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**Official Report  
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**Journal  
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(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 2 December 2009**

**Mercredi 2 décembre 2009**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 2 December 2009

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 2 décembre 2009

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prayers.*

### CONDUCT OF HOUSE PROCEEDINGS

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to rise on a point of order that relates to standing orders 15(a) and (c) and to the ongoing situation surrounding the member of provincial Parliament for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound and the member of provincial Parliament for Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington.

As we all know, for close to two days now, Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Hillier have been staging a legislative protest over the McGuinty government's refusal to hold so much as a single public hearing on the HST outside of Queen's Park. Speaker, I know these past two days have been challenging for you, as well as for the Sergeant-at-Arms and other House officers, and I want to make it clear that there was never any intention to use this protest to undermine your authority in this chamber.

William Lyon Mackenzie King, a Liberal, once warned Canadians about the importance of public input in our democracy: "Where there is little or no public opinion, there is likely to be bad government, which sooner or later becomes autocratic government." This week, two legislators put that belief into action. Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Hillier made a stand on principle and fought on behalf of the public's right to be heard in the halls of power. They refused to be bullied; they refused to be silenced. Today, they are heroes to their constituents and heroes to taxpayers who will be left paying for this historic \$3-billion tax grab.

It says a lot that in our negotiations around this protest, we made a single, extremely moderate and reasonable request that would have ended this standoff—a single public hearing in a single day outside of Queen's Park—and the government denied the public even that.

Our caucus was proud to stand united behind Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Hillier throughout this protest and we continue to be proud of them as our colleagues. We will continue to oppose the HST, but our point through this particular tactic has now been made, and with the complete support of our caucus, Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Hillier are ending their legislative protest this morning. Thank you, Bill. Thank you, Randy.

*Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Hillier were escorted from the chamber.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd just ask the honourable members if they wouldn't mind staying for a moment, please. I have a message I would like to deliver to all members.

Within the walls of this chamber, the authority of the House is clear: The Speaker is given the authority to "maintain order and decorum." The most serious penalty in the hands of the Speaker is naming, and it is rarely used. Within our standing order 15(c), I exercised that standing order and have suspended two members from this chamber.

As Speaker, I was extremely reluctant to remove two members with force. Some may agree with my decision; some may not. I stand behind it. I'd encourage members to Google "BC member ejected from the chamber" and see the result of a forcible removal in 1983.

I want to take a few moments of members' time to reflect and comment on the events of the past couple of days. First let me say from the Chair, thanks to the opposition House leader, Bob Runciman, for his effort to resolve this matter without further disruption.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** But I'm obligated to add that what took place was at odds with the traditions of parliamentary debate and the practices of this place. To say it plainly, the behaviour of the two members crossed the line. I want to declare emphatically that it was unacceptable to the Chair, just as it should be to all members of this Legislature, regardless of party affiliation. Expressions of dissent, disfavour and even outright protest on the part of members are a respected part of our parliamentary traditions. As Speaker, I am obligated to defend those traditions, and I will not hesitate to do so.

Order and decorum are what makes our system work. Merely enforcing the rules of the game does not imply that I side with one point of view or another. Points of view are to be given full expression in our Legislature, and chaos is not conducive to that. Actions like these actually hurt all of our cause, and doing what has happened impacts seriously on debate and discussion.

But respect is a mutual obligation. There are boundaries to which members must also adhere and standards of conduct that must be upheld. This is not about the Chair's discretion or the opinion of an individual Speaker. It is about failing to show due deference to this institution and the traditions of civil debate; it is about failing to show due deference to the privileges of fellow members of this Parliament, including members from all parties; and importantly, it's about failing to display an

image of parliamentary conduct that the public would rightly regard as appropriate.

Indeed, when members ignore authority other than their own and force the Speaker to contemplate measures as extreme as forcible removal, it seems reasonable to suggest that these same members are projecting an image of indignity that feeds public cynicism about politics and the political process. Surely that has to be unacceptable to us all.

Let me be clear about where we stand now with respect to such behaviour in the future. This is not the new normal. As Speaker, I attempted to exercise a great deal of tolerance and a measure of patience that I will, if needed, repeat again. But at the same time, I will not accept such flagrant disrespect for the Legislature and its members. In future, I assure you that I will move swiftly to preserve the dignity of this chamber, and to preserve the privileges of all members to speak, debate and, if they so wish, protest within the limits of established convention.

To the public I'm going to send a clear message: This is not the way we do your business in your provincial Parliament. We are really doing a grave disservice to our constituents if we willingly give up our voice. The point remains that the Legislature is what gives us our voice. Disregard for those rules diminishes the voice for all.

I'd ask all members to please reflect on these events over the past few days and make the greatest of efforts in their own efforts. Thank you.

0910

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ONTARIO TAX PLAN FOR MORE JOBS AND GROWTH ACT, 2009

#### LOI DE 2009 SUR LE PLAN FISCAL DE L'ONTARIO POUR ACCROÎTRE L'EMPLOI ET LA CROISSANCE

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 26, 2009, on the amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 218, An Act to implement 2009 Budget measures and to enact, amend or repeal various Acts / Projet de loi 218, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures énoncées dans le Budget de 2009 et édictant, modifiant ou abrogeant diverses lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated December 1, 2009, I'm now required to put the question.

On November 19, 2009, Mr. Duncan moved second reading of Bill 218, An Act to implement 2009 Budget measures and to enact, amend or repeal various Acts. Shall the bill be now read a second time?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 19, the bill is ordered

referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

## TIME ALLOCATION

### ATTRIBUTION DE TEMPS

**Hon. Jim Watson:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 196, An Act respecting the adjustment of the boundary between the City of Barrie and the Town of Innisfil, when Bill 196 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the third reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That the vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Watson has moved government notice of motion number 167. Debate?

**Hon. Jim Watson:** I'm pleased to participate today in the debate on the proposed Barrie-Innisfil Boundary Adjustment Act. I know members of the House are sitting on the edge of their seats waiting for this piece of legislation and my speech.

Ce projet de loi, s'il est adopté, permettra d'assurer la santé et la vitalité économique continues du comté de Simcoe.

We are expecting 73,000 new jobs in the Simcoe area by 2031.

Nous devons nous assurer de pouvoir faire face à cette croissance de façon responsable et durable.

I'm proud of the strong record that the McGuinty government has in planning for growth, with an overall vision and plans that protect the environment while enabling our economy to grow and our communities to offer a better quality of life to their residents. If the proposed Barrie-Innisfil Boundary Adjustment Act is passed, we can get on with definite plans for good, sustainable, environmentally responsible growth for this area.

Prior to our government introducing this bill, we tried for years—literally years—to find a solution to this boundary dispute that would not require us to impose a solution. We arranged for facilitated discussions among the municipalities by the Office of the Provincial Development Facilitator from 2006 to 2008. Those discussions included the town of Innisfil, the county of Simcoe and the city of Barrie.

We thought we might be coming to an agreement in February 2008, when the facilitator tabled a proposed solution. Unfortunately, no consensus could be reached among the municipalities, and so, for almost two years, the stalemate continued. Resolving the impasse is an important element of our government's plan for a sustainable future called the Strategic Vision for Growth in the Simcoe Area.

Municipal and community leaders have been asking the province to take a leadership role in building strong and attractive cities, towns and rural areas. Well, we are. Our strategic vision for growth shows how the Simcoe region should grow over the next 20 years. One of the first steps in proper planning for growth is to identify the potential of existing urban centres. This lets us plan to make the best use of existing infrastructure so that we can maximize the value of the public investments in infrastructure that we've already made.

Our government is committed to building and supporting strong communities across Ontario. However, we will not do that by sacrificing our environment and our natural heritage systems. We are living up to that commitment with our strategic vision for the Simcoe area.

First, our vision would curb urban sprawl and focus development into existing cities and towns that can accommodate new growth. This makes good use of existing infrastructure and the best practices of compact urban development. Towards this end, we have identified five centres that we call urban nodes in the Simcoe area, where employment growth would be focused. One of these is Barrie, which we see as a primary urban node in the Simcoe area.

Second, our vision would build on the Simcoe area's diverse economic base. Agriculture and resource-based industries, large- and small-scale manufacturing sectors and a strong service sector are economic mainstays of this area. Our vision protects the employment areas for the industries and for future investments in these industries.

Third, our vision would outline a clear future for the city of Barrie as a key urban centre. Our plan would require the city of Barrie to confine 40% of each year's new residential development to its existing built-up area. A further requirement placed on Barrie by our plan is that it must achieve a minimum density of 150 residents and jobs, combined, per hectare, in the area designated as the urban growth centre by our plan. Importantly, our plan will support building and intensification in Barrie's downtown area to help realize the tremendous potential that exists there.

Fourth, our vision would protect the green spaces and agricultural areas to support a cleaner Lake Simcoe. I want to congratulate my colleague—who's in the House—the Minister of the Environment, and my colleague the Minister of Culture for their strong work in ensuring the protection and survivability of that valuable asset from an economic, tourism and development point of view in Lake Simcoe. Development pressures on rural and agricultural lands would be reduced, thereby protecting valuable natural heritage, farmland, sensitive watersheds and, of course, Lake Simcoe.

Ontarians have made it very clear to us that they support a comprehensive plan that protects and restores the ecological health of Lake Simcoe and its watershed. Our strategic vision for growth in the Simcoe area is part of the plan to protect Lake Simcoe and its watershed, and in turn our proposed Barrie-Innisfil Boundary Adjust-

ment Act is a central component of our overall strategy in the Simcoe area.

We have sought the House's approval for this because, obviously, there are time constraints. We want to make sure that the act is in fact passed into law prior to January 1, when candidates can begin registering, because this is going to have an impact, obviously, on the political boundaries of the community of Barrie and Innisfil. It's our hope, with the support of members of the House, that we will reach that deadline, to give that certainty and stability to current and future candidates in the Barrie and Innisfil area.

If passed, this proposed act would help set the stage for the future long-term growth and the coming prosperity for the economy of the Simcoe area and its residents. That's why I urge all members of the House to support this. If members of the House support smart urban growth practices, if they support the concept of blending in the need to protect our environment, as well as future economic growth, they will support this particular piece of legislation.

We're proud of the fact that we have worked in a spirit of goodwill, but unfortunately we were not able to bring the two parties together. So while the facilitator should be commended for the work that he did to try to bring the parties together, regrettably, consensus was not reached. As a result, we had no other choice except to end this long-standing debate, which, quite frankly, was not creating one job, was not allowing the community to move forward and plan. The development community and those people who wanted to create jobs in Simcoe kept telling me and, I know, my colleague from Barrie that this kind of inaction, this kind of instability was not good for economic growth.

#### 0920

I've always felt that the most important thing any government can do in the midst of an economic recession is create the environment to create the jobs for the men and women of all parts of the province, whether it's in my hometown of Ottawa or in Peterborough or, as we're talking about today, in the Simcoe area. I'm very disappointed that we were not able to reach a local consensus. I had the opportunity to talk to the member who represents that area, and I thank her for her courtesy. Obviously, we disagree on the approach, but at the end of the day, the alternative was simply years and years of inaction, more instability and a lack of clarity for the people of Simcoe.

I urge all members to support Bill 196. It is, I believe, a sensible solution to a long-standing problem. This is part and parcel of the work that my colleague the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure has responsibility for, the growth plan. We are working hand in hand to make sure that the people, the businesses and the visitors to that great part of the province, Simcoe county and Barrie, can prosper in the future. I'd ask all members for their support as we move forward to create a better, more vibrant economic circumstance for the people of Barrie and for future generations.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I find it a rather strange situation this morning because actually the motion that we're debating here is a time allocation motion on this bill. Normally the government introduces a time allocation at a point after second reading debate or during that time when it wishes to shut down debate and reduce the time available for discussion. But, in fact, in this particular circumstance we find ourselves in, the normal passage of a bill has actually completed second reading, the opportunity for public hearing and clause-by-clause—the introduction, and by the way, rejection, of amendments to this bill. It's really a kind of strange situation that, at the very last minute, the government has introduced a time allocation motion. I think they didn't look at how far this bill had come along, and in the sense of opportunity to time-allocate bills as we come closer to the projected time to rise, they simply put all of the bills in the same basket and introduced a time allocation motion on this bill.

It's also interesting because of the fact that we now have actually more time to talk about this bill than we would have had it just continued in that normal process. There's some kind of mystery in my mind in terms of why the government would choose now to introduce the time allocation bill that, in fact, allows more time to discuss this bill.

For me, it's an important opportunity because not only is there the questionable tactic of introducing it as a time-allocated bill at this particular point, but it also is really an important opportunity for me to speak to some of the underlying issues that this bill represents.

The minister, in his comments a few moments ago, referred to the fact that this area, from the government's point of view, is projected to have an increase of 73,000 jobs in the community by the year 2021, which is in just a little more than 10 years. What strikes me as interesting about this land acquisition is that apparently the jobs can only exist if it's under the urban leadership of the city of Barrie. So it poses some interesting questions: Nobody else can provide that opportunity? That seems rather strange. It also seems strange to me, since this is an amount of land in the neighbourhood of 5,000 acres, that only under Barrie's guidance could jobs actually appear.

At the same time, the minister makes reference to the fact that this will somehow allow people, presumably in Barrie, to provide greater protection to the environment. I find that an interesting comment. The minister has, as other ministers of the crown have, referred to the importance of curbing sprawl and having sprawl as an evil kind of thing. Regardless of how that is interpreted, the point is, according to the logic of the government, that when Barrie has control over this almost 3,000 hectares, it's not going to be sprawl; it's going to be protecting the environment, but it couldn't happen under the leadership of the town of Innisfil. So there are some questions.

I also think that most people, when you talk about intensification, tend to understand the use of brownfields,

the question of looking at rezoning to allow higher structures and initiatives like that, which in fact would qualify for intensification. Part of that intensification argument is the ability to expand public transit, and much has been made about the importance of public transit. When you look at adding more areas and not having the kind of intensification that I've just referred to, then, in fact, transit becomes an extremely expensive undertaking. It demands that you have higher-storied buildings on a particular footprint in an urban area. So there are many concerns that people in Innisfil have about the fundamental assumptions that this government has made in proposing that it is appropriate for Barrie to consume, as I say, approximately 5,000 acres in the area.

I think there are a number of outstanding issues in terms of what happens. One of the things that I think is really important, which is missing from this piece of legislation, is the recognition of the principle of compensation. Certainly that is something that we know there are precedents for, where municipalities have changed their boundaries at the expense of their neighbours. There has been a principle of the need for compensation.

I see the issue of compensation on three levels. Obviously the town of Innisfil loses not only the current assessment and, with that current assessment, the fiscal and municipal planning that goes with those assumptions, but also, there is no contemplation of compensation on the future loss of the area. Were it to continue under Innisfil's ownership, so to speak, the opportunities for the same kind of growth and development could be contemplated, whether it's part of Innisfil or part of Barrie. So that future consideration is, again, completely ignored.

The people who live on the land that is going to be transferred to the city of Barrie have huge concerns, and I think justifiable concerns, about the impact that is going to have on assessment values; although not directly but indirectly, assessment values do come to play a role in terms of municipal taxes. The people who are resident in the area have, in some cases, fairly wide frontages. These were properties that were made available 20 or 30 years ago, when people bought small acreages but had, obviously, significant frontages, whether it's a 100-, 200- or 300-foot frontage. As the importance of this land has been elevated significantly by its inclusion into Barrie, they have I think justifiable concerns about the future in terms of the municipal taxes that they're going to see.

Finally, the element of no compensation, this particular principle that the government has used in this case, has much broader-reaching effects, and that is to Simcoe county. Innisfil, as a member of the Simcoe county council, is obviously a payer in terms of the coffers of Simcoe county. The potential of the land now—obviously it pays its way in terms of the levies from the county, but Simcoe then loses that. It also loses the potential value of the area as development takes place because of the legal entity of Barrie not having to contribute in the same way to Simcoe county. So, in fact, the municipalities of Simcoe county are indirectly impacted by what I would call this new principle of land acquisition.

The issue, then, at this particular time is the question of compensation, the fact that the government has chosen to introduce time allocation at this time on the bill, and what would seem to be the inappropriateness—one can only imagine that in the question of public hearings and the lack of public hearings on Bill 218, the assumption is that we need to speed up the process on all bills. We're not looking at the opportunities to have the public heard in the area of Bill 218, the HST, and we're going to see the same kind of broad brush stroke on all the pieces of legislation we're currently looking at.

For those reasons, I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Ms. Munro has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 0933 to 1003.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Order. Members, take your seats, please.

Mrs. Munro has moved adjournment of the debate.

All those in favour, please stand and be counted by the clerks.

All those opposed, please stand and be counted by the clerks.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 6; the nays are 46.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** I declare the motion lost.

Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I would just like to finish up on the issue of the time allocation. As I say, it—

**Hon. M. Aileen Carroll:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I was in the House, waiting for the honourable member to use her time to speak. She used about six minutes of that time and then went and—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** That's not a point of order. The member called adjournment. We dealt with that. She has the floor.

**Hon. M. Aileen Carroll:** Mr. Speaker, for how long does she have the floor?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** For 27 minutes and 24 seconds.

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Will the minister please take her seat.

Member for York-Simcoe.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I just want to finish up by speaking about the question of the government's initiative in terms of taking time allocation.

The minister raised a question about time. I find it really ironic that she would take the time to rise on a point of order with regard to a perfectly legitimate process.

In my remarks earlier, I referred to the fact that the government made the decision to time-allocate this bill. It did that, obviously, within the basket of its options. But I

find it passing strange that it would want to use the time allocation motion, which is a normal process for this government, because what that actually did was create more time for debate. We had already gone through second reading; we had public hearings; we had clause-by-clause. The government had agreed—that is, all members had agreed—that we would have third reading debate and each party would have 10 minutes. The government obviously is only interested in time allocation, and actually created far more time on the clock for all to speak than we had already agreed to.

Particularly when the minister raises the issue about the use of time, I find it very ironic that this should suddenly be an issue, because she already knows that we had completed this process. Now we've actually expanded the process by entertaining this as a time-allocated process.

Once again, I think it's important to remind people that whatever criticisms there are, the point is that the government has the ability to time-allocate, as we've just witnessed here. They have the ability to make decisions on public hearings. Those are two examples of the fact that they have all these cards to play.

I think that calling this particular bill for time allocation was an extraordinary decision to expand the debatable time for this bill.

It's a bill that has very, very narrow interests, because it is a question of Barrie taking a bite out of Innisfil, and people would feel that it is something exclusive to those two municipalities. However, I think that it should be regarded as perhaps a portent of the future, the fact that this government has allowed legislation to move forward that allows no compensation for an undertaking such as that of Barrie and Innisfil. So while it might appear to be a very local issue, I suggest that it sets a dangerous precedent of not providing compensation.

Not only is no compensation provided for the land that has been usurped by Barrie, but there is the fact that the whole reason for doing this is Barrie's apparent ability to provide jobs. The minister referred to 73,000 jobs. I don't know whether that's part of the 600,000 or those are extra jobs, but the point is that apparently Barrie can create 73,000 jobs out of the same land that Innisfil could not. Again, it's the same thing: If Innisfil were allowed to keep its land, then presumably it would be sprawl, but under Barrie's tutelage it simply becomes urban growth. So I think there are some issues that other municipalities should pay some attention to. Obviously, the ones in Simcoe county are seeing that Innisfil's ability to pay its dues to Simcoe county are reduced by the change in control over almost 5,000 acres of land.

While this bill appears to be very narrow, I think it is important. The issue of no compensation, the issue of future impacts on land, the effects on Simcoe county, the fact that Barrie is not in the same relationship with the other municipalities in Simcoe county, and therefore Barrie gets to keep its money in a way that the other neighbouring municipalities of Simcoe county all share in the provision of particular services—I think it is a bill that

has very serious implications for other municipalities, and I think we have to be really careful about the government's rhetoric. When something is good environmentally, the minister says it's protecting the environment, which I think most people find difficult to visualize, considering that at the same time the land acquisition is being done to provide Barrie, in the minister's own words, with land that is necessary for its economic viability. So there are remaining outstanding issues.

I'm going to close on one particular outstanding issue. One of the deputants at the public hearings brought to the attention of members of the committee that her particular property, which through various earlier agreements is now physically an island—it technically belongs to Innisfil, and she has letters that indicate that Innisfil would certainly allow her property to be changed to Essa township, which would be much more logical for her. She was looking for legislators to appreciate her personal position, and I found it unfortunate that the government did not see fit, during clause-by-clause, to include this particular personal anomaly.

We all talk about being here for the benefit of our constituents and the broader base of the people of Ontario, and here we have one quite simple line to be changed from "Innisfil" to "Essa," but in this case the parliamentary assistant—the government—had not included the opportunity for that to be included in the bill. It seems most unfortunate that something that no one disagreed with could not, in fact, be accommodated through this process, and I find that most regrettable. With that, I'm going to conclude my remarks on time allocation.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Pursuant to standing order 8, this House is in recess until 10:30 of the clock.

*The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** We're honoured today to have the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association lobby day here at Queen's Park. They'll be meeting with all of us.

I'd like to recognize just a few; I know other members will want to as well. We have Fred "It was the night before Christmas" LeBlanc, the president; Mark McKinnon, the executive vice-president; Barry Quinn, the secretary-treasurer; Pat DeFazio, the president emeritus; and then we have district vice-presidents Ernie Thorne, Mike Pauze, Terry Colburn, Warren Scott, Randy Richards and Chris Francescone, and we're really fortunate that we have Eric Nordlund here this morning from Thunder Bay or somewhere, or he's coming.

