surround patients and for patients and families to be—

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

Next question.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. She's one of my favourite ministers; I want you to know that—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Lisa MacLeod:** What are you asking for, Jim?

**Interjection:** It must be the hospital.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** —and my favourite topic is the hospitals in my riding, the Collingwood hospital and the Alliston hospital.

As the minister knows, the hospitals are 50 and 60 years old. They're bursting at the seams, they were ignored under the Liberal government, and they're waiting for redevelopments. Over the last 15 years—this is the second time now that they've both had to present the same documentation for stage 1 in the application process. They're running out of patience.

We deal with hallway medicine every day. You can imagine the extent of hallway medicine in Alliston, for example, when the building was built for 7,000 emergency room visits and last year did close to 50,000. Collingwood, being a four-season resort community, deals with tens of thousands more visits than it was built for.

The last redevelopment was under Mike Harris in 1998. Alliston got about a \$5-million fix and there was about \$18 million at Collingwood General and Marine. But over the last 60 years, nothing has really been done, so they're looking to our government to move forward.

I'd ask if you would come up again and tour to see the need for the redevelopment yourself.

**Hon. Christine Elliott:** I thank the member very much for the question. You're one of my favourite members as well, so thank you very much.

We have had several conversations about the Collingwood and Alliston situation. I understand that they are under great strain and that the population has diversified. It is really four-season residents now, where perhaps it used to be more a smaller group of local residents with more seasonal visitors—but there are more families settling there now. I know that there are issues there, so I look forward to working with you on that.

We're continuing our conversations within the ministry on your community's needs, as well as the needs of many communities across the province where they have outdated infrastructure and rapidly growing populations. It is a challenge that we need to tackle together. That's part of our plan to end hallway health care and make sure that all communities get updated—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Thank you to the minister. I know there's tremendous pressure on the capital side and the operating side, but these buildings are bursting at the seams.

My constituents have noticed that you've been able to tour other hospitals in the area, so they've asked me to come here today and to say, "Can you have Christine come up? We'd really appreciate it."

1110

One of the consequences of waiting so many years is, particularly over the last four or five years we've had some real superstars in terms of physicians and nurses and staff and board members and even administrators come to both hospitals with the expectation that we would be seeing a new hospital within the last five years. That hasn't happened, so the morale has taken a bit of a dip in both hospitals. I'm undertaking to visit the board in Alliston in just a few days and the Collingwood board to try to bring morale up and to try to retain those specialists and those physicians and nurses who have come with the expectation of new buildings.

Again, if you could find it in your heart to come up and say hello—skiing season is over, but we'll take you boating or whatever you need to do—and tour the hospitals and help us boost morale. They're making this government and all of us politicians look good by not complaining about hallway medicine. You don't hear complaints from these

hospitals. They're very respectful of the government. They're very respectful of their member. But they are—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Response?

**Hon. Christine Elliott:** Well, I thank the member very much for the invitation.

Certainly, I know that there are many hospitals that have had needs for many, many years. For 15 years, they were largely not attended to. We are going to change that. We know that there are priorities in certain areas because of aging infrastructure with pipes that are ready to burst and roofs that are falling in. That is a sad state of affairs. But we're going to fix that.

I have been touring across the province the last number of weeks, talking to groups that are already providing integrated health care. It's wonderful to see what's happening on the ground and how excited providers and patients are about our plan. But I do look forward to coming to both Alliston and Collingwood, hopefully in the very near future.

#### GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. Speaker, our government was elected by the people of Ontario on a commitment to bring change to this province. As part of our commitment, the Premier and the Minister of the Environment announced that as of April 1, our government would bring to an end the outdated and ineffective Drive Clean program. Since 1999, drivers across Ontario have needed to complete a Drive Clean test to continue driving their cars. It took time out of their day and no longer delivered effective results.

Can the minister please tell us, this House, what relief the cancellation of the Drive Clean program or emission program will bring to Ontario?

**Hon. Rod Phillips:** Thank you to the member from Markham-Thornhill. I know he does a fantastic job for his constituents.

Mr. Speaker, our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan protects Ontario's air, its land, its water, but we also protect tax dollars. We want to make sure that tax dollars are spent in the right way. The Drive Clean program, when it was put in place over 20 years ago by a Progressive Conservative government, made sense. But programs from 20 years ago don't necessarily make sense in 2019.

The former Minister of the Environment Norm Sterling said it was time to get rid of the program. The former Liberal Minister of the Environment admitted that the program had little impact. Even the leader of the Green Party, with us today in the Legislature, says that it was no longer as relevant as it once was. But most importantly, Doug Ford said Drive Clean—it's done; it's gone. So that \$40-million program, as of April 1, is gone from Ontario drivers, and not a moment too soon.

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

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** Thank you, Minister, for that wonderful answer. I am sure most Ontarians would agree that it is clear that Drive Clean was no longer useful and

therefore no more an effective and efficient way to protect our environment. I know for a fact my constituents in Markham–Thornhill are happy about the government saving them \$40 million every year. Our government committed that we would do right by taxpayers and end ineffective programs taking money out of people's pockets. The end of Drive Clean is a perfect example.

Mr. Speaker, Ontarians recognize the need to do our share to fight climate change. Minister, can you add more about the Drive Clean program?

**Hon. Rod Phillips:** Mr. Speaker, through you to the member: Thank you for the question.

Instead of spending \$40 million for a program that everyone admits was not working, we are focusing on large emitting trucks. We're focusing on diesel trucks. We've all seen those on the highways. So the ministry is bringing in programs to focus on those vehicles.

Of course, as the Legislature knows, in our made-in-Ontario program we've also focused on targets to reduce greenhouse gases. So we have committed to the targets agreed to by the federal government internationally for a 30% reduction in GHGs by 2030. We've brought in a pragmatic sensible plan: a plan that is sensitive to the fact that we can have a healthy economy and a healthy environment; a plan that focuses on reducing emissions but in a sensible way that won't punish families and won't hurt the economy at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, we can get rid of outdated programs that once worked and, at the same time, bring in solutions that protect the taxpayers and protect the environment.

#### CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Today, we're joined by many of this province's front-line correctional staff. We welcome them all here today. They're here, Mr. Speaker, because the crisis in corrections under the Liberals is now the crisis in corrections under the Conservatives. Members who meet with our front-line correctional workers today will hear how violence is in fact increasing in this province in correctional facilities and in jails. It was only a month ago that eight correctional officers were injured in an attack at the Toronto South Detention Centre.

Speaker, I would like to know, and corrections officers, corrections staff, would like to know, what this minister has done since the violent incidents occurred to make our correctional facilities more safe?

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Speaker, through you, I want to join and thank the excellent work that our corrections officers do every single day across institutions in Ontario. There is no doubt that our government's number one priority is to ensure safety: the safety of our citizens, the safety of our staff and the safety of the individuals who are housed in our institutions.

In terms of what has been happening in the ministry, I think it's important to note that earlier this year we launched a wellness and resilience program that specifically is going to help correctional staff build resilience at

work, manage stress, enhance personal health and try to reduce injuries related to occupational stress, including PTSD.

This very week, my friend and colleague the Minister of the Attorney General and I announced Guns and Gangs phase two. It specifically has a component that is increasing corrections intelligence and security within our jails.

We are not waiting. We are acting after 15 years of inaction, and we are proactively moving forward on things that make our jails safer and our corrections officers safer.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to ask the member for Niagara Falls to come to order.

Supplementary.

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** Without having first addressed the lack of resources, the lack of adequate staffing in order to get our correctional facilities back to zero, it sounds like the government expects front-line correctional workers to do even more with less. Instead, this government continues with the previous government's failed approach of hiring only enough correctional staff to cover shifts when correctional officers are off sick, on vacation, out injured or on stress leave. My question to the minister is simple—very simple. When will she provide enough staff to get the job done safely and provide the right tools to fix the crisis in corrections?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Members, please take your seats.

Minister.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Speaker, through you, as I said in my initial answer, we are actively and proactively engaged in making changes right now that are making a difference. I continue to have conversations with our corrections officers and our front-line staff to understand what opportunities that we need to take.

But let's be clear: Fifteen years of Liberal inaction is not going to be solved in eight months. I am working very actively with my ministry to make sure that we're putting stuff in place. I've already talked about phase two in the Guns and Gangs announcement that was made this week. We initiated a program in January. We are working to make sure that our jails are safe.

1120

When will you participate in ensuring that we have the tools we need? I want to make sure that, together, we can keep our jails safe and our corrections officers safe. I'm happy to have any kind of positive—

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

#### NATURAL GAS

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Infrastructure. Expanding access to natural gas lowers heating costs, creates jobs and makes businesses more competitive. Recently, I was with the minister at Truly Green Farms and Cedarline Greenhouses in Chatham-Kent, where he announced that this local business will be able to grow thanks to our government's new natural gas



expansion support program. Our government is committed to tackling high energy costs.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister please tell us more about how this new program will save people money and send a clear message that Ontario is open for business?

**Hon. Monte McNaughton:** I would like to thank the honourable member from Sarnia–Lambton and my good friend for that excellent question this morning.

I would also like to thank the Minister of Energy for his leadership in bringing affordability back to energy bills across the province.

Speaker, I represent the neighbouring riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex and I've heard first-hand from my own community about what access to natural gas means for hard-working Ontario families. Our priority, as a government, is creating and protecting good jobs for the people. By lowering energy costs, we are making businesses more competitive and signalling that Ontario is open for jobs.

The Chatham-Kent natural gas expansion project is possible thanks to our government's new and innovative partnership with the private sector. The construction of two new transmission lines and supporting distribution mains could expand natural gas to an estimated 1,300 households and 200 businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to sharing more about this important milestone in my supplementary.

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

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Thank you, Minister, for that answer.

Mr. Speaker, after 15 years of Ontario Liberals passing policies to benefit their insider friends, it is refreshing to see a government that is squarely focused on making life more affordable for families.

While other parties wanted to ban private sector participation, and even natural gas altogether, I am pleased to hear that our government is ending energy poverty. People no longer have to choose between heating and eating.

Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Infrastructure please tell the House more about how our government is helping people in Lambton county and across this great province of Ontario?

**Hon. Monte McNaughton:** Once again, thank you to the member from Sarnia–Lambton for that question.

Mr. Speaker, we replaced a one-time taxpayer-funded grant program with a sustainable private-sector-led model that will save Ontario \$61.5 million over three years.

Expanding access to natural gas will put money back in people's pockets. Residential consumers can save up to \$2,500 per year by switching from electric heat, propane or oil. For Chatham-Kent, the municipality estimates this project alone could bring 1,400 brand new jobs to the greenhouse sector alone.

As Greg Devries, president and CEO of Truly Green Farms and Cedarline Greenhouses said, "This natural gas project is a great example of how infrastructure stimulates the economy."

This is only the beginning. Our government is bringing prosperity to rural, remote and other underserved communities across Ontario. And, Mr. Speaker, this is yet another example of a promise made, promise kept.

#### ARTS EDUCATION

**Ms. Jill Andrew:** Good morning, Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education. This government's scheme to increase class sizes will mean arts classes that typically have smaller class sizes will be put in jeopardy.

When asked on Metro Morning about how this will impact arts programs in high schools, the minister replied, "When it comes to the world of work, our students need to have skills in the pathways that are providing jobs." Essentially, she threw arts education under the bus.

Speaker, let's be clear: Ask Drake if arts aren't jobs. There are over 269,000 arts and culture jobs in Ontario, contributing \$26 billion—not million—annually to our economy.

Why does the Minister of Education think arts and culture jobs don't matter?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Before I ask the minister to reply, I've got to ask the member for Northumberland–Quinte West to come to order.

Minister of Education.

**Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:** I am very pleased to stand in this House today and suggest to the member opposite that she should never, ever put words in my mouth, because I come from a family that absolutely values arts and culture. Shame on her for continuing this ridiculous rhetoric that absolutely does nothing but confuse people.

I said that we need to make sure that students have the opportunity to learn science, technology, math, the skills that are going to see them adapt and absolutely be successful in the careers of today and tomorrow.

If the members opposite were tuned in, they would know that the realities are for students, going forward, that we need skilled trades, we need technology, we need math competencies. All of that—

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

Supplementary.

**Ms. Jill Andrew:** In fact, the Minister of Education doesn't listen, because I said to add some STEAM to her STEM. Arts matter too.

When the minister was asked about band classes in high schools being cancelled, she let the cat out of the bag that not every school board would be able to afford band classes. Instead, she suggested that arts enthusiasts could step in and offer these courses, instead of professional educators.

Speaker, the minister's education scheme will mean fewer classes that enrich students' learning. I heard from Liz Burnip, an arts educator for 27 years. She said arts education provides safe spaces for students who often don't fit in anywhere else.

Why is this minister happy to cut arts classes that bring so much value to a young person's life—classes that have been scientifically proven to create better, more well-rounded students?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Members, please take your seats. The government side will come to order.

Minister of Education to reply.

**Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:** The fact of the matter is, I need to repeat: Never, ever put words in my mouth. That member has to withdraw what she said, because she's doing nothing but pandering and creating rhetoric that's going to confuse people.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Opposition, come to order.

**Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:** The fact of the matter is, what I was alluding to when I was speaking to that particular radio program is the reality that not every school across Ontario actually has music classes in curriculum. Some people—if she got out of her bubble in Toronto—in rural Ontario and northern Ontario only have the opportunity to pursue arts through clubs. That is what I was saying.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:** So, again, the fact of the matter is, we need to equip our kids with science, math, technology, skilled trades, so that they have career pathways that absolutely—

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

Stop the clock. I'm going to ask the member for Toronto–St. Paul's to come to order. She can't interject constantly while the minister is replying.

Next question.

#### POLICE SECTOR COMPENSATION

**Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos:** My question is to the President of the Treasury Board. For 15 years, the Liberals recklessly spent taxpayer money on pet projects and scandals, which resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money being wasted.

Their out-of-control spending put our public services at risk. They showed a complete lack of respect for the hard-working men and women whose tax money they squandered.

Yesterday, the sunshine list was released, and it showed that under the previous Liberal government, public sector wages had far outpaced private sector wages.

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It's unfair that the average Ontarian is earning far less but is being expected to pay far more to support these rapidly growing salaries. Can the President of the Treasury Board inform the House: What is the government doing to restore sustainability, accountability and respect for taxpayer money?

**Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy:** Thank you, MPP Triantafilopoulos, the great MPP for Oakville North–Burlington.

I'll tell you, folks, when you've got a name like Bethlenfalvy, you'd better get Triantafilopoulos right.

Our government was elected on a promise to get spending under control and repair the damage that was left by the previous Liberal government. Since 2003, the number of people on the sunshine list has grown from 20,000 to over 150,000. That's almost 20,000—or a 600% increase.

Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure the responsibility for taxpayers' dollars, and that's why we took steps immediately upon getting elected—for example, we froze executive compensation; we froze external hiring in the public service; now we require all agencies to get approval for bargaining mandates. We are placing reliability and the taxpayer at the centre of everything we do, and we are putting in place structures that create a culture of accountability and efficiency.

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

**Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos:** Speaker, it's great to hear that the government and the President of the Treasury Board are taking decisive action to ensure that tax dollars are going to the front-line services that Ontarians depend on.

Like most Ontarians, it's deeply troubling to the constituents of my riding of Oakville North–Burlington to know that, because of the tax-and-spend Liberals, Ontario is now the most indebted sub-sovereign jurisdiction on the planet. Because of the feeble leadership and reckless overspending of the previous Liberal government, we were left with a \$15-billion deficit. This is shameful.

The results of the sunshine list, published yesterday, show us areas of clear overspending.

Can the president tell us what the government is doing to fight for the people and eliminate reckless government spending?

**Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy:** Mr. Speaker, through you: Again, I thank my colleague for that question. She's absolutely right. We've got to ensure that we support the front lines—the people of Ontario who support the patients and the people in this great province—and not necessarily the paper-pushers.