Welcome, everyone. Have a great day.

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I as well would like to ask all members to join me in welcoming the delegation of firefighters from Oshawa. They would be Paul Konorowski, Steve Barkwell, Rod Thwaites and Craig Baird.

**Hon. Jim Watson:** I am delighted, along with my caucus colleagues from Ottawa, to welcome the delegation of the Ottawa Professional Fire Fighters Association. I'm not sure if they're actually in the gallery yet, but we've seen them in the halls of Queen's Park: John Sobey, Erik Leicht and Rob Collins. They do a great job for us in the nation's capital, and we welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** It's my great pleasure today to introduce guests in the gallery here on behalf of myself and the member from Haldimand-Norfolk: Rev. John and Jackie Cruickshank and Rev. Malcolm and Marie Muth, all from Simcoe, Ontario.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I would like to welcome the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association to Queen's Park today, particularly Henry Watson and his group from Hamilton. We're very proud of our firefighters in Hamilton.

**Mr. Monte Kwinter:** I'd like to welcome the staff and students of Premier Elite Athlete Collegiate, which is a private high-performance sports school located in Downsview Park. These are grades 6 and 7 students, and they are learning about international trade. They are up in the public gallery, and I'd like to welcome them.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I'd like to extend a special welcome to York professional firefighters Brent Heppell and Andre Bourrie, whom I'll be meeting with later today to hear of their issues relating to their profession and the support of the provincial government.

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** I want to welcome firefighters from the city of London on behalf of myself and my colleagues Deb Matthews and Chris Bentley: Jim Holmes and Phil King. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer:** I'm pleased to welcome today our wonderful Ontario principals and also the firefighters from Kitchener-Waterloo.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to introduce firefighter Muldoon and his crew from the Sudbury fire department, as well as recognize firefighter Harris and Captain Groulx, who are watching us on TV this morning.

I also want to welcome the principal from Sudbury Secondary School, who is visiting as part of Principals' Day. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** Today it's my pleasure to welcome some wonderful people from the riding of Scarborough-Guildwood: Ms. Stacey Berry, Mr. Zubair Patel and Ms. Anne-Marie Thompson.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'd like to welcome the Ontario Principals' Council, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters and, in particular, Michael Gagnon from the Midland fire service.

**Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I would like to welcome two members of the Oakville Professional Fire Fighters Association: president Carmen Santoro and Andrew Lee.

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** I would like to acknowledge in the Legislature the delegation and members of the Mississauga fire association. Members include Chris Varcoe, Ryan Coburn and Mark Train. We're proud of



the work performed by our firefighters. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I would like to have members join me in welcoming to the Ontario Legislature today firefighters Dave Pay, Terry Colburn, Dean Stoltz and Mike Fowler, and constituency office staff of mine Betty Humphreys and Sarah Grocock.

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** In the public gallery, I'd like to welcome three of my colleagues from the master's of business administration program at York University, the Schulich School of Business. In the early 1990s we were all together: Margaret Thomas, Dorene Weston and Diarmuid Salvadori.

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I'd like to welcome today Robert Lloyd, who is a very distinguished member of the Peterborough Professional Fire Fighters Association.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'd like to welcome all the firefighters and principals.

I'd also like to welcome Dr. Edward Lin, who is the father of page Robyn Lin, from the riding of Don Valley West.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I'd like to welcome the members of Toronto Fire Services, Canada's largest fire services, and retired firefighter Digger O'Dell. Welcome.

**Hon. John Milloy:** I'd like to, on behalf of all of the members, issue a blanket welcome to all of the members of the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance who are at Queen's Park this week, I know, meeting with members on both sides of the House. Welcome here to Queen's Park.

**Hon. M. Aileen Carroll:** I also would like to join colleagues in welcoming firefighters from Barrie: Kevin White and Jim Dawes. It's great to see them back. Unfortunately, one of the very finest, Charlie, couldn't join us because he got married.

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I want to welcome all of the firefighters who are here today. In particular, I want to welcome, from the Markham Professional Firefighters Association, Scott Daniel, Kevin Tsang, Rob Klassen and Jason Scovell. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Kim Craiton:** I, too, want to welcome all of the firefighters here. In particular I want to recognize some of the firefighters from Niagara Falls: Michael Collee and Tim Lea. Welcome. As well, we are really well represented from Niagara Falls because we have the assistant fire chief, Jim Jessop, here as well speaking on a bill that's going through the House. I'm proud to have the members from my riding here.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I would like to introduce Cameron Wood. He is neither a firefighter nor a principal. However, he is job-shadowing me for the day, and he is a grade 10 student from Orangeville District Secondary School.

**Ms. Leeanna Pendergast:** It's my pleasure today to welcome members of the Ontario Principals' Council: my colleague Lisa Vincent, past president of the Ontario Principals' Council; Peggy Sweeney, who does communications, whom I had the pleasure of growing up with; we also have Doug Morrell, the president; Vicki

Shannon, the president-elect; Ken Arnott, vice-president; Naeem Siddiq, vice-president; Paul Camillo, member at large; Richard Pincombe, member at large; Wendy Wade, member at large—almost done, Speaker—Anne Presley, member at large; and Mike Benson, the executive director. Please join me in welcoming them to Queen's Park today.

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** Still making their way through security are proud members of the Burlington community. I would like to welcome Don and Carolyn Johnston; Ralph and Joyce Weston; Alice Sterling—you may recognize that name; Myrna Paton; Abdul Chaudhry; Trudy DeBoersap; Annette Jagt; Ron Morrison; Bert Radford; Lionel McDonald; Dorothy Lundy; June Bishop; and Marlene Purdy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** On behalf of page Cairistiona Federico, I'd like to welcome her mother, Gillian; her father, Paul; and her grandmother, Dorothy Dixon, to the galleries today.

As well, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome a friend of mine from the St. Thomas fire department, Warren Scott, who's sitting up in the Speaker's gallery.

#### COMMITTEE SITTINGS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Yesterday, the government House leader raised a point of order to ask for an interpretation of the phrase "regular meeting times" as used in the time allocation order passed yesterday respecting Bill 218. The matter arises because of a meeting of the subcommittee on committee business of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs which resulted in the subcommittee adopting a recommendation to the committee that the public hearings on Bill 218 commence at 12:01 a.m. on Thursday, December 3. The members for Leeds–Grenville, Timmins–James Bay, Durham, Beaches–East York and Pickering–Scarborough East also made submissions on the point of order.

#### 1040

While in most situations Speakers have held that a matter that arises in a committee should be considered and disposed of by that committee, there is also precedent for the Speaker ruling on a matter when the committee proceedings in question were the subject of an order of the House and the issue is the interpretation of the order itself.

The facts, as I understand them from the submissions, are as follows:

The subcommittee on committee business of the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs met on December 1 in anticipation of the eventual referral of Bill 218 for public hearings and clause-by-clause consideration. This is the usual process that is followed to allow the committee's decision-makers to provide the clerk of the committee with some direction and preliminary instructions so the committee's work can be organized. This is particularly important in a circumstance where the full committee will not have an

opportunity to meet before the commencement of public hearings.

In the meeting of this subcommittee, there was a decision made to commence public hearings at 12:01 a.m. on Thursday, December 3, which is the day set out in the time allocation order for such hearings.

The time allocation motion respecting Bill 218, which passed yesterday, authorizes the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs to meet on Thursday, December 3, 2009, during its regular meeting times for the purpose of public hearings on the bill.

The government House leader contends that an appropriate interpretation of "regular meeting times" would be 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. The question, then, to be decided is: Does such an invariable time exist that committees are required to observe when they meet in the morning? Such a practice would certainly have to be considered "regular." A quick review of committee meeting notices and agendas, however, reveals otherwise. Many committees have commenced their morning meetings earlier or later than 9 a.m. The very committee we are concerned with today, the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, has on occasion commenced its meeting at a time earlier than 9 a.m. The only consistency in morning committee meetings governed by an order of the House dated May 1, 2008, is that they must occur in the morning.

This order designates regular meeting times and provides the authority for standing committees to meet. It specifies that the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs "may meet on Thursday mornings to 10:45 a.m. and Thursday afternoons following routine proceedings." I might add that that identical wording is used in that same motion to authorize other standing committees to meet at those same times on different days, and that the same general terminology has been used in earlier orders of the House in this and previous Parliaments.

There have been occasions when committees have, by a superseding motion, been authorized to meet at a very specific time. That is not so in the case before me. However, it does suggest that if the intent was that the committee would be restricted to a 9 a.m. start time, the motion could have been worded that way. Let me hasten to say, though, that the House leader would not reasonably have had any reason to consider needing to do anything different than using the very common and usual standard wording of a time allocation motion. They have consistently gotten the job done with little ambiguity for many, many years in this Legislature.

Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice states that time allocation motions represent "the extreme limit to which procedure goes in affirming the rights of the majority at the expense of the minorities of the House, and it cannot be denied that they are capable of being used in such a way as to upset the balance, generally so carefully preserved, between the claims of business and the rights of debate."

It is certainly the case that in this House we have seen our share of what I will call extreme procedural events in

the past while. This issue in the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs is but the latest. All of these have had less to do with any fundamental flaws or lack of soundness in the traditional operating practices of the House and its committees and more to do with manifestations of a profound disagreement over a particular issue.

Erskine May's "carefully preserved" balance has been disrupted, and as a result, wording in a motion that has been used over and over in the past is today tested to the upper limits of its interpretation. However, the interpretation is there; and authorization for morning meetings has previously meant, and continues to mean, any time in the period between midnight and noon unless specified time is observed. If that were not the case, committees would up to now have been prohibited from meeting earlier than the start time of the House, or earlier than 9:00 a.m., or earlier than some other specified and universally observed time.

Do I think it is sensible that a committee would consider holding public hearings before dawn? No, I don't, and since this has not previously occurred, it would seem that that sentiment has generally been shared by committees in the past. But just because I think it is impractical, and just because it has not happened before, does not mean that it's out of order. It simply means that up to now the prerogative has not been exercised. Until it happened, we had never seen a bill title so long that it took all day to introduce; until it happened, the House had never sat through until adjournment listening to petitions; until it happened on April 2, 1997, we had never seen 14,000 amendments filed on a single bill. All of these things did occur; all were extreme measures employed within the limits of the rules.

It is my interpretation that "regular meeting time" refers to the days and times that committees have been authorized to meet by the committee scheduling motion. In that motion, "mornings" has by practice been interpreted to mean some time in the morning, but not a specified time in the morning. I find therefore that if the committee decides to meet at any time commencing at 12:01 a.m. they are in compliance with the terms of the time allocation motion on Bill 218.

I would simply add this: The report of the subcommittee is still to be considered by the full committee. The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs will have the final say on whether that report is adopted, amended or overturned.

I thank all the honourable members for their interjections.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### TAXATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is for the Premier. As William Lyon Mackenzie King said, "Where there is little or no public opinion, there is likely to be bad

government which sooner or later becomes autocratic government.” Premier, Bill Murdoch, Randy Hillier and the Ontario PC caucus stood up for that higher principle. We stood on the side of hard-working families in the province of Ontario, facing up to Dalton McGuinty’s \$3-billion tax grab. Premier, through that near 48-hour protest, we had one simple request: one day of public hearings outside of the city of Toronto.

Premier, what is it about your \$3-billion tax grab that makes you afraid to go outside of the city of Toronto for your hearings?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My honourable colleague knows that this has been the subject of some considerable debate, discussion and conversation for nine months. I’d ask him to contrast that with the few weeks devoted to this on Parliament Hill. I understand the legislation has yet to be introduced in the province of British Columbia.

I also want to raise an issue which I think is an important one, one that weighs heavily on the minds of Ontarians. It has to do with the credibility of the Conservative Party position on the HST. The member for Halton once said, “Taxing businesses for their input costs is also a negative thing to do in an economy. It would be far better if we could find a way to harmonize the PST with the GST.”

The member for Dufferin–Caledon once said, “The government should be beginning serious consultations with Ottawa on the subject of tax reform.”

Again, we’re wondering: Why is it that for a party that stood so long in favour of the HST, they’re now against—

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

1050

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Premier, you began this session under the summer of scandal, a billion-dollar boondoggle that saw public opinion force you to finally dump ministers and senior public servants. We then saw your record \$25-billion deficit, with no plan whatsoever to control your runaway spending. Now we have a \$3-billion greedy tax grab on the backs of Ontario families without any public hearings outside of Queen’s Park.

Premier, your contempt for the public is drawing criticism even from the editors of the Toronto Star, who say, “The bill’s critics deserve a wider opportunity to voice concerns about the legislation. And the Liberals, if they have any faith in the validity of their own position, ought not to be fearful of a fuller public debate.”

Premier, I ask you again: What is it about your \$3-billion—

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

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I think it’s worthwhile that we further explore the depth of the opposition to the HST to be found in the Conservative Party.

The member for Wellington–Halton Hills said, “They must follow the advice they sought from Roger Martin, and reduce taxes on new business investment in Ontario.”

The member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills said, “The Ontario government should harmonize its provincial sales tax with the federal goods and services tax.”

The member for Cambridge said, “We have called on you to stimulate our economy by reducing the tax burden on business ... eliminating capital taxes in Ontario, reducing taxes on small business, and initiating serious negotiations with the federal government on tax reform.”

That’s the true position of the Conservative Party on the HST.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Premier, Bill Murdoch, Randy Hillier and the Ontario PC caucus have the courage of their convictions and stood alongside Ontario families in fighting your greedy sales tax grab. In that nearly 48-hour protest here in the chamber, we had one simple request: public hearings outside of the city of Toronto. They stood with that senior citizen in Belleville who’s worried about the tax impact on her natural gas and home heating. They stood with that young commuter family from Oakville worried about your new tax on the cost of gasoline.

Premier, why are you refusing to hear directly from seniors in Peterborough and commuters from Oakville and getting outside the city of Toronto for full public hearings?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I want to continue to make the case which is obvious to all: that the Ontario Conservative Party, in fact, supports the HST.

Here’s what the member for Thornhill said: “I am not saying that harmonization ultimately is a bad idea.”

Here’s what the member for Leeds–Grenville had to say: “I think, in theory, our party is supportive of harmonization. In principle, it’s something we think should occur.”

Here’s what the leader of the Conservative Party said: “To be clear, I believe that there’s little sense in allowing two separate governments to apply two separate sets of taxes and policies and to collect two separate groups of sales taxes.”

I greatly appreciate the performance put forward by my honourable colleague, but the fact of the matter is, the Conservative Party of Ontario, like the Conservative Party in Ottawa, supports the HST.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Maybe I will give back to the Premier one of his quotes. This time, unlike his quotes, it is a full, direct quote. The Premier once said, “Public hearings”; those two words go together nicely if you believe in true democracy.” Now, after six years in office, we see an entirely different Dalton McGuinty—locked away in his Queen’s Park bubble, surrounding himself with elite opinion and losing touch with hard-working Ontario families.

Let me read your what Fred and Jen, senior citizens from Peterborough, inspired by Bill Murdoch and Randy Hillier and the PC caucus protest in the Legislature, said:

“To implement the HST would be disastrous for many of us. The 8% tax increase on our heating bills, hydro bills, repair bills etc. will be impossible to pay.”

Premier, why don't you hold a public hearing in Peterborough to hear from these—

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

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Just to continue to help Ontarians better understand the genuine commitment of the Conservative Party to the HST, here are some quotes from federal Conservative members.

Mike Wallace, MP for Burlington: “As Conservatives, we're supportive of a combined tax.... It's not a tax grab.... That is a misnomer [designed] to mislead the public to get them excited about something that's not accurate.”

Here's what Dean Del Mastro, MP for Peterborough, said, “It's a massive tax reduction for those that employ Ontarians, for those that drive the Ontario economy. It's a politically courageous decision.”

If Ontarians want to know where Conservatives stand on the HST, they need to know they're actually in favour of it.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier knows that the Ontario PC Party stands with hard-working Ontario families and retirees in fighting your greedy sales tax grab.

In response to the 48-hour protest in the Legislature, Val and Jim sent in an e-mail that said, “Support your stand 100%. As seniors, there are only so many taxes we can pay.”

Mel from Waterloo said, “Thank you for your actions regarding the HST. We seniors and vets need more MPPs like you” supporting the protest here in the Legislature.

Premier, why won't you listen to Mel from Kitchener-Waterloo? Will you hold public hearings in that community to hear from the taxpayers who are going to foot your bill?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** We now know that the Conservative caucus here in Ontario in fact supports the HST. They've said that. They're on the record. We know that the federal Conservative Party supports the HST. They are clearly on the record. We know that this leader has said in the past that he supports the HST.

Let's ask ourselves what the former leadership of the Conservative Party says about the HST. Here's what John Tory just recently said on the HST:

“I will not take back what I said.... That has made the PCs mad because they think we should just say no, this thing is bad news, all bad news, no matter what, all the time, every day, every part of it—period, full stop. I do not agree with them.”

My point is this: This party, like the party in Ottawa, in fact, supports the HST. They won't undo it. They've been in favour of it in the past and they continue to be in favour of it now. They just won't say that.

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

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier needs to get outside of his Queen's Park bubble and listen to the hard-working families and retirees—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd just ask all members to please come to order.

Please continue.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier needs to get outside of his elite Queen's Park bubble and listen to the hard-working Ontario families stuck with your greedy tax grab. The PC caucus has received an overwhelming response in letters, phone calls and e-mails in our protest for public hearings outside of Toronto.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. I'm finding it extremely difficult to hear the questions. I would just ask certain ministers to please be respectful of the Speaker having the ability to hear the question asked.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you, Speaker.

An e-mail said, “Public hearings should be held so members of the public can talk and the government can listen. [McGuinty] doesn't want to hear any dissenting opinions.”

Another e-mail said, “Congrats to the two members for speaking up for the” hard-working “people of the province of Ontario” and fighting this greedy tax grab.

As you know, even the Toronto Star said, “The Conservatives have a point that should not be brushed aside: One day of public hearings is absurd.”

Premier, will you hold public hearings outside of the city of Toronto?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My honourable colleague is so committed to public debate that he deliberately scuttled two question periods. When we offered them more committee time, they rejected that.

I think it's important to hear from an author of a report called Building Prosperity that was prepared in 2006. The author is Mike Harris and this is what he said on the HST, “The five provinces that still apply the provincial sales tax to business inputs ... should take measures to exempt business inputs. Specifically, all provinces should harmonize the provincial sales taxes with the federal goods and services tax.”

**1100**

The reason that this party, like the federal Conservative Party, is in favour of the HST is because they know it's going to create 600,000 more jobs for the people of Ontario, and they know they don't have a better plan.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Members will please come to order.

*Interjections.*

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

## TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier, and it actually comes in the form of a quote: “Premier ...

if you said when you sat in opposition that we should hold public hearings, if you maintained ... that listening was the hallmark of courage ... and given that this budget represents such a dramatic departure from your six previous budgets, do you not agree that the best thing to do in the circumstances is to allow the Ontario public to have public hearings?"

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My honourable colleague will know that we've had nine months of public debate on this very important package of tax reforms. I think the public has, to a very large extent, become informed on the HST. I think they still don't know that they're getting a tax cut effective January 1, which is one of the reasons we want to move ahead with this package of tax reforms.

I'd ask my honourable colleague again to compare what we are doing here in Ontario with what they're doing on Parliament Hill; they may have two or three weeks to deal with this important issue. I ask her to compare with what's happening in the province of British Columbia; they have yet to introduce their package of reforms there. We have done this nine months past. There have been extensive conversations, consultations and opportunities to become informed. I say to my honourable colleague that if she is so opposed to the HST, then why doesn't she stand up and commit right here to rescinding it?

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My first question was, word for word, a question asked to the former Premier, Ernie Eves, by none other than Dalton McGuinty, MPP.

This week the Legislature was reduced to a farce because the Premier is scared to hear the views of everyday people on his unfair tax scheme. What would the Dalton McGuinty of 2002 say about that?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My colleague and I just happen to see things differently on this score. I think there has been ample opportunity for debate. There have been over 160 occasions created by members of the government—MPPs—to connect with the people in their ridings around the province to get a better understanding of their views and give them a sense of what in fact is happening through our package of tax reforms. Add to that, I'm sure, at least 40 opportunities created by the opposition, and you're talking about over 200 separate opportunities to engage Ontarians when it comes to the matter of the HST and our package of tax reforms.

We have always said that this is a difficult initiative, and that is why the other two parties chose not to do it. But sometimes you have to do things even when they are not easy. Sometimes you have to make difficult decisions in order to create 600,000 more jobs, and that's what this is all about.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The right decision would be to have the people of this province get an opportunity to speak to their government. That's the right thing to do. But tomorrow, or, more accurately, I guess, later tonight

when the clock strikes midnight, one single day of hearings will begin on this government's unfair tax scheme.

My question is this: Is the Premier willing to consider additional hearings, or will people of this province be forced to depute at 2 o'clock in the morning?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Start the clock. Premier?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My understanding is that through discussions with House leaders, we in fact offered more time for committee hearings. Speaker, you will know that the opposition scuttled two question periods. They also said they were not prepared to accept more committee time.

Speaker, you've ruled on this, and we accept that ruling, that we're going to have committee hearings after midnight. I think it will be a little hard on families to have to engage in those kinds of things, but so be it. If that's what the opposition wants to do, we will willingly participate in that.

The point I want to continue to make, though, is that we've had an opportunity now for nine months of public conversation and discussion about a very important package of tax reforms. It's an important package. It particularly speaks to securing a bright future for our children. Experts have told us we're talking about creating some 600,000 more jobs and eliciting \$47 billion more by way of investment and new business. We think that's worth going ahead with.

## TAXATION

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. Over the last week the people of Ontario have seen a heck of a lot of pigheaded behaviour around here, and frankly, the people of Ontario deserve better. They sent us here and we have a responsibility to listen to, respect and reflect their views. Does the Premier think it is respectful to force people to depute in the middle of the night?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My honourable colleague knows that is not a position that we put forward. It's one that was put forward by the opposition. They have deemed that to be an appropriate approach. Speaker, you've ruled on that and we accept that. So be it.

Again, we offered more committee time to be held during regular time, a time that was more convenient for our families and businesses. That was rejected by the opposition.

We look forward to moving ahead with this bill. We look forward to putting in place those tax cuts that take effect on January 1. But most importantly, we look forward to creating 600,000 more jobs over the course of the next 10 years.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** This Premier knows very well that the government can put those extra hours of hearings

on another day. That's what we've been pushing for, for days and days and days now in this Legislature: a respectful hearing process for the people of this province.

The Premier's tax scheme is a significant change, and he even says so himself. Every single person in this province will be affected. The people have a right to have their voices heard, to have their views heard. Instead, all they've seen this week is government that arrogantly ignores all of their views and makes a mockery, frankly, of the democratic process.

Has the Premier grown so arrogant and so distant from the people who sent us here that he's unwilling to reconsider his plans?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My colleague knows that discussions with respect to the time allocated to these kinds of things is done through the House leaders. She's very much aware of the events that have unfolded during the course of the past few days, and I'm sure she's very much aware of our offer for more committee time. I'm sure she's aware of the position that we took, which was that we thought it was inappropriate to bring families to the Legislature at midnight or 3 o'clock in the morning.

I think she's also aware that this debate has gone on for nine months now. I think she's aware that our package of tax reforms is supported by poverty groups and business groups and by economists on the left and on the right. I think she knows fundamentally that this is about doing something which is not easy but which is important for us to do together, which is about creating 600,000 more jobs. It's about building a stronger Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** My friends ridicule that, but they don't have a plan.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier can play this game all he wants, but everybody knows that debate on this bill started just a couple of weeks ago, and much of that debate has been shut down, unfortunately.

The Legislature is supposed to actually represent something, but the Premier's intransigence has allowed it to turn into antics: no debate, no consultation. It has just been a circus around here for the last couple of days. In the meantime, everyday people who just want to be heard are told to come in the middle of the night. Has the Premier grown so arrogant and so out of touch—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. Members will come to order, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Minister of Economic Development.

Start the clock. Please continue.

1110

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is this: Has the Premier grown so arrogant and so out of touch, so certain that hundreds of thousands of people are wrong that he refuses to even listen to dissenting voices?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I will say that my honourable colleague has been very consistent in her opposition to the HST. But I would also add, in all humility, that beyond opposing, my colleague has a responsibility to propose. We have a plan on the table. It's not an easy plan to execute. There is some controversy connected with it and some resistance in some quarters. I understand that, I accept that and I respect that, but it's a plan to create 600,000 jobs. If my honourable colleague has another plan that she has been hiding of some kind to create 600,000 more jobs over the course of the next 10 years, then we'd love to hear about that, we'd love to learn something more about that, we'd love to be able to debate that and to share that with the people of Ontario. Until she does, I would argue that she lacks a certain amount of moral authority when it comes to putting forward opposition to our plan.

We're moving ahead with a plan for 600,000—

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

## TAXATION

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** My question is for the government House leader and deals with committee schedules. Tourism and guide outfitters are part of the North Bay local economy, and your hometown is calling for public hearings into the HST. Councillor Judy Koziol says, "We're urging (the provincial) government to shelve the bill until there's been full consultation.... I believe that every resident deserves to be heard and there should be consultations in every riding."

As you know, Minister, we asked for hearings in just one riding outside of Toronto. Why wouldn't you hold one day of public hearings where the tourism sector, seniors, and people of your hometown, North Bay, could participate?

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** My colleague from North Bay and my colleagues across Ontario have held numerous meetings with their constituents. Just this past Friday, I had the opportunity to speak at the chamber of commerce and take questions from the audience. Some of those questions were difficult. My colleague from North Bay has relayed to me the concerns of some of her constituents and has relayed to me the support of some of her constituents. She worked very hard with the tourism sector to accommodate some of their needs. In fact, we're investing an additional \$40 million into the tourism sector.

As the Premier has said earlier, this package is about creating jobs, it's about a brighter future for the people of North Bay, and it's about more jobs for the people of North Bay. Nobody more than the member from Nipissing has done a better job of bringing forth the views of all her citizens—

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

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** It's unfortunate that the minister didn't respond, because she had choices. She

could have stood with the people of her riding and the taxpayers of the province, like Bill Murdoch and Randy Hillier did, or shown contempt for them by ramming this record sales tax through without letting your hometown folks have their say. She could have honoured a promise that the Premier made not to raise taxes.

One day outside of Toronto for public hearings—that's what we asked for. Why, Minister, did your colleague make the wrong choice for the people of North Bay?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Members of this caucus have in fact held meetings all over the province—even in your riding—where they have been invited to take questions, where they have taken questions. A very prominent citizen of North Bay has endorsed this package, a fellow named Mike Harris, as the Premier pointed out earlier.

Premier McGuinty laid out a plan some nine months ago. He urged his caucus and cabinet to go out across Ontario, to meet with people, to answer their questions, and we have done that. Now it's time to pass a plan that will create 600,000 jobs in Ontario, lower taxes for all Ontarians and, yes, as the leader of the third party said, do away with the kinds of antics we've been exposed to over the last—

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

#### PENSION PLANS

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Acting Premier. The other day our leader raised the issue of Nortel paying out—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Restart your question, please.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'm sorry. To the Deputy Premier—would that be sufficient? All right; to the Minister of Finance.

The other day our leader raised the issue of Nortel paying out \$7.5 million in bonuses to its senior executives, this at a time when thousands of Nortel workers are facing a 30% cut in their pensions with no help from the Ontario government. This government claims to have done what Quebec has done, but in fact it hasn't. The government hasn't guaranteed the current capital while at the same time allowing a sufficient period to manage the fund assets back into solvency. Why does this government do nothing as Nortel shovels money out the door to its senior executives and its workers get a 30% cut in their hard-earned pensions?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** As I indicated to the leader of the third party, I agreed with the comments the leader of the third party made the other day with respect to this. The member opposite will know that under the CCAA, or bankruptcy protection, Nortel remains an operating company and its pension plan remains subject to the Pension Benefits Act, which we did in fact amend before Quebec did. The amendments Quebec brought in reflect those amendments.

I'm aware of some recent concerns about lump sum or commuted-value withdrawals in the Nortel pension plan. Under court orders of June 1, 2009, Nortel will distribute future additional payments of commuted values from the pension plan at 69% rather than 86%. This is an enormously difficult issue. There are other pension challenges. This government is responding responsibly and listening and working with both the workers and others on these very important matters.

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

**Mr. Paul Miller:** It has been 12 months since the Arthurs commission delivered its recommendations on pension reform for this province. In those 12 months we've had one pension disaster after another: GM, Chrysler, Nortel, AbitibiBowater. The list goes on and on. This government promised to table pension reform in this Legislature in November but didn't. Will this pension reform legislation ever see the light of day in our province?

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Yes, I expect it will be any day now.

I do want to indicate that there was some interesting debate that went on in the federal House of Commons on November 2. In an exchange, the following was said: "The minister ... keeps insisting that he can do nothing because it is a provincial matter. He is wrong. The Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act is under federal jurisdiction and could provide recourse...."

"Companies can use federal bankruptcy laws to evade their debt to pensioners and instead pay off corporate creditors whose investments are likely insured anyway."

That is the federal NDP member for your riding, sir: Mr. Wayne Marston. He's right. This has a federal overlay. I would suggest that he and his colleague federally ought to get their act together.

#### POVERTY

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. This week marks a very important anniversary for our government's commitment to reduce poverty across Ontario. One year ago we committed to reduce the number of children living in poverty by 25% in five years. These are challenging economic times. The Ontario Association of Food Banks released a report yesterday saying that food bank use is increasing. Ontario families need more support. Can the minister please provide the House with an update about the status of our efforts to combat poverty in our province?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I'm very proud to tell the Legislature that this morning our first annual report on Breaking the Cycle: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy was tabled in this Legislature—a historic moment here in Ontario. I assure you that we are on the right track. Despite challenging economic times, we are making real progress towards our goal of lifting 90,000 children out of poverty within five years. Much hard work lies ahead of us, but over the past year we have

made some very important steps. We've increased the Ontario child benefit to \$1,100 per child per year, two years ahead of schedule. We are also moving ahead to implement full-day early learning for four- and five-year-olds beginning in September 2010, with an investment of \$200 million and \$300 million in the following years. And through our harmonized sales tax, we are ensuring tax fairness for low-income families. Ninety thousand Ontarians—

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

1120

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** Thank you, Minister, for the update on the annual report.

In the past few weeks there has been a lot of media coverage around the one-year anniversary of the poverty reduction strategy. One of the topics that has attracted a lot of attention in the media has been the proposed social assistance review. I have been hearing allegations that our government is not acting quickly enough on this. Minister, can you provide us with an update on when you will start the much-awaited social assistance review?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I know that the Minister of Community and Social Services would love to respond.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Thank you very much for the question.

The review of the social assistance program is a very big task, and one that can only be accomplished with the support of those partners in the poverty community. That's why I am pleased to announce today the creation of an advisory group chaired by Gail Nyberg of the Daily Bread Food Bank. I would like to thank Gail and all of the advisory members for their ongoing commitment to improving the life of Ontario's most vulnerable. The group has been asked to create the scope of the review, followed by recommendations to remove barriers and increase opportunities for those who require assistance.

I look forward to working with the advisory group to help us tackle poverty. Again, thank you, Gail—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock for a moment, please.

I don't need help from my armchair Speakers who surround me in this chamber.

I was listening to that answer, and I would caution members, because that was sounding very much like a ministerial statement and an announcement being made through the form of a question.

I would remind the honourable ministers that the appropriate time to make announcements is not during question period but during the routine proceedings in the afternoon, under the title of ministerial statements.

#### TAXATION

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is for the Premier. What do public hearings on the HST and a public inquiry into the billion-dollar Liberal health care boondoggle at eHealth have in common? It's the public.

We're wondering, on this side, why you are hiding from the public who have questions about your scandals and your tax grab.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** Hillier has eclipsed you, Lisa.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock.

Withdraw the comment, please.

**Hon. Sandra Pupatello:** I withdraw, absolutely.

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** Our government has endeavoured on all efforts to involve public opinion across Ontario for more than nine months since the introduction of the bill. I regret that yesterday, because of the opposition, we lost an hour of question period. I regret that a week ago Monday, we lost an hour of question period because of the tactics of the opposition. I regret that that member and her colleagues on the committee have moved the hearing times for the bill—the important public hearings—until midnight tonight. That's all unfortunate.

But the member opposite and her colleagues need to understand this government's absolute commitment to moving forward with creating 600,000 new jobs. It's the right—

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

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** The one thing that we all regret in this chamber is that you are in charge of the province, because, my goodness with the scandals and the tax grab, you're now known as Canada's worst government, and you've also become Canada's most secretive government.

We know, on this side of the House, that it's been a tough session for them. With the scandals at OLG, eHealth and the Windsor Energy Centre, he's got his hands in every pot, and now he's rushing to try and get away because of the \$3-billion tax grab. Despite a motion to extend sittings, you're in a race to ram through your record \$3-billion tax grab and to try to run away from your billion-dollar boondoggle.

We also know that the \$1 billion wasted at eHealth resulted in him throwing right under the bus two ministers, a deputy minister, the CEO, and a chair.

We want to know: Why are you throwing the Ontario public under the bus, and will you have the guts to hold public hearings outside of Toronto on eHealth?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Stop the clock. Order.

The honourable member made a comment during her question, a reference to a hand being in a particular place, and I would ask that that comment be withdrawn.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'll withdraw.

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

**Hon. Dwight Duncan:** I think Ontarians want their Legislature to move responsibly and productively. I think they see the importance of the debate which we have engaged in. I think they want a reasoned debate. I think they do want to have the opportunity to be heard. That's



why we've conducted some 160 hearings across the province involving our members, people who support the HST and others.

I think the people of Ontario really do regret this; they regret the fact that we've wasted, I think, some six hours now on stunts, and even the front row of that party understands the mistake they made.

It's important to move forward with this plan, which will create some 600,000 new jobs and lower taxes for all Ontarians. We will lead through this, unlike that member and her party.

### POVERTY

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question is to the Premier. I heard what the honourable ministers have to say, but I'd like to hear the Premier.

Today's report by the 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction states: "The province runs a very real risk of falling short of its poverty reduction goal unless bolder action is taken, and soon."

Premier, 25 in 5 calls increases to the child benefit and minimum wage welcome but insufficient, and the implementation of the low-income dental plan long overdue.

Is the government still committed to reducing child poverty by 25% by the year 2013, the end of the five-year period, and will it act on the recommendations made today?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I'm very pleased to have an opportunity to speak to an issue which is of critical importance to our government and one that we have made headway on in the past year.

I want to provide the member opposite with a quote from Greg deGroot-Maggetti, the co-chair of the 25 in 5 network and poverty advocate of the Mennonite Central Committee, who just a few minutes ago said this in his press conference: "Let me start by stressing the importance of the poverty reduction strategy. The government launched the strategy just as the global recession rolled across Ontario, and that was precisely the time when we needed our government to work for us. So the fact that the government has moved forward with the poverty reduction strategy in the midst of the recession is significant, and in the first year of the poverty reduction strategy, the government has taken some very positive steps."

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

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I was also at the press conference, and the next word was "however." The government has finally announced a social assistance review panel, but it will be another year before the review is complete. Most members of the panel have stated that immediate action is needed to make social assistance a hand up, including increased allowable asset levels and "decent and adequate incomes" as a stated outcome of the review.

My question: Will the government listen to the panel members, or will this review be another government-

controlled process like the closed-door poverty consultations last year?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** To the Minister of Community and Social Services.

1130

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I thank the member for his question, and I can guarantee the member that it's going to be an open process.

I'm very proud of the people who have agreed to take on this responsibility. There has been a lot of work done internally by staff, and we have introduced changes this year. It will complete the review that was already started by staff. We will make sure that people have been heard and that their recommendations—because we're looking for recommendations—will be taken into consideration. I'm very excited about this task and this work that will be done, and we're looking forward to their recommendations.

### FIREFIGHTERS

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, firefighters perform a critical job and play a very important role in keeping Ontarians safe. They are outstanding individuals who take their duty very seriously. They have chosen a career that involves great personal risk to themselves: As everyone else is rushing away from a fire, they are the ones rushing in.

It is important, when firefighters are responding to a call, that they have the resources and training they need to be best protected while performing their duty. Firefighters should be able to feel confident that they are prepared as they work in dangerous situations. Would the minister tell us what our government is doing to help better protect Ontario's firefighters?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** I want to thank the member for the question. As a former chief medical officer of health, she understands the importance that our firefighters bring to community safety. It's been said that a firefighter's first act of bravery is signing up; everything else is in the line of duty.

The men and women who are here today representing professional firefighters believe that. Our government chose to have a very, very open relationship with our firefighters. We chose to bring them in as a partner of community safety. That has led to very, very dramatic results and major change. There is better equipment. There is better training. We introduced presumptive legislation for firefighters who develop cancers and other related health conditions. Why? We did this because we listened to our professional firefighters—

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

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** Minister, I'm pleased to hear that we're working with the OPFFA to help better protect Ontario's firefighters. Unfortunately, there are occasions when a firefighter has given their life in the line of duty. These tragic cases leave a mark, not only on the com-

munity where the firefighter lived, but also on all Ontarians. People from across the province come together to mourn and respect the act of bravery it takes to lay down one's life while attempting to save another. The Ontario Firefighters' Memorial honours all of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

You will recall that the memorial and the names of those brave firefighters etched on its columns was the target of an appalling act of vandalism in May 2008. What role did our government play in the restoration of the memorial?

**Hon. Rick Bartolucci:** Another important question. The Ontario Firefighters' Memorial is just steps away from this building. It is difficult to pass this memorial and not think of the brave firefighters who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. At the same time, this memorial reminds us of the dangers that these professional firefighters put themselves in on a regular basis.

After the outrageous and senseless vandalism, our government was proud to contribute \$150,000 towards having the memorial restored. I want to thank the Restoring Respect committee for the incredible work they did in establishing the rededication of this particular memorial. It is a testament to those who have passed on in the line of duty. It is a reminder of the bravery of these people every single, solitary day.

#### DRIVER EXAMINATION CENTRES

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** My question today is for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Minister, as you well know, the current labour dispute at the DriveTest centres is dragging into its fourth month. Your government has refused to take any action to get the centres back open. This is having a very real impact on truck driver training schools. Minister, truck driver training schools, like all private career colleges, pay a mandatory levy that goes into a training completion insurance fund. This fund is designed to make sure that if a private college goes bankrupt, the student is protected. How much money is in that fund today?

**Hon. John Milloy:** To the Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Peter Fonseca:** I thank the member for the question. I understand the member's frustration, and I can empathize with those who are being inconvenienced by this work stoppage.

The parties, over the last couple of weeks, have had an opportunity to assess their positions and the other party's position. Through our mediation department, through our mediators at the Ministry of Labour, we are encouraging the parties to get back to the table. We know that the collective bargaining process is the best process. It is the most productive and provides for the best agreements for short-term and long-term stability.

We will continue to work with the parties through the Ministry of Labour so that they can get a collective agreement that is right for both parties.

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

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** That rendition was all very well and good, but my question was to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, and I hope he'll answer it.

Minister, this is a very troubling question, the situation about this fund. I understand that there have been three draws on the fund, leaving it almost empty. The industry is rife with rumours that a large school is about to ask for a draw, which would completely bankrupt this fund.

Your government is not doing anything to get the DriveTest centres back open. It's your responsibility, not the industry's, to make sure these students are protected. Minister, when will you and this government step up to the plate and make sure that the students caught in this stuff are protected?

**Hon. Peter Fonseca:** The member talks about responsibility, and he's right. It is the responsibility of the employer and the trade union to come to the table, to work through their differences and to get a collective agreement done. Through the Ministry of Labour, our mediators are there to assist; they have been assisting. I know that the parties are assessing their positions. We encourage them to get to the table, to resolve their differences, so that those who are being inconvenienced—and we do understand that many are being inconvenienced across the province—can get on with getting their licences and getting on the road and being able to drive.

#### MANUFACTURING AND FORESTRY SECTOR JOBS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. The jobs crisis in northern Ontario continues, and this government doesn't have the slightest idea what to do about it. The latest shoe to drop? Sysco Corp. has announced it is closing its Sturgeon Falls warehousing facility and throwing over 100 people out of work. This is devastating news for a small community that has already been crippled by forestry job losses.

My question is a simple one: When will this government get off the sidelines and actually do something for hard-hit communities like Sturgeon Falls?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** To the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I appreciate the question. We are very conscious of the challenges being faced in northern Ontario, particularly relating to the forestry sector. Therefore it's a good opportunity for me to be able to tell the leader of the third party and all members about the decision that we made last week to open up a competition for wood supply in the province of Ontario. Eleven million cubic metres have been opened up in terms of opportunities for existing industry and new entrants to bring forward proposals. We want to put Ontario's wood to work, and this is going to provide us with that opportunity.

I can tell you that there's a great deal of excitement about these opportunities. In fact, may I say, this is something that the third party has been calling on us to do for some time. We are very pleased with the fact that

we opened it up. It's a big competition and it's going to put people back to work, create jobs in northern Ontario and make a real difference. We're very excited about it.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** That measure doesn't deal with the severity of the problem that we're seeing in northern Ontario. Sturgeon Falls is simply one example. Across the north, 40,000 jobs have been lost in the forestry industry alone, and each one of those lost jobs cost at least two additional service jobs. When these good-paying, community-sustaining jobs are lost, there's a tragic trickle-down effect. Schools close, Main Street businesses are shuttered and families are forced to move away from friends and loved ones.

How many more northern Ontario communities have to be economically and socially gutted before this government finally takes action that makes a difference for them?

1140

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** In some ways, I'm startled by the response, in light of the actions our government is taking. For one thing, there's no question in terms of the benefits the HST will bring to the forestry and mining sectors. It's significant. It's huge—at least \$15 million. Corporate income tax cuts, again, will be of great help to the forestry sector and the mining sector, let alone the fact that we have got the northern Ontario heritage fund—

**Mr. Mike Colle:** That they wanted to cut.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:**—which you wanted to cut. Our government has increased the funding for that. We're up to \$80 million this year, creating thousands of jobs in northern Ontario in a variety of ways for the community sectors.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** We're going to send this transcript everywhere.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** I hear the member from Kenora–Rainy River going on as well, and I appreciate the fact that—

**Mr. Mike Colle:** He was the one who was going to kill it.

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Exactly. We are very excited about the opportunities that the HST will bring to the sector; there's no doubt about that. The cuts to corporate taxes for forestry and mining, the northern Ontario heritage fund and a number of other initiatives, including the wood supply competition—we're putting Ontario's wood to work, creating jobs for new—

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

#### AMATEUR SPORT

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** My question is for the Minister of Health Promotion. I'm really pleased to ask this good-news question of you—an update. I would have loved to ask it yesterday, but that opportunity didn't present itself.

Now that Ontario has been awarded the 2015 Pan Am Games, we know there's much work to be done to ensure

we are ready to host a successful event. It was reported that the University of Toronto at Scarborough will see a major new facility built there, and that other sporting events will be using further venues in Durham region.