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, under the previous Liberal government, public sector employees made 33% more than the average Ontario worker—33% more. The disparity is indicative of the unsustainable practices of the previous Liberal government, a government which saddled the people and future generations, as the member mentioned—of \$347 billion.

Our government is committed to being accountable to the taxpayers of this province.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy:** I know it is very troubling to the previous Liberal government to hear all this. That's why—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. I'm going to ask the member for Ottawa South to come to order.

Next question. The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Stop the clock. The government side will come to order.

Start the clock. The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

#### TENANT PROTECTION

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Tenants in Hamilton are being squeezed out by landlords who abuse the rules to seek rent increases that are higher than the guideline.

Last night, the city of Hamilton approved funding for a tenant defence fund to help tenants defend themselves against unethical practices.

Does the minister think it is fair that tenants should be forced to turn to the city of Hamilton to get the protection that this province is supposed to provide?

**Hon. Steve Clark:** I want to thank the honourable member for that question. We're obviously very concerned about a number of issues in the housing space. That's why our government began consultations on the Housing Supply Action Plan. To remind members of this House, we asked for suggestions on five themes: cost, speed, mix, innovation, and rent. We received over 2,000 submissions. I have to tell you, Speaker, through you to the member, that over 85% of those submissions were from the general public, so there was a wide variety of opinion. We are going to take those consultations and move them forward into a piece of legislation for the Housing Supply Action Plan.

I take the concerns of the members—every member—of this House very seriously, and I can assure them that comments like that will be taken into consideration as we move forward.

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Landlords are using unethical tactics, Minister, to squeeze out tenants because once the tenant is gone they can jack up the rent to whatever they please. The minister could protect these tenants, but instead he actually wants to make it easier for landlords to evict tenants. Now the city of Hamilton, believe it or not, has been forced to step in to give tenants the protection the minister and this government refuse to provide. Why is this minister willing to protect landlords but not tenants?

**Hon. Steve Clark:** Speaker, through you to the member: The member is incorrect. If he's referencing the Toronto Star story, there is nothing in that story that is before me as a piece of proposed legislation. In fact, I've said the opposite. I have indicated a number of times that I'm working with the Attorney General on some of the challenges that are facing the Landlord and Tenant Board. There is a backlog, obviously, in some of those cases, and our government is very, very concerned about that.

So we are talking about issues and options to make it easier for the system to go forward, to help strengthen protections but at the same time recognize that landlords have told us it's hard to be a landlord. There are some difficulties. But that's the balance, Speaker, between tenant protection and some of the other issues on the table. Again—

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

#### FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

**Mr. Ross Romano:** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. Like many Ontarians, I was excited to learn about the successful relocation of

wolves from Ontario to Isle Royale National Park in Michigan. Our government takes the conservation of our natural resources seriously, and was able to assist our friends in Michigan with restoring a healthy population of wolves to Isle Royale. Ontario has an important trading relationship with the state of Michigan, and this operation will strengthen our bond.

Can the minister inform the House how this operation was carried out and how the wolves are adapting to their new home in Michigan?

**Hon. John Yakabuski:** I want to thank our great member from Sault Ste. Marie for that excellent question. Boy, this was what you call a win-win, a really, really great operation that we worked together on. As announced by our Premier and the governor of Michigan, my ministry worked with the United States parks service to identify Ontario wolves on Michipicoten Island and the nearby mainland that were fit for relocation.

Before being transferred to Isle Royale, the wolves were examined by veterinarians and found to be in good health. However, these wolves suffered from a lack of food on Michipicoten. Relocation gives them an excellent opportunity to thrive. Isle Royale has an overpopulation of moose, putting stress on vegetation and the rest of the ecosystem on Isle Royale, so this is a perfect match. They have got an overpopulation of moose and we had wolves that needed to be relocated. In the words of Mark Romanski, the park's natural resources division chief, these wolves "will almost certainly know what to do when they encounter a moose."

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

**Mr. Ross Romano:** Thank you, Minister, for that answer. I share the minister's confidence that our wolves will have no issues adapting to their new home because, as the media have said, these are "elite Canadian wolves." In fact, I've been told that when these wolves discover the abundant moose populations on Isle Royale, they will howl with delight, just like the NDP did for the last 15 years whenever the former Liberal government raised taxes on the backs of hard-working Ontarians.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, back to the minister: Could he confirm how many wolves were relocated as part of this operation and please expand on how the relocation will benefit Ontarians?

**Hon. John Yakabuski:** I thank the member again for his supplementary as well. He is absolutely right: The wolves that were transported are high, high-quality wolves. In fact, an alpha male and alpha female were part of that relocation.

As far as our government attacking other issues with respect to our co-operation with Michigan, we've heard the term "deficit hawk" in politics before, but in our government, I believe we have a caucus of deficit wolves. We will be ferocious in respecting taxpayers' dollars and putting Ontario back on a responsible track to balance. For example, the 11 wolves that were relocated were funded by the United States National Park Service and private donors. There was not a single penny of cost to Ontario taxpayers.

We also collaborate with Michigan to protect our waterways from invasive species and to combat forest fires through the Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact. The Premier recently visited the Detroit auto show to promote Ontario. We look forward to increasing the \$64 billion in two-way trade as we make Ontario open for business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** That concludes the time we have for question period.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** There's a point of order. The member for Don Valley North.

**Mr. Vincent Ke:** I would like to welcome Working Women Community Centre to Queen's Park. This is a community organization that enables positive change, from my riding of Don Valley North. Welcome to Queen's Park. I hope you enjoy the day trip.

#### DECORUM IN CHAMBER

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Before I recess the House, I want to comment on and thank the members for the higher standard of decorum that we set today—noticeably higher, thank you. In doing so, we demonstrated our respect for the provincial Parliament. Thank you very much.

This House stands in recess until 1 p.m. this afternoon.  
*The House recessed from 1142 to 1300.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** I would like to introduce Ragina Sivarajah, who has recently joined my team as a manager, administrator and MPP liaison. Thank you. Welcome to Queen's Park.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER OF ONTARIO

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** A point of order, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** On a point of order, the member for Guelph.

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** I just want to take a moment to thank the Environmental Commissioner, Dianne Saxe, and her predecessors for their 25 years of service to the people of Ontario, protecting our environment. Your independent advocacy and oversight will be missed.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** Harbord Collegiate, Central Tech, Central Toronto Academy, Palmerston, Rosedale, Montrose, Kensington, Charles Fraser: These are just a few of

the many wonderful schools in the riding of University–Rosedale, a riding I'm proud to represent at Queen's Park.

Our school community, our parents, our teachers, our children and teenagers: We believe in building a quality public education system right here in Ontario. So many in our school community are angered by the Ford government's cuts to education. The decision to drastically increase class sizes in high schools, to slash up to 10,000 teaching positions, to ignore the repairs that are begging for attention at every school across our province, from the too-hot classrooms in summer to the broken washrooms to the aging boilers, and then to the constant threats to the future of JK and SK, which are such critical learning years for our kids: There's this feeling that this government doesn't care about us and the quality of education we want for our children.

Many of us are standing up to say, "No, thank you." There's a lot that we can fight for that's better than this. We encourage you to join us, to join the high school students at Harbord Collegiate who are organizing a school-wide walkout on April 4; the teachers and parents who are organizing a family-friendly rally at Queen's Park at 12 p.m. on Saturday, April 6; and join us on a community canvas on Sunday, April 12, at 12 p.m. in our riding to talk to residents about what's at stake and what we can do to fight for our kids' education.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** A point of order: the member for Ottawa West–Nepean.

**Mr. Jeremy Roberts:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for being here a little bit late for this, but I just want to introduce a very special pair of guests we have. We have Senator Jim Munson and his lovely wife, Ginette, here in the gallery today. Jim is a champion for individuals with developmental disabilities, along with his wife. It's wonderful to have them here today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Welcome.

#### HIGH-TECH INDUSTRY

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Recently, the Premier and myself attended a site tour of the IBM Toronto Software Lab in my riding of Markham–Unionville. We were given a chance to see and understand current endeavours being pursued by IBM, like self-autonomous vehicle technology, and were personally amazed by their work.

Following the tour, the Premier and I participated in a round table discussion with IBM executives regarding the benefits of a continued and steadfast relationship between their company and our province. Besides being a world-renowned company, IBM has a strong presence in my riding, along with many other high-tech firms. These companies chose Markham and Ontario as their venue for their business because of our intelligent and extraordinarily skilled work force.

Mr. Speaker, our government has recently announced reforms to education in the province which will not only

enhance the learning capability of students from kindergarten to grade 12 but will also set up our children for future success. Helping our young students develop a better grasp on mathematics and understanding the vast potential in STEM sectors at an early age will give them the tools and information they need to excel in the workforce.

Our global competitiveness is something that we have to continue to work on and not take for granted. I am proud to stand by our Minister of Education's recent announcement, which I believe helps us to maintain and surpass this goal.

#### TRANS COMMUNITY

**Mr. Terence Kernaghan:** I'd like to acknowledge that this Sunday marks the International Trans Day of Visibility. This day exists to celebrate our trans friends and amplify their voices.

Unfortunately, the government is making it harder and harder for the trans community to be seen and heard, given the many barriers trans Ontarians face, particularly in our health care and education systems.

Matt is a 16-year-old student in my riding who is struggling to pay for the cost of the surgery he requires. Matt's mother, Tara, was shocked to learn they would have to travel from London to Mississauga and pay \$9,000 for his surgery.

LGBTQ students are dismayed that this government has delayed teaching gender expression until grade 8, when we know our trans students need support and acceptance from their peers long before that.

The cancellation of the Basic Income Pilot project and new difficulties accessing OSAP have affected constituents of London North Centre, like Jai. The trans community has to face these financial and social barriers far too often.

Including your preferred pronouns, such as he, him or his, on a name tag is a simple way to let the trans community know you stand with them.

As the Trans Day of Visibility approaches, New Democrats vow to continue to fight for trans-affirmative health care and an inclusive curriculum that acknowledges and celebrates Ontario's vibrant trans community.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Stephen Lecce:** Today I rise to recognize two historic events that are set to take place on April 1 that will have drastically different effects on the people of this province.

On Monday, our provincial government will celebrate the end of Ontario's costly, burdensome and ineffective Drive Clean program. Announced in September, this change will put \$40 million back into the pockets of Ontarians. This is the mandate our government was elected on, and we're going to see it through: to make life more affordable for working families in this province.

Moreover, and to contrast, on Monday we'll also see the introduction of a punishing and regressive Trudeau

carbon tax. This tax will raise the prices on everything, from the gas you use to heat your home to the fuel you use to drive your kids to hockey practice. Mr. Speaker, this is a tax that will raise the prices on everything.

Now, while our government is taking action to support a climate of jobs and growth and to create prosperity for families and workers in this province, in contrast, the Trudeau Liberals are raising taxes, creating more red tape and impeding the job hopes of young people in this country.

Colleagues, we are working under the leadership of our Premier and this cabinet and the entire Progressive Conservative team to put the province back on track, to create better jobs, to grow this economy and to make life affordable for every single Ontarian.

#### HOSPITAL EVACUATION

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I want to thank the staff and management team at the North Shore Health Network and the North East LHIN for their tireless work throughout the evacuation situation at the Blind River hospital. Over the span of two weeks, these individuals quickly coordinated plans to relocate patients and residents, organize snow removal efforts, and ensure patients and residents could return to a safe Blind River hospital.

Northern Ontario winter conditions can lead to many unforeseen circumstances. This is especially true this year, with the multiple roof collapses and near collapses in many communities across my riding and across northern Ontario.

When a concern was flagged at the Blind River hospital, efforts began to ensure patients and staff were safe. I would like to thank the hospitals and long-term-care homes that lent a hand, welcomed those relocated from Blind River, and ensured they received proper care. From Little Current, Espanola, Elliot Lake, Richards Landing and Sault Ste. Marie, you continue to demonstrate how compassionate our communities are.

No one should have to worry about their safety when entering a hospital, restaurant or community centre. We must work together to ensure situations like this do not become a regular occurrence. Northern infrastructure faces unique challenges, and this winter has offered us many learning opportunities. It is reassuring to know how diligent the North Shore Health Network and its allies—and what I mean by allies is community members that opened up their homes to take in their loved ones and as well responded in this challenging situation.

Je vous salue; I take my hat off to you.

#### OSGOODE CARE CENTRE

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** On Saturday, March 23, I had the distinct pleasure of welcoming the Premier of Ontario to the beautiful riding of Carleton as he joined me for a tour of the Osgoode Care Centre in Metcalfe. I want to thank Lori Norris-Dudley, the president and CEO of the Osgoode Care Centre, Dave Eggett, the chair of the

Osgoode Care Centre, and Gino Milito, chair of the Osgoode Ward Business Association, for helping me organize a fantastic visit of their facilities for the Premier.

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The Osgoode Care Centre is a not-for-profit, long-term-care home in the riding, often regarded as one of the finest in the province. It is one of the jewels of Carleton, Mr. Speaker, a place that becomes a new home for residents and their families, where they and their family members are welcomed with open arms.

It was so great to see the joy on the faces of the residents, front-line workers, volunteers, staff and key community stakeholders who have been involved in the Osgoode Care Centre for decades when they had an opportunity to speak with the Premier and grab a few photos. I particularly like the photo I took with Vera Mitchell, who I have adopted as my grandmother, and the Premier, one of us flanking her on either side.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Premier for coming to Carleton and joining me for a tour of such a great facility. Since his visit, I have been receiving a seemingly endless flow of support and appreciation for the Premier from my constituents. So to the Premier of Ontario, I just want to say: Thank you so much, and please come back to Carleton. You're welcome any time.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** Imagine a child sitting in a classroom on a cold winter day with 40 other classmates. It's crowded. It's hard to learn with the mittens and the bulky winter coat they are wearing because the school furnace broke down—again. They're thirsty but forgot their water bottle at home and can't drink the water from the fountain because the school pipes have lead in them.

They are trying hard to concentrate. They are trying to listen to the teacher and understand the lesson. It looks fun, but they just don't quite get it. They tried raising their hand, but they sit at the back of the room in the middle. The teacher tried to get to everyone, but didn't see the child. With thousands fired, teachers are stretched thinner than ever. Students just don't seem to get the one-on-one support anymore.

The bell rings. Class is over. The child still doesn't understand the lesson. They used to be able to go to an after-school tutoring program, but that too has been cut, like many other supports that were available.

Speaker, this will be the reality for students in our public schools under this Conservative government. Instead of investing in our children, the Ford government is making deeper cuts. They're taking a billion dollars out of our public education system and giving it as tax cuts to big businesses and the wealthy.

We need to give our children more opportunities, not less. Public schools are a public trust. It belongs to the people of Ontario, not Premier Ford. Parents, educators, students and people across the province: We stand together. We will not allow anyone to destroy our public education system.

#### POPE JOHN PAUL II

**Miss Kinga Surma:** On a more optimistic note, every year on April 2, Pope John Paul II Day is celebrated throughout Canada.

Pope John Paul II, born Karol Józef Wojtyła in Poland, served as the pontiff of the Roman Catholic church from October 1978 until his death on April 2, 2005. He was widely recognized as a leading figure in the history of the Roman Catholic church and in the world, and played an influential and vital role in promoting international understanding and peace. Pope John Paul II loved to travel to spread that message. He visited Canada for the first time in 1984, later in 1987, and again in 2002. His last visit to Canada was dedicated to the celebration of World Youth Day that was held here in Toronto. That year, my family and I travelled from Ottawa to see “the people's Pope” in Toronto.

John Paul II visited many countries, promoting international peace and interfaith dialogue, and played one of the key roles in helping to dismantle the grip of communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe.

Today, in his memory and to celebrate his life achievements, together with other MPPs, we held a ceremony here in Queen's Park unveiling his portrait.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank former member of Parliament Wladyslaw Lizon, Ted Opitz and, of course, Chris Korwin-Kuczynski for making John Paul II Day in Canada a reality. The legacy of John Paul II will never be forgotten and his life will continue serving as an inspiration for generations to come.