Can the minister please tell us what steps the government is taking to ensure that these Pan Am Games are going to be an overwhelming success, and how Scarborough and Durham will play an important part in these games?

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my colleague the member from Pickering–Scarborough East for his hard work in Pickering–Scarborough East and for the question.

The 2015 Pan Am Parapan Games will bring approximately \$700 million worth of investment in sport infrastructure to the greater Golden Horseshoe area. In fact, this investment in the games will create approximately 15,000 new jobs. It will attract up to 250,000 tourists and bring 10,000 athletes and officials to our great province of Ontario.

But it's not just about infrastructure legacy. It's about all the goodwill this will generate and the fact that this will put Ontario on the map in terms of sports infrastructure and development. In fact, Scarborough stands to gain the Canadian Sport Institute Ontario, to be located at the university—

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

**Mr. Wayne Arthurs:** Minister, thank you for that response. As the member for Pickering–Scarborough East, I'm excited about the opportunities that are presenting themselves. Thank you for highlighting how my riding and the region are going to benefit from the 2015 Pan Am Games.

The games also bring thousands of the best athletes in America to Ontario. As the home team, we want to make sure our athletes perform the best they possibly can to bring home the medals. Minister, can you please tell this House what our government is doing to support high-performance athletes so they can perform to their full potential in these international games?

**Hon. Margaret R. Best:** I will continue by saying that both Scarborough and Durham will benefit long after the Pan American closing ceremonies in 2015, as will the rest of the Golden Horseshoe.

On the international stage, we want to ensure that our athletes are the best-trained and supported on the track, in the pool or on the courts. That is why, between 2003 and 2009, the McGuinty government increased support for amateur sport by 166%. This government supports our high-performance athletes and coaches as they train for international competition through our ministry's Quest for Gold program. In fact, I received two letters from Quest for Gold recipients just today, telling us how much the Quest for Gold has benefited them. Since 2006, we have provided \$42 million to this program. This has contributed—

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

## SCHOOL FACILITIES

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** My question is for the Minister of Education. Why is the minister standing idly by while the students of McKenzie-Smith Bennett public school in Acton are losing their playground?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I understand that the member opposite's question has to do with local decisions about how facilities are allocated and the decisions that school boards have to make about how to use their facilities to best advantage. At the core of that is a question that school boards have to answer about providing the best program for their students. They have decisions that have to be made about schools that are less than full; they have decisions about building new schools. In doing that, they have to rationalize the use of their property. That's what the local school board is doing—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** They don't want that dictated from Toronto.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** You don't want a minister at Bloor and Bay—at Bay and Wellesley; where is that office?—making a decision about a small community or even a suburban community and its schools. You want that decision made by the local school board.

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

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** The minister cannot escape her personal responsibility in this matter. School boards are making decisions based on policies and directives from the minister's office. In this case, the ministry policy is being interpreted to compel the Halton District School Board to declare the playground to be surplus land in order to sell it and then use the proceeds to build new schools in other communities.

I've written multiple letters to the minister on this, I've raised it in the Legislature and I've spoken to the minister many times directly. Is the minister really prepared to ignore our intervention, that of the mayor and council of the town of Halton Hills, the region of Halton, the school council, the outstanding community support for the playground, and the 5,000 people who have signed a petition demanding that it be saved?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The member opposite knows I have spoken to the mayor. I really believe that a good, local community process is very important in these decisions. There need to be plans that include school boards, municipalities and other community agencies. In fact, the member opposite knows full well that in this year, we've introduced a partnership policy into the school board system that would require school boards to work with their partners and have a plan that all of the partners, including municipalities, would know about well in advance, so that if there's space that's going to be surplus and they have an opportunity to use that space, they will be able to talk with the school board about that.

But I go back to the fundamental principle, which is that local school boards need to be working in their communities to make the decisions regarding school facilities and school properties. That is not a decision that

you want made at the ministry level, at the provincial level; you want that to be a local community decision. The provincial government can—

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

## HIGHWAY 407

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. For weeks, the Toronto Star has been showing how Ontario drivers are being taken to the cleaners by the Highway 407 toll company. Billed incorrectly, charged sky-high interest rates, pursued for 15-year-old charges, even stripped of their driver's licences, Ontario's drivers are incensed and want action. Why did the minister sell out Ontario's drivers in the 2006 settlement with 407 ETR?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** As you would know, it's exactly the opposite. When your NDP government decided to embark on this trail of the privatization of Highway 407 when in power—I know you were supporting the NDP at that time—you will recall that that started us down a path where the Conservative government, in desperation, wanting to show a balanced budget, almost gave away the 407 to the 407 corporation. The deal was ironclad. I'm going to tell you, that company had to be completely happy with that deal. We went to court as a government in the year that the member mentioned, 2005, to fight against this, and the court ruled in favour of the deal that the Conservatives had set up.

So we have a Conservative government that signed the deal and a court that confirmed it. I'm with the member in being highly—

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The history is an interesting diversion. The reality is that this government issued a press release in 2006 talking about the wonderful deal that it had settled with 407 ETR and talking about protection for drivers, and in fact what it did was sell drivers down the river. This government abandoned its responsibilities. When is it going to take back the initiative and actually act to protect drivers?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** The member is usually a member, I know, who doesn't provide wrong information. He's usually pretty accurate in this House, and I know he's usually fair-minded.

**1150**

The problem is, our government went to court over this matter. We were criticized by some saying, "Why would you bother with this? It's an ironclad guarantee." But we went to court on behalf of the people of Ontario that use Highway 407. Not only did the court rule in favour of the deal that was signed between the Conservative government and 407 corporation, they also denied our government the opportunity to appeal, because we would like to have appealed.

I know, in hindsight, the member has lots of solutions, but I think the whole history of the 407 commends itself to those—

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

#### AIDS TREATMENT

**Mr. David Zimmer:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. One of the most significant issues during our lifetime has been the spread of HIV/AIDS and how it has affected millions of people across the planet. Yesterday was World AIDS Day. This year, the theme is of “Universal Access and Human Rights,” which will highlight and underscore the importance of understanding HIV/AIDS from a human rights perspective. I think we can all agree that the elimination of HIV/AIDS is of utmost importance.

In Ontario alone, this disease will claim or has claimed 9,000 Ontarians. My question for the minister: What is our government doing to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and to support people living with HIV/AIDS?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** World AIDS Day is a solemn reminder to all of us of the lives lost to AIDS in this province and around the world, but it’s also a time to consider our shared hope—hope for better prevention, hope for better treatment, now and in the future, for those living with the disease in Ontario, in Canada and around the world.

Ontarians are now able to live with HIV/AIDS. In fact, about 27,000 people across the province are doing exactly that. With a stronger provincial support system, Ontarians now have access to better HIV/AIDS medications, to better community-based AIDS education programs; people now have better access to anonymous testing and to outpatient clinics.

In this fiscal year, I’m very pleased to say, we’re increasing our investment by \$1.68 million to community-based AIDS/HIV prevention—\$1 million of that earmarked for women—

#### MEMBERS’ PRIVILEGES

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe that according to standing order 21(c), my privileges as an MPP and the PC critic for community and social services had been breached because the minister made a statement during—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** If you’re going to raise a point of privilege with the Speaker, there is a process that needs to be followed. You need to file a letter with the Speaker outlining your point of privilege, and I will be happy to review it.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like clarification on that. It’s my understanding, according to the standing order, that if a point of privilege arises as a result of the proceedings, that that point of privilege can be made directly to you and does not have to be put in writing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I will stand corrected, and the interpretation is correct.

I would say to the member from Dufferin–Caledon that I too noted during question period that it very much sounded to me as a ministerial statement, and I took the minister to task for that and said that it should have been.

Again, I would just urge caution to all ministers because we get into situations like this, and the members of the opposition, the duly appointed critic from Her Majesty’s loyal opposition should rightly be given an opportunity to respond to a ministerial statement, and I will recognize the member from Dufferin–Caledon.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** On this same point, Speaker: Because you ruled like that, if you don’t call for her to ask for a ministerial statement today and allow me the five-minute response, we will continue to see this activity on behalf of the government. I am concerned that we have to stop it today and demand that she do that ministerial statement during today’s proceedings.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I thank the honourable member.

The member from Beaches–East York.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** You said the “official opposition.” I think, Mr. Speaker, with the greatest of respect, the third party has the same privilege. I would echo what the member has just said. We will be prepared to make statements today, should the minister actually make a statement during the appropriate time.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I thank the honourable member from Beaches–East York. Yes, when I was responding, I was speaking directly to Her Majesty’s loyal opposition. I do not lose sight of the role that the third party plays in this House as well of keeping the government accountable.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** We demand an apology.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I’d just ask the member from Renfrew to please come to order.

As I have ruled in the past, I cannot compel a minister to make a ministerial statement, but I will again remind members that, on issues, it would be best for statements to be made within the chamber.

With that, I believe I have some reading to do here.

#### DEFERRED VOTES

#### TIME ALLOCATION

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** We have a number of deferred votes.

First we have a deferred vote on government notice of motion 166 on time allocation of Bill 185, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act with respect to greenhouse gas emissions trading and other economic and financial instruments and market-based approaches.

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

*The division bells rang from 1156 to 1201.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** All in favour will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

Albanese, Laura	Duncan, Dwight	Naqvi, Yasir
Arthurs, Wayne	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Oraziotti, David
Balkissoon, Bas	Fonseca, Peter	Pendergast, Leeanna
Bartolucci, Rick	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Gravelle, Michael	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Ramal, Khalil
Best, Margaret	Jaczek, Helena	Ramsay, David
Bradley, James J.	Jeffrey, Linda	Rinaldi, Lou
Brotten, Laurel C.	Johnson, Rick	Ruprecht, Tony
Brown, Michael A.	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Cansfield, Donna H.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sergio, Mario
Caplan, David	Leal, Jeff	Smith, Monique
Carroll, Aileen	Matthews, Deborah	Sorbara, Greg
Chan, Michael	Mauro, Bill	Sousa, Charles
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Dickson, Joe	Milloy, John	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mitchell, Carol	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	Moridi, Reza	

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

**Nays**

Arnott, Ted	Jones, Sylvia	Runciman, Robert W.
Bailey, Robert	Klees, Frank	Savoline, Joyce
Barrett, Toby	MacLeod, Lisa	Shurman, Peter
Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Sterling, Norman W.
Dunlop, Garfield	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tabuns, Peter
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hampton, Howard	Munro, Julia	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John	
Hudak, Tim	Ouellette, Jerry J.	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 59; the nays are 25.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

**TIME ALLOCATION**

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** We have a deferred vote on government notice of motion 168 on time allocation of Bill 203, An Act to allow for better cross-border policing co-operation with other Canadian provinces and territories and to make consequential amendments to the Police Services Act.

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

**Interjections:** Same vote.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Same vote? Agreed? I heard a no.

*The division bells rang from 1205 to 1210.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. Bartolucci has moved government notice of motion number 168. All those in favour, please rise and be recorded by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

Albanese, Laura	Duncan, Dwight	Naqvi, Yasir
Arthurs, Wayne	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Oraziotti, David

Balkissoon, Bas	Fonseca, Peter	Pendergast, Leeanna
Bartolucci, Rick	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Gravelle, Michael	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Ramal, Khalil
Best, Margaret	Jaczek, Helena	Ramsay, David
Bradley, James J.	Jeffrey, Linda	Rinaldi, Lou
Brotten, Laurel C.	Johnson, Rick	Ruprecht, Tony
Brown, Michael A.	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Cansfield, Donna H.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sergio, Mario
Caplan, David	Leal, Jeff	Smith, Monique
Carroll, Aileen	Matthews, Deborah	Sorbara, Greg
Chan, Michael	Mauro, Bill	Sousa, Charles
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Dickson, Joe	Milloy, John	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mitchell, Carol	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	Moridi, Reza	

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

**Nays**

Arnott, Ted	Jones, Sylvia	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Bailey, Robert	Klees, Frank	Runciman, Robert W.
Barrett, Toby	MacLeod, Lisa	Savoline, Joyce
Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Shurman, Peter
Dunlop, Garfield	Martiniuk, Gerry	Sterling, Norman W.
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norm	Tabuns, Peter
Hampton, Howard	Munro, Julia	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John	Yakabuski, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 59; the nays are 24.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

**TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND SAFETY  
STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2009**

**LOI DE 2009 MODIFIANT DES LOIS  
EN CE QUI A TRAIT AUX NORMES  
TECHNIQUES ET À LA SÉCURITÉ**

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of Bill 187, An Act to amend the Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000 and the Safety and Consumer Statutes Administration Act, 1996 / Projet de loi 187, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes techniques et la sécurité et la Loi de 1996 sur l'application de certaines lois traitant de sécurité et de services aux consommateurs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

**Interjections:** Same vote.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Same vote. Agreed?

**Interjections:** No.

*The division bells rang from 1213 to 1218.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Mr. McMeekin has moved third reading of Bill 187. All those in favour, please rise and be recorded by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

Albanese, Laura	Duncan, Dwight	Naqvi, Yasir
Arthurs, Wayne	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Oraziotti, David
Balkissoon, Bas	Fonseca, Peter	Pendergast, Leeanna

Bartolucci, Rick	Gerretsen, John	Phillips, Gerry
Bentley, Christopher	Gravelle, Michael	Pupatello, Sandra
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Ramal, Khalil
Best, Margaret	Jaczek, Helena	Ramsay, David
Bradley, James J.	Jeffrey, Linda	Rinaldi, Lou
Broten, Laurel C.	Johnson, Rick	Ruprecht, Tony
Brown, Michael A.	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Cansfield, Donna H.	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sergio, Mario
Caplan, David	Leal, Jeff	Smith, Monique
Carroll, Aileen	Matthews, Deborah	Sorbara, Greg
Chan, Michael	Mauro, Bill	Sousa, Charles
Colle, Mike	McMeekin, Ted	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crozier, Bruce	McNeely, Phil	Van Bommel, Maria
Delaney, Bob	Meilleur, Madeleine	Watson, Jim
Dickson, Joe	Milloy, John	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mitchell, Carol	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	Moridi, Reza	

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

#### Nays

Arnott, Ted	Jones, Sylvia	Runciman, Robert W.
Bailey, Robert	Klees, Frank	Savoline, Joyce
Barrett, Toby	MacLeod, Lisa	Shurman, Peter
Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Sterling, Norman W.
Dunlop, Garfield	Martiniuk, Gerry	Tabuns, Peter
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norm	Witmer, Elizabeth
Hampton, Howard	Munro, Julia	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	O'Toole, John	
Hudak, Tim	Ouellette, Jerry J.	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 59; the nays are 25.

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

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

*Third reading agreed to.*

#### NOTICES OF DISSATISFACTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Sarnia–Lambton has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities concerning bankruptcy of the training fund. This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Leeds–Grenville has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Finance concerning public hearings on Bill 218. This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Wellington–Halton Hills has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Education concerning the McKenzie-Smith Bennett public school in Acton. This matter will be debated at 6 p.m. today.

#### VOTING

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm very, very concerned with a ruling you made two or three days ago in this Legislature and the precedent that it creates in the future of this Legislature

of Ontario. I would like an explanation of where the Speaker's power is derived from in ignoring standing order 20 and standing order 28 with regard to your decision to let me vote in another seat of this Legislature. This is important from a point of view of the Speaker taking the liberty to ignore standing orders that are in place in order to resolve a problem that arose in the Legislature. Mr. Speaker, it may have made rational sense to do what you did, but on the other hand, we must be concerned that the standing orders which you are charged to put in place are adhered to.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I thank the honourable member for his point of order and I reserve my decision on it.

There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 3 this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1224 to 1500.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'm going to take this opportunity to welcome in the west members' gallery Debbie Thompson, who is the reeve of the township of Stone Mills, and Todd Steele, the deputy reeve of the township of Stone Mills. They're down here today to support Olivia Hughes, one of our pages.

Welcome to both of you, and enjoy your visit to Queen's Park.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### TAXATION

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I would like to take this opportunity to speak out against the harmonized sales tax that the McGuinty Liberals are imposing on Ontario families. This shameful tax grab will mean that Ontario families will lose more of their hard-earned income. The HST means that Ontarians will be stuck paying more for essential services such as home heating.

What the McGuinty Liberals are doing is inexcusable. What they are saying is that they don't care about Ontario's average taxpayers.

The consequences of the HST are being felt across Ontario, including in my riding of Dufferin–Caledon.

Home renovations will be subjected to the HST. The consequences of this are enormous. Ontario families that want to renovate will struggle to pay the extra costs. This will mean a thriving underground economy where illegal contractors are not subjected to the HST. This will mean loss of sales, or even bankruptcy, for many legitimate contractors who are forced to pay the HST.

The federal government has introduced a home renovation tax credit to support families and the economy. Yet, the HST shows that the Liberal government doesn't care about either. The HST will not benefit On-

tario families or taxpayers. The McGuinty Liberals need to stop this shameless tax grab before it begins.

#### FIRE SAFETY

**Mr. Mario Sergio:** Tomorrow I will be debating my private member's bill, Bill 214, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997. Countless deaths have instigated three coroners' inquests to recommend making sprinklers mandatory in specific care occupancies. Our government did the right thing and mandated that all care homes built after 1997 have sprinkles installed.

What about those seniors who live in older buildings? Why are their lives put at risk? Those are our mothers, our fathers, our family and our relatives. This year alone the province lost four seniors in two separate fire incidents.

Bill 214 has wide support from the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, the municipal fire chiefs' association, the Ontario Municipal Fire Prevention Officers Association, as well as the endorsement of a number of seniors' organizations all over Ontario.

I'm looking forward to the debate tomorrow afternoon, and I'm honoured that this Legislature will be filled with fire chiefs from around Ontario who will have made the commute to support this particular bill.

At the present time, we have in Ontario two systems of care occupancy: one with a sprinkler system and one without. I hope that we can move closer to providing safety and peace of mind to our seniors.

#### GENERAL MOTORS OF CANADA

**Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette:** I'm pleased once again that General Motors Oshawa has been recognized as one of the most efficient and best-quality car assembly plants in the world, with the announcement of the all-new 2011 Buick Regal being produced at the Oshawa assembly plant. This is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the employees from General Motors Oshawa.

There will be a tremendous impact on our community as the extra shift will be added and approximately 600 laid-off employees will be recalled to produce the new Buick. I'd like to congratulate the work of the Canadian Auto Workers and General Motors for securing this agreement to have the Buick Regal built in Oshawa. I want to thank the engineers and the marketing personnel at General Motors who secured the advanced design technology and performance capabilities of this vehicle for the North American market.

This is definitely not your grandfather's Buick. This exciting, new, European-inspired sports sedan is based on the GM award-winning 2009 European Car of the Year. The Buick Regal is the second new car to be built on the new state-of-the-art flex manufacturing line.

Congratulations to General Motors for moving forward with innovative, fuel-efficient, high-quality new vehicles and building them right here in Ontario. Once again, great things are starting to happen in Oshawa.

#### PENSION PLANS

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I couldn't help but be enraged when I heard about the obscene payouts that Nortel executives have given themselves. How these people can even look at themselves in the mirror every day is beyond any decent person's comprehension. Sadly, they're not alone in this scandalous behaviour.

In my riding of Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, my former employer, US Steel, laid off all but a bare skeleton of workers and moved not only Canadian raw materials but Canadian jobs to the States. Although I'm glad that many Canadian workers have been recalled to work, as I've said before, this is only to stave off the cost of severance pay. I fear the long-term goals of US Steel.

Our sisters and brothers at the Lake Erie Works plant in Nanticoke have been locked out for many months in a dispute with US Steel, with a very dim outlook. Like so many foreign owners of our Canadian industries, as soon as the going gets tough, they grab whatever they can get—money the government gives them to keep operations in Ontario and Canada—and run back home, taking our jobs and our livelihoods with them.

The steelworkers at Vale Inco in Sudbury are all too familiar with this scenario as they face their daily trek to the picket lines of this strikebreaking, union-busting foreign owner.

I can't imagine how the Nortel injured workers must have felt when they discovered that their long-term disability plan was actually being paid by Nortel and not by an insurance carrier. Now they face an uncertain future with real fear that they will not be able to afford their medications, while Nortel executives pay themselves for driving this once-thriving company and its employees into the ground.

The province needs to enact legislation that will guarantee real long-term illness insurance, a real backstop for the pension benefits guarantee fund and a system like Quebec's, whereby the province takes over an at-risk pension fund, guarantees the bottom line and actively—

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

#### MEHRUB RAHMAN

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I rise to speak about Mehrub Rahman, a Bengali writer, poet, actor, journalist and community activist. Mehrub is his pen name, which in Arabic means a sacred place or platform to disseminate information.

Mehrub came to Canada five years ago and has quickly assimilated into the mainstream society here in Toronto. He has a regular day job, but his evenings and weekends are spent working in the community as a writer, poet, actor and journalist. He's a graduate of the University of Dhaka, but Mehrub has always had an attraction to the literary world. He started writing poetry in grade 9, with his first literary magazine published in grade 10. In the years that followed, his works appeared in many national dailies. He's often been recognized for



reciting poems of Bangladesh's revered national poets. It is little wonder that in 1971, Mehrub joined the Bangladesh liberation war as a freedom fighter.

Mehrub has published three poetry books and four anthologies, one in English. In early 2010, another three books of poetry and a book of short stories will be published.

Recently, I had the distinct honour of attending the Bengali community's poetry reading in tribute to Mehrub's literary works and the launching of one of his poetry books, *Ami Krito Das*, which means "slave."