#### COPTIC COMMUNITY

**Mr. Sheref Sabawy:** Over the weekend, I was a guest speaker at the ninth international Coptic convention, hosted by the Dutch Coptic association in Amsterdam. Some of the topics discussed were the integration of newcomers, second-generation identity challenges and terrorism against minorities.

I was proud to present our Canadian model, to present how Canada and our great province of Ontario are good examples of effective integration of newcomers by embracing multiculturalism and acceptance, and respect of all cultures.

One of the main challenges the world faces today is terrorism. It is an issue that we need to tackle with care and promptness as it affects the lives of all of us. Every necessary step should be taken and all actions should be adopted to eliminate the threat. We have to keep our province safe, not just for us but for generations to come. It must start with each one of us Ontarians, how we view each other, how we respect each other and how we treat each other. At the end, the goal is not to tolerate one another, but to love and live with one another under one country and one province.

I'm honoured and privileged to be part of this great government that works diligently each and every day to make our province the best place to live in, not only in Canada but in the whole world.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

1320

PETER KORMOS MEMORIAL ACT  
(TRILLIUM GIFT OF LIFE NETWORK  
AMENDMENT), 2019

LOI DE 2019 COMMÉMORANT  
PETER KORMOS (MODIFICATION  
DE LA LOI SUR LE RÉSEAU TRILLIUM  
POUR LE DON DE VIE)

Mme Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to amend the Trillium Gift of Life Network Act / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à modifier la Loi sur le Réseau Trillium pour le don de vie.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Would the member for Nickel Belt like to explain her bill?

**Mme France Gélinas:** The short title of the bill is the Peter Kormos Memorial Act (Trillium Gift of Life Network Amendment). Peter Kormos passed six years ago on March 30, and this is something that was very meaningful to him. He used to tell us, "I will have 'Trillium Gift of Life' tattooed on my chest so that if I die, people know that I want to donate my organs to help people on the wait-list." This is a bill in his honour. This is something that he worked really hard on. I hope that we will see to pass this bill.

LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT  
ACT (REPLACEMENT WORKERS), 2019

LOI DE 2019 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL  
(TRAVAILLEURS SUPPLÉANTS)

Mme Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 92, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act, 1995 with respect to replacement workers / Projet de loi 92, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail en ce qui concerne les travailleurs suppléants.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Again, the member for Nickel Belt to explain her bill.

**Mme France Gélinas:** This bill is also introduced in memory of Peter Kormos. We will be celebrating the sixth anniversary of his death on Saturday. It is an anti-scab bill. This is a bill that Mr. Kormos had on the docket for the whole time that he was here. This is something that he championed many, many times, and this is something that he and I worked together on in the last years that he was here at Queen's Park. I'm happy to present this anti-scab bill for the House to consider.

## PETITIONS

## INJURED WORKERS

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I want to thank Mr. Will Noiles. This is a petition entitled "Workers' Comp is a Right."

"Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas about 200,000 to 300,000 people in Ontario are injured on the job every year;

"Whereas over a century ago, workers in Ontario who were injured on the job gave up the right to sue their employers, in exchange for a system that would provide them with just compensation;

"Whereas decades of cost-cutting have pushed injured workers into poverty and onto publicly funded social assistance programs, and have gradually curtailed the rights of injured workers;

"Whereas injured workers have the right to quality and timely medical care, compensation for lost wages, and protection from discrimination;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to change the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act to accomplish the following for injured workers in Ontario:

"Eliminate the practice of 'deeming' or 'determining,' which bases compensation on phantom jobs that injured workers do not actually have;

"Ensure that the WSIB prioritizes and respects the medical opinions of the health care providers who treat the injured worker directly;

"Prevent compensation from being reduced or denied based on 'pre-existing conditions' that never affected the worker's ability to function prior to the work injury."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition, affix my name and give it to Saniya to bring down to the Clerks' table.

## LONG-TERM CARE

**Mme France Gélinas:** I would like to thank Matthew Brideau from Capreol in my riding for this petition.

"Whereas quality of care for the 78,000 residents of (LTC) homes is a priority for many Ontario families; and

"Whereas the provincial government does not provide adequate funding to ensure care and staffing levels in LTC homes to keep pace with residents' increasing acuity and the growing number of residents with complex behaviours; and

"Whereas several Ontario coroner's inquests into LTC homes deaths have recommended an increase in direct hands-on care for residents and staffing levels and the most reputable studies on this topic recommends 4.1 hours of direct care per day;

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“Amend the LTC Homes Act (2007) for a legislated minimum care standard ... of four hours per resident per day, adjusted for acuity level and case mix.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Nicholas to bring it to the Clerk.

### CAMPUS RADIO STATIONS

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** I have a stack of petitions from my constituents in Guelph called “Campus Radio Stations are an Essential Service.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario campus radio stations consist of over 150 staff members and 3,500 volunteers, a majority of them youth and students;

“Whereas campus radio stations offer training and development for students, both as part of their on-campus course curriculum and within the community at large, including preparation for careers in broadcasting and journalism;

“Whereas campus radio stations in Ontario are key providers of emergency information under the National Public Alerting System;

“Whereas campus radio stations are an independent news and media outlet for students and communities that provide a platform for marginalized voices;

“Whereas campus radio stations have a high fixed cost compared to other student services;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to deem campus radio stations an essential fee under the Student Choice Initiative.”

I wholeheartedly support this petition and will ask page Julien to bring it to the table.

### ANIMAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** My petition is entitled “Animal Protection in Ontario.”

“Whereas the people of Ontario care about the animals who live among us and believe all animals deserve our protection but are largely going unprotected at this time;

“Whereas the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has abandoned its responsibility to enforce animal protection laws in this province as of April 1, 2019, leaving Ontario as the only province in Canada without a functional animal” protection system;

“Whereas the Superior Court of Ontario has concluded that the level of accountability and transparency required of a law enforcement agency can only be found in the public sector;

“Whereas the animal protection elements of the current law, the OSPCA Act, are sound but require enforcement that is dedicated, effective and accountable;

“We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario through the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, which has the lead for animal protection in our province, as follows:

“Immediately implement interim measures to ensure animals are protected in Ontario, which includes changes

to the OSPCA Act to enable the minister of MCSCS to appoint a new chief inspector with the ability to appoint staff from municipalities and provincial ministries as investigators under that act;

“Introduce legislation that establishes a new animal” protection “system for Ontario that will be effective and accountable, with provincial oversight and service delivery by the public sector including municipalities and provincial ministries;

“Appoint a trustee to administer the affairs of the OSPCA and merge its assets into the new animal” protection “system.”

I support this petition, will be giving it to page Elizabeth and will be signing it.

### FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

**Mr. Dave Smith:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the ban on hunting and trapping in sections of Ontario to protect the eastern hybrid wolf was put in place without regard for the overall ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban has adversely affected the ability of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), hunters and trappers to properly manage animal populations and Ontario’s ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban is no longer needed and is in fact causing more damage to Ontario’s ecosystem and increasing unnecessary encounters between wildlife and Ontarians;

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

“That the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry immediately lift the ban on hunting and trapping set in place to protect the eastern hybrid wolf.”

I agree with this petition, I’ll sign my name to it and hand it to page Greyson to take to the table.

### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Faisal Hassan:** I have a petition entitled, “Stop Auto Insurance Gouging.”

“Whereas some neighbourhoods across the GTA have been unfairly targeted by discriminatory practices in the insurance industry;

“Whereas people in these neighbourhoods are penalized with crushing auto insurance rates because of their postal code;

“Whereas the failure to improve government oversight of the auto insurance industry has left everyday families feeling the squeeze and yearning for relief;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to ban the practice of postal code discrimination in the GTA when it comes to auto insurance premiums.”

I fully support this petition. I will be affixing my signature to it and providing it to page Aaryan to deliver to the table.



## VETERANS MEMORIAL

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** The petition is titled, "Petition in Support of Constructing a Memorial to Honour Our Heroes." It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas over 40,000 Canadian Armed Forces members served in the war in Afghanistan including the 159 Canadians who made the ultimate sacrifice; and

"Whereas the Premier made a commitment to the people of Ontario to build a memorial to honour the bravery and sacrifice of our armed forces; and

"Whereas, by remembering their service and sacrifice, we recognize the values and freedoms these men and women fought to preserve; and

"Whereas the memorial will show our gratitude to our veterans, their families and to their descendants; and

"Whereas the memorial will be a place of remembrance, a form of tribute, and an important reminder to future generations of the contributions and sacrifices that have helped shape our country;

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

"That the government of Ontario immediately construct the memorial to honour the heroes of the war in Afghanistan."

I affix my signature.

## TENANT PROTECTION

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** I would like to thank Brenda from 100 High Park for collecting signatures on this petition, entitled "Protect Tenants: Stop the Speed-Up of Evictions."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas recent reports show that the Ontario government plans to introduce new laws that would allow landlords to evict tenants faster and use private bailiffs to enforce eviction orders;

"Whereas there is an affordable housing and rental crisis in Ontario;

"Whereas many tenants who have lived in their units for years are being pushed out of their homes through renovations and other loopholes, allowing their landlords to double or triple the rent;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to act to: reject any proposed changes that give landlords the power to evict honest tenants more quickly; close all loopholes that give landlords incentive to drive people out of their units so they can rent at new, much higher rents, including action in above-guideline rent increases and renovations; and commit to immediate action to increase access to affordable housing in Ontario by building more affordable housing, social housing, supportive housing and increasing rent supplements, etc."

I fully support this petition and will be affixing my signature to it.

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## FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

**Mr. Mike Harris:** I have a great petition here.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the ban on hunting and trapping in sections of Ontario to protect the eastern hybrid wolf was put in place without regard for the overall ecosystem;

"Whereas this ban has adversely affected the ability of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), hunters and trappers to properly manage animal populations and Ontario's ecosystem;

"Whereas this ban is no longer needed and is in fact causing more damage to Ontario's ecosystem and increasing unnecessary encounters between wildlife and Ontarians;

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

"That the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry immediately lift the ban on hunting and trapping set in place to protect the eastern hybrid wolf."

I have affixed my signature to this, Mr. Speaker, and present it to page Liv.

## ANIMAL PROTECTION

**Ms. Rima Berns-McGown:** I have 2,000 signatures gathered from across Ontario for a petition to ban outdoor dog-chaining.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas video footage depicting Ontario dog-sledding operations has been gathered on multiple occasions in 2018, featuring hundreds of dogs chained to poles outdoors in freezing cold and blistering hot conditions, with only plastic barrels as shelter; and

"Whereas these conditions are standard in the sled dog industry; and

"Whereas these social pack animals suffer from boredom, frustration and depression when forced to eat, sleep and eliminate in the same tiny area they are chained, and may be shot to death if operators' profits decline; and

"Whereas animal health experts encourage Canadians to keep dogs indoors in extreme weather; and

"Whereas the provincial standards of care (O. Reg 60/09, s. 3) allow dogs to be chained outdoors indefinitely, requiring a mere three-metre tether and a minimal shelter; and

"Whereas the laws protecting dogs in Ontario are vague, insufficient and inadequately enforced,

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

"To ban outdoor dog-chaining in Ontario and take immediate steps to better protect dogs with stricter regulations of the sled dog industry."

I agree with this petition, will be signing it and giving it to page Ishwarejan to take to the Clerk.

### FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** The petition is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the ban on hunting and trapping in sections of Ontario to protect the eastern hybrid wolf was put in place without regard for the overall ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban has adversely affected the ability of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), hunters and trappers to properly manage animal populations and Ontario’s ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban is no longer needed and is in fact causing more damage to Ontario’s ecosystem and increasing unnecessary encounters between wildlife and Ontarians;

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

“That the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry immediately lift the ban on hunting and trapping set in place to protect the eastern hybrid wolf.”

I agree with these sentiments and sign the petition.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Ms. Jill Andrew:** This petition is called, “Affordable housing.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas for families throughout much of Ontario, owning a home they can afford remains a dream, while renting is painfully expensive;

“Whereas consecutive Conservative and Liberal governments have sat idle, while housing costs spiralled out of control, speculators made fortunes, and too many families had to put their hopes on hold;

“Whereas every Ontarian should have access to safe, affordable housing. Whether a family wants to rent or own, live in a house, an apartment, a condominium or a co-op, they should have affordable options;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately prioritize the repair of Ontario’s social housing stock, commit to building new affordable homes, crack down on housing speculators, and make rentals more affordable through rent controls and updated legislation.”

I am proud to affix my signature in support of this petition and the wonderful people of Toronto–St. Paul’s and hand this to Arthur.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. We have time for one more petition. The member for Brampton Centre.

### AUTISM TREATMENT

**Ms. Sara Singh:** Thank you, Speaker, for allowing the time. I’d like to present this petition entitled “Support Ontario Families with Autism.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas every child with autism deserves access to sufficient treatment and support so that they can live to their fullest potential;

“Whereas the Ontario Autism Program was badly broken under the Liberals, and the changes introduced by the Conservatives have made it worse;

“Whereas the new funding caps are based on age and income, and not the clinical needs of the child;

“Whereas Ontario needs a true investment in evidence-based autism services that meets the needs of autistic children and their families;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to invest in equitable, needs-based autism services for all children who need them.”

I’m happy to sign my name and send this off with page Nicholas.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much. That concludes the time that we have available for petitions this afternoon.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### SUPPORTING ONTARIO’S COMMUNITY, RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL NEWSPAPERS ACT, 2019

#### LOI DE 2019 SUR LE SOUTIEN AUX JOURNAUX COMMUNAUTAIRES, RURAUX ET AGRICOLES DE L’ONTARIO

Ms. Ghamari moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 78, An Act to amend various Acts with respect to the publication of notices in newspapers / Projet de loi 78, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne la publication d’avis dans les journaux.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** I’m pleased to stand here today in the Legislature to talk about my first private member’s bill, Supporting Ontario’s Community, Rural and Agricultural Newspapers Act.

Community newspapers bring high-value engagement and trust to all levels of government messaging: federal, provincial, regional and municipal. Some 82% of Ontario citizens read their local community newspapers. Community newspapers like the Manotick Messenger and Ottawa Community Voice in my riding of Carleton are the voice of their community and strong contributors to their local economies.

Community newspapers are aligned with our provincial government’s mandates to help create jobs, to save taxpayer money and to reduce red tape for small businesses. In a December 2016 research poll, when almost 2,500

Canadians were asked the question, “Which of the listed media do you think are the most appropriate for advertising about federal, provincial and municipal/regional government programs and services,” 72% of respondents, or almost three quarters, said that they want to see advertising for government programs and services in their local newspapers. In smaller markets with a population of less than 100,000 people, six in 10, or approximately 60%, of adults believe that community newspapers are the most appropriate media for government advertising. Indeed, Ontario’s community newspapers are lucky to be supported and represented by the Ontario community newspaper industry, and I’m glad that I was joined earlier today by Caroline Medwell, the executive director of the Ontario Community Newspapers Association.

This proposed private member’s bill has its roots in my riding of Carleton. This issue was originally brought to my attention by Mr. Jeffrey Morris, who owns two local community newspapers: the Manotick Messenger in my riding of Carleton and the Barrhaven Independent in Minister MacLeod’s riding of Nepean. With the past purchase of the free Metroland news and subsequent shutdown of its local community editions, independently owned community newspapers are vitally important sources of information in Carleton and in other rural and northern communities throughout Ontario. They are also relied upon by many immigrant and new Canadian communities as crucial sources of local, non-traditional-English news. The proposed changes will help ensure the viability of these newspapers, enabling them to continue to bring their communities together and to provide residents with crucial local news.

**1340**

Turning now to the content of my private member’s bill: Municipalities are required to post notice to the public for relevant community works, events, consultations and other things. These notices are often required to be tendered to the public via postings in community newspapers. The current definition of “newspaper” in the Legislation Act reads as follows:

“‘newspaper’, in a provision requiring publication, means a document that,

“(a) is printed in sheet form, published at regular intervals of a week or less and circulated to the general public, and

“(b) consists primarily of news of current events of general interest....”

This definition of a newspaper contained within the Legislation Act, 2006, is the standard used by municipalities for the purpose of providing public notice in the following acts: the City of Toronto Act, the Development Charges Act, the Environmental Assessment Act, the Expropriations Act, the Municipal Act, the Ontario Heritage Act and the Planning Act.

Increasingly, community newspapers, particularly those in northern and rural Ontario, are published on a biweekly or monthly basis because of disastrous policies made by the previous government, such as increasing red tape, increasing hydro bills, and increasing their overall

bottom line, which has led many of them to look at cost-cutting efforts in order to maintain their small, independently owned businesses.

By limiting their publications to biweekly or monthly, municipalities are not able to post notice in these local publications anymore because they do not fit the standard definition of “newspaper.” So not only are these community newspapers losing out on a potential source of revenue that would help support local businesses, but it also makes it difficult for municipalities to inform local populations of relevant local news.

To fix this problem, I am proposing to add the following definition of “newspaper” to the acts that I previously mentioned:

“‘newspaper’, in a provision requiring publication, means a document that,

“(a) is printed in sheet form, published at regular intervals of a month or less and circulated to the general public, and

“(b) consists primarily of news of current events of general interest....”

By amending the City of Toronto Act, the Development Charges Act, the Environmental Assessment Act, the Expropriations Act, the Municipal Act, the Ontario Heritage Act and the Planning Act to include this updated definition to reflect publications of a month or less as opposed to weekly or less, I am hoping to strengthen the fabric of Ontario’s rural, northern and immigrant communities, while at the same time supporting local businesses and ensuring that Ontarians continue to have easily accessible news resources.

To clarify, Madam Speaker, this change does not mandate that municipalities must now provide notice in all of these papers; all it does is broaden the scope of potential newspapers. Municipalities can still pick and choose which paper they wish to provide notice in.

The requirement that municipal notices be posted in newspapers with a publishing frequency of weekly or less has prevented many smaller local community newspapers from being able to post these municipal notices, putting them at a competitive disadvantage. Amending the definition of a “newspaper” to those which have a publishing frequency of a month or less will help even the playing field for many local community newspapers and could add to their bottom line. It would also save the municipalities money, as they could specifically target the areas in which they must post notice, as opposed to publishing in a larger newspaper which has many readers for whom the notice may be irrelevant.

Note that the majority of these local community newspapers are free. Therefore, the proposed changes will also save many Ontarians from having to purchase a newspaper just to get relevant and important local community information as it pertains to municipal notices, since they will be able to get that same information for free in the community newspapers that they already rely upon.

I have received broad support for this private member’s bill from key stakeholders across Ontario.

I would like to take a moment to read a letter of support provided to me by Ottawa's mayor, Jim Watson. On January 21, 2019, Mayor Watson wrote:

"I am writing to request that the province amend the definition of 'newspaper' to allow for a broader range of options for municipalities to provide public notice for residents as required under various Ontario statutes.

"With consolidation in the newspaper industry, this leaves the city of Ottawa with few options to post public notice required by various laws. I ask that you consider broadening the legislation's requirements from a weekly frequency. This would allow municipalities to advertise in a broader range of local and community newspapers, some of which publish every two weeks.

"This would enable us to more effectively reach more residents and communities, and support local newspapers, while fulfilling statutory public notice requirements."

I'd like to thank Caroline Medwell and everyone from the Ontario Community Newspapers Association for their support. I'd like to thank Mr. Jeffrey Morris for bringing this issue to me in the first place.

I'd like to thank everyone here today for joining me in this debate. I hope that after listening to my comments, everyone in the House can join me in Supporting Ontario's Community, Rural and Agricultural Newspapers Act.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I rise today in support of Bill 78, the Supporting Ontario's Community, Rural and Agricultural Newspapers Act. This is a solid start to supporting the growth and use of local and community newspapers.

In addition to the importance of rural and agricultural newspapers, I want to speak to the great presence of the ethnocultural and non-English press in Ontario. More than five million people in Ontario don't consider English their first language. They might rely on ethnocultural and non-English newspapers in order to get important information, including the municipal notices to the public that the member for Carleton has been talking about.

In my riding of Waterloo there are a few non-English newspapers such as the Chinese Canada Voice and the Além Fronteiras, a Portuguese paper. Every month, all members in this House get a community newspaper in Arabic to remind us that non-English newspapers exist and they matter.

These newspapers tend to have monthly issues, so the legislation will serve them well. I just wanted to highlight their importance in this diverse society of Ontario.

I also just want to give a shout-out to student newspapers in the province of Ontario. The importance of student journalism has recently come to the fore.

Isabelle Beezley, who is the editor-in-chief of the Charger, writes, "Journalism is far more than simple fact reporting. Journalists act as informants, watchdogs and storytellers. They tell the stories people want to hear and, more often, the stories they don't....

"Being a journalist comes with a sense of responsibility to provide the truth to your readers."

Anything that we can do to strengthen newspaper coverage in the province of Ontario is good.

One of the most important functions of journalism is to convey transparent, unrestrained and unbiased information. The media is doing a great job in Ontario doing just that. A free press is needed in order to hold all of us members accountable to our communities and this province. The media is a watchdog. They oversee the work of government officials on behalf of the citizens, and they are needed now more than ever.

When the Premier of Ontario goes on record to say that mainstream journalists have become irrelevant because he speaks to Ontarians through social media, that sets a dangerous tone to our democracy. When the Premier limits the number of press conferences he does, that sets a dangerous tone to our democracy. When he does not post his itinerary and is not transparent about where he is and what he is doing, that makes the media's job more complicated.

I believe, and I know many members in this House believe, in the value of the fifth estate and social media in disseminating information. In fact, I talk to my constituents in Waterloo every day via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, and I know that many of us do that.

You cannot have a government private member's bill supporting local media on one hand while you have a rogue Premier attacking the media on the other hand. The Premier, on multiple public occasions, claimed that his biggest rival—and the official opposition—is the media, referring to reporters as the media party. If anyone's cheese fell off the cracker, it's the Premier's in this instance, not the reporters in the province of Ontario.

With that said, we support this member's motion because community newspapers serve an important role in the province of Ontario to disseminate information from municipalities. As I've stated, those ethnic media sources actually ensure that inclusion of populations in our democracy happens in Ontario. New Democrats will proudly support this private member's motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I recognize the member from Milton.

**Mr. Parm Gill:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's always an honour and a pleasure every time to rise and speak in this House and represent my constituents in the great riding of Milton, and especially to speak to the bill introduced by my colleague from Carleton, Bill 78.

**1350**

As I've mentioned before in this House, it's very important that the legislation introduced and passed in this Legislature not only focus on the GTA, but rather the province as a whole, and this piece of legislation fulfills that.

In my riding of Milton, I have many small communities with unique identities, including Moffat, Kilbride, Brookville, Campbellville and others. The residents of these rural areas deserve to be supported just as much as any other community.

The amendments this bill proposes allow for a newspaper to be defined as a document that is published at regular intervals of a month or less, rather than published at regular intervals of weekly or less, as it is currently.

Madam Speaker, it concerns me, obviously, that the previous Liberal government did not support rural areas like my riding of Milton. Many of my constituents who live in rural parts felt neglected for 15 years. In fact, I can tell you that I am a rural resident. I live in a rural part of Milton. I know first-hand how rural areas in this province have been forgotten and how and why they feel neglected. I can assure this House of my constituents that, under the PC government now elected and in place, that will no longer be the case.

My office, like many other government offices, informs residents about community events, consultations taking place and government announcements through newspaper distributions. Each and every Ontarian has the right to voice their concerns to their community leaders, but it is sometimes difficult to do so when messages are not getting to them in a timely manner.

This bill will help rural communities be part of the important conversations that take place regarding their community, and outside of their community.

I encourage all members in this Legislature to support this excellent piece of legislation, especially the members who represent northern or rural parts of Ontario.

I want to thank my colleague the member from Carleton for introducing this piece of legislation, and I'm looking forward to supporting this when it comes to the vote.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** It's always a privilege to take my place on behalf of the good people of Algoma-Manitoulin.

I want to congratulate the member from Carleton for bringing this bill forward. It's a good bill. A lot of your words were words that you took out of my notes, I'm pretty sure. Did you copy my notes? So I won't have to go there very much.

I want to give a shout-out to the good people who provide essential reporting and news articles to the good people of Algoma-Manitoulin:

- Tracy Black Moore from the Algoma News Review;
- Andrew Vondette from Around & About magazine in Espanola;
- Mario Lafreniere from the Chapleau Express;
- Carl Clutchey from the Chronicle Journal up in Marathon;
- Kevin McSheffrey from the Elliot Lake Standard;
- Andrew Kwon from Island Clippings;
- Nicole Lortie from Le Voyageur;
- Michael Erskine, Alicia McCutcheon and Warren Schlote from the Manitoulin Expositor;
- Tom Sasvari, my good friend and golf partner in the summertime, from the Manitoulin West Recorder;
- again, Kevin McSheffrey, Jessica Brousseau and Dawn Lalonde from the Mid-North Monitor in Espanola;
- the North Shore Bulletin in Elliot Lake;
- Brent Rankin from the North Shore Sentinel;
- Brenda Grundt from Wawa-News;
- Wicksteed Weekly in Hornepayne; and
- Rosalind Russell in Espanola. I didn't forget you.

These individuals provide a very key and essential service, as the member talked about.

A lot of the challenges that the industry has faced over the course of the years come from the preceding government that was here. I have to admit, you have an opportunity to fix it. I hope this project doesn't get passed—it will get passed, but I hope it doesn't stay on a shelf, collecting dust, because what I heard from this government and the preceding government are words like, "Let's streamline things. Let's modernize. Let's create greater outreach tools." Well, that took away from northern Ontario and across this province small newspaper businesses that were looking at bringing the essential services and messaging not only from government, but from municipalities and so on to their communities.

I will throw a stone—I'm sorry; I will, but it's deserved. The Minister of Tourism came to Manitoulin Island to talk to tourist outfitters and tourist businesses in regard to how we can improve certain things, what we can do—they wanted to hear the messaging. The shocking thing is, the media was asked to leave that room. The media in my area are the voice of a lot of tourism opportunities that are there, and it was shocking that they were asked to leave the room, when they could have actually provided and added—because a lot of the advertising that goes through events, through tourism, is reflected in our newspapers.

I also want to give a shout-out to a lot of the opportunities, the revenues, the economic businesses—just the opportunities for young students, not only through their own media outlets that they have in their high schools and college and university in my area, but that they have working at these newspaper facilities. So I want to give a shout-out to them too. As a matter of fact, there are a few of them I'm going to be seeing, I believe, on April 4. I wonder why; I wonder what reporting is going to be happening on that day.

There are also a lot of public notices that go through these papers that don't get out on the Internet. Guess what? Not all my communities have Internet. Some of them are on dial-up, some of them have nothing, and they still rely on this as a mode of communication. Plusieurs dans ma région sont couverts par des papiers francophones. Ça, c'est un service essentiel qu'on a dans toutes nos communautés.

There are a lot of people who have relocated and opened up new businesses in northern Ontario, and they rely on the ethnic papers that are being put out there. They get sent up to many of our communities, and these individuals stay connected with the media streams that are happening not only down here, but across the world.

Again, I give a shout-out to the member for bringing this forward—good motion; good bill coming forward. I just hope that it doesn't stay on the shelf collecting dust. If you need somebody to dust those shelves with you, you come and see the member from Algoma-Manitoulin and I'll make sure that paper gets to the proper desk.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate.

**Mr. Stephen Lecce:** I want to start by extending my gratitude to the member from Carleton for having leadership and bringing forth this important PMB, for a few reasons, and Madam Speaker, allow me to enumerate four.

The first is, last year alone in the province of Ontario over 130,000 newcomers proudly made this province home—over 300,000 people came to this country. As a conservative movement in the western world, we literally are one of the only conservative parties that are pro-immigration within the world. We are a party that has seen immigration levels rise every single year that the former federal Conservative government was in power. Even during the recession, when every economy, virtually, was contracting immigration, we took a very strong position in supporting immigrants and newcomers, ensuring that they settle in this country and they are able to achieve their potential through employment and through integration in their communities. The reason why I mention that is because we have hundreds of thousands of people who choose Ontario. This initiative alone will give more access and viability to third-language media for those individuals and for all Canadians.

I should also add, Madam Speaker, that with a circulation of four million people observing local media, it speaks volumes to the fact that this is a well-subscribed source of media. I have respect for all forms of media, however it manifests, but local media is really the lifeline of many communities and plays an important role in highlighting successes. Also, the spirit of a community is driven most often by some of the local papers. In my great riding, the King Weekly Sentinel plays a vital role.

On that note, I want to mention a gentleman from my riding: the outgoing president of the Ontario Community Newspapers Association, Ray Stanton, who is a great supporter of this bill. He asked me to express my gratitude to the member from Carleton for taking action on this important piece of legislation.

This is also about supporting small businesses. These are often small businesses, either sole-owned enterprises—and these are folks who want to be able to compete with other newspapers in the marketplace. This will save communities money, which we think is vital, especially during a time when costs are rising—energy, among others. We want to do everything we can to help communities and municipal governments save more money so they can deliver better services for the people they represent.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I just want to note that—just concluding on the ethnocultural side—having spent many years of my life working with Canada and Ontario's ethnocultural media, I know that this access to these outlets will play a vital role in really helping with the integration, the journey that these folks come to Canada seeking so that they can succeed.

**1400**

I just wanted to conclude with a notation of thanks to the member and thanks to all members for their support for this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always an honour to stand in the House. The bill is Bill 78, regarding more advertising access, notifications for the public in small newspapers. I fully support this bill—fully, fully, fully—for several reasons.

For one, in many parts of rural Ontario—and just to backstop, the member from Milton suggested that he thinks that his part of Ontario is rural. I accept that. But if that's rural, then my part of rural Ontario is, like, tumbleweed Ontario. There is a whole different perception, and that's why we need to travel across this province to really figure out how we perceive ourselves and how we perceive others.

In many parts of rural Ontario, as in my part of rural Ontario, we don't have Internet access, so we need—we need—to be notified through rural papers. It's a necessity. I commend the member. It's a necessity. That's why, when the government suggests that we can apply for things online, in northern Ontario it's a joke. It's a joke. I commend the member that she recognizes that we need to sometimes have notifications through community newspapers, whether weekly, monthly, biweekly, because sometimes, in parts of our province, that's the only way it is accessible—the only way. Many parts of our province don't have Internet access. For many citizens of our province, whether they be the older generation or recent immigrants or, quite frankly, they aren't into our Internet age, that's the only information they get. In order to have universal access, they have to have the support so they can find that. I hope the government also makes sure that they not only get the municipalities to post their information but post information themselves.

I fully support this bill, but we're getting extremely mixed messages from this government. When they do time allocation motions and give, like, days for witness lists—days, sometimes hours, for witness lists—that this government is committed to informing the public, quite frankly, outside of that member, is a joke. Because when you give hours of notice and you expect—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** —Ontarians throughout the province to be able to get that information, that is a joke.

The member who is heckling me used to come from North Bay, and he should understand that—that north of North Bay there are lots of people who don't have daily communication with this fine city. It is a fine city, but we have to understand that there's more than this fine city in this great province, and you guys are as bad as the Liberals with that. You've totally forgotten most of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** I'm pleased to be able to speak in support of Bill 78, because Whitby is a town where the majority of its residents still rely on Whitby This Week and the Brooklin Town Crier for local news and information about local events, but when I sit down and I speak to

the publisher and I speak to the editor of those publications, they tell me that they're under growing pressure for advertising dollars and they are now competing with online providers and national publications.