I join with the entire Bangladeshi community in recognizing and paying tribute to Mehrub Rahman, a literary icon in our very own community.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** 'Tis a few days till Christmas and all through the land,

The people are worried and can't understand,

Why in this year of recession and fear,

On top of it all new taxes appear.

We must have been naughty to deserve such a fate,

Those consultants at eHealth, they must have been

great.

They got our millions, we got this tax,

This unwanted burden on taxpayers' backs.

Little Bobby was dreaming of a brand new bike.

Too bad, little Bobby, there's a giant tax hike.

Little Suzie was hoping for a pretty new doll.

No dice, Little Suzie, can't afford that at all.

For the new HST is well on its way,

With no chance for the people to have their own

say,

Imposed from above by McGuinty the Grinch,

Who will add extra squeeze to our financial pinch.

All we want this Christmas is real consultation,

Some questions and answers and real explanation

Of how the new tax will affect families' lives,

How to brace for the hurt when it finally arrives.

Dear Santa, can you bring us in your bagful of toys

A Premier who listens before he destroys?

If that's too much to ask, a request too immense,

At least bring the Premier some economic sense.

1510

#### FUNDRAISING

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** I rise today to speak about a wonderful initiative underway in the riding of Mississauga South. 'Twas the Bite Before Christmas is a community-wide campaign to raise food and funds for the Mississauga Food Bank and the Compass Food Bank. Unfortunately, more families and children are in need this holiday season. I'm proud to say that south Mississauga has come together to help by organizing a number of fundraising events, including the highlight: a 500-person benefit dinner on December 10 at the Oasis banquet facility.

My staff have also initiated and collected an overwhelming number of donations for a holiday turkey drive to help feed many families. Mississauga is fortunate indeed that so many caring individuals have come together to assist. For example, non-perishable food items are being accepted and collected by neighbourhood businesses throughout the community. As is often the case in Mississauga South, this campaign is a result of the selfless hard work and dedication of many generous volunteers and sponsors.

In particular, I'd like to thank Ron Lenyk, a long-time volunteer and community leader; Ellen Timms of the Port Credit BIA; Dan Meadowcroft, a lead volunteer and organizer of this and many other community campaigns; Frank Bailey, a graphic artist; Andrew Briggs, from the Compass Centre and food bank; Christopher Hatch, executive director of the Mississauga Food Bank; and my entire staff.

All proceeds—100%—from the campaign will go directly to our Mississauga food banks. People are welcome to get involved by contacting the Port Credit BIA. Together, in the spirit of Christmas giving, we can make this a brighter holiday for all.

#### UNIVERSITY FUNDING

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Last week, I had the pleasure of attending the groundbreaking for the Environmental Cluster at the University of Guelph, which, through the knowledge infrastructure program, received funding totalling over \$33 million, with Ontario and Canada each contributing \$16.8 million. With this funding, the University of Guelph is refurbishing the 50-year-old Axelrod Building to create a cutting-edge teaching and research centre that will serve as the hub for the university's environmental sciences programs. The building will house the newly formed School of Environmental Sciences and related programs at the Ontario Agricultural College and the School of Engineering.

Researchers will help us understand environmental issues such as climate change and support the development of a greener, more innovative economy. Renovations to the Axelrod Building will provide space for the additional grad students in environmental science that Ontario is also funding. Axelrod is currently one of the most non-accessible buildings on campus, and the original building has no insulation. This funding will enhance the building's accessibility and significantly improve energy efficiency and sustainability. As someone who was both a student and lecturer in this building, I can say that this \$33-million investment is enthusiastically welcomed by both students and faculty, and it will create 670 jobs for Guelph-area workers.

#### GENERAL ELECTRIC

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** GE was founded by Thomas Edison in 1892 and has operated in Canada for over 100 years, beginning with the manufacturing facility in Peter-

borough. This is a company with a great deal of history, especially in my riding. Generations of Peterborough families have worked for GE. My late father worked there for almost 40 years. They manufacture everything from jet engines to power generation, financial services to water processing, and medical imaging to media content.

On November 19, 2009, I had the distinct pleasure of welcoming my esteemed colleague the Honourable Sandra Pupatello, Minister of Economic Development, to Peterborough. Together we announced a memorandum of understanding that will have GE and Ontario invest \$100 million in the Peterborough operation; our government would be investing \$15 million over five years from the Next Generation of Jobs Fund.

With this funding, GE will create 100 high-value jobs, attracting new investment to the Peterborough area, and help Ontario reduce its carbon footprint. They plan to upgrade their facility, buy new equipment, and increase R&D for new products and training initiatives, including apprenticeship programs.

GE has been referred to as “imagination at work” because of their ability to create diversified technology used in solving some of the world’s toughest problems. This announcement is good news for Peterborough, good news for Ontario and great news for Canada.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I take this opportunity, on behalf of the member for Burlington, to welcome some Burlington firefighters to the Legislature today: Sandor Toth, Dan VanderLelie, Paul Cunningham, Jeff Rock and Chris Burville. We welcome all the firefighters to the Ontario Legislature today.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 14, An Act to deem that the Building Code and the Fire Code require fire detectors, interconnected fire alarms and non-combustible fire escapes / *Projet de loi 14, Loi prévoyant que le code du bâtiment et le code de prévention des incendies sont réputés exiger des détecteurs d’incendie, des systèmes d’alerte d’incendie interconnectés et des sorties de secours incombustibles.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The bill is, therefore, ordered for third reading.

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Mr. Bas Balkissoon:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 204, An Act to protect animal health and to amend and repeal other Acts / *Projet de loi 204, Loi protégeant la santé animale et modifiant et abrogeant d’autres lois.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 17, 2009, the bill is ordered for third reading.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### DAY NURSERIES AMENDMENT ACT (SUN PROTECTION), 2009

##### LOI DE 2009 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES GARDERIES (PROTECTION SOLAIRE)

Mme Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 229, An Act to amend the Day Nurseries Act with respect to sun protection for children / *Projet de loi 229, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les garderies à l’égard de la protection solaire des enfants.*

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I was approached by Sheri Miller—MPP Paul Miller’s daughter—Jillian Dodman, Carmen Romero, Rachel Rollings and Bera Garcia, who are in the fourth-year nursing program at the University of Western Ontario. They presented me with a very good idea, which is basically a bill to amend the Day Nurseries Act to require every operator of a day nursery to provide adequate sun protection to a child in its care if the child is going to be outdoors for more than half an hour, unless a physician or parent advises otherwise. So, that could be to provide a shaded area, long clothing or sunscreen, hats etc. to the kids in their care.

## MOTIONS

### COMMITTEE SITTINGS

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion respecting the consideration of Bill 218 by the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

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

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I move that the order of the House dated December 1, 2009, providing for allocation of time on Bill 218 be amended by striking out the second and third paragraphs and substituting the following:

“That the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet from 8 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday, December 3, 2009, and from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Monday, December 7, 2009, for the purpose of public hearings on the bill; and at 2 p.m. on Monday, December 7, 2009, for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

“That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the clerk of the committee shall be 12 noon on Monday, December 7, 2009. At 5 p.m. on Monday, December 7, 2009, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond the normal hour of adjournment until completion of clause-by-clause consideration. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession with one 20-minute waiting period allowed pursuant to standing order 129(a); and.”

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

*Motion agreed to.*

1520

## PETITIONS

### RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

**Mr. Gerry Martiniuk:** I have a petition provided to me by Shelley Kennedy of Waterloo, which reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas to cover the cost of reconstructive surgery when a patient has had extreme weight loss after bariatric surgery, as these surgeries are not covered under OHIP and are at present considered cosmetic;

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

“That when patients have bariatric surgery and lose the required amount of weight and keep it off, they also have another set of health care issues that can be very

costly to take care of. As these individuals lose weight, they end up with so much excess skin and fat pockets that no amount of exercise will take care of it. This excess skin and folds in the skin can cause anything from boils, cysts, skin infections and more that have to be cared for constantly in hospital emergency rooms and cared for by agencies like community care access centres. If preventive reconstructive surgeries are not approved, the constant medical care will cost the taxpayer much more money as said health issues would cost over time.”

I sign the petition pursuant to the necessary orders.

### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to present a petition from the people of Timiskaming–Cochrane. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the Ontario government is making positron emission tomography, PET scanning, a publicly insured health service.... ; and

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

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

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

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

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It's been sent to me by the Islamic Society of North America in Mississauga. I'd especially like to acknowledge the efforts of Raza Jokhio of Quartermain Drive and Ahmed Raza of Malhance Gate, in Mississauga, for having collected the signatures. It reads as follows:

“Whereas wait times for access to surgical procedures in the western GTA served by the Mississauga Halton LHIN are growing despite the ongoing capital project activity at the hospitals within the Mississauga Halton LHIN boundaries; and

“Whereas ‘day surgery’ procedures could better be performed in an off-site facility. An ambulatory surgery centre would greatly increase the ability of surgeons to perform more procedures, reduce wait times for patients and free up operating theatre space in hospitals for more complex procedures that may require post-operative intensive care unit support and a longer length of stay in hospital;

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

“That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care allocate funds in its 2009-10 capital budget to begin planning and construction of an ambulatory surgery centre located in western Mississauga to serve the Mississauga-Halton area and enable greater access to ‘day surgery’ procedures that comprise about four fifths of all surgical procedures performed.”

I’m very pleased to sign and support this petition and to ask page Christopher to carry it for me.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I have thousands of petitions and thousands of names addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty’s plan to blend the PST with the GST into one 13% harmonized sales tax (HST) represents one of the largest tax hikes in Ontario history, at a time when families and businesses can least afford it; and

“This new tax, which we are calling the DST (Dalton sales tax), will raise the cost of a long list of goods and services not previously subject to provincial sales tax, including: electricity, home heating oil and gas at the pump; haircuts, magazines and Internet; home renovations, heating and air conditioning repairs; accounting, legal and real estate fees; condo fees and new home sales; rents will also go up; minor hockey registration fees will increase; green fees and gym fees will also be taxed;

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

“That the Dalton McGuinty government not impose this new tax on Ontario’s hard-working families and businesses.”

I agree with this. I will affix my name and send it down with Maggie.

#### RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

**Mr. Yasir Naqvi:** I’ve got a petition from my constituents: Heather Saunders, Chase Irwin, Susan Sprung and Sophie Theroux.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas to cover the cost of reconstructive surgery when a patient has had extreme weight loss after bariatric surgery, as these surgeries are not covered under OHIP and are at present considered cosmetic;

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

“That when patients have bariatric surgery and lose the required amount of weight and keep it off, they also have another set of health care issues that can be very costly to take care of. As these individuals lose weight, they end up with so much excess skin and fat pockets that no amount of exercise will take care of it. This excess skin and folds in the skin can cause anything from boils, cysts, skin infections and more that have to be cared for constantly in hospital emergency rooms and cared for by agencies like community care access centres. If pre-

ventive reconstructive surgeries are not approved, the constant medical care will cost the taxpayer much more money as said health issues would cost over time.”

I affix my signature and send it to the table via page Cairistiona.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I too have a petition. It’s signed by hundreds of the residents of Thornhill and it’s to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Dalton McGuinty’s plan to blend the PST and the GST into one 13% harmonized sales tax (HST) represents one of the largest tax hikes in Ontario history, at a time when families and businesses can least afford it, this new tax, which we are calling the DST (Dalton sales tax), will raise the cost of a long list of goods and services not previously subject to the provincial sales tax, including electricity; home heating oil and gas at the pump; haircuts; newspapers and magazines; Internet and cable; home renovations; heating; air-conditioning repairs; accounting, legal and real estate fees; condo fees; new home sales; rents will also go up; minor hockey registration fees will increase; and green fees and gym fees will also be taxed;

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

“That the McGuinty government not impose this new tax on Ontario’s hard-working families and businesses.”

I agree with this petition. I will sign it and send it down with page Hadhy.

#### SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDING

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I have a petition today from ErinoakKids in Mississauga, Ontario.

“Whereas the population in Peel has tripled from 400,000 residents to 1.2 million between 1980 to present. Human services funding has not kept pace with that growth. Peel receives only one third the per capita social service funding of other Ontario communities; and

“Whereas residents of Peel cannot obtain social services in a timely fashion. Long waiting lists exist for many Peel region service providers. The child poverty level in Peel has grown from 14% to 20% between 2001 and 2006, and youth violence is rising; and

“Whereas Ontario’s Places to Grow legislation predicts substantial future growth, further challenging our already stretched service providers to respond to population growth;

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

“That the province of Ontario allocate social services funding on the basis of population size, population growth, relevant social indicators and special geographic conditions;

“That the province provide adequate growth funding for social services in Peel region; and

“That Ontario develop, in consultation with high-growth stakeholders, a human services strategy for high-growth regions to complement Ontario’s award-winning Places to Grow strategy.”

I’ll affix my signature to it.

### TAXATION

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas residents in Burlington do not want the McQuinty 13% sales tax, which will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

“Whereas the McQuinty 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to home sales over \$400,000; and

“Whereas the McQuinty 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships, newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees; and

“Whereas the blended sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families and low-income Ontarians;

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

“That the McQuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario families.”

I agree with this petition. I’m going to sign it and give it to page Jordan.

### DRIVER EXAMINATION CENTRES

**Mrs. Maria Van Bommel:** I am presenting this petition on behalf of my colleague the member for Chatham–Kent–Essex.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the ongoing and unproductive labour dispute between Serco DES and the unionized employees of DriveTest has resulted in the closure of all DriveTest offices in Ontario; and

**1530** “Whereas licence testing services are available only at DriveTest offices; and

“Whereas we, the drivers who require the testing services of these offices, are being held hostage during the negotiations of this labour dispute; and

“Whereas the parties involved in the said dispute are out-of-province entities and as such are showing little or no regard for the needs of the citizens of Ontario; and

“Whereas the licence testing services of DriveTest offices are a critical component of road user safety in Ontario; and

“Whereas the lack of licence testing service is preventing the citizens of Ontario from progressing through the driver licensing requirements; and

“Whereas the inability to attain required licensing standards is causing irreparable damage to lifestyle,

employment opportunities and financial situations for this Ontario society;

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

“We respectfully urge the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to recognize that the outsourcing of driver licence testing is proving to be damaging to the lifestyles and financial situations for the citizens of Ontario and to please take whatever action that may be necessary to immediately return the availability of licence testing services to Ontario drivers.”

### TAXATION

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I’m pleased to present a number of petitions from my riding of Durham, which read as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Premier Dalton McQuinty is increasing taxes yet again with his new 13% combined sales tax, at a time when families and businesses can least afford it; and

“Whereas, by 2010, Dalton McQuinty’s new tax will increase the cost of goods and services that families and businesses buy every day. A few examples include: coffee, newspapers and magazines; gas for the car, home heating oil and electricity; haircuts, dry cleaning and personal grooming”; personal fitness; “home renovations and home services; veterinary care and pet care; legal services, the sale of resale homes, and funeral arrangements; and

“Whereas Dalton McQuinty promised he wouldn’t raise taxes in the 2003 election. However, in 2004, he brought in the” dreaded “health tax, which costs upwards of \$600 to \$900 per individual. And now he is raising our taxes again;

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

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

I’d like to present this to Minister Wilkinson, the Minister of Revenue.

### SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDING

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition sent to me by the students and staff of Father Michael Goetz Secondary School on Central Parkway in Mississauga. I would like especially to acknowledge Phil Baca of Kenna Court and Nancy Begin of Queenston Drive in Mississauga. It is addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the population in Peel has tripled from 400,000 residents to 1.2 million between 1980 to present. Human services funding has not kept pace with that growth. Peel receives only one third the per capita social service funding of other Ontario communities; and

“Whereas residents of Peel cannot obtain social services in a timely fashion. Long waiting lists exist for many Peel region service providers. The child poverty level in Peel has grown from 14% to 20% between 2001 and 2006...”; and

“Whereas Ontario’s Places to Grow legislation predicts substantial future growth, further challenging our already stretched service providers to respond to population growth;

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

“That the province of Ontario allocate social services funding on the basis of population size, population growth, relevant social indicators and special geographic conditions;

“That the province provide adequate growth funding for social services in Peel region; and

“That Ontario develop, in consultation with high-growth stakeholders, a human services strategy for high-growth regions to complement Ontario’s award-winning Places to Grow strategy.”

I very much agree with this petition. I’m pleased to sign and support it and to ask page Connor to carry it for me.

#### TAXATION

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas residents at Halton Standard Condominium number 504 (the Baxter), 399 Elizabeth Street, Burlington, Ontario, L7R 0A4, do not want the harmonized sales tax (HST) of 13%, which will increase many of the costs of goods and services previously PST exempt; and

“Whereas the HST will hit condominium owners far harder than people that live in single-family homes; and

“Whereas the provincial government encourages condominiums through Places to Grow policies and then overtaxes those condo owners by taxing goods and services presently PST exempt, which condo owners have no control over;

“That the government drop its proposed HST.”

I agree with this petition, and I will give it to page Christopher.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### GOOD GOVERNMENT ACT, 2009

##### LOI DE 2009 SUR LA SAINE GESTION PUBLIQUE

Ms. Smith, on behalf of Mr. Bentley, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 212, An Act to promote good government by amending or repealing certain Acts and by enacting two new Acts / Projet de loi 212, Loi visant à promouvoir une

saine gestion publique en modifiant ou en abrogeant certaines lois et en édictant deux nouvelles lois.

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

**Hon. Monique M. Smith:** I will be sharing my time with the member from Willowdale.

As you’ll recall, the Good Government Act, 2009, would, if passed, modernize Ontario laws and regulations to increase transparency, accountability and effectiveness. I’m very pleased to have the opportunity this afternoon to speak to third reading of this bill.

The bill is the combined response of many ministries, as you know. The result is close to 600 items from 22 ministries. The proposed items include a number of technical changes and general housekeeping measures, but they also include increases in transparency and accountability in our existing systems by improving public inquiries and jury selection processes.

With respect to jury selection processes, we’re looking at jury verification through this bill. Building on recommendations made this fall by the Information and Privacy Commissioner, we are moving forward with proposed amendments to the Juries Act. These changes would create a clear and transparent process for screening prospective jurors who are ineligible to serve as jurors because of a prior criminal conviction. This would ensure that juror eligibility under the act is checked independently from court locations and that it is done according to strict confidentiality requirements.

These proposed changes would maximize respect for privacy because the names of ineligible jurors would be replaced before lists were sent to court locations so that the information is never provided directly to any of the participants in court proceedings. I think that protection of privacy is incredibly important, and it is certainly one of the major aspects of the Good Government Act, 2009.

As well, there has been lots of discussion in the public domain about public inquiries. The proposed changes to the Public Inquiries Act are about providing both the government and commissioners with better tools to determine the scope and manage the cost and length of public inquiries. Public inquiries can, of course, as you know, provide governments with direction and expertise. However, over the years, many inquiries have become increasingly complex, time-consuming and costly.

The amendments that are proposed in Bill 212 would require future commissions to rely, where appropriate, on factual sources that promote efficiency, such as representative witnesses, agreed statements of fact, and existing records and reports. These tools will streamline our public inquiries, ensuring that we do get the appropriate evidence before our commissioners and also ensuring there is not a lot of wasted time or resources in the process. They reflect modern case management techniques and will mean that, when inquiries are necessary, they will complete their important function in the most efficient and effective way possible.

I know the member from Willowdale has done a great deal of fabulous work on this bill. I am pleased this afternoon to have the opportunity to share with him my

time, and I was pleased to have the opportunity to speak to third reading.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** He will be able to share it in rotation.

Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I will be sharing my time, in rotation, with Mr. Shurman from the riding of Thornhill.

I would like to make some comments concerning the minister's comments. This is a huge bill, of course: 324 pages. We've talked about that in the past. There are 79 schedules. Amongst those schedules, there are two complete acts. For all of that legislation, for all of the schedules and for all of the new acts that are in this bill, we had the grand total of half a day of hearings. Those hearings had less than 36 hours' notice for people to come to Queen's Park from all over the province and to make a submission. Lord help you if you were in Thunder Bay; you had no opportunity whatsoever to have a discussion on this bill. The clause-by-clause on this bill took longer than the half day of public hearings.

**1540**

It's really quite amazing that this bill is passing through the House, especially by this government. I well remember, in 2003, the Premier's first words in this House as he was saying a few words after his swearing-in. Those words rang true with me at the time. I thought that this was not all bad. He was talking about public consultation and he said very strongly, "None of us is smarter than all of us."

Apparently, after six years, that has faded into the background, because no longer does this Premier want to hear about others' comments, others' thoughts and words on these things. With a bill this size, when 79 days would have meant one day per schedule for hearings to take place, we had half a day of hearings.

In those hearings, some of the people who appeared before the committee had very interesting things to say. They indicated very strongly that Bill 212 hinders the independence of a commission and will not ensure the increased transparency and increased accountability of a government or of a public inquiry. This has been highlighted by our party and, of course, confirmed by various people who made presentations during that very brief half day of hearings.

The commission counsel and researchers who spoke to the committee considered this bill to be very restrictive, as far as the conduct of public inquiries in the future.

Kent Roach wrote an interesting and very informed piece on this bill in the *Ottawa Citizen* entitled "Keep Public Inquiries Independent." He wrote that article on November 16 this year.

During the second reading of this bill, I made a statement in the House: "It will give the government a lot more control over how those public inquiries take place"—this bill, if passed. "If you read the new process that public inquiries will operate under, one would suspect that the government could scope the conclusions of an inquiry, taking away the independence of a public

inquiry"—since they now control so many aspects of public inquiries.