Speaker, by changing the definition of "newspaper" for the purpose of these required notices that we have right now, by defining it as being "published at regular intervals of a month or less and circulated to the general public," we will be acknowledging the importance of these community publications and helping their sustainability, an important aspect, and ensuring that community residents receive important information from very visible community resources like *Whitby This Week* and the *Brooklin Town Crier*.

I'm pleased, again, to support Bill 78 and commend the member from Carleton for her great work in bringing this bill forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** To be blunt, this bill is a bit of a no-brainer. Our community papers are there for us, but they are businesses. They've always been businesses, and they provide such an important source of ideas and information, and I'm referring particularly to rural Ontario and small-town Ontario. I think just in my riding alone, I'll name the *Simcoe Reformer*, the *Grand River Sachem*, *Lakeshore Shopper* and *Tillsonburg News*. They're all owned by national conglomerates.

In addition, we have the independent papers. Some of them have been around—oh, gosh—100 years or more. The *Port Dover Maple Leaf*: How patriotic is that? How Canadian is that? The *Port Dover Maple Leaf*, the *Haldimand Press*, the *Port Rowan Good News*—the *Port Rowan Good News* doesn't print much from me, for some reason. I've got to work on that, with a name like the *Port Rowan Good News*. They're all locally owned.

Our local papers, of all sizes, as has been indicated in our discussions this afternoon, are facing a momentous challenge with reduced advertising revenue. As we all know, at one time, radio stations and papers were really the only options for far-flung communities across our province. Today, with the Internet and social media, there are so many other options, and as a result newspapers have had to cut their publishing frequency.

One of the results is that some papers, as we now know, no longer qualify as vehicles to advertise municipal changes as required through provincial legislation because their publishing frequency is not enough—another wound in the revenue chest of our small-town papers. However, there is also an easy fix, and this appears to me to be a no-brainer. We need to change the legislation so that every community newspaper qualifies to run municipal announcements. These publications are still a vital source of information, and, I might add, in my view, they have editors, they have professional journalists and they provide accurate news of what's going on in the community, contrary to what one might see on Facebook or Twitter, for example.

I've also heard from owners who have had to shut down their papers, and I've lost a number of papers across my riding, in part because they lost that municipal government

advertising or perhaps that provincial or federal government advertising—levels of government that underestimated the readership, the following, of these publications: in my perspective, another indication of where centralized government in this great city that was mentioned can sometimes be out of touch with what's going on in small-town Ontario, rural Ontario, northern Ontario, a very important part of our fabric. They're the conduit to what's happening—news, for example, on local councils, how the town sports teams are faring, what kind of services are being advertised by local businesses, businesses that obviously support the paper and we support them, community members, families that are recognizing important milestones, all happenings, a bit of gossip here and there that we all glean usually on a weekly basis. I have only one daily in my particular riding.

Two of my staffers are former journalists. They were both editors of small-town papers, and I have certainly come to value their sense of community, the skills, the connections they have, that they've built up over two decades previous to joining my office. I'm very lucky; I'm able to keep them to myself.

Again, full support for the member from Carleton. It's good work, Goldie.

1410

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** The member for Carleton has two minutes to reply.

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** First of all, I wanted to thank the members from Waterloo, Milton, Algoma-Manitoulin, King-Vaughan, Timiskaming-Cochrane, Whitby and Haldimand-Norfolk for standing and speaking to my private member's bill. I wasn't expecting to get so much interest or support, but it's a pleasant surprise, and it's probably the best birthday present I've ever had. Thank you, everyone, for your support on that. It really means a lot to me, and I know that it's going to mean a lot to the people of Ontario.

I'm a millennial. I turn 34 today, I guess, but I'm still connected to my phone. I live off of my phone. I'm on social media. I'm on Twitter. But at the same time, I recognize the importance of having that local paper connection to the community, and especially in rural communities.

Carleton is definitely rural in some areas. It might not be as rural as Timiskaming-Cochrane, but it's still pretty rural, and we do have Internet issues. I know that in my constituency office in Richmond, we couldn't even get—I don't know what we had to do, but we had to get four different lines through Bell just to get to that 25 megabytes or whatever. That's still within the city of Ottawa, so I understand—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** Yes, it's the rural part of the city of Ottawa.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I just got one.

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** Oh, there you go.

It's so important to have that connection to community newspapers and to support them, because they are small businesses. Our government and our mandate is all about

supporting small business, making Ontario open for business again and getting rid of unnecessary regulations and red tape.

I'm thrilled to have everyone's support on this. I look forward to seeing what we can do next. Thank you, everyone.

HELLENIC HERITAGE MONTH  
ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LE MOIS  
DU PATRIMOINE HELLÉNIQUE

Ms. Triantafilopoulos moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 77, An Act to proclaim a month to celebrate Hellenic heritage in Ontario / Projet de loi 77, Loi proclamant un mois pour célébrer le patrimoine hellénique en Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos:** I'm so pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 77, An Act to proclaim a month to celebrate Hellenic heritage in Ontario. Bill 77, if passed, would declare the month of March as Hellenic Heritage Month in Ontario.

March is the month chosen for this bill because March 25 is the date of Greece's war of independence in 1821, marking the beginning of the revolution that gained Greece its independence from the Ottoman Empire.

On March 25 of this year, I was pleased to join colleagues from the House, along with the consul general of Greece and many members of the Hellenic community in Ontario, to raise the flag of Greece on the pole in front of the Legislature.

On March 25, 1821, 198 years ago, the courageous people of Greece, after centuries of living under Ottoman despotism, rose up to fight for their "elefteria"—their freedom. As the great patriot Rigas Feraios wrote in his *Thourios*, or war song: [*Remarks in Greek.*] "Better one hour of a free life than 40 years of slavery and prison."

The Peloponnese, the great peninsula in the south of Greece, was at the heart of the uprising against the Ottoman rule. When war was declared, one of the first cities liberated was my birthplace of Kalamata in Messinia in the Peloponnese.

We, in Canada, as with most peoples in the western world, are blessed to live in a land of freedom and democracy, something that we must never take for granted. This heritage of democracy is part of the heritage of Greece, since democracy was a creation of ancient Greece. It's in the very word itself. To the ancient Greeks, the *demos* was the people, and the literal meaning of the word "democracy" is "rule by the people."

Democracy is associated with the Athens of the great statesman Pericles in the 5th century BC. The city-state of Athens had a very advanced view of what democracy meant, operating its system of government on three

principles. The first is the idea of *isegoria* or equal speech, the right of every citizen to take part in debate on matters of public policy. The second is *isonomia*, equality of every citizen under the law. The third is *isopoliteia*, equality of votes and the equality of opportunity to assume political office.

These ideas, of course, did not last forever in Athens, as the city fell under the rule of stronger powers, empires established by Alexander the Great and others. But they offered a beacon for other nations and peoples who would follow. Yet the heritage of the Hellenes extends far beyond just the creation of democratic government.

Greece is the birthplace of philosophy. Socrates, Plato and Aristotle explained the meaning of the world to people, extending from their contemporaries to ourselves in the modern world.

Doctors and scientists: Hippocrates, born in the 5th century BC, was a great healer who gave us the Hippocratic oath, which told us "First, do no harm;" Galen, whose theories would dominate medicine for 1,300 years; Euclid, the mathematician whose book *Elements* would be used to teach geometry until the 19th century; and Ptolemy of Alexandria, who knew the world was round more than 1,000 years before Columbus set sail.

The literature and poetry of ancient Greece: Homer, writing the spellbinding histories of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Look at any building with great rounded columns, such as our own Union Station, and you see the architectural heritage of the Greeks passed on to the modern world.

The contribution of ancient Greece to the cultures of Europe and, indeed, to the Islamic world is incalculable. Without the contributions of Hellenic culture, our modern world might operate on very different ideas and values today.

When we look back to the Renaissance and the Enlightenment in the west, at the heart of advancement was the rediscovery of the knowledge of ancient Greece. The learning of antiquity returned to the west, preserved in monasteries, in the Hellenic empire of the Byzantines, and in parts of the Islamic world. This is a heritage that enriched the world. When the Roman Empire became a Christian empire and moved its capital to Constantinople, it would slowly evolve into a Greek state. The Byzantine Empire lasted 1,000 years, and the religion of that state is essentially the Greek Orthodox faith we know today.

When the Ottoman Empire attempted, over a period of 400 years, to suppress the language and faith of Greece, forcing the people to practice both often hidden in caves, the Orthodox Church would sustain the Greek people as the nation struggled for freedom in the 19th century.

With easy access to water, Greece has also been a seafaring nation. Greeks are natural travellers and emigrants and the ancient Greeks founded countless colonies around the Mediterranean, from the coast of Anatolia and the Black Sea to north Africa, southern Italy and even Marseilles.

In present day, the Greek diaspora extends across the world. I can add, Speaker, in my own international law



practice, I encountered Hellenes in many different countries, including the former Soviet Union, Russia, Ukraine and as far away as Uruguay and Argentina.

1420

In Canada, Greek immigration began early in the 19th century. Greeks from the islands, such as Crete, Syros and Skopelos, and from the Peloponnese, especially the villages of the provinces of Arcadia and Laconia, settled in Montreal as early 1843. The greatest wave of Greek immigrants started coming to Canada after the Second World War. Thousands came through Pier 21 in Halifax, including my family, leaving their homeland in search of a better and safer life following wars, poverty and famine.

Today, more than 270,000 people of Hellenic descent live in Canada, and over half of them live here in our great province of Ontario. Canadians of Hellenic descent have contributed to our province in every field imaginable, from education to medicine, to politics, to business and to sport. The earliest immigrants worked hard and sacrificed so that their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren could fully participate in the freedoms and prosperity of Canada. Yet many of the early Hellenes in Canada faced discrimination and racism.

In my first statement as a member to this House, I commemorated the anti-Greek riot in Toronto at the end of the First World War. Most people, including young Canadians of Hellenic descent, were unaware of this history and the stain on Toronto's past. On August 2, 1918, a misunderstanding between a war veteran and the Greek Canadian owner of the White City Café on Yonge Street triggered the largest riot the city had ever seen. Because of Greece's late entry into World War I, there was anti-Greek sentiment and a belief that Greek Canadians didn't support the war. In fact, nothing could have been further from the truth, as many young Greek Canadians fought and volunteered with our forces. As many as 50,000 Torontonians took to the streets over three days, rioting and systematically targeting and destroying businesses owned by Greek Canadians. Ultimately, after three days, the militia was called in to restore peace. The armistice soon overshadowed the riots, and this event was quickly forgotten. Business owners whose businesses had been vandalized and looted sought redress in the courts but were denied. They then appealed directly to the government of Canada and the cabinet, and they were denied. The Hellenic community of 1918 did not receive justice. However, it resolved to move forward and to integrate into Canadian life.

The racism against Greek Canadians in 1918 would no doubt surprise many of us today. A hundred years later, our Hellenic community is an integral part of Ontario's cultural life, with an historic district, the Danforth, known for its "philoxenia," the Greek word for hospitality. This year's parade on the Danforth, which has become an iconic parade, was held last Sunday. We were pleased to have the Premier join us, along with many other caucus colleagues and dignitaries showing their support and respect for Toronto's Hellenic community. It was originally held on Queen Street. The parade dates back to the

1950s. The first laying of the wreath occurred at Old City Hall in November 1940. I was honoured to lay the wreath last week on behalf of our government.

One of the most important national institutions is the Hellenic Heritage Foundation, whose mission is to preserve and promote Hellenic culture, language and heritage in Canada. I've had the honour to be its past chair and president. During its more than 20 years in existence, it has raised millions of dollars to support various educational and cultural initiatives, including the establishment of the Hellenic studies chair at York University and the Hellenic studies program at the University of Toronto.

Churches, community organizations, cultural organizations and memorials have all been created by the Greek community of Toronto all over this city and the province. Hellenes have worked to create these institutions because of the concept of "philotimo," literally meaning "love of honour" but more closely meaning "doing good." Love of country, love of province, love of family, loyalty, and doing the right thing—these virtues are vital to Hellenes. To recognize Hellenic heritage is not just to remember the past; it honours the generations who struggled to build their lives in Canada and in our great province of Ontario for themselves and for their families; it honours their achievements; and it is this House and the province of Ontario publicly recognizing that Canadians of Hellenic origin, like those of so many others, have joined the Canadian family. Our country today is unthinkable without the sons and daughters of Greece. Celebrating Hellenic Heritage Month every year is not a recognition of people beyond the seas or visitors to our country; it is a recognition of part of Canada itself.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to rise in the House and support this bill. I want to thank the member for Oakville North—Burlington for bringing this forward. I think it's a bill that has not been passed before and one that needs to be passed in this House.

It's very fitting to debate this bill in March, as in this month we commemorate the beginning of the war of independence for Greece. March 1821 brought the beginning of spring to Greece, and Greeks brought the beginning of a political spring for Europe with the revolt against Turkish rule. After 400 years of darkness, of autumn and winter, Greeks could not be stopped. They would break winter and bring spring to their land or die trying. And so, the Greek spring of 1821 set the pace for revolutions in Europe that would create modern, western democratic societies and a century of revolutions. Every March 25, I remember that every winter, no matter if it's four months long or 400 years long, will be broken by the sun or by human spirit.

We have much to thank modern Greeks for. Modern Greeks, those great-great-granddaughters and great-great-grandsons of those who remade Europe in the model of the democratic ideals that the ancient Greeks first thought of, first put into practice—we owe them a great debt of

gratitude. Speaker, we owe much to modern Greeks, without a doubt, and my colleague has elucidated some of that. But we owe a lot to the ancient Greeks who shaped the very way that we think. It was ancient Greeks who first understood that the earth was round and calculated the size of the earth.

The member notes the epic literature, the epic poems of Homer—the Iliad and the Odyssey—both still amazing to read all these millennia later. Anyone who reads the account of the Odyssey and reads in the last chapter the description of Odysseus coming home to his wife, who he has not seen in years, will find tears coming to their eyes because it is so beautifully written, so emotionally powerful.

Anyone who reads Herodotus—who was the first great Western historian, a man who, in the 450s before the Common Era, wrote the contemporary history of Greece but talked about the reality of the world at that time. He talked about the Scythians north of the Black Sea, in what we would think of as Ukraine today. He actually went to Egypt, talked about what he found there, how people lived. In fact, it is interesting that just in the last month there was an archaeological discovery made in Egypt of a ship that had sunk around 400 BC or 500 BC that is exactly as had been described by Herodotus. And for the last few centuries—those who don't follow Greek literature may not have followed this controversy—some had said, “Maybe Herodotus was just making it up.” No, what they found was exactly what he reported. It validated what he had to say about the world at that time.

I can't leave without noting Thucydides, who wrote the History of the Peloponnesian War, a text about a multi-decade war that is still used in military academies to this day, to understand that it's not just a question of conflict of arms but conflict of societies and the relationships within those societies and between them.

Speaker, there are some people in my riding from Greek families who ask me did I shorten my name from Tabunopoulos. I tell them, “No, that's not true,” but I never try to damp down that rumour; it's a good one.

I support this bill and I want to again thank the member for bringing it forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** I appreciate the opportunity to speak in the Legislature today. We don't get many opportunities in this corner of the House to speak on bills, but I'm proud to be able to speak to the bill today, because of its importance. I want to thank the member for introducing this bill because I think it's very important that we recognize the rich heritage and culture of the Hellenic tradition here in Ontario and Canada. We know that it's a culture that's recognized not only in Canada but around the world as being one of the major influences to western thought, here, in western civilization.

1430

I just want to start by giving you a little background on my early experience within the Hellenic culture and community. I grew up in Flemingdon Park, which is at

Don Mills and Eglinton. There was a very vibrant, strong Greek community that was there. There's a Caribbean community, a Greek community. We had great families from that neighbourhood: the Tsoukarellis, the Alafogiannis, the Pessos, the Tonnos—so many different families.

One thing I always noticed is the tradition of making sure that young people go and learn about their culture at a very, very early age. They would go to Greek school on Wednesday evenings and, I can remember, on the weekend as well. In fact, if you go across Toronto, even currently, in my beautiful riding you have Hellenic courses and Greek culture courses that are offered by the Toronto District School Board, by the different churches in the city and by different associations.

I knew at an early age that this was a culture that had a lot to pass on to its children. The more I started to learn, I found that the Greek tradition itself is something that everyone can be very proud of. The influence in modern democracy, the influence in architecture, mathematics, science—it's countless—in literature and poetry. There's so much influenced by the Hellenic tradition here in Ontario, and the very strong, vibrant culture that exists in many different parts of Ontario.

I think that this bill being formalized in this Legislature is something that is very positive because, as MPPs, we need to use the tools we have to ensure that cultures that are here which make up this great province are recognized. By recognizing them, you are sharing information with other communities as well.

I'm very proud to stand here today to say I support this bill. Again, I want to thank the member for bringing this forward. I think it's very timely and necessary, considering the Greek Independence Day just passed, so I just want to say thank you to the member. I want all members in the Legislature to know that myself and my colleagues on this side of the House, who are in this corner of the House, are very supportive of this bill.

Thank you very much for bringing this forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** It's truly an honour and a pleasure to rise in the House today in support of the member from Oakville North-Burlington's private member's bill, Bill 77, Hellenic Heritage Month Act, 2019. We have had Hellenists who have lived in Canada and called Canada home, now, for many generations, and I was genuinely surprised that in all this time there hasn't been a piece of legislation introduced. Then, of course, I found out that, in fact, legislation was tabled in 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005, and for some reason, it never passed.

As Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, one of the things that I pride myself on in the work that I do is to make sure that culture is something that's celebrated. Culture is something that feeds into who we are as a society. It is the basis on which a lot of tourism exists. A lot of our festivals and events that take place in the province of Ontario are themed around culture.

Culture is extremely important because when you think about who we are, where we are, what our kids are doing, what our kids' future is, all of it has to be rooted in where we came from and recognizing who we are. The problem that we have, especially when you think about some of the situations that we're seeing in our society today, like the guns and gang violence—you have to ask yourself, why are things like this happening? I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that we forget to look at our roots, we forget to remember our traditions, we forget to teach our children the languages of our parents, our grandparents. A piece of legislation like this is extremely important to bring forward not only for the Greek community but for all communities, because Ontario and Canada are not made up of a single culture; they're made up of numerous cultures, and every one of them deserves the right to be respected, to be shared, to be celebrated.

It doesn't matter whether you're Italian or Chinese, what goes on on the Danforth or what happens in Little Italy is something that we should all celebrate and share because what that does is it allows us to understand each other at a much more profound level. It's very difficult to be prejudiced against someone when you understand why he or she does what they do.

For me, in situations like this, it's a no-brainer. It's really hard to understand why more of these aren't being brought forward. There are more than 148,000 people of Greek heritage—this is according to the 2016 census, so I'm sure there's more than that today—who live here in the province of Ontario, and they have contributed, as they have across Canada and around the world—and there were very eloquent words. I couldn't have said it better myself, from the standpoint of what they've contributed, whether it's the contributions to democracy and our way of life, whether it's some of the brilliant strategies they've brought forward, the contributions to science, the contributions to the arts, to literature and, of course, to food. They've contributed to every aspect of our lives. In a lot of ways, I'm very proud, because just across the other side is, of course, Italy and we share so much in common as Canadians of Italian heritage and Canadians of Greek heritage.

This is something that I think we have to do more of, regardless of where in the House it is.

In 2010, I was the president of the National Congress of Italian Canadians, and I thought of the idea of celebrating Italian heritage. It was interesting because, like what I'm hearing today, it was unanimous—all three parties came together and recognized the importance of celebrating the contributions of people of Italian origin, and today we're doing the same thing. I'm very pleased to hear that everyone in the House is supporting the legislation, because this is something, again, that will be there not only for us but also for future generations. We can't underestimate the importance of the strength in believing in who we are, remembering who we are and using that as a way to move forward in life because you have to be grounded in something.

When you think about what motivates an individual, he's either going to get that intrinsic motivation from his

family, from his peers, from community groups or he's going to get to a certain age, realize he doesn't have it and he's going to look externally to get that motivation. That's when you turn to gangs, and that's when you turn to things that are very difficult to correct later on.

To do this, to put legislation forward that gives us an opportunity to be able to celebrate an important culture, a culture that's respected around the world, gives us the opportunity to share it and also to educate our children and the children of other cultures as well—again, in the sharing.

This legislation, to me, is important really for three reasons. The first reason is that we remember our past, our history, our tradition, our culture, who we are. The second part of it is that we celebrate what the Greek community contributes to our lives every day in Ontario and here in Canada. That celebration is really important because what that does is it gives us the third point, which is, inspire—if we don't inspire our youth, members of this Legislature, we lose them. We lose them to drugs, we lose them to addictions, we lose them to mental health issues, we lose them to all kinds of other things because they don't have that grounding.

From my standpoint, it's extremely important that this type of legislation moves forward. I am extremely proud of the fact that it's being brought forward by our member. I support it wholeheartedly.

Thank you for bringing the Greek community to the forefront and recognizing the great work that they've done in the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Ms. Rima Berns-McGown:** I'm absolutely delighted to stand in the House and support the motion of the member for Oakville North–Burlington.

**1440**

I was really struck by something the member for Mississauga–Erin Mills said earlier this afternoon when he talked about the fact that nobody wants to be tolerated. We have to go so beyond tolerance in order to build this country. We have to recognize each community that is here. We have to value each community. We have to respect each community. A motion like this is so very important.

Of course, the Greek community provides and contributes so much to who we are as a Canadian fabric, both culturally—the philosophy, history, food, of course. I am very lucky to live in Beaches–East York, which has an enormous Greek population. I get to enjoy Greek culture and food all the time. It enriches my life and that of my community so very much.

But I also think it's important to take this as a learning moment. Those 1918 riots didn't come out of nowhere. It wasn't just sparked by an argument, although that was the trigger. As the member will know well, there was an environment at the time of political rhetoric that was deeply imbued with bigotry and discrimination against Greek Canadians, but also other immigrants from southern and eastern Europe.

I want to read you a couple of quotes. I used to teach diaspora studies at the U of T, and this was always one of my lectures. Writing around the time of the 1918 anti-Greek riots, Peter Bryce, the chief medical officer of the Department of Immigration, advocated for an immigration policy that would prefer British and western European immigrants over eastern and southern European immigrants on the grounds that “inferior immigrants” burdened Canada with massive social problems and “perversely lowered the fertility of Anglo-Saxons who had to limit their own family size if they were to pay through taxes for the support of others.”

Stephen Leacock, who we know as a humourist from *Orillia*, was also a professor of political science and economics at McGill. He was a profoundly racist professor who talked disparagingly and wrote in 1911 about how “still more important is the economic and racial character of the immigrants.” He was disparaging immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, saying, “They no longer consist of the strenuous, the adventurous, the enterprising ... they are animated by no desire to build up a commonwealth of freedom.... They are, in great measure, mere herds of the proletariat of Europe, the lowest classes of industrial society ... indifferent material from which to build the commonwealth of the future.”

I think that we really need to think seriously about the ways in which we sometimes talk about newer immigrants to Canada. We need to be careful that we don't use these terrible tropes, which we of course have thrown away with regard to Greek Canadians, and apply them to new immigrants. We have to be careful about divisive rhetoric and the way that it hurts newer immigrants to Canada, the way that racism, anti-immigrant rhetoric and Islamophobia still exist in our political rhetoric and sometimes in our lives.

It wasn't a coincidence that when the folks whose property was damaged in the riots went to get restitution, they were denied. The stuff was deeply systemic. It is upon us to examine our systems to get rid of that now, so we can truly be the country we say we want to be.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Belinda Karahalios:** Good afternoon. Thank you to the member for Oakville North–Burlington for putting this bill forward and for allowing me to speak to it.

Full disclosure: I myself am not Greek. I am a child of immigrants. My father is from Trinidad and my mother is from Portugal. But I am married to a wonderful Greek man by the name of Jim. His parents come directly from Greece. It is because of them that I'm able to experience the Greek culture, which is very, very rich. My father-in-law, God rest his soul, Gus Karahalios, used to always say, “Greece is the cradle of democracy,” and was always very happy to fill me in on Greek history whenever I would let him.

Canadians of Hellenic descent have contributed to every field of life in Ontario. They have enriched our culture and have strengthened our economy. It's fitting that so soon after Greek Independence Day and the flag-raising here at the Legislature, I get to stand in this place

and speak to Bill 77, an act that, if passed by this House, would see the month of March proclaimed as Hellenic Heritage Month in the province of Ontario.

More than 270,000 people of Hellenic descent live in Canada today, and over half of them live here in Ontario, as the minister had mentioned earlier.

Looking to my own riding of Cambridge and the surrounding area, almost 4,000 people living in Waterloo region identify as being of Greek or Hellenic origin.

Greek culture, food and dance are showcased often at various local Greek multicultural, multi-ethnic and faith-based events within our region. Most notably, at St. Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Kitchener, we have our Greek food festival every July, so for those who are in the area, please come on by.

Many leaders in our local business communities in Cambridge and Waterloo region are originally from Greece or they have family members who are, like myself.

To the member from Oakville North–Burlington: Thank you again for putting this bill forward. I'm happy to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, thank you for this time to speak.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** It is an honour to rise today in support of the Hellenic Heritage Month Act, and I thank the member from Oakville North–Burlington.

If passed, this bill will proclaim March as a time of special recognition of Greek heritage, history and contributions to our province and world. In fact, the list of contributions is so great that the few minutes of my speech today are as rain drops to the earth's oceans.

Greek philosophy, culture and science were pillars of Western thought and progress. Ancient Greek mathematicians such as Euclid, Archimedes and Pythagoras revolutionized geometry and developed mathematical proofs.

Greek philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle contemplated ethics, politics, psychology and reality itself.

The Hippocratic oath is the first known statement of medical ethics, and many of the principles that physicians still uphold today were established there.

Ancient Greek playwrights such as Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylus and many others formed the foundation of our modern theatre.

And who among us are strangers to the names and deeds of ancient Greek gods and heroes? Learning those myths and stories inspired the imagination and creativity of my own youth.

Speaker, my paternal heritage, being from Montenegro of the former Yugoslavia, has always made me feel a special kinship and appreciation of the Greek people, and primarily the Greek Orthodox Church, for not only are they the geographic neighbours of my own ancestors, but it was the missionary work of the great Saints Cyril and Methodius in the ninth century that brought the Orthodox Christian faith that has been central to the identity of many people, Balkan and beyond. Today, there are more than 200 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. The Eastern Orthodox Church can trace its roots right back to the

foundation of Christianity, and it is widely agreed that the original books of the Christian New Testament were, in fact, in Greek. Subsequent translations came from this text.

St. George's Greek Orthodox church here in Toronto was the first Greek Orthodox congregation in Canada. Founded by Greek immigrants in 1909, many of Canada's Hellenic community still refer to it as the "mother church." Until 1961, it served as the only Greek Orthodox church in Toronto. Today, there are 39 Greek Orthodox parishes in Ontario, where many of this province's 150,000 Greek Canadians—more than half of the Greek population in Canada—and other Orthodox Christians worship.

Speaker, I speak today in tribute to the Greek people. I recognize their contributions to the world, their contribution to my own education, my own imagination, and, above all, their contribution to my faith and my identity.

I want to wish them a happy Greek Independence Day and a happy Hellenic Heritage Month.

*Eleftheria i thanatos.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Miss Kinga Surma:** Thank you to my colleagues for allowing me this opportunity to speak to this legislation and to the member from Oakville North–Burlington for introducing Bill 77.

I am happy to stand before all of you today to speak to my support for the Hellenic Heritage Month Act. I have many Greek residents in my riding who I know would be very proud of the member's bill.

I am sure many constituents of mine were on the Danforth last weekend as well. I, too, was there and was very lucky to experience the passion and pride of the Greek community. On Sunday, I walked with our Premier, my colleagues in caucus and with my proudly Greek Canadian executive assistant Eva at the Greek heritage parade along the Danforth. A common message that I had heard from folks was that everyone started attending ever since they were little with their parents. I love events where the young and the older can celebrate together, and that's exactly what we saw. Families, friends and neighbours joined together, marching, dancing, eating and singing.

1450

The following day, on Monday, we celebrated our Greek community with a flag-raising outside of Queen's Park. It was an honour for our caucus to host members of the Greek community here in this building.

Being of Polish descent, I truly understand and appreciate one's ability to be able to celebrate one's culture. To me and my family, attending the Polish festival on Roncesvalles is always the highlight of every year. It's so important to us that often my family and friends are inviting guests and friends from out of town to join us and to come to Toronto during that time of year.

Heritage days and months help each and every single one of us share our pride of where we come from, our history, our culture and our growth as a community. It also encourages us to participate and appreciate other cultures, which is the very essence of being Canadians.

To the member for Oakville North–Burlington and to all of my constituents from Greece, I say, Ζίτο ε Ελλάδα.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mr. Aris Babikian:** I want to thank my friend the member for Oakville North–Burlington for bringing forward the Hellenic Heritage Month Act, Bill 77. I believe that recognizing the Hellenic community and their contributions to Ontario is very important and timely.

Madam Speaker, since the arrival of the first Greek immigrants to Ontario during the early 19th century, the community has contributed immensely to the social and cultural makeup of this great province. Greek cultural organizations, businesses and religious institutions have historically played an important role in contributing to this great mosaic we call Ontario.

On a personal note, I am the son of Armenians, a culture and society very much intertwined with the Hellenic culture. Since the Byzantine era, Armenians and Hellenics have stood side by side to face adversaries, occupation and invasion. The two nations share a commitment to family relationship, freedom, democracy and faith, which has strengthened their bonds throughout history.

Do I still have time?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** No, sorry. Thank you.

I return to the member for Oakville North–Burlington, who has two minutes to reply.

**Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos:** Thank you to all the members who have spoken in support of this bill today. To the members from Toronto–Danforth and Don Valley East; Minister Tibollo, the member for Vaughan–Woodbridge; the members for Cambridge, Etobicoke Centre, Scarborough–Agincourt, Beaches–East York, Humber River–Black Creek: my sincere thanks to you.

I'd like to conclude by letting the House know why this bill is so important to me. The early immigrants arrived with minimal language and little money, but they worked hard to provide for their families and find their place as Canadians. They were truly the pathfinders for all who followed in their footsteps, and we all stand on their shoulders because of what they were able to do for us. They sacrificed so that their children and grandchildren would receive the benefits of living in a free and democratic country.

This is, in fact, the story of my own family. My parents came to Canada, hoping for a better and safer future for our family. We found it here in Toronto. The existing Hellenic community we found here was relatively small at the time. It's in this environment, though, that my family thrived. My parents' home became a haven for relatives and friends who followed in my parents' footsteps. It's why I never forgot my community or my Hellenic roots and the importance of family.

Like so many families that have come from across the world from different parts of the world, we settled here and found many opportunities for our family to thrive. So for me, recognizing Hellenic heritage also lets me honour my own family, who came to this blessed country and

beautiful province, and it also allows me to honour all of those who helped us along the way.

#### STUDENT ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Chris Glover:** It's my pleasure to rise in the House to present a motion that is near and dear to me. It reads:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should make it easier for low- and middle-income students to access higher education and relieve their debt loads by converting all future OSAP loans into grants, and finally end the practice of the provincial government charging interest on student debt.

The reason I'm—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** For clarification, could the member please move the motion?

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Yes, I move the motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** The member has 12 minutes for his response.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Thank you—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I apologize to the member.

Mr. Glover has moved private member's notice of motion number 40. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation. Now he may proceed.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Okay. I guess I should have rehearsed this.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Thank you. Wow, I'm even getting applause at the beginning of my speech from the opposite side. Hopefully, I'll get some applause at the end as well.