Of all the 79 schedules that exist in this bill, probably the ones that I see as the most damaging are the changes to the Public Inquiries Act, which give the government much more control, take away the independence of a commissioner of a public inquiry, and I think, do not augur well for the future of that independence in the House.

The Attorney General of the province, when he was introducing this bill for first reading, said, "The amendments to the Public Inquiries Act would, if passed, provide the government and commissioners with better tools to determine the scope and manage the cost and length of public inquiries."

I think that perhaps when the minister said that, if passed, it would provide the government and commissioners—of course, the emphasis should be on the government. It would give the government much more scope, much more management of the costs. It would give the government much more control over the length of public inquiries. In fact, if you read between the lines, it would give the government much more control over what findings that public inquiry came to.

During second reading, the minister talked about Bill 212, and I quote: "Recognizing the essential independence of the commission, which would not, cannot and should not be in any way, shape or form compromised...." Well, that hasn't been the experience of what we've heard in the half day of public hearings that we did have.

Further, on the second reading of Bill 212: "I want to re-emphasize that we're very anxious to hear what the suggestions and comments will be with respect to what's in here." That's something the Attorney General talked about, and then you had half a day of public hearings. So I'm not sure how anxious he was to hear suggestions about this bill.

Further, the Attorney General, in response to the member from Oshawa's question on November 5, 2009, said, "The Public Inquiries Act remains as strong as it ever was, but would propose to be strengthened." Again, I question the Attorney General's comments there, as do the people who were able to make a public submission during the half day of hearings.

Again, the Attorney General responded to a question I asked him on November 5, 2009: "The suggestion that the proposed legislation would be less than what is there now is completely wrong."

That's what the minister said, and I compare that to the submission made by the commission counsel and researchers to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. In their submission to the committee, they said:

"A number of the provisions in the proposed act could in our view adversely affect the independence of inquiries once they have been appointed, and will affect the ability of sitting judges to agree to conduct public inquiries in Ontario. We are concerned that prior advance

legislative authorization for executive termination and other interferences in the conduct of an inquiry would seriously alter the delicate balance that now exists between government and inquiries.”

That was in their submission to the hearings. At the public hearings, the same deputants, the commission counsel and researchers, said:

“Public inquiries play a valuable role in restoring public confidence, ensuring accountability and proposing reforms for the future. But it is the independence of the commissioners of public inquiries that creates the conditions for the restoration of public trust and confidence. Without public confidence in the commissioner’s findings and the process employed in reaching them, there can be no public acceptance of the commissioner’s recommendations to address the tragedy or other matter of public concern that led to the commission’s creation.”

That seems to be in direct contradiction to what the Attorney General has been saying in this House. I think it’s a sad day for Ontario when these things aren’t being taken as seriously by the minister as they are by the report writing of the research staff.

At committee: “If schedule 6 to Bill 212 is enacted in its present form, it will create more problems than it solves and will likely end the long tradition of public inquiries that have served this province so well.” That is a huge, huge red light. The government should note, and note well, that if this bill is passed, it will “create more problems than it solves and will likely end the long tradition of public inquiries that have served this province so well.” That should scare anyone who is thinking about voting in favour of this bill.

Further, at committee, the member for Thornhill, Peter Shurman, asked, “If you had a choice to make, would you change anything at all about the way public inquiries are constructed at present?” The answer was an emphatic, resounding no.

At committee, Mr. Shurman further asked, “If I characterized this as highly objectionable, from your perspective, that would be a good synopsis?” The answer again was, “That is a fair synopsis.”

As this bill goes forward in its immensity—a huge piece of legislation—I feel that this one section dealing with the Public Inquiries Act is highly flawed, and would suggest that the government reconsider introducing this section of the bill and look back on the history of this province and how it has been served by public inquiries down through the ages. It’s a long and wonderful tradition, and I fear that this bill is going to seriously impact the ability of those public inquiries to take place in the way they have in the past and provide this province with the kind of advice that has served us well in the past.

1550

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I’m pleased to continue the debate from our side on this bill, Bill 212. I’d like to begin not by addressing my colleagues on the Liberal side—because I don’t think they’re paying an awful lot

of attention—but I’ll borrow a page from my friend from Trinity–Spadina and address a number of people who are watching us today on the legislative channel, because they have an interest in a bill of this import and size.

This bill is what we commonly call an omnibus bill. It’s entitled “Good Government”—how ironic is that?—because it purports to change in a very good way something about virtually every ministry in the government of Ontario. On the face of it, you could say that’s a good idea. There is certainly no doubt that on some level, there are good things about elements of this bill. Equally, as one would expect in a 400-page document, there are a lot of things that people find objectionable. Certainly, as the person who acted as point man on the Progressive Conservative side in hearings—hastily called hearings, I might add—I can tell you that there wasn’t sufficient time for people to give thoughtful response to a number of elements of this bill that certainly deserved that.

So I’d like to say that for a complex bill like this, I find myself disappointed in the process. And it’s the process that I’d like to spend my time addressing today: the process in which this bill has been handled, both in committee and in the Legislature.

In committee, very particularly, to sit opposite the government side and witness my colleagues behaving in many cases like automatons, robots, in terms of how they responded, and to see in the room pretty well only bureaucrats in the clause-by-clause consideration, who probably—I did a quick mental calculation at the time—added up to about \$3 million a year, if I’m estimating correctly, of public sector salaries, so that they could provide the answers that the government side could not, was disappointing to say the least.

This is massive legislation. As I mentioned, it changes so much about so many ministries and so many acts in the province of Ontario. Yet this bill was time-allocated to ensure only minimal input from MPPs, from stakeholders and from individual Ontarians.

I have said it already in committee, but I’ll say it again: Elements of the bill are positive, elements of the bill are negative. That’s why public hearings are held. That’s why public hearings are required. That’s why stakeholders should be given adequate time to prepare their comments and to present them in an atmosphere where due consideration is provided and where they can legitimately be incorporated, where felt appropriate, into the bill itself.

The McGuinty government’s time allocation motion for Bill 212 has rendered any consideration of the bill, in my view, undemocratic. The McGuinty Liberals have literally stifled debate on Bill 212, in the same way that they have stifled debate on Bill 218, the HST tax grab bill. And while I’m at it, I could point to a couple of pieces of legislation that have been recently debated in this House that have suffered the same fate. One is the bill on TSSA, which went through third reading last night. This bill, without going far afield from what we’re considering, was in the same way very reactive to a particular event, and at the end of the day inconsequential



to making the differences that that event should have called upon it to make. Cap and trade is another one. That's a lot like the Green Energy Act. It sounds great, but what does it really do?

To bring us back to the focal point of what I'm talking about today, good government: Does this bill provide for good government? The fact of the matter, Speaker and people watching, is that good government is about the concept of full debate. It's about the concept of public hearings that allow stakeholders—that's you—to come and say what they feel about the bill. It's about the concept of creating the time to do the research and to have professional people or non-professional people who have opinions on what happens to the 13 million citizens of the province of Ontario come and talk to us, the MPPs who represent you, and to have that representation count for something when amendments to a bill are considered.

It seems that this government is not interested in debating any legislation that would have a significant impact on Ontarians. They're not interested in listening to anyone.

I have in my hand not a prop but the actual agenda for Thursday, November 19, 2009, in room 151, which constitutes the time and place of the hearings for Bill 212. It began at 9 a.m. We listened to six submissions of up to 15 minutes each. There was one scheduled for the afternoon, but it was a no-show. So this committee met, as my colleague from Halton has already mentioned, for one morning, basically for three hours, and considered the submissions of six organizations. I will read them into the record because they deserve that, at least: commission counsel and researchers talking about the Public Inquiries Act, and ably quoted by my colleague as finding the section pertaining to that objectionable; the Ontario Deputy Judges Association; Ontario Nonprofit Network; Hull and Hull LLP; Bernard Nayman, chartered accountant; and Conservation Ontario, the Grand River Conservation Authority. That was it.

I wonder why that was the full agenda for a 400-page bill, a highly complex omnibus bill. Hearings require complex submissions. Hearings require the time to create those submissions. They require, particularly when they are held in Toronto, for people who might want to travel to make those submissions, the opportunity to do so.

But the fact of the matter is that, looking at orders of the day from November 16, this bill was the subject of a time allocation motion. It was voted for time allocation on November 17, and then the hearings were authorized for Thursday, November 19—all of 36 hours after that. That's almost an impossibility for anybody in terms of being able to get here and meet and do what is required to make a meaningful submission. That, Speaker and viewers, explains why a bill this complex got all of six submissions and only held one morning of hearings, and then clause-by-clause amendments.

At least those six folks got a chance to talk about what amendments should be made. Those amendments had to be filed with the clerk of the committee by 12 noon on Tuesday, November 24, and were considered on Thurs-

day, the 26th. Considered they were, for all of about 30 seconds apiece, with every single amendment—and our amendments were submitted by our opposition critics for an array of portfolios, all with good grace and with an honesty that only goes with the representation that they can provide to reasonable and legitimate stakeholders—turned down one by one by a series of motions for these amendments that were voted “no” on by the entire Liberal panel, with, I dare say, and I can't provide paper proof of this, very little knowledge of what they were voting against. That concerned me a great deal.

**1600**

Going back to the motivations of the government on this, they're certainly not interested in meaningful review of their proposals. Members of the finance and economic affairs committee received copies of these stakeholder submissions for their review one hour before the deadline to submit any amendments. What was I supposed to do with that? How was I supposed to even transmit them to my colleagues for consideration in that kind of a time frame? The answer is very simple: I wasn't. And so they got them and we hastily assembled some amendments, but I can say that this bill—a bill that, I can't underline strongly enough, is a pretty important and far-reaching bill—did not receive the consideration from this assembly, did not receive the consideration from the committee, and certainly did not receive the input and consideration that the government should have demanded of itself in passing legislation like this. With the deadline for submissions being set an hour before the deadline for amendments, neither individual Ontarians nor stakeholder groups had any kind of an opportunity, any adequate opportunity, to have their submissions properly considered and properly reviewed. That's not only not fair; that is the antithesis of what the bill's title implies. It's not good government; it's bad government.

From what I heard at the committee table, the Liberal MPPs did not seem to know exactly why they were voting for some amendments and not for others. In fact, the point person for the Liberals, from whom I believe we'll be hearing shortly, when questioned by regardless what party, simply read from a card in a very robotic way or asked one of the bureaucrats in the room. Again, as I say, it probably took several million dollars per year worth of bureaucrats to explain why something was in the bill, rather than providing meaningful debate. Honestly, did anybody actually read this bill or the parts of it that were assigned for individual consideration, if that even happened? I don't know, but I seriously doubt it.

So I put forward this challenge to all members of the McGuinty government: We here in this chamber are all elected members who represent our constituents, or we should be. We are not here as pawns of anybody. I'm here for 150,000 people who live in Thornhill. They have expectations, and I would hope to be able to deliver on those expectations. We're here to make decisions on what is best for Ontario, and to do so, you have to do more than raise your hand when told to. The McGuinty government is contradicting itself.

I'd like to conclude with a quote. Here's what the Minister of Transportation had to say about time allocation motions back in 2002, a mere year before the McGuinty government took hold in the province of Ontario: "They are motions which are designed to choke off debate, to end debate, on a particular piece of legislation that would be before us." I submit to you that Mr. Bradley, the Minister of Transportation, was 100% correct. That's what has been done here. That's the point I want to make today; that's what I want to get on the record. The time allocation motion has become the favourite tool in that very same McGuinty arsenal. The Liberals have used this tool to make a mockery of the committee process. They are using it again, and many times, I might say, to make a mockery of the entire democratic process by refusing to hold public consultations on a range of things, and, when they do hold them, to curtail them.

Speaker, thank you very much for letting me take this time, and thank you very much, viewers, for paying some attention.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I rise to talk about this bill. This is a huge bill with so many sections, so many acts involved, and I have to state at the outset that most of the bill was kind of benign. Whether a few housekeeping measures were taken or other things were brought to light or a couple of minor changes to regulations and to acts took place, it was benign. But there were a couple of things that the government really fell down on.

I want to echo my colleague from Thornhill in what he just said, because I found it a very frustrating committee to attend. The Liberal members who were there would not engage in debate as to why they were making motions or why they were not supporting opposition motions. From time to time, they were forced to call staff to explain what the regulation changes meant because they themselves, even though it was their motion, did not understand what it meant or how it was going to impact the existing legislation.

So we asked many questions, and there were two things in the end that I really feel compelled to say in opposition to this bill.

The first one involved the Ontario Municipal Board and the changes to that board. What it did, in effect, is, it took away the rights of ordinary citizens to appeal a decision of the Ontario Municipal Board to cabinet.

I asked the parliamentary assistant to the minister: "Why is it that you want to take away this right?" I'm glad to see the parliamentary assistant is here, because the parliamentary assistant would not answer that question. I pointed out in debate how it had been used so successfully by citizens over the years and was reminded that it had not been used for a number of years. In fact, 15 years ago was the last time that citizens were successful in going before cabinet to have an Ontario Municipal Board changed.

Was this something onerous to the government? Was this something they had to get rid of because it was

making so much work? I think not. It has been used sparingly but effectively.

I pointed out to the Liberal members across that the two occasions in living memory of the people of East York were both beneficial. The first one involved the Bayview ghost. Those who live in Toronto would know about the ghost. It was an apartment building built on Bayview Avenue on a hill that remained vacant for years. It was largely constructed but not completed, and it became derelict. It was there for a number of years, as a result of squabbling back and forth with the Ontario Municipal Board and the developer and the municipality as it then was, the township of East York.

Eventually cabinet got involved, and it was the Conservative cabinet that came to the rescue of the people of East York and made a cabinet order on what to do with the lands. Cabinet determined that the lands should be developed not with an apartment building but with homes. Today, if you go to the site of the Bayview ghost, you will see some of the most magnificent homes in all of Toronto perched on that hill. I think there are about 100 of them, and they range in price from \$1.5 million and up, and that's what was built there in the end.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Which one did you live in, Michael?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I have to tell you, I don't live in any of them. I was mayor at the time that this was developed, and it was an appropriate tool for us to go out and determine what was going to be there. We knew it had to be homes.

The developers and other people, the residents and those who wanted to be embroiled in a big fight and start the process all over again were not allowed to do so. We had a cabinet order that was duly made and signed, and even though it was many years old at that time, it was still the law inasmuch as it had never been rescinded.

The people of East York have come to accept that development and the homes that are on it. The people there will tell you that going to cabinet way back in the days of the Conservatives—and I think it was Bill Davis or perhaps even John Robarts when this was done—was the right thing to have done, because the Ontario Municipal Board in those days, with the greatest of respect, had screwed up that file royally.

The second instance is much more modern. People will see it if, again, you're going along Bayview Avenue. There is a place that is being developed by Evergreen—getting a huge government subsidy from the Ontario government, the federal government and private people to develop that place, which was once the Don Valley Brick Works. Again, the Ontario Municipal Board, in its wisdom, listening to developers with big dollar signs in their eyes, ruled that that should be housing. What they didn't say, and what they wouldn't accept, is that the housing was going to be built on the flood plain. It's on the flood plain of the Don River. In fact, in those years of Hurricane Hazel, October 1954, when Hurricane Hazel came in with torrential rains, that entire area of the flood plain was six or eight feet deep in water. That's where

the Ontario Municipal Board, in its wisdom, determined that there should be new houses.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Tell us about the Bayview ghost.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I did.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** Did you?

1610

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I did talk about the Bayview ghost, for the member, already. I did talk about that.

Then the citizens rebelled against what the Ontario Municipal Board said, and they went to cabinet, and this time it was a Liberal cabinet minister in the Peterson government who came to the rescue of East York. Her name was Lily Munro. People will remember, Liberals especially will remember, how she said, "No. What the Ontario Municipal Board is doing is wrong. We have a higher use for this property." The Ontario government came to the rescue, and that place today is being developed. It is one of the most beautiful urban parks in this country today. It has ponds, it has fish, it has birds, it has frogs and trees and all the things that people could want. The old industrial heritage of the Brickworks has been saved, and it is being put forward for future consideration so that people can remember the heritage of the Don Valley and the bricks that were made there that built elaborate and beautiful homes, including this very building. The bricks came from the Don Valley Brickworks. All of that has been preserved because, again, the Ontario Municipal Board was simply wrong.

Now what is happening is, with absolutely not one word of debate, with the Liberal members sitting there mute and silent, that right is being taken away. They would not even defend their actions about why it was necessary, except to say it hasn't been exercised in 15 years. Well, 15 years ago, it worked very well for the people of Toronto, and that safeguard has to be there to protect citizens in other communities when the Ontario Municipal Board again makes a horrendous decision.

If what the members opposite are saying is, "Go to court," do you think ordinary people can afford to go to court? I know the developers will go to court if they don't get what they want, but ordinary people, trying to do the right thing and protect our heritage, trying to do the right thing and protect—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** They can't go to court now; lawyers' fees are going to have HST.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Exactly, yes. HST on lawyers' fees, my friend reminds me; that's true.

But ordinary people will not be able to afford it, and the one thing they had—a government that could look and say, "There's a mistake here," and remedy it—is being taken away. I think this was shameful on the part of the government. This alone would cause me to go from the side of supporting an otherwise benign bill to not doing it at all.

That was not the end of it. There was a second set of proposals put forward around municipal elections. We know they are problematic. We know that elections in the 444 municipalities across this province are not held to the same high standard as federal and provincial elections.

That's not to say that every municipality is not doing the right thing; I do not cast that kind of aspersion. But I do say that from time to time, there are examples of municipal elections that do not hold up to the light of scrutiny, where things have been done wrong, where people have made mistakes and people have been elected in less than favourable circumstances, where monies have changed hands, where donations have been improper and all of that.

We put forward a number of recommendations, every one of which was shot down without explanation; not once was an explanation given. I want to tell the people, especially those who are watching, some of the things that we attempted to do, because I think they were good motions.

The first thing we attempted to do was to prohibit gifts of money, property and services to candidates. We tried to do this so that gifts of money, including loans, property or services, that are not used for a campaign but that could influence a candidate if he or she was elected, must be prohibited, the same way as in the federal elections act, the Canada Elections Act. We think that's a good act. It's certainly the act that the Parliament of Canada uses for its elections; it's one that I would hope some day we would use in our provincial elections, something to make sure that a candidate does not benefit if they are elected and that they are in fact prohibited from taking these kinds of loans, property or services.

I moved the motion and without debate, without a single signal from the government as to why not, five hands went up in opposition. You can understand my frustration, but it did not end there.

The second motion we attempted to make on this same act was to require donors to political candidates to be at least 18 years of age before they can donate. Note that we didn't ask that they be Canadian citizens, because we understand that many people in Ontario have come from other lands and may not be Canadian citizens yet but may want to participate or have a candidate they want to support. We left that open in order to make sure that what happened federally does not happen in municipalities. We call this the Joe Volpe law.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** You remember Joe. I see the Liberals opposite laughing. Remember how he was collecting money? He was collecting \$5,000 from five-year-olds. What was happening was that parents were giving \$5,000 to their five- and six- and seven-year-old children, who in turn would take that money and could think of no better use for it—not ice cream, not candy, not a new bicycle—but to give it to Joe Volpe's leadership campaign, and people thought this was ridiculous.

Therefore, we suggested: Make sure that people are of the age of majority, that they can vote and they're 18 years of age before they're allowed to make that kind of contribution. We don't want the money being funnelled from rich people down to their children, and their children, in turn, giving it candidates—be they Joe Volpe or a municipal candidate under that guise.

I moved that motion. I asked the Liberals to support it. Without even saying a single word in defence, or not, or why it was a good idea, or not a bad idea, five hands went up against it, and that was the end of it. Not a single defence about why children five years of age should be allowed to contribute.

I went on to ask other things. I went on to ask about banning union and corporate donations to municipal election candidates. I talked about what happens in other places. That has already happened in Manitoba; it has already happened in Quebec. I am very hopeful that this week it's going to happen in the city of Toronto, because they know this is not good policy, and I asked for a simple motion. It's happening in Nova Scotia as well, I'm given to understand, as we speak. It's the law in Canada; it's the federal law.

I suggested that it's a really good law. I explained that it's much easier to enforce than the \$5,000 limit set out in this act. It is a problem of developer domination of municipal candidates—it has been well documented by Professor McDermott and others in places like Markham, Pickering, Vaughan and other places where developers really pay all the shot for municipal elections. It was at least 50% of all the contributions in the municipal elections from a broad range of places across Ontario.

I asked that this be considered, and again, with no discussion at all, with absolutely no defence of the position of the Liberal Party, five hands went up in opposition. To this day I have no idea why they think this is not a good idea. Certainly, it is the law in Canada. It ought to be the law in Ontario. It is the law in most of the other provinces. It will be the law in the city of Toronto. Even Vaughan is looking at this. Even Vaughn is looking at it. But no, the Liberal party of Ontario can't look at it.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Did they speak to that in committee?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Yeah, I did.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** No, did they?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** No, they didn't say a word on this issue.

Then I started to talk about reducing the maximum donation limit to \$1,500 from the \$5,000 that's proposed. I suggested that the \$5,000 limit was too high, especially in small municipalities, because you can give \$750 per candidate. There are hundreds of municipalities across this province that have either five or seven members of municipal council. You have a mayor or a reeve and you have four or six councillors, and that makes up the council. At \$750 a crack, you can fund them all, and I suggested that's not right. You can fund them all with the limit. Is that what the government had: For developers to go in and fund all the incumbents for being developer-friendly? I asked the question. Not one word of defence was given by the government—not one word. But five hands went up in opposition. I don't know; maybe they think it's a good thing. Maybe they think it's a good thing that a developer can go into a small town and fund every incumbent and have the wherewithal under this act to do it.

**1620**

I asked about average voters. If they that say for four years—given that an average voter makes \$35,000 annually, they couldn't afford to ever do it, and no average voter is ever going to make that kind of contribution.

The Canada Elections Act limit on donations in any calendar year to a candidate for a particular election is \$1,000 in total in any calendar year to the registered associations, nomination contestants and candidates of a particular registered party. But here in Ontario, municipally, whoa, you can do everything you want. You can go in and you can give money to every candidate under the sun in your particular place.

Then I went to the next one. I talked about requiring the candidate to collect the information on an employer, union or business connections of donors. This is not the law in Canada, but it is the law in the United States. What is happening here is that big corporate interests and developers—particularly developers—are giving the money out to their employees. They're saying, "Here's \$5,000. Give to it candidate X. I've already given my \$5,000. I can't give any more, but you can give it, my wife can give it, my children can give it, now my employees can give it. We're going to fund this guy right to the nines, and he's going to win. That's what we want to do." In order to stop this, if the government insists on a \$5,000 limit, then they should at least have to disclose. The identity of each individual donor's employer must be required, as in US law, and disclosure of each donor's direct organizational affiliations must also be required, to help ensure that corporations, unions, and other organizations are not funnelling donations through their employees or board members.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** Through the back door.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Back door. I asked that question, I put forward this proposal, I talked about it, and without a word of defence, five Liberal hands went up in opposition. I still don't know why the government thinks this is not a good idea.

We went on to talk about prohibiting loans to candidates from businesses, unions or other organizations. Again, the same thing: Loans to candidates from corporations, unions and all other types of organizations must be banned, and loans from individuals must be limited to the same limits as donations. So if you're allowed \$750 and you don't have the cash but you want to loan it out to your friend, that's the limit, so that the money can't be used by others to circumvent the act. Again, I put it forward, and five hands went up in opposition. I don't know why. I don't know why they thought that they don't have to answer this, except that they're the government and they can do whatever they want. They don't even have to defend it. They don't even care.

I'm almost finished here.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Take your time.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** You're on a roll, Michael.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** I know.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** And I'll finish it off, don't worry.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Okay.

Here's a really good one, we thought—we required that the end of the surplus fund carrying over from the 2010 election year rather than the 2014 election year. This great scam that's been going on for years is that candidates running in elections accumulate huge scads of money, they don't spend it all, they hand it over to the municipality, and they have it ready for the next election year. That's a bad enough scam as it is. I know that it happens. I know that when I ran my last time municipally, I had the money but I gave it to the municipality and I did not try to protect it. That money went to the city of Toronto, and I am proud that they got that money and I hope they spent it well.

I also see what other people have done, people who have lost the election and then determine that they maybe want to run in the next election, or not run in the next election, or two or four elections. What they do is a little-known scam: They go in and register for the election, and then they withdraw half an hour later, and then that money is protected for the next election after that. And the next election after that, they go in and sign up, and a half hour later they withdraw, to protect it for the election after that.

The best-known case was a former member of this House—who was sitting on the government side in the last Parliament—who was a municipal councillor, who had tens of thousands of dollars in the bank for the city of Vaughan, and who was, I guess, anticipating his eventual demise and loss in the election. He went in as a member of this House and registered to run in the municipal election without resigning. Of course, as soon as that was discovered, he withdrew. But he protected the money. I understand that he may in fact be seeking election as mayor in the city of Vaughan in this upcoming election, but he has a huge head start on everybody else who might run because he has all that money. He has all that money, and he can use it in this election.

I talked, and I asked them—I'm getting a note here, Mr. Speaker. Bear with me.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Okay. I'm going to end in about one minute.

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** He has a very effective money-laundering agent.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** And that is what's happening now. The one time the members did speak, it was to say, "Oh, no, we're not going to do that. We're not going to end it now. We're going to end it in 2014," as if the problem doesn't exist. If it's unfair in 2014, then it's unfair now.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Michael Prue:** No, you're not ending it in 2010. That's what the motion would have done. You wouldn't listen to that. You want to end it not in this election but in the one after that. The only time that anyone spoke to the issue at all, the only time, Mr. Zimmer, the member from Willowdale, said we're not going to do that because people who collected the money and took it from

developers and gave it back to the municipality have the expectation that they can use it in this election, whether it's unfair or not.

I have to say that I find this repulsive. I find the whole attitude of this government around this bill in those two key areas to be repulsive. They would not defend their actions; they cannot defend their actions; they will not explain their actions. But they are willing to vote against every good and decent proposal to have their own way.

For that reason, I don't see how I could ever support this bill, no matter how benign the rest of the 90% is.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate? The member for Willowdale.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Willowdale?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Willowdale. This is rotation today.

**Mr. David Zimmer:** I last spoke to this bill on November 2, 2009. As you've heard, we had committee hearings on November 19. We've heard from the member from Halton, the member for Thornhill and the member for Beaches–East York about this idea that there has not been consultation, that we haven't taken into account suggested amendments.

Let me just speak for a minute to the question of amendments. In this bill, we put forward some important amendments to make sure that Ontario's laws are up to date and effective, and we are very, very pleased that some additional helpful recommendations, and indeed amendments, were put forward at committee hearings and we were able to incorporate those suggestions into the bill before the House today.

Let me speak specifically to the matters that the members for Halton and Thornhill spoke to. They spoke to the issue of the Public Inquiries Act and seemed very steamed up that we hadn't taken into account any of the important submissions and suggestions that we heard in committee.

Well, let me just read into the record for the benefit of the House and particularly for the benefit of the members for Halton and Thornhill a letter that we received from Freya Kristjanson, a lawyer with the law firm of Cavalluzzo Hayes Shilton—

**Mr. John O'Toole:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Member, take your seat, please. The member from Durham on a point of order.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member from Willowdale is making such a fuss out of this very important omnibus bill; why aren't there more members here? I call quorum. Let's see how many are here now.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Is a quorum present?

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** A quorum is present, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** A quorum is present.

The member for Willowdale, the floor is yours.

**Mr. David Zimmer:** The members from Halton, Thornhill and Beaches–East York made much of this

business that with respect to the Public Inquiries Act this government had a closed mind.

I was at the November 19 public hearings, and there was a very effective and thoughtful presentation made by a group which calls itself the Commission Counsel and Researchers. They are the leading lawyers here in Ontario who appear before commission counsel and have particular expertise in this area. They wrote to us after we introduced our amendments, shortly after November 19, which I'll get to in just a minute, and this is what they said:

"I am writing on behalf of our group of commission counsel and researchers with respect to the government's proposed amendments to the Public Inquiries Act. On November 17, 2009, we provided the standing committee with a brief setting out our significant concerns regarding the proposed amendments, and testified before the committee on November 19. We subsequently met twice with senior Ministry of the Attorney General officials to discuss our concerns with both judicial independence and procedural fairness."

1630

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** On a point of order, Speaker: Is there a quorum present?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Is there a quorum present?

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** A quorum is not present, Speaker.

*The Deputy Speaker ordered the bells rung.*

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** A quorum is now present, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Willowdale.

**Mr. David Zimmer:** The letter goes on:

"We would like to acknowledge the significant improvements to the proposed Public Inquiries Act which have been made in response to our concerns. The new amendments address many of the concerns we raised respecting the independence of commissioners, including judicial officers. The new amendments also allay some of our concerns in respect of procedural fairness.

"We appreciate the government's responsiveness to our concerns, and both encourage and welcome the opportunity for consultation on future changes to the Public Inquiries Act." It's signed by a representative of the law firm.

That's in direct contradiction to what the members for Halton, Thornhill and Beaches–East York said, that there was no consultation and that we didn't take into account people's genuine concerns.

With respect to the member from Beaches–East York, he went on and on at length and left the impression that when he sat on the standing committee, the committee was completely unresponsive to any of the questions or concerns or suggestions he had about the bill. Well, in fact, and I say this to other members of the chamber, the government accepted five NDP amendments that were proposed when we did clause-by-clause. Two of the amendments had to do with the Public Inquiries Act—

those were NDP motions 34 and 60—and three NDP motions on the Clean Water Act—motions 66, 68, and 70.

For instance, NDP motion 34: They wanted to strike out clause 9(1)(e), which identifies "summaries of facts prepared by a participant" as a source on which the commission can rely. That's an important amendment. That was accepted.

We move on to NDP motion number 60, a motion to strike out a subsection, and we accepted that. We move on to motion 66: again a motion where they wanted to strike out a subsection. We agreed to that. Motion 68 was similar. Motion 70 was similar. In fact, I remember saying to the member for Beaches–East York, when he proposed the amendment at clause-by-clause, that we saw merit in that amendment, and that's why we accepted that amendment. All five Liberal members of that clause-by-clause committee voted in favour of those proposed five NDP amendments. We took the clause-by-clause exercise seriously. We examined all of the proposed opposition amendments, and I have just gone through the ones that we have accepted.

I'd like to speak on a more general basis about the four key areas that we've addressed in the amendments that arose out of clause-by-clause.

Amendments were made to the Public Inquiries Act to incorporate suggestions that were given by lawyers at the committee who had been counsel or researchers at previous public inquiries. We're pleased that these amendments reflect their submissions, and I've read the letter of support that the group wrote to express appreciation for the government's responsiveness.

On another matter, the Ontario Bar Association had two technical amendments about charitable investment provisions. These amendments were made in consultation with the Ontario Bar Association.

There are a further two changes to the Provincial Offences Act schedule, which were made based on suggestions from the city of Toronto. There was consultation there.

Further amendments arose because of suggestions made by the Prosecutors' Association of Ontario. They suggested a number of drafting changes to ensure that the new provincial offences regime, which they have supported, will work as smoothly as possible with existing expectations of the participants in the system.

So you see, the impression that the member for Halton and the member for Thornhill and the member for Beaches–East York would leave with this House, that somehow this clause-by-clause was just sort of steam-rolled through without taking into account any suggestions or constructive suggestions and amendments proposed by stakeholders, is just false.

You have seen the letter of support from the organization of commission counsel where we incorporated their suggestions. I have read into the record the amendments that the NDP proposed that we accepted. If you check Hansard, you will see where I said, as a parliamentary assistant on that committee—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** The member for Kenora–Rainy River will come to order, please.

**Mr. David Zimmer:** When the member for Beaches–East York introduced his five amendments, I complimented him. I said, “Our government sees the wisdom in your proposed amendments,” and all five Liberal members voted for those proposed NDP amendments.

That is consultation. That is consideration. That is striving to get the best possible opinions incorporated into the act.

Let me just make a few other general comments. Bill 212 reflects our government’s commitment to making sure that the Ontario statutes are up to date. The bill, if passed, is going to streamline a whole lot of processes in various Ontario acts. It’s going to make sure that our laws are clear, current and relevant.

This is an exercise that all governments go through sort of once a decade, and it’s our government’s turn now to do the Good Government Act. We’ve combed through all of the acts in the Ontario statute books. We’ve checked with all of the ministries. We’ve checked with all of the various stakeholders that have an interest in these matters. As a result of that consultation, this Good Government Act has come forward.

The bill proposes a number of items that are technical in nature, that are sometimes classified, as I have referred to them, as general housekeeping measures. The proposed legislation also includes items that would contribute to the enhancement of existing systems in process.

The bill is comprehensive, as I have said. The reason that it’s comprehensive and detailed and lengthy is because we have been diligent about making sure that the laws are up to date, accurate and in line with the everyday needs in the lives of Ontarians.

In particular, the Attorney General’s office has a number of amendments that come directly under the purview of the Attorney General. Let me just say something about the Juries Act. The proposed amendments would ensure that jury eligibility under the act is checked independently from court locations and that there are strict confidentiality requirements in that process. The changes would maximize respect for privacy, because the names of the ineligible jurors would be replaced before lists were sent to court locations. That way, information is never provided directly to any of the participants in the court proceedings. There are amendments under the Public Inquiries Act, as I’ve already talked about. Essentially, what this does is manage the scope and manage the cost and the length of public inquiries while continuing, and this is important, to respect the independence of the inquiry process.

**1640**

So we’ve balanced cost, efficiency and the independence of the commission process. That’s a delicate process, and we’ve captured that in this legislation. These changes also include the ability to bring in an independent third party before an inquiry is called to advise

the government as to the appropriate scope, and how the inquiry should be conducted. Again, we want to get a fair inquiry, we want to manage the costs and the time frames of the inquiry, all predicated on independence of the commission and fairness to the participants. In addition, and this is a very important concept, the bill will allow for the establishment of very specific rules and requirements in regard to completion dates—of course, these would be worked out with the government and the commission counsel.

There are a number of items having to do with the Provincial Offences Act. Effectively most Ontarians, if they have a contact with the justice system, it’s through the various provincial acts and the Provincial Offences Act. We’re trying to make that as effective and as efficient as we can. The municipality is currently responsible for administering the courts that hear provincial offences and the prosecution of these offences.

These proposed reforms reflect the recommendations of a municipal and provincial working group that was looking for ways to simplify court procedures and improve services to the public. Again here it’s this idea of recommendations emanating from a provincial and a municipal working group that together have come up with these ideas that are incorporated into the Good Government Act.

Again, consultation, sensitivity to the needs of the municipality and to the needs of the public: These changes are going to allow for quicker and more efficient filing of tickets and reduce the overall time required to process certificates of offences. The bill is going to allow routine court appearances by telephone conference and video conference and help reduce the financial resources that are spent on travelling time and hiring representative agents to attend routine court proceedings, again, balancing efficiency and cost containment, cost management, with fairness to the parties. It would also set up a system for out-of-court settlements for a whole range of minor offences to help focus the court and the enforcement resources available to the judicial system on the more serious offences, where the attention is really needed.

Some comments under the Change of Name Act: The proposed amendments here are intended to overcome problems that occur when protected witnesses and others at significant risk of harm have recently arrived from another province and require a secure name change but can’t meet the act’s requirement for one-year residency for a name change. That’s a very practical concept that’s incorporated into the act. The amendment, if passed, will facilitate a safer and more expeditious name change process, for those who need it, by alleviating the need to wait a year before obtaining a new identity.

There are ideas introduced with respect to the Crown Witnesses Act, the crown administration acts and the very, very technical matters having to do with the administration of states and the like. There are concepts introduced affecting the Municipal Elections Act. The proposed changes to the Municipal Elections Act in Bill 212 again—and I want to emphasize this—stem directly

from consultations with the public, the municipalities and the school organizations, such as the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario. These people were consulted. We wanted to get the best advice that we could on these matters that we set out in Bill 212.

My time is up now, but I did want to leave this final thought: Notwithstanding the impression that the members for Thornhill, Beaches–East York and Halton have left in their submissions that there was no consultation, there was no idea of this government sitting down and listening to the other political parties—“Have you got any ideas? Have you got a better way of doing that?”—witness the suggestions from the organization for commission counsel that we took into account, and their congratulatory letter. Look at the NDP amendments that we accepted. Go and check Hansard, where we said that we accept the wisdom of those five NDP amendments, and all five Liberal members voted for them.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate?

**Mr. John O’Toole:** It’s a real pleasure this afternoon to have the opportunity to speak on this omnibus bill of all omnibus bills in this session.

Really, what that is an indication of—they would like to portray this as a housekeeping bill, but you’ve always got to be somewhat suspicious, given the incidents of the last couple of days and the government’s intransigence on having additional hearings on Bill 218, the largest single change in tax policy in Canadian history. We know the reason the government is making that change in that bill, which is the HST, the new 13% tax. It is to increase revenue. They’re not doing it to reduce revenue. So let’s get that sorted out here.

In that context, the reason I bring 218 up, the new HST tax, is that it’s a matter of trust. So when you have an omnibus bill that has some 22 sections of ministries that are being amended, reformed, changed, deleted, reinterpreted, one has to be somewhat suspicious. I don’t mean to cause any unnecessary alarm—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Do your best.

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I can hardly wait till the member from Trinity–Spadina speaks, because he is probably the most entertaining speaker here. So stay tuned; he will be on later if Howard doesn’t bounce his time.

However, getting to the substance, because one has to stick to the messaging here, all I’m concerned about is, when I went through the bill—and I have; I like to look through these things—it’s virtually impossible to read it unless you have all the statutes it’s amending beside you. This is the bill, for the viewers. This bill is 289 pages. I believe it amends 22 different statutes, and some of them are quite interesting. In fact, I had asked for a briefing on a couple of sections and, with all due respect, the Ministry of Finance people did get back to me. Last Friday, they would have provided me with a very personalized briefing on the section that I had mentioned.

In the very limited time—has this been time-allocated, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Yes, it has.

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Oh, no. Not another one. I would have liked an hour to get through some of this. Why wouldn’t they allow me to have a little bit more time? This is a pretty comprehensive bill. But I will break it out here.

Schedule 16 is one example that I can’t, for one minute—some of the members may not have read this, and this is what concerns me repeatedly.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Look, we could seek unanimous consent later on; that will come.

But it’s schedule 16, if people could turn to their page, please. They don’t even have the bill out. Most of them probably don’t have a copy, which is the most discouraging piece of it all. Anyway, I’ll refer, for those who want to read Hansard later—you’re in real pain. It’s on page 180. It says, “The rules of law and statutory enactments relating to accumulations do not apply and are deemed never to have applied to a trust fund required by subsection 9(1) of the Nuclear Fuel Waste Act....” What does that actually mean? There’s no need to have a perpetuity fund on nuclear fuel waste?

**1650**

Let’s just put this in context, just this one small section in this huge bill. This section here, as I interpret it, would be this: Nuclear fuel—about 16% of the energy has actually been used after the fuel rod is removed from the reactor. They have no solution for dealing with nuclear fuel waste. There is none. They’re working out a long-term solution, which is deep storage in the Precambrian Shield of Ontario, and the reason they’re doing that—

**Mr. Howard Hampton:** Storing it up north.

**Mr. John O’Toole:** Exactly, up north—not near Toronto, no. Mr. Hampton is well aware; it’s probably in his riding.

But the point is this: That fuel will last probably—I’m not a nuclear physicist. I did take a couple of physics courses. But we have a nuclear physicist right here, a Ph.D. in physics right here in this Legislature, and I put it to him; he can come up with the answer. I think the radioactive life for these fuel rods is probably 20,000 years? About 20,000 years?

**Mr. Reza Moridi:** Yes, a long time.

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I’m just going to keep it simple. Let’s say we’ve only got one little pile of nuclear rods—actually, there are swimming pools full of them. Here’s the deal; it’s not to alert anyone, but this is it. If they’re going to last 20,000 years, you have to put them somewhere so that terrorists can’t get to them, so you at least have to have a couple of security guards, right? They would be working for 20,000 years. Just to cover that one little case would cost hundreds of millions of dollars. So just put this into perspective: perpetuity—it’s in perpetual storage. They’re saying here, “The rules of law and statutory enactments relating to” perpetuities “do not apply and are deemed never to have applied....” That’s jettisoning the liability the government of the day may have if something untoward was to happen.

That’s only one act. And I would say that if you look through here, I could point to several quite glaring,



significant—and there has been no substantive debate. We've heard the member from Willowdale talk, we've heard comments today from the minister, and I'm still concerned.

I'm going put this into an even deeper context, because reasonable debate is something that we should expect in this Legislature. I'm disappointed there's no one here listening to me. That might explain something. But here's what was said by the now Premier, a very respected gentleman, most of the time—except under Bill 218; that's a whole other debate, so we'll just stay away from it. Here's the deal: Premier McGuinty said on December 6, 1999—at that time, he was dealing with another omnibus bill, a large, complex bill: “This omnibus, megabill approach to legislation makes for bad legislation.” Thank you, Premier McGuinty. Do as I—

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** Say.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Not as I—

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** Do.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Okay? That's what we tell our children. No, we don't.

He went on here and said, “The next thing”—this is quoting. I'm going to have to give this to Hansard because I want it on the record. I'm mailing it out to my constituents because it's the right thing to do to keep them informed. “The next thing you know, this government is going to introduce omnibus ... legislation that puts a little bit of money” here and there and all these kinds of things. “We want the bill split to allow separate votes on each piece of legislation.” I would move that that's a reasonable thing to do.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** We made that request.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member from Trinity-Spadina no doubt sat religiously and enthusiastically on the public hill, along with my member from Thornhill and our member from Halton. They've talked on this bill. We've talked about it in caucus. We raised concerns that it's such a large, comprehensive bill.

Here's another thing it says in here—this is all in Hansard; I have it here, so I will make sure you get a copy of it: “In addition to demanding that this government split this bill,” Mr. McGuinty is saying, “I have an additional outrageous request.” That's pretty unusual. “We want just a few hours of public hearings.” That's what we've been talking about for three straight days here on Bill 218: additional public hearings.

Large, complex policy shifts should be broadly debated. Did anyone hear about HST during the election in 2007? I don't think so. This is the largest single change in tax policy in Canadian history. In fact—

**Mr. Michael A. Brown:** That's not so.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Well, the member from Algoma—*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Not in a belligerent way, Mr. Brown, I don't challenge you with this, but I could probably do anything that you could do, only probably better.

I only say this, Mike, because you challenged it. Here's the issue, Mr. Brown, quite honestly—and I'm

quite serious about it: This bill that we're dealing with is a complicated bill. I think we all agree with that. We need more hearings on it.

But quite honestly, it's a case that we've been asking for—about the last five bills have all been time-allocated. What that means, to the public: “Time allocation,” a fancy term, is limiting the debate, shutting down debate. It's a short term for no more question period, no more input.

I can only say to you that I'm becoming disillusioned, disenchanted, disheartened, and somewhat reluctant and reticent to participate as anxiously as I always have. It's a sad day when we can't get more public hearings on such significant changes.

Now, the real truth of this is, on Bill 218—I'm merging them, because it's kind of an omnibus bill as well. We all know the real reason that they're doing it. It's sort of like at the circus where they have the shell game: Find the pea under the shell. The reason they're doing it is, at the end of the day, the revenue for the province of Ontario is going to go up about \$3 billion. That's why they're doing it.

The context around that is, they currently have an operating deficit—that's a shortfall called “I can't make payroll unless I borrow the money”—of \$25 billion. Every pension fund, public and private, is basically bankrupt. So there's a significant problem in the economy right now.

Then they have the gall to promise 600,000 new jobs. I leave one question on the table: In what sector? Forestry? It's pretty near dead. Auto? It's in serious trouble, speeding towards the cliff. Steel is pretty near shut down because of the price of energy. What sector? Everybody can't work at the community college, teaching electronics or something. What are the jobs of the future?

I remain concerned because I have five children, all of whom are 30 and older, and—I say this repeatedly—they work around the world. They work in Australia, England and the Isle of Man. The reason is that the world is flat, according to certain textbooks, and I would say that the evidence is right here today. Friedman's book *The World Is Flat* says in the first chapter, I believe, that the only thing that's going to be done here is what's actually done here. You get your car fixed, your teeth fixed, your—whatever—things done. The service industry will survive here. But if you're an accountant right now, a lot of the accounting, corporately is done in Bangalore, India.

**Mrs. Joyce Savoline:** Bangladesh.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Bangalore, India.

Friedman has another book, called *Hot, Flat, and Crowded*. It's his new book. I think that's it. Isn't that it?  
*Interjection.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I haven't read it yet. I had it given to me, and I'm quite interested, and I'll probably read it over the Christmas period.

Now, how this relates to all of these points on Bill 212 is when you get something this large and this complicated, I think—I'm going to repeat again, for the record,

Dalton McGuinty's remarks, Premier McGuinty, December 6, 1999: "I want you all to say it with me slowly now: public hearings." So that's it. He was trying to kind of incite—of course, he was the Leader of the Opposition. He said, "Public hearings'; those two words go together nicely if you believe in true democracy...."

1700

We find these omnibus bills becoming more common. We find time allocation becoming more common. We find that the province is in serious financial upheaval. I don't see any consistent plan. I've looked at eHealth; they wasted \$1 billion, and yet we have people dying of cancer who can't get access to drugs. These are all signs—pathetic signs—of what's happening in Ontario.

I had planned on sharing my time with the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, but he's encouraging me to hold on to the message. I'm going to repeat, just like the Premier: Please hold public hearings more frequently; talk and listen to the people of Ontario. There's only one taxpayer; they're up against the wall. Over 300,000 families have no job, and they're going to have no Christmas. It's not all Dalton McGuinty's fault, but a good part of it is.

I can't for one moment see any reasonable purpose to support Bill 212 without a lot more dialogue. I'm waiting for the member from Trinity–Spadina to bring his passion and his interpretation. He'd put all the money into education, which is probably a good idea, really. I would say that educating the workforce for the new economy that Friedman and others—Jeff Rubin's book is another example; it's about peak oil.

Stay tuned, people; this province is going in the wrong direction under the wrong leader.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate? The member for Trinity–Spadina.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I want to welcome the citizens to this parliamentary channel. We're on live. It's 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and it's Wednesday. I want to say hello to all the friends who watch this program, including Chris, who's a regular watcher of this program. He loves to watch us because he learns so much from each and every one of us every time he turns on that television. Welcome to this program, Chris.

Speaker, I've got to tell you, I oppose motions that strangle debate. I oppose these motions, as the Minister of Transportation used to on a regular, consistent basis. He did it, and we're doing it, and we're consistent in attacking closure motions. I've got to tell you as well that I am against these omnibus bills that a few governments have been introducing in the last 15 years.

I hate to mention the Harris regime, but, boy, did we have fun with the member from Rainy River when they introduced Bill 26. Pandemonium broke out in this place. I remember the member from Rainy River and my friend Frances Lankin and others dragging these carts with 24,000 amendments—this big, long cart with 24,000 amendments to that bill.

John, you weren't here, so you don't know what it was like. It was a huge omnibus bill that would restructure the

health and hospital system. We opposed it, because we felt it was wrong. We know that some of our friends who are here now would have opposed if they were there then. I know that.

But I wanted to simply tell you that it has become the modus operandi of various regimes in this place.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Did the NDP do that?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** I've racked my brains to think: Did we, the NDP, do that? I have to say that I don't think we did; otherwise, we would have heard about it. But if you go through Hansard and find it, let me know.

The only bill I remember that caused chaos was Bill 26, by the infamous and famous Mr. Harris, and this government is doing the same thing with Bill 212, a huge omnibus bill.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** We didn't do that. And they included in this bill changes to the Municipal Elections Act that we said should be separated from the bill. The member from Beaches–East York said that we would love to separate this bill in two parts so we could have an adequate discussion, a good debate. Bring municipal leaders to the hearings so they could tell us what they would like, what they dislike, what they would like to include, exclude, what they think would be good and bad—have a full discussion on the issue.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My colleague from Eglinton–Lawrence, you probably thought or would think that's a reasonable request. You would think reasonable requests would be acceptable to any government of any political stripe, and yet they rejected the idea of separating the two. Why do they do that? It has become the modus operandi of all governments in this place, both Conservative and Liberal, to do the same thing each and every time.

It has been a very funny thing of late to see the role reversal between the Liberals and the Conservatives. I am so amused, and every day I have a big hearty laugh about it. Today McGuinty quoted Mike Harris—and how he and Mike Harris have become one on harmonized tax. It's beautiful to witness, beautiful to listen to. It's melodious to see that charming closeness they have. I'm sure that when they met, they gave each other a big hug, a love hug between the two. You've got Harris saying this is good, and McGuinty is quoting all sorts of illustrious luminaries of the Conservative Party who said in the past that harmonized sales tax is good. And now it's reversed. You've got Hudak saying to McGuinty, "But you used to hate harmonized taxes," and there's a whole long list of quotes quoting him, particularly, because he's the leader. So you've got this role reversal between these two parties—the most comical thing I've ever seen—McGuinty accusing Hudak, and Hudak in his style accusing McGuinty. They've now just switched the chairs. That's all they did—and McGuinty forgetting what he said and Hudak forgetting what he said. They both forget.

Now you in government say, “Ha, we have different times. The times dictate that we have to be bold. We have to do this because we’re going to create 600,000 jobs,” listening to the financial wizards and the financial fairies you consult, who will tell you anything if you pay them. They’re telling you that they’re going to create 600,000 jobs, and you say, “We’re going to create 600,000 jobs.” Even Mulroney couldn’t deliver on the promise of free trade when he said “jobs and prosperity.” Now McGuinty is saying we’ll have 600,000 jobs if we pass this harmonized sales tax. Who believes it? Nobody believes it—no one. But I know you Liberals have to say it, and you think if you repeat it long enough, they’re going to believe you. Please; nobody’s going to believe you. You know how much political trouble you are in—I know that you know that—and you’ve got to do your best to try to persuade the public that you are so bold, and that they need to be bold too. So bold, you are, that you can’t have hearings; so bold you are, so daring you are, so convinced you are of the rightness of your position that you are only going to give one day of public hearings. I’ve never seen that before—one day on a very serious matter. So convinced, they are, persuaded by their arguments, that they can’t have three days, four days, of travel out of Toronto and go out wherever they need to go out to be heard.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** I know the member for Trinity–Spadina is somehow weaving this into the motion that’s before us.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** You’re so right. I was thinking about the same thing, I have to admit.

It’s about how unreasonable governments can be. I’m speaking to the unreasonable demands of majority governments. In fact, they can do what they like, and they do. Even with this bill, we request, “Separate the municipal act from the rest,” and they don’t listen. What do you do?

You heard the member from Beaches–East York. He had a long list of things that he wanted to amend by way of that act—and all of the Liberal hands, as they normally do, just go up, as the Conservative hands used to go up in a similar fashion. I’ve got to tell you, it gets tiring. That’s why I keep saying in this place that people stop believing in politicians: because we change our minds all of the time, and role reversals end up making cynics out of all voters in this province. That’s the problem I’ve got.

I’ve got to tell you, if I was in government, I could not do what I am opposing today. If I oppose something today and get into government, and then with a straight face come and deliver something different—I just couldn’t do it. I just couldn’t. But I know that there are a lot of people who get into cabinet who could be so easily persuaded by a little pecunia and status to forget some things that he or she might have said, which has become so apparent in this place. As you listen to any Premier and/or minister on any of these matters, they will have said things that they just disregard once they get into cabinet, because cabinet is a drug, isn’t it? You get a little

more pecunia and you have the power to be able to say what you want, do what you want, and you do.

**1710**

So we requested of this government to have a reasonable discussion on these things. Make it so that we can debate.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** How did that social contract fit with your principles?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Ah, John, would that you were here then. Mr. Stockwell had a great old time when he was here. It was a good time for some.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** What about public auto insurance?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** But you will have—if you check the record, if you check Hansard, because I know you’re a regular student of these things, you will know that there are some things that some of us opposed—some publicly and some internally. Public auto insurance should have happened, and many northerners and many southerners supported public auto no matter what. All we needed was the conviction of one person to have made it happen, and he didn’t do it. The Premier of the time decided he didn’t want to do it. But it was the right thing to do then and it’s the right thing to do today.

**Mrs. Carol Mitchell:** What did you do?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Speak up, man and woman. I can’t hear you very well.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Yes, you guys are good. Your hands just go up in committee and you’re done with your intellectual job for the day. Simply being automatons in committees is not helpful. It is not helpful. It’s almost disgraceful, I have to say.

What we need are governments to not be arrogant and not be so fearful. What I’m seeing from this government in the last couple of weeks is that they’re both arrogant and afraid. It’s a terrible combination. It’s either one or the other, but I suggest it’s both. They are afraid to take things out for debate and they are arrogant in assuming the people accept their policies. They are afraid of what the people are going to tell them, so they want to make sure that nothing gets out of this place and everything stays in this place.

Speaker, just to tell you, labour mobility, Bill 175: We moved a closure motion on Monday and we’re having hearings tomorrow. We had a subcommittee this morning and I said, “Did you advertise?” and the poor clerk said, “No, we couldn’t.” The poor Chair said, “What else can we do? It’s not our job. This was just given to us.”

Imagine: closure debate on labour mobility that no one knows anything about, including MPPs in this Legislature. We are having hearings for one day, from Monday to Thursday, and nobody knows we have hearings—no one. This is the most shameful act of this government. I tell you, it’s the most shameful, dictatorial thing this government has done in the last couple of years, in my view.

I believe between that bill and the harmonized sales tax, in terms of lack of debate and discussion, is the worst

thing this Liberal government has done, and this bill falls into that same category of lack of reasonableness and lack of debate and lack of discussion.

That's the pattern and that's the modus operandi of this particular government. You've got to say it, you've got to tell it and you've got to say it until they hear you. So when people say, "What is labour mobility?" or "What is Bill 212?" nobody can tell you anything about any of these bills because nobody debates any more outside of this room. If people are not watching this debate, they won't have a clue what we're talking about. It appears that governments want the population—citizens and taxpayers—to be utterly ignorant of what we do in this place. It is both intentional and arrogant.

The effect on the public is damaging. The effect on the population of citizens—citizenry and civic involvement is adversely affected.

So I am telling you that what we need from the citizens and taxpayers is an active, collective voice that sends a message to this government. Tomorrow at noon, there's going to be a rally out there on the harmonized sales tax, and we urge anyone watching today to be out there. You've got to be out there. This government doesn't listen unless the numbers are big. I wish we were in Europe. I wish I was in Florence or Rome, where you have a strike and you have 100,000 people in those cities demonstrating against some stupid thing that a government has done—hundreds of thousands of people out demonstrating.

**Mr. Michael Prue:** Or Greece.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** Or Greece or France or Germany. You come into Canada, David—in Canada, you've got a couple of hundred people and you say, "Oh, that was a good rally. Yeah, great." If you've got 2,000 people, people say, "Oh, my God; there are 2,000 people. It's really, really huge."

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** And if you get 20,000—

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** And if you get 20,000 against Mike Harris—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Hula hoops. It's hula hoops.

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** That's right: hula hoops and hooligans. That was the then-regime.

If you're free on Thursday afternoon at 12 o'clock and you want to send a voice of opposition to this government; against this government; against my good friend David Zimmer from Willowdale—send him a message because he's so arrogant in this place. We need to teach him a lesson. The only way to teach him a lesson is to, of course, unelect him when the time comes, which wouldn't be such a bad thing.

And so, yes, we are too complacent in this province, and that's the problem. We can't afford to have citizens become cynics and cynical, because if you become cynical, then governments can do what they like. And the only way to stop governments from doing what they like is to tell them you disagree when you disagree, and there's a lot to disagree over, particularly against the harmonized sales tax, one of the worst things I have ever seen—a flat tax that is not and never can be, never will

be, progressive; a flat tax that's flat because it means everyone, regardless of income, will pay 8% on those goods and services. It's going to whack a whole lot of people.

They're reducing progressive income taxes by \$1.2 billion. That's a progressive tax they should keep, yet they are reducing the progressive income tax and supporting, they say, a progressive flat tax. There's nothing progressive about flat taxes.

This is the worst thing this government could have done, and the other worse thing is to give away \$4.5 billion of corporate money to corporations that do not need it and will not create additional jobs because they're given a writeoff of \$4.5 billion.

This government is making wrong choices, bad choices and destructive choices against citizens, and we urge them on Thursday, if they have a moment, to come out at 12 o'clock outside of this place.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Further debate? Further debate? No one else wishes to speak?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, I'll speak.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Too bad; you don't have any time.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Darn.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 17, I am now required to put the question:

On December 2, Ms. Smith moved third reading of Bill 212, An Act to promote good government by amending or repealing certain Acts and by enacting two new Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We'll call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Except this isn't a deferral slip. I have received a note to the Speaker of the assembly:

"Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request the vote on a motion by Minister Bentley for third reading of Bill 212 be deferred until December 3, 2009, during deferred votes."

*Third reading vote deferred.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Orders of the day?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bruce Crozier):** Mr. Duguid has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This House is adjourned until 9 o'clock on Thursday, December 3.

*The House adjourned at 1720.*

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

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

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

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

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

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

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

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

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O’Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
<b>Peters, Hon. / L’hon. Steve (LIB)</b>	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l’Assemblée législative
<b>Phillips, Hon. / L’hon. Gerry (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Energy and Infrastructure / Ministre de l’Énergie et de l’Infrastructure
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L’hon. Sandra (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Runciman, Robert W. (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l’opposition officielle
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L’hon. Monique M. (LIB)</b>	Nipissing	Minister of Tourism / Ministre du Tourisme Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Smitherman, George (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L’hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Watson, Hon. / L’hon. Jim (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L’hon. John (LIB)</b>	Perth–Wellington	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu
<b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l’Assemblée
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L’hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Education / Ministre de l’Éducation
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l’opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





*Continued from back cover*

**Amateur sport**

Mr. Wayne Arthurs .....	8997
Hon. Margaret R. Best .....	8997

**School facilities**

Mr. Ted Arnott .....	8998
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	8998

**Highway 407**

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	8998
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	8998

**AIDS treatment**

Mr. David Zimmer .....	8999
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	8999

**Members' privileges**

Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	8999
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	8999
Mr. Frank Klees .....	8999
Mr. Michael Prue .....	8999

**DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS**

**Time allocation**

Motion agreed to .....	9000
------------------------	------

**Time allocation**

Motion agreed to .....	9000
------------------------	------

**Technical Standards and Safety Statute Law**

**Amendment Act, 2009, Bill 187, Mr. McMeekin /  
Loi de 2009 modifiant des lois en ce qui a trait aux  
normes techniques et à la sécurité, projet de loi  
187, M. McMeekin**

Third reading agreed to .....	9001
-------------------------------	------

**Notices of dissatisfaction**

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	9001
--------------------------------------	------

**Voting**

Mr. Norman W. Sterling .....	9001
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	9001

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS /  
PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	9001
--------------------------------------	------

**MEMBERS' STATEMENTS /  
DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

**Taxation**

Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	9001
------------------------	------

**Fire safety**

Mr. Mario Sergio.....	9002
-----------------------	------

**General Motors of Canada**

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette.....	9002
-----------------------------	------

**Pension plans**

Mr. Paul Miller.....	9002
----------------------	------

**Mehrub Rahman**

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti.....	9002
-------------------------------	------

**Taxation**

Mr. Ted Chudleigh .....	9003
-------------------------	------

**Fundraising**

Mr. Charles Sousa .....	9003
-------------------------	------

**University funding**

Mrs. Liz Sandals.....	9003
-----------------------	------

**General Electric**

Mr. Jeff Leal.....	9003
--------------------	------

**Visitors**

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	9004
--------------------------------------	------

**REPORTS BY COMMITTEES /  
RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private  
Bills**

Mr. Paul Miller.....	9004
Report adopted .....	9004

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly**

Mr. Bas Balkissoon .....	9004
Report adopted .....	9004

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

**Day Nurseries Amendment Act (Sun Protection),  
2009, Bill 229, Mme Gélinas / Loi de 2009  
modifiant la Loi sur les garderies (protection  
solaire), projet de loi 229, Mme Gélinas**

First reading agreed to.....	9004
Mme France Gélinas .....	9004

**MOTIONS**

**Committee sittings**

Hon. Monique M. Smith .....	9005
Motion agreed to .....	9005

**PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

**Reconstructive surgery**

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk.....	9005
--------------------------	------

**Diagnostic services**

Mme France Gélinas .....	9005
--------------------------	------

<b>Hospital funding</b>	
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	9005
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Robert Bailey .....	9006
<b>Reconstructive surgery</b>	
Mr. Yasir Naqvi .....	9006
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Peter Shurman .....	9006
<b>Social services funding</b>	
Mr. Jeff Leal .....	9006
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mrs. Joyce Savoline .....	9007
<b>Driver examination centres</b>	
Mrs. Maria Van Bommel .....	9007
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. John O'Toole .....	9007
<b>Social services funding</b>	
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	9007
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mrs. Joyce Savoline .....	9008

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

<b>Good Government Act, 2009, Bill 212, Mr. Bentley / Loi de 2009 sur la saine gestion publique, projet de loi 212, M. Bentley</b>	
Hon. Monique M. Smith .....	9008
Mr. Ted Chudleigh .....	9009
Mr. Peter Shurman .....	9010
Mr. Michael Prue .....	9012
Mr. David Zimmer .....	9015
Mr. John O'Toole .....	9018
Mr. Rosario Marchese .....	9020
Third reading vote deferred .....	9022

## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 2 December 2009 / Mercredi 2 décembre 2009

### Conduct of House proceedings

Mr. Robert W. Runciman.....	8981
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	8981

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

#### Ontario Tax Plan for More Jobs and Growth Act, 2009, Bill 218, Mr. Duncan / Loi de 2009 sur le plan fiscal de l'Ontario pour accroître l'emploi et la croissance, projet de loi 218, M. Duncan

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	8982
Second reading agreed to .....	8982

#### Time allocation / Attribution de temps

Hon. Jim Watson.....	8982
Mrs. Julia Munro.....	8984
Debate deemed adjourned .....	8986

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Rick Bartolucci.....	8986
Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette.....	8986
Hon. Jim Watson.....	8986
Mr. Robert Bailey .....	8986
Mr. Paul Miller.....	8986
Mr. Monte Kwinter .....	8986
Mr. Frank Klees .....	8986
Mr. Khalil Ramal .....	8986
Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer.....	8986
Mme France Gélinas .....	8986
Hon. Margaret R. Best .....	8986
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	8986
Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	8986
Mr. Charles Sousa .....	8986
Hon. James J. Bradley.....	8987
Ms. Helena Jaczek.....	8987
Mr. Jeff Leal.....	8987
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	8987
Mr. Mike Colle.....	8987
Hon. John Milloy .....	8987
Hon. M. Aileen Carroll .....	8987
Hon. Michael Chan .....	8987
Mr. Kim Craitor .....	8987
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	8987
Ms. Leeanna Pendergast.....	8987
Mrs. Joyce Savoline .....	8987
The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	8987

### Committee sittings

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters).....	8987
--------------------------------------	------

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### Taxation

Mr. Tim Hudak.....	8988
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	8989

#### Taxation

Mr. Tim Hudak.....	8989
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	8990

#### Taxation

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	8990
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	8991

#### Taxation

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	8991
Hon. Dalton McGuinty.....	8991

#### Taxation

Mr. Robert W. Runciman.....	8992
Hon. Dwight Duncan.....	8992

#### Pension plans

Mr. Paul Miller.....	8993
Hon. Dwight Duncan.....	8993

#### Poverty

Mrs. Carol Mitchell.....	8993
Hon. Laurel C. Broten .....	8993
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	8994

#### Taxation

Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	8994
Hon. Dwight Duncan.....	8994

#### Poverty

Mr. Michael Prue .....	8995
Hon. Laurel C. Broten .....	8995
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	8995

#### Firefighters

Ms. Helena Jaczek.....	8995
Hon. Rick Bartolucci.....	8995

#### Driver examination centres

Mr. Robert Bailey.....	8996
Hon. Peter Fonseca.....	8996

#### Manufacturing and forestry sector jobs

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	8996
Hon. Michael Gravelle .....	8996

*Continued on inside back cover*