I began teaching at York University in 2007, and the class I was teaching had about 35 fourth-year students. I was just shocked at how hard their situation was. They were paying, at that time, about \$5,000 a year in tuition, and they had enormous debts. One student, who was a single mother, had an \$80,000 student debt. She was a fourth-year undergrad. Of the students, more than two thirds were working either part-time or full-time while going to school. Out of the 30, about four were actually working 30 or 40 hours a week and going to school.

I compare that to the situation when I started university in 1980. At that time, I was paying about \$1,000 a year in tuition. I was going up north and planting trees to pay for my education. I was making 10 cents a tree. I could plant about 2,000 trees a day—

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** You were pretty good.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I was not bad. The black flies chewed me up.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** You donated blood.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I have donated my share of blood to the black flies and mosquitoes in northern Ontario.

Thirty-five years later, my daughter's friend goes up to northern Ontario to plant trees. He's making nine cents a tree. Thirty-five years later, he's making less money, and his tuition fees today are about \$8,000. We are not providing this generation of young people with the same opportunities that were available to us. That, to me, speaks

to the regressive nature of our economy and of our society over the last 30 years. It's something that we need to reverse, because if we live in a progressive society, it means that this next generation should have at least the same, and preferably better, opportunities than were available to us.

The question that will come up from the other side of the House, I'm assuming, is, "How would we pay for this?" Paying for this is a question of priorities. This government just gave a \$127-million tax cut to the wealthiest Ontarians. That portion would cover the interest cost on all the student debt on this province—the provincial portion of the student debt. They also promised to give a billion-dollar tax cut to corporations. That billion dollars would—and it depends because it's a bit of a moving target with all the changes to OSAP, but that would more than likely cover the cost of converting loans to grants. So that's how we could pay for it.

Then—I'm just anticipating what the other side is going to say—they're going to say, "Well, what about our competitive advantage?" Well, we have one of the lowest combined corporate tax rates of any neighbouring jurisdiction in the States or in Canada. At the same time, we have the most highly educated workforce in the world. Some 67% of Ontarians between the age of 25 and 40 have some post-secondary education. When we look at value added for this province for corporations that are thinking about locating here, we've got this educated workforce. What we're asking for is that corporations and those most able to should pay a portion of that and should contribute to the education of the next generation.

#### 1500

I want to talk about how we got to the situation where we are, because in Ontario we have the lowest per-student funding, the highest tuition fees and the highest student debt levels. That really started in 1995. At that point, university tuition fees in Ontario were about \$2,500, college was about \$1,200, and it was fairly consistent across programs. In university, if you were studying in undergrad or you were doing law school, medical school or an MBA, it was roughly about \$2,500.

The Harris Conservatives came in and they jacked up tuition fees and deregulated professional program fees. By the time they were finished in 2003, tuition fees for undergrads had gone from \$2,500 to about \$5,000, and professional fees for law school and medical school were hitting about \$12,000.

In 2003, the Liberals came in on a promise to freeze tuition, and they did, for two years. Then they set in course a plan where most fees would go up by 4% a year and professional fees would go up by 8% a year. Under the Liberals, tuition fees in this province more than doubled. They went up by more than 100% under the Liberals during their 15 years.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Shame.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Yes.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Not progressive.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Not progressive, no, and really—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Progressively worse.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Progressively worse. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Order.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** The Tory plan is actually making things worse than it was even under the Liberals. A month ago, the Tories came out and they announced—and it speaks to, I think, a lack of integrity that, two days before their official announcement, it was leaked that they were having a 10% tuition cut.

The problem with playing games like that is that everybody knew it was a bait-and-switch. When I was speaking to media reporters, they all said, “So what’s the switch? We know there’s a catch. This government is not going to be friendly to post-secondary students in this province, so what’s the switch?” The switch was that it’s an unfunded tuition cut. Students are actually going to be paying for the tuition cut with larger class sizes, with less access to professors, higher lab fees and higher ancillary fees. The students are actually going to be paying for it in other ways.

The other thing the government did is that they eliminated the six-month interest-free grace period. And they launched an attack on student unions. With this one, they are now asking students to have the power to opt out of fees. These fees, the student union fees and all the program and club fees that are charged to students, have been democratically decided by a majority vote at the college or at the university, but this government is overriding that democratic process and deciding that no, you’re going to have an opt-out.

When I speak with union members in this province, they all know that this is a shot across the bow. This is an attack on unions and on the right to organize and unionize, and they’re starting with the student unions in this province.

The thing that I don’t know that they understood when they did this is that the student unions at colleges and universities across this province provide really valuable services on the campuses. They provide first-aid response teams. They provide peer-to-peer mental health support. They provide clubs. They provide safe spaces for women, racialized students and LGBT students. They provide food banks. All of those programs are at risk because of this opt-out that this government has implemented. We know that this is the beginning of an attack on all unions in this province.

When I started teaching at York University, I was so appalled with the situation of the students I was teaching that I decided, “I need to study this. I need to get some facts on this.” So actually, last spring I completed a PhD on the impact of university costs and student debt. It was a survey of students in Ontario and Quebec. These are the findings: What I found is that having the highest tuition fees, the highest student debt levels, the lowest per-student funding, the impact on students affects their ability to access post-secondary education, it affects their ability to achieve good marks and it affects their mental health.

In the survey group, 35% of the Ontario students studying part-time said that they were studying part-time

because of costs; 56% reported that cost was a large barrier or prevented them from pursuing further studies; 28% said that cost was a large barrier or prevented them from achieving good grades; 65% were working while going to school; and 54% of those who were working said that work negatively affected their ability to get good marks.

But the most shocking finding was that 46% of the Ontario university students in the survey scored above the cut-off for anxiety and depression, and the anxiety and depression were related to the stress of the cost of university. So when we’re talking about the decisions of this government to download billions of dollars of more debt on to students, we need to recognize that we are impeding their ability to access post-secondary education, to achieve good marks, and we’re affecting their mental health.

I want to give you a few stories. I’ve been touring around the province and I’ve spoken with students across this province. In Thunder Bay, I met a woman named Sara. She’s not in university now, but she’s a bus driver. Her son is just entering grade 7, and she was dreaming about going to university. She says, “Now my child’s old enough, I think I can finally do it.” She’s got a bit of money saved. But the changes that this government is making are preventing her from doing that. She says that she was depending on this. Her sister just went back to university, and she was hoping to follow in her footsteps. She’s not going to be able to do it.

I spoke to a woman named Chloe in Cobourg. She’s at a college in Peterborough. She’s a single mother and she’s got about \$30,000 in debt. She’s worried about changes next year because she thinks she’s going to get stuck with another \$25,000 in loans and debt next year, so she’s going to graduate with a \$50,000 debt. She’s worried about the elimination of the six-month grace period because she’s worried about: When she graduates, how is she going to start making those payments right away and, at the same time, feed and dress her child and make sure her child is ready for school?

I’ve got some quotes from some students here. One student said, “I relied on student loans to get through my undergraduate studies, and it took me nearly 10 years to pay them off. Even if I was in a position to stop working or rely on loans to get through my graduate studies, I did not want to be paying for this education for another 10 years.... Money has been a persistent concern throughout my entire course of studies and has made it difficult to focus on my studies so that I can get them done.”

Another student dreams of being a professor. This student said, “I want to get into academia, but the precariousness is a deterrent. How much it costs to get a PhD, and how hard it is to get tenure afterward, which is nearly impossible, I’m just like, no, I don’t want to do that.” This is a person with the ability to make a contribution, to be a professor, but because of the cost and because of the precariousness of the employment afterwards, they’re not going to pursue that.

One student said, “Our school has”—I’m almost out of time, so I’ll read this other quote when I have my two-minute wrap-up. Thank you, and I look forward to the comments from my colleagues.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate.

**Mr. David Piccini:** It's a great pleasure to rise to speak to this motion today. I'd like to thank the member opposite for his remarks, and thank you for this opportunity to address this motion today.

I think we, across all aisles in this House, agree that post-secondary education in Ontario plays a crucial role in preparing our students for today's economy and the jobs of tomorrow. Whether we're talking about university, college or apprenticeships, it's clear that we, as a province and as a society, must make sure that we keep the doors of opportunity open.

When Ontario's government for the people was elected last year, we promised to restore trust and accountability in the government's finances. Not only are we doing that, but we are putting more money back in the people's pockets, including students and families investing in post-secondary education as well. We are building a post-secondary education system for the 21st century, one that places a greater emphasis on experiential learning, one that does a far better job of linking the skill sets and competencies our next generation needs to succeed with entering our workforce. We're making changes to ensure that programs and supports for post-secondary students are sustainable and will be there for the future generations who so need them the most.

1510

Earlier this year, we announced a series of measures that will result in a significant savings for students and their families. First, we introduced an unprecedented 10% tuition cut at all publicly funded colleges and universities in the province. Madam Speaker, after years of inaction, we put students first. Under the previous government, we know that post-secondary tuition skyrocketed. It skyrocketed over 100% in the last decade alone. Our government heard from students and their families across the province that these skyrocketing tuition prices made access to post-secondary education far more difficult. This 10% tuition reduction will provide Ontario's students with \$450 million in cumulative tuition relief, keeping more money in the pockets of our hard-working students.

The member from Spadina–Fort York may be interested to know, Madam Speaker, that a student from his riding studying dental hygiene at George Brown would save over \$1,200 next year, thanks to this reduction. Furthermore, a student at Ryerson in engineering would save over \$1,000. A student studying medicine, to fill the doctor shortages we so direly need to fill, would save over \$2,400.

Speaker, I must say that I did take notice that the NDP's motion did not mention anything about a 10% tuition reduction. I assume that's because the NDP support our plan, though the NDP's position has been very unclear over the past while.

For years the NDP campaigned, and Mr. Bisson campaigned, on tuition freezes. But when our government announced the historic 10% reduction in tuition, the

member from Spadina–Fort York called the plan “a sugar-coated poison pill.”

It appears the NDP have changed their minds again, because the member for Spadina–Fort York then tweeted on March 11 that the NDP support lower tuition.

What is it, Madam Speaker? The left hand is not talking to the right. It appears that Mr. Bisson isn't communicating with his caucus. It appears that the NDP know in their hearts that cutting tuition is the right thing to do, and they were only criticizing our plan because they were not the ones to introduce it.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Stop the clock. I'm sorry to interrupt the member. Just a polite reminder that we refer to all members by their ridings.

**Mr. David Piccini:** My apologies.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** And we don't impute motive, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** And all members can listen quietly and will have the opportunity for further debate.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** As long as you don't call me late for supper.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** The member from Timmins will come to order.

I apologize to the member who does indeed have the floor.

**Mr. David Piccini:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In addition to reducing tuition, we are making post-secondary education more affordable in a number of other ways. For the first time ever, we're putting students first with our Student Choice Initiative. These additional ancillary fees, which have been in excess of \$2,000 on some campuses, are often allocated to services that students do not fundamentally benefit from. Students aren't even aware, in many cases, what these fees are paying for. Starting in September, the Student Choice Initiative will allow students to choose which programs and organizations they wish to support with their student fees, and be empowered to be informed about their own personal finances and where those fees go.

Students are adults, Madam Speaker, and we are treating them as such by giving them the freedom to choose and to clearly see where their fees are being allocated.

While we are lowering the costs of attending post-secondary institutions in Ontario, we have also had to look at the long-term sustainability of our funding programs.

We are restoring financial sustainability to the Ontario Student Assistance Program, also known as OSAP, and making sure that this program is there for students who need it the most, today and well into the future.

I submit to you, Madam Speaker, that it is fundamentally immoral to saddle our future generations with an albatross of debt around their neck that will fundamentally jeopardize the services and supports that they will so desperately need in their future and that their parents will rely on.

As the Auditor General confirmed in her December 2018 report, Ontario student aid programs had ballooned



to the point where it was no longer fiscally sustainable. The Auditor General said that the OSAP program expenses will increase to over \$2 billion next year. In fact, according to projections by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, without any changes to the OSAP program, the budget was expected to balloon—to double—in the next eight years, Madam Speaker, doubling in the next eight years alone. It's fundamentally not sustainable. And at the same time, enrolment only increased by 1% to 2%. In short, the previous government overspent and under-delivered.

Meanwhile, the previous government's system allowed individuals from high-income families to access OSAP. The member spoke about taking equity in our next generation, taking equity in one's experience. Families making \$175,000 were not doing that. They were getting grants just for applying. This is fiscally irresponsible.

**Mr. Daryl Kramp:** Wrong.

**Mr. David Piccini:** And wrong.

Our plan will ensure that OSAP is sustainable and there for students who need it most for years to come. We're doing this by recalibrating the program to focus on those with the greatest financial need. That's why our government is taking the responsible approach of making changes to OSAP to ensure that it's sustainable for future generations to come. We have increased the proportion of grants awarded to low-income students from 76% to 82%. OSAP will continue to provide grants and loans to those students with the greatest need.

I draw your attention to Alex Usher from Higher Education Strategy Associates, whom many consider to be an expert in the field of government student aid. He said, "Even after these changes, (Ontario) is still among the more generous provinces in the country... There is still a lot of aid for students; a lot of it is grants; we shouldn't lose sight of that. Help is still there for people who need it."

That is the crux of this argument. We have designed a system that is there for those who need it most. The system is still more generous than it was years ago.

Further, Alex Usher blasted the opposition's fear-mongering tactics by saying, "This NDP talking point about students graduating with 'mortgage-sized debt levels'," to which the honourable member opposite alluded, "is both wrong and annoying."

I would be happy to send across the aisle, with a page when I am done, a copy of this quote to the member opposite.

Let's be clear: The NDP are resorting to their tried-and-trusted technique of fearmongering to our young people, to our next generation. Our plan is generous and, most importantly, it's sustainable for future generations to come.

I think it's important that we address the substance of the member's motion and tell people in Ontario what the NDP plan truly means. Their plan is not about sustainability. Their plan is about continuing to give generous grants to the most wealthy families. Their plan would double down on the financially unsustainable Liberal program.

The NDP believe that Ontario can afford to pay for a program which has a ballooning budget without saying where the taxes they would raise on the people to pay for it are. Where are those taxes? What taxes are you going to raise on our next generation to fund this ballooning program that the Auditor General has motivated us—she has told us we must act. Ontarians want to know, our next generation wants to know: What taxes will you raise on their backs to pay for this unsustainable plan? You have a tax-and-spend agenda, and we will not stand for it.

Their plan would provide massive benefits for high-income students. I want the NDP to explain to the people of Ontario how they would raise taxes to pay for families earning over \$175,000 to receive generous grants, non-repayable grants. I think that it's irresponsible to put forward a plan with such deep and long-lasting financial implications to the province of Ontario without being clear, without having any idea how they would pay for it.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. David Piccini:** In fact, yes, the member opposite, who is motioning with these gestures—that's all their plan is; it's this.

We need the NDP to come clean about how they would finance a program that would balloon and double over the next eight years.

Speaker, in closing, it is clear that we cannot support this fiscally reckless and unsustainable proposal. The NDP have put forward a proposal that would bankrupt OSAP and that would actually provide grant money to wealthy families and those who do not need it. This is in stark contrast to our plan, which is fiscally sustainable. Our plan is going to ensure that those families who need it most are going to get access to those OSAP supports.

Reducing tuition and increasing the affordability of college and university will help Ontario students get the education and training they need to receive good-paying jobs in our modern, ever-changing economy.

**1520**

The prosperity of Ontario depends on the prosperity of our people. We are designing a fiscally sustainable system to ensure that monies are there for those families who need it most, and that those shoes in which the next generation will walk will have access to the financial means and supports they need for those families who need it most.

Madam Speaker, the NDP must come clear. On whose backs will you raise taxes to pay for this fiscally reckless system? Whose backs? Because you will put unsustainable debt on our next generation.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** How about the rich?

**Mr. David Piccini:** The rich are who they're proposing to give grants to, Madam Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Order, member for Danforth.

**Mr. David Piccini:** On this side of the House, we will stand by the next generation. On this side of the House, we will work every day, tirelessly, to support an OSAP structure for those who need it most.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Mr. Faisal Hassan:** I would like to thank my colleague Chris Glover, the member of provincial Parliament for Spadina–Fort York, for bringing this motion forward. The people of Spadina–Fort York are incredibly fortunate to have such a dedicated representative in this House.

Madam Speaker, the choice here is simple. This government can decide to continue to bury students in debt, or it can support this bill and empower them to be the best that they can be.

Under the current system implemented by this government, students are being forced to decide between racking up debt that will continue to loom over their heads for decades to come, or dropping out. This is not a choice that any student, young or old, should have to make in this province. In my riding of York South–Weston, with an average household income of less than \$68,000 per year, this is the choice that countless students are contemplating and being forced to make. Again, this just isn't right.

The changes made to the Ontario Student Assistance Program help only the students whose families can afford to bankroll their education and no one else. This government has left the students of York South–Weston out to dry. I cannot and I will not sit idly by while this government goes after the young people of York South–Weston. Higher education should not be an option only for the wealthiest in our society. No 17-year-old high school student should have to worry about whether or not they will be able to afford to go into post-secondary the following year.

Madam Speaker, I support this bill, and I call on this government to do the right thing and allow the students of this great province to choose their dreams for a brighter future.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** No Ontarian should be forced to stay out of school or college because they can't afford tuition.

I've received many letters about this motion and the Ford government's cuts to university education because my riding of University–Rosedale includes the University of Toronto. One of the letters I received was from Onella Charles. Onella was the child of immigrant parents from Sri Lanka, she writes in her letter, and she grew up in Mississauga. When she was 20 years old, her father died from an unexpected heart attack, and it put her family in a very precarious financial situation where they were no longer able to pay for tuition because of the loss of her father and her father's salary. She writes that it was the introduction of OSAP and the greater support for low-income families that allowed her to return to school and continue her education. She writes:

"I must emphasize that without OSAP's low-income-family policy, I would not be a medical student right now. My fate would probably have been to move back home to Mississauga to save costs, drop out of school at Western University and work while attending a local university or

college. My dreams of being a physician would have been cut short, at no fault of my own, or of my family's."

Luckily for her, and also because of the support of government—which is what we are supposed to do: help people—Onella is now a U of T medical student. I'm very proud of her.

What this government is doing around cuts to education is forcing thousands of students like Onella to make very, very tough choices, because this government has cut grants, it has made loan supports harder to get, and it has cranked up the amount of interest that students have had to pay.

In Ontario, we have some of the highest student debt in North America and, as our MPP from Spadina–Fort York identified, some of the highest levels of anxiety we've ever seen among young people. That's not right. That's why I'm here supporting the MPP for Spadina–Fort York's motion. It makes so much sense. It makes sense to help everyone get access to higher education by converting student loans to grants and by eliminating interest on provincial student loans. This is necessary to ensure that everyone has access to higher education and, more importantly, access to a better quality of life.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Ms. Suze Morrison:** Today I rise to support my colleague's motion to improve access to post-secondary education, which I believe would be an important step forward in making it accessible to students from low- and middle-income families.

As I've mentioned in this House before, I come from a family that has experienced intergenerational poverty. My mom went to university as a mature student with two young kids in tow in an attempt to make a better life for us. As a kid, we lived in university housing on campus at U of T while we also waited on the decades-long wait-list for Toronto Community Housing.

Needless to say, when it was time for me to apply to go to university, I certainly didn't have private savings or RESPs to rely on, having come from the kind of intergenerational poverty that I was coming from. Like many other students across Ontario who have to, I applied for OSAP, and like many of my millennial friends and colleagues in this House, I am still paying off that debt today.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Suze Morrison:** Making post-secondary education more accessible to students who come from low-income and middle-class families will make a world of difference. Converting loans to grants can change lives, and forgiving interest on loans will help so many young adults in Ontario.

In our province, student debt levels are crushing. Estimates are that an average student who gets a bachelor's degree will be over \$30,000 in debt at the end of their education. Speaker, \$30,000 is a lot of money for young people who are just trying to get a leg up in life, who are

delaying starting their families and buying their first homes—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Member from Peterborough south.

**Ms. Suze Morrison:**—because they are burdened and buried under this debt.

The changes this government has brought to the table and the OSAP reform that looms for this fall are devastating. My office has heard from dozens of students and parents who are truly concerned about their ability to afford post-secondary education. Everyone in our province deserves the right to pursue an education should they so choose. Education is not something that should be reserved for the wealthiest among us. It is our duty as members of this House to give all Ontarians across our province a more fair and equitable way to access education.

I am so proud to stand with my colleague the member for Spadina–Fort York in support of this motion. I call on this government to finally eliminate the interest on student loans—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Order.

**Ms. Suze Morrison:**—and convert the provincial portion of OSAP loans into grants.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** The members from the government side that are heckling can have an opportunity to stand and speak on the record, but it's challenging to hear this speaker over the heckling.

I recognize the member from London West.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I rise as economic development critic for the Ontario NDP caucus just to offer a couple of comments on this very important motion that has been brought forward today by my colleague the member for Spadina–Fort York.

From an economic development perspective, universities are key drivers of the economic prosperity and well-being of our province. They generate the talent that we need in our labour market. And through innovation, applied research and the commercialization of research that goes on within a post-secondary institution, they generate new generations of entrepreneurs who are going to make our economy thrive.

If we don't draw upon the broadest possible pool of applicants to post-secondary education, we are limiting the talent and the technology that we can benefit from at our post-secondary institutions. That's why this motion is so important. It will enable low-income Ontarians, it will enable racialized Ontarians, Indigenous people, to attend post-secondary, who may not be able to afford to go otherwise.

1530

We know from the experience in the UK: They abolished grants, converted to loans, and what happened? Post-secondary participation decreased. When they re-introduced grants for low-income people in the UK, those

low-income people were able to go to post-secondary and then contribute to the economy.

This is a very important motion, Speaker, and I encourage members across the way to support it.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Further debate?

**Ms. Jill Andrew:** I am proud, Speaker, to rise and speak in support of my friend and colleague the member for Spadina–Fort York's motion today.

Last week, I was asked by OCAD, as the culture critic, to join the hundreds of students during their day of action and student walkout. I want to share with the House some of what I heard that day.

They told me that cuts and reforms to OSAP leave students with devastatingly fewer academic opportunities when they need more.

They said that they need to be able to go to school knowing that they can be supported by grants to be able to afford rising tuition fees.

They said that once they graduate, they need to be able to find work without racking up student debt with no interest relief, accumulating immediately upon graduation.

They said that Premier Doug Ford is targeting low-income students, who will feel these changes to OSAP the most.

They said that not only is the PC government increasing student debt, making it harder to get grant money—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** The member for Mississauga East–Cooksville will come to order.

**Ms. Jill Andrew:**—it is also making it harder for them to pay back their loans more quickly.

Most of all, they told me that they deserve to be consulted on all of these changes, for the government to actually hear the voices of those who will be impacted the most.

Students told me they want the right to organize. Student unions are paramount, and the PCs' attack on student unions is an attack on their student democracy. It's an attack on their ability to access human rights, health and equity initiatives on campus.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** The member for Mississauga East–Cooksville is warned.

**Ms. Jill Andrew:** That is why I stand with my colleague and friend—a scholar and an education activist for years—the students at OCAD and post-secondary students across the province who are calling for the government to convert student loans to grants and to eliminate interest on student loans.

I can't say more how proud I am of my colleague. We believe that students deserve better than to choose between giving up their dreams and racking up debt. I certainly wouldn't be standing here as a doctor, and neither would my colleague, without grants, scholarships and interest relief.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** The member for Spadina–Fort York has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I want to thank the members for Northumberland–Peterborough South, University–Rosedale, Toronto Centre, York South–Weston, London West and—

**Ms. Jill Andrew:** Toronto–St. Paul’s.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** —Toronto–St. Paul’s for their comments.

The opposition tries to frame this as a financial argument, but this is not a financial argument. In the last 35 years, our economy in Canada has grown by 50%. Since 2000, our tax cuts across Canada add up to \$56 billion. Our economy is growing and our taxes are going down. So what we are facing here is not a financial issue; it’s an ideological issue. What the government is doing right now is an ideological attack on public services.

This is not a Progressive Conservative Party—and I wish, for the integrity of your party, you would remove the word “progressive” from the name. This is not a Progressive Conservative Party; this is one that wants to privatize public services and sell off public assets. The rich are going to get richer and the poor are going to lose their services.

This is a neo-conservative, neo-liberal government. It was fully exposed with the attack on student unions in their recent changes. When they’re trying to decertify, delist, student unions, this shows where this government is going.

As a person who grew up in Oshawa, who benefited from having a unionized family—in fact, for everybody in my generation after the Second World War who benefited from being in a middle-income family because of the growth of unionization in the post-war period. Since 1995, as the number of unionized jobs has gone down, the middle class is being eliminated.

So this fight today is a fight for ideology and it’s a fight for middle-class—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Thank you.

The time provided for private members’ public business has expired. We will deal first with ballot item number 55 standing in the name of Ms. Ghamari.

SUPPORTING ONTARIO’S  
COMMUNITY, RURAL  
AND AGRICULTURAL  
NEWSPAPERS ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LE SOUTIEN  
AUX JOURNAUX COMMUNAUTAIRES,  
RURAUX ET AGRICOLES DE L’ONTARIO

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Ms. Ghamari has moved second reading of Bill 78, An Act to amend various Acts with respect to the publication of notices in newspapers. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Which committee?

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** I’d like to refer it to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Is the majority in favour of the bill being referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy? Agreed.

HELLENIC HERITAGE MONTH  
ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LE MOIS  
DU PATRIMOINE HELLÉNIQUE

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Ms. Triantafilopoulos has moved second reading of Bill 77, An Act to proclaim a month to celebrate Hellenic heritage in Ontario. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Which committee?

**Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos:** The Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Is the majority in favour of the bill being referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly? Agreed.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Mr. Glover has moved private member’s notice of motion number 40. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1537 to 1542.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Members will please take their seats. Ministers will please take their seats.

Mr. Glover has moved private member’s notice of motion number 40. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

Andrew, Jill	Hatfield, Percy	Rakocevic, Tom
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Karpoche, Bhutila	Sattler, Peggy
Bell, Jessica	Kernaghan, Terence	Singh, Sara
Berns-McGown, Rima	Lindo, Laura Mae	Stiles, Marit
Bisson, Gilles	Mamakwa, Sol	Tabuns, Peter
Coteau, Michael	Mantha, Michael	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	Miller, Paul	Yarde, Kevin
Glover, Chris	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	
Hassan, Faisal	Morrison, Suze	

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

**Nays**

Anand, Deepak	Harris, Mike	Parsa, Michael
Baber, Roman	Hogarth, Christine	Pettapiece, Randy
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Phillips, Rod
Barrett, Toby	Kanapathi, Logan	Piccini, David
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Karahalios, Belinda	Rasheed, Kaleed
Bouma, Will	Ke, Vincent	Roberts, Jeremy
Calandra, Paul	Khanjin, Andrea	Romano, Ross
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kramp, Daryl	Sabawy, Sheref
Cho, Stan	Kusendova, Natalia	Sandhu, Amarjot
Clark, Steve	Lecce, Stephen	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Coe, Lorne	Martin, Robin	Smith, Dave
Crawford, Stephen	Martow, Gila	Surma, Kinga
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Downey, Doug	Miller, Norman	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dunlop, Jill	Mulroney, Caroline	Tibollo, Michael A.
Elliott, Christine	Nicholls, Rick	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fee, Amy	Oosterhoff, Sam	Wai, Daisy
Ghamari, Goldie	Pang, Billy	Yakabuski, John
Gill, Parm	Park, Lindsey	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker):** The ayes are 25; the nays are 56.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** I declare the motion lost.

*Motion negatived.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Orders of the day.

**Mr. Stephen Lecce:** Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Order, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):** Could I ask for order in the House, please?

Mr. Lecce has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This House stands adjourned until Monday, April 1, 2019, at 10:30 in the morning.

*The House adjourned at 1546.*









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

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Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott  
Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker  
Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day  
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Valerie Quioc Lim, William Short  
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Arthur, Ian (NDP)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Baber, Roman (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
<b>Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)</b>	Pickering—Uxbridge	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	
<b>Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)</b>	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Stan (PC)	Willowdale	
<b>Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)</b>	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Downey, Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	
Dunlop, Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
<b>Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)</b>	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)</b>	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
<b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)</b>	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
<b>French, Jennifer K. (NDP)</b>	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)</b>	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Parm (PC)	Milton	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
<b>Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
<b>Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)</b>	Oxford	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
<b>Hatfield, Percy (NDP)</b>	Windsor—Tecumseh	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hillier, Randy (IND)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
<b>Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)</b>	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Orléans	
Lecce, Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
<b>MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)</b>	Nepean	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
<b>McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)</b>	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
<b>Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)</b>	York—Simcoe	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (PC)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)</b>	Ajax	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Piccini, David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
<b>Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)</b>	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
<b>Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)</b>	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (IND)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)</b>	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
<b>Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)</b>	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
<b>Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)</b>	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
<b>Walker, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (PC)</b>	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
<b>Yakubski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)</b>	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
<b>Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)</b>	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Wayne Gates  
Stan Cho, Jill Dunlop  
John Fraser, Wayne Gates  
Stephen Lecce, Gila Martow  
Jane McKenna, Judith Monteith-Farrell  
Lindsey Park, Randy Pettapiece  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

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

Chair / Président: Stephen Crawford  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeremy Roberts  
Ian Arthur, Stephen Crawford  
Doug Downey, Sol Mamakwa  
David Piccini, Kaleed Rasheed  
Jeremy Roberts, Sandy Shaw  
Donna Skelly  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

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

Chair / Président: Dave Smith  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Natalia Kusendova  
Jessica Bell, Chris Glover  
Christine Hogarth, Logan Kanapathi  
Daryl Kramp, Natalia Kusendova  
Amarjot Sandhu, Mike Schreiner  
Dave Smith, Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens  
Daisy Wai  
Committee Clerk / Greffier / Greffière: Julia Douglas

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

Chair / Président: John Vanthof  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Roman Baber, Rudy Cuzzetto  
Amy Fee, Vincent Ke  
Andrea Khanjin, Marie-France Lalonde  
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls  
Jeremy Roberts, Marit Stiles  
John Vanthof  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

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

Chair / Président: Parm Gill  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian  
Roman Baber, Aris Babikian  
Nathalie Des Rosiers, Jill Dunlop  
Parm Gill, Lindsey Park  
Ross Romano, Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria  
Sara Singh, Monique Taylor  
Kevin Yarde  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

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

Chair / Présidente: Jane McKenna  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vijay Thanigasalam  
Robert Bailey, Rima Berns-McGown  
Lorne Coe, Michael Coteau  
Mike Harris, Faisal Hassan  
Jane McKenna, Christina Maria Mitas  
Sam Oosterhoff, Gurratan Singh  
Vijay Thanigasalam  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

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

Chair / Présidente: Catherine Fife  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Peggy Sattler  
Toby Barrett, Catherine Fife  
Goldie Ghamari, Jim McDonell  
Norman Miller, Suze Morrison  
Michael Parsa, Peggy Sattler  
Kinga Surma  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

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

Chair / Président: Kaleed Rasheed  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Will Bouma  
Will Bouma, Paul Calandra  
Lorne Coe, Stephen Crawford  
Mitzie Hunter, Laura Mae Lindo  
Paul Miller, Billy Pang  
Kaleed Rasheed, Amarjot Sandhu  
Jamie West  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

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

Chair / Présidente: Nina Tangri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Deepak Anand  
Deepak Anand, Doly Begum  
Jeff Burch, Amy Fee  
Michael Gravelle, Joel Harden  
Belinda Karahalios, Robin Martin  
Sheref Sabawy, Nina Tangri  
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie