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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Thursday 17 November 2016

Jeudi 17 novembre 2016

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
Todd Decker

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Todd Decker

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 17 November 2016

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 17 novembre 2016

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

NOTICE OF REASONED AMENDMENT

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 71(b), the chief whip of the third party, the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane, has notified the Clerk of his intention to file notice of a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 70, the Building Ontario Up for Everyone Act (Budget Measures), 2016. The order for second reading of Bill 70 may therefore not be called today.

Orders of the day.

Hon. David Zimmer: Government order G—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister, I'd like to acknowledge you first.

The Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.

Hon. David Zimmer: Thank you for acknowledging me, Speaker.

Government order G27.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BURDEN REDUCTION ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR L'ALLÈGEMENT
DU FARDEAU RÉGLEMENTAIRE

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 16, 2016, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 27, An Act to reduce the regulatory burden on business, to enact various new Acts and to make other amendments and repeals / *Projet de loi 27, Loi visant à alléger le fardeau réglementaire des entreprises, à édicter diverses lois et à modifier et abroger d'autres lois.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further debate? The member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you for acknowledging me as well, Speaker.

Bill 27, the Burden Reduction Act, is up for debate, and I thought I would put some context at the outset on the need for burden reduction. There are some members in the House who may not have seen this publication. It's

called the pocket edition of Ontario Provincial Offences. I'd like to see if anybody, even any of the Liberal members, has a pocket big enough that the pocket edition fits in. Anyway, I've been getting these pocket editions now ever since I was elected—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Excuse me. I need to remind the member that you're not allowed to bring props into the chamber and showcase that particular item.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): It is.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Chair, I would like to say—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): No, I already ruled. It's final.

Continue.

Mr. Randy Hillier: While I'm speaking about burden reduction, about regulations, this is a government publication about regulations. It's not meant to be a prop. It's meant to examine and show how many regulations we have in this province. In the past, I've been able to demonstrate just how many regulations we have in this province. I do have the 2017 edition in my Perth office; it's even larger.

Maybe the Chair is reconsidering that decision. However—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member knows I've already ruled; that's the first thing.

Secondly, that particular item on your desk is fine. But the way you present it to the members and to the television, it's now considered a prop. Okay?

Mr. Randy Hillier: I wasn't challenging—I thought—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Order.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Chair, I'm just explaining. There was no intention to challenge. I thought there had been some discussions going on.

Anyway, we go back. So I can refer to this: 400,000 regulations we have in this province. The book that I have for 2017 is even larger than the one for 2016. We need to get deeper and deeper and bigger and bigger pockets in this province to satisfy the Liberal government's burden reductions, obviously.

But Chair, this is a step in the right direction, Bill 27. It at least recognizes that there is a need to reduce the regulatory burden in this province. However, one must examine and see if this is a sincere and genuine attempt to reduce the regulatory burden or if it is just for optics.

I've gone through the bill. The bill is 158 pages. It amends 50 statutes. In my reading of the bill, it's not that

it's reducing regulatory burden, but shifting the regulatory burden. So, a step that is required now that must be done to the minister—the same step is required but now it can be done to a director of that ministry. The burden actually doesn't change in substance, just in optics.

If we are sincere about reducing the regulatory burden, let's just take a look at our own actions in this House since the start of this session in September. In two months we now have, I believe, over 70 pieces of legislation on the order paper in this House—in two months. And remember, in those two months, we've also had two weeks off for constituents, for Thanksgiving and for Remembrance Week. But we've still managed to introduce over 70 new bills. One would think that in a province so highly regulated, the most highly regulated in the country, that—

Ms. Daiene Vernile: That's not true.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Well, it is true. The member from Barrie may not think it's true—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Kitchener.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Oh, from Kitchener; pardon me. The member from Kitchener may not think it's true, but we have the greatest regulatory burden in the country. If we weren't so heavily regulated, member from Kitchener, why are they reducing the regulatory burden, or appearing to, or at least bringing a bill forward to do so?

Speaker, let me give another example of why I am suspect of the sincerity of burden reduction.

As I mentioned, there are 70 bills in the House. One of those bills is Bill 2, the election financing act. Under that act, it broadens who gets captured under our election financing rules significantly—significantly. Right at the present time, our election financing rules only apply to elected members of the Legislature, but Bill 2 goes out and captures everybody who seeks to be nominated and run in an election for office. So we're getting more people, and let's be very clear. In all those provincial offences, which the provincial offences are a derivative of legislation—provincial offences are a derivative of regulations. The more regulations, the more legislation, the more provincial offences: There's a correlation there.

Each one of these regulations places an obstacle, a hurdle or a barrier for somebody to do things. We all know that there should be barriers on actions and activities, if they're harmful, hurtful or injurious to other people. But when we have 400,000 regulations and ever-increasing provincial offences, one must wonder: What else do we capture? Who else and what else are we denying opportunities for and creating undue barriers? I spoke at length in committee on this.

0910

The new rules under Bill 2 will actually prevent people from seeking office. That's without a doubt. It is such a barrier, such an obstacle, that many people who are not wealthy, well connected or chosen by their political party will not have an opportunity ever to seek office at the provincial level in this Legislature.

We know that Bill 2—the trigger for that was recognizing the abuses that were happening with election fi-

nancing by Liberal ministers. But now the regulatory burden is not going to be focused on crown ministers or on elected members; the regulatory burden is going to be cast far and wide in a way that actually prevents people from running for office.

This is what we've seen so often with this government: Public policy that is advanced not for the betterment of society, public policy that isn't advanced for the public good, but public policy that is advanced for the Liberal good, for the Liberal benefit—not for the public benefit, and oftentimes, not just for the Liberal benefit but to the detriment of the public. We need to really call out the sincerity of this government when it comes to dealing with regulatory burdens.

We all know. We had a gentleman here not long ago who faced some of the regulatory burden in this province, who is mayor of Trent Hills. His name is Hector Macmillan. The obstacles and the regulations in our health care system meant that he had to leave this province to get a life-saving procedure. Not only did he have to leave this province; he had to leave this country because of our failings here.

Hector is not alone. There are many, many people who are facing those same things. Here's another one from today in the headlines of the Toronto Sun: "There was no hope for me in Ontario"—a young cancer sufferer has to go to Mexico for treatment. That's because of a regulatory burden.

The burdens of regulations, of poorly thought-out regulations, impacts everybody in society in many different ways. It impacts the truck driver. We all have received correspondence in our constituency offices about some of these ridiculous regulations that are applied to truck drivers, older drivers. We have seen just so many people—

Interjection.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I know the member from Northumberland gets upset with this, but regardless—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. I'm going to encourage all sides to be respectful of the Speaker today. We need to speak through the Chair. I'm going to encourage the member not to encourage that back and forth.

I return to the member.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I've always been speaking to the Chair, I believe. But I know this gets under the skin of the member from Northumberland.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member from Northumberland—Quinte West.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I withdraw.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you.

I return to the member.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you, Chair. Listen, I understand why this gets under his skin, because these are real-life examples of a government that is complete in their culture of complacency. Their culture of complacency and do-nothing, except for in their own interests,

has impacts, such as with Mayor Macmillan, such as with so many people. Remember last year, the tragic case of Laura Hillier? Our history is littered with examples of tragedy as a result of the culture of complacency of this Liberal government.

As I said earlier, Bill 2 is another good example of that, where, in order to try to disperse or dilute their culpability in the cash-for-access scandals, they're now trying to disperse that responsibility over people who aren't even elected into this assembly, people who will never be elected but are being caught in the same regulatory trap that this Liberal government is setting for society.

The result, the end, is of course harmful—harmful—not just to this institution but, more importantly, harmful to the public at large as they seek to diminish political participation, democratic representation, but to continue to increase the size of the pocket edition of regulations.

Speaker, think of all the requests our constituency offices get. It's incredible that, without fail, they're the result of a government regulation that is poorly thought out. That's what the result is.

I had a case where an individual, Curtis—

Laughter.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Well, they might think it's funny, the Minister of Indigenous Relations, but Curtis Brady is suffering tremendously. He went into the Royal Ottawa hospital—and he has given me permission to use his name here. Curtis Brady admitted himself. He was required to sign a whole bunch of government regulatory forms. Unbeknownst to him, he signed away the power of attorney for his family members and got captured by the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee. For six months now, he has been trying to revoke the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, but the regulatory barriers are preventing him. The government has even gone so far as to say, "Curtis, you have to give us 900 bucks before we'll cancel the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee and allow your family members to have power of attorney once again."

These are tragic, tragic episodes for the people we represent, and here we get smirks and smiles, and the members think that this is all fun and games. But our laws impact people. Our laws ought to impact people in a positive fashion. They ought not to impact people in a negative way, such as Curtis, such as Hector Macmillan.

When we bring in laws that are poorly thought out, when we bring in laws that are only meant to advance a partisan political agenda by the government, we create more Curtis Bradys, we create more Hector Macmillans in those tragedies.

0920

I do think there are some minor improvements in Bill 27, Speaker, but I do not believe that this government has shirked their culture of complacency. I do not believe that they really, sincerely want to see next year's book smaller. They do not care if there are more Hector Macmillans who have to leave this province to seek medical care, and that's unfortunate, very unfortunate. I do hope that members of the Liberal government reflect on

all those constituents who contact their office who are seeking advice, seeking assistance, and recognize that they must do better to stem the tide of tragedy that they create with their legislative and regulatory burdens.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning, members and Madam Speaker. I want to talk again on the professional engineers who are part of this bill. I want say that the NDP is in favour of cutting red tape, but I've got to read this: The Professional Engineers Ontario, PEO, are "dismayed" by the repeal of the reversal of the "industrial exception" proposed in schedule 2. Then I go further and I read—and this is very disturbing to me and should be disturbing to every single Liberal member over there—it "includes the cancellation of the repeal of clause 12(3)(a) of the Professional Engineers Act, commonly known as the 'Industrial Exception.'"

And listen to this, please. I know you guys are reading the papers and doing other things, but please listen. This is important for our industries in the province of Ontario. The exception allows unlicensed employees to design or modify production machinery or equipment used to make a product in their employer's facility. This is opposed by the professional engineers, and why wouldn't it be? What the Liberals said yesterday is that it's only for small design changes. I can tell you: Nowhere in the bill does it say it's only small equipment. The equipment could be the size of this room in that employer's workplace.

Yesterday the labour minister said that the number one priority in the province of Ontario is safety. I like that, because I think it should be the number one priority. I think that when people go to work, they should come home and see their family. But what I don't understand is how you can say that the number one priority is safety when you're having unlicensed employees design or modify equipment. It makes absolutely no sense to me, and—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Good morning. As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development and Growth, I'm very pleased to stand in this House this morning to once again speak to Bill 27.

As the member opposite, the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, mentioned earlier, this bill proposes to make over 150 amendments to more than 50 statutes from 11 ministries. The Burden Reduction Act, if passed, would support Ontario ministries in updating legislation to remove unintended burden on business and to create savings and benefits for both government and external stakeholders. We heard the member opposite speak about the number of regulations and the burden that people often face. What we're trying to do with this bill is to eliminate that burden.

The amendments included in the bill, while good for business, are intended to ensure that necessary environmental, health and safety standards are maintained or enhanced in Ontario. The bill is the first of annual burden

reduction bills, serving as a model to meet a commitment to reduce burdens on Ontario businesses. So, unlike how the member opposite referred to it, this is not just fluff. This is something that our government is committed to, something that on this side of the House we're committed to ensuring continues moving forward. This will become an annual process that would provide all ministries with an awareness of and access to a regular and ongoing instrument for future legislative changes, supporting their ministry planning efforts.

Speaker, we are competing in a globally competitive environment, and we need to make sure that we are taking all measures to create a fulfilling environment for our business. The measures included in the proposed Burden Reduction Act, 2016, are just some of the burden reduction activities this government is undertaking.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm very glad that we're here talking about burden reduction because I think that it's something that all sides of the House agree on. Certainly, you can't find a business large or small in the province that thinks that we need more regulations. In fact, many businesses are relocating not just because we keep hearing about high hydro costs and other issues—traffic congestion—but they're also relocating to other jurisdictions just because of all the regulations.

Maybe it's time for the government to realize that we can't keep piling on new regulations as new digital equipment and technology become available, and we have to look at new problems that could arise. We have to also look back on some regulations that maybe aren't that necessary anymore and cut them back, maybe a two-for-one kind of thing where, if we're adding new regulations, we have to take away at least two other regulations.

I'm reminded of, when we go to the airport, we do screening. It seems like each time we go through the airport, there are more and more screening steps that you have to go through. You wonder if maybe some of the old screening steps aren't necessary anymore and they should be cutting back. Is this, sometimes, a little bit that politicians, like airport screeners, are often accused of being on some kind of a power trip, controlling people, controlling business and controlling lives? We've all had those experiences at the airport—you included, Madam Speaker, I'm sure—where you really questioned the judgment of what was being done over there.

I think that people are concerned and they want to have safe workplaces. They want to know that their roads are being constructed well. They want to know that things are being done properly.

They're also concerned about their digital privacy, their banking systems, and their rights in general, Madam Speaker. I think that they would really like us to go through some of these other regulations and—a little bit, step by step—justify why these regulations are there.

We're all reminded of Tim Hudak, who used to say that his daughter would take a few magnets on the fridge and she would invariably spell out, without knowing,

some government agency. Too many agencies; too many regulations.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I think what this bill is actually about, when we're talking about burden reduction for business, is creating a fair business environment, a fair business climate, in the province of Ontario. I have to say that I don't have a whole lot of confidence.

There are a whole bunch of things, as many members have mentioned, that aren't covered by this. I wanted to highlight one of the most egregious examples I've ever seen, whether working as CA or as an MPP, and that is the case of Angelina Anderson. Angelina Anderson is a Canadian ex-wife who lives in my riding. She had a former husband who is from the United States. They owned a tourist operation up in far-flung northwestern Ontario. They divorced in 2004. He was abusive. She fled with her children. What has happened is, at that point, she signed over all the documents. Her name is not on the business. She has nothing to do with the business. Her husband has taken over ownership of the business. He stopped paying Ontario sales tax; he completely stopped. He owes \$130,000 to this government.

The government continues to allow him to operate. What they have done, because I guess it's too difficult to go after an American citizen, is that they have placed that entire \$130,000 on this abused ex-wife who is making a living for herself and supporting her children. It is absolutely disgraceful. When we have talked to the Ministry of Finance, they have said, "Well, perhaps she should talk to her ex-husband." That is not an option. We have court documents that prove that she has nothing to do with this business. So the response then from the government was, "We don't recognize those court documents." This is an absolutely ludicrous situation: that a business can continue to operate, that they don't even pay sales tax, and this government can't even collect sales tax. How are they supposed to get the rest of this stuff right? It is absolutely ridiculous.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: It is a privilege for me to rise today to offer some thoughts on Bill 27, the Burden Reduction Act, 2016, on behalf of the people I represent in London West.

Many members may be aware that southwestern Ontario's economy is somewhat distinct from other areas of the province. We have a much higher proportion of our economy and our labour force involved in the manufacturing sector. Certainly, burden reduction is critically important for the health of our manufacturing sector.

0930

I actually had the opportunity to attend the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters' southwestern Ontario dinner that was held in London earlier this year, and I had a really constructive conversation with the director of policy and programs for CME Ontario. He talked to me about some of the things that CME, the Canadian Manu-

facturers and Exporters, had heard from London businesses who had participated that very day in a focus group.

He passed along some notes from some of the comments that were made during that focus group. He pointed out that there are close to 400,000 regulations that impact the members of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, and 1,500 regulations that apply just to the manufacture of automotive parts. He said that businesses who participated in this focus group remarked that they were spending 25% to up to 50% of their time in their business complying with these regulatory requirements. Businesses said that because of this compliance, this regulatory burden that is placed on businesses, they simply didn't have time to innovate.

Businesses made the point that the government's responsibility is to provide an environment for businesses to succeed, and that without that kind of environment, there is a risk of an overemphasis on compliance that undermines productivity and undermines innovation.

Certainly, in the context of that discussion, we know that reducing the regulatory burden is essential. It's essential for businesses in my community. It's essential for businesses across the province. Bill 27 begins that process. It begins the process of reducing the regulatory burden, as was mentioned. There are 50 acts that are amended, and 17 schedules in the bill. It is one of the thickest bills that I have seen since I have been elected. There are a lot of words in this bill; unfortunately, there's not really a lot of significant content.

Mr. John Yakabuski: The bill will be thick; the action will be thin.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Exactly. So these 17 schedules—most of them, Speaker, are really housekeeping. They are really not the kind of significant burden reduction that would have an impact in jumpstarting the economy and enabling businesses to expand and grow. We know there are five schedules simply to bring Ontario into line with international commitments, through international conventions or agreements that had been made. There are a number of amendments that are just sort of tweaking of wording; for example, schedule 13 makes some housekeeping changes to the Protecting Child Performers Act, which was a piece of legislation that was introduced by my colleague the member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. And we support those word tweaks. We had wanted those wording changes in the first place, so that's good to see in this bill.

Unfortunately, Speaker, as has been pointed out by my other colleagues who have already spoken to this legislation, there are not one but two poison pills buried in this thick document. As a result of those poison pills, Speaker—

Mr. John Yakabuski: The old poison pill trick.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yeah, those old poison pills. As a result of those poison pills, the NDP will be unable to support the legislation that is before us today.

I'm going to spend some time elaborating our concerns about those two poison pills. Schedule 2 of this bill

makes some changes to a number of acts that are under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General. One of those acts is the Professional Engineers Act. This bill includes a proposal to cancel the repeal of clause 12(3)(a) of the Professional Engineers Act, a clause that is known commonly as the industrial exception. This exception allows unlicensed employees to design and modify production machinery or equipment that is used to make a product in their employer's facilities.

In other words, what it does is allow unlicensed individuals, individuals who are not engineers, to do the work that engineers are specifically trained and paid to do. They have the expertise through the years of their education. They have the experience and the knowledge of what needs to be done to protect the public interest and to ensure that the public good is front and centre.

As well as being the MPP for London West, I'm also the NDP critic for research and innovation. In that capacity, I have had many wonderful opportunities to sit down with Professional Engineers Ontario, PEO, to sit down with individual engineers who live in my riding, and I have heard over and over again from those engineers that I have spoken to that they are opposed to this industrial exception; that the industrial exception undermines public safety, it undermines the public interest, and that it should be repealed. No province in Canada currently has an exception that allows non-engineers to do the work that only engineers are trained to do, and no province, except for Ontario, ever had such an exemption set out in legislation before.

I know that PEO, the professional engineers' association, welcomed the government's commitment in 2010 to eliminate this industrial exception that shouldn't ever have been there in the first place when they passed Bill 68, which was the Open for Business Act. This was an important public policy change that spoke to the professional obligation of professional engineers to ensure that the public interest is protected. Professional engineers recognize that repealing that exception would improve workplace safety, and that is what we are all absolutely committed to doing. We want to have an Ontario that is safe for workers to work, and repealing the exception could contribute to fewer workplace accidents and more effective and productive workplaces.

I don't know; I wasn't here in 2010 when that bill was passed. I don't know why the government chose not to proceed with the repeal of the exemption after making that commitment in the legislation at the time. I expect and I would hope that there had been some consultation prior to writing that into the legislation. I would hope that writing the repeal into the legislation was based on feedback that had been received that was based on research and evidence. But anyway, I don't know what happened.

What I do know is that six years later, we now see the Liberal government backtracking on that commitment to repeal the exception. For that reason alone, the NDP would not be able to support the passage of this bill. We cannot support legislation that could jeopardize the safety of workers in the province, and we cannot support allow-

ing this exemption to remain in place that could potentially contribute to workplace accidents and injury—not only that, but the safety of Ontarians when this machinery is modified, or design changes are made, by unlicensed people who don't have the qualifications and the training that professional engineers do.

0940

I also wanted to talk about the second poison pill in this legislation, and that is schedule 16. This is the schedule that opens up Ontario Place Corp. to having the land that is owned by the corporation—to having private interests move in and acquire some of this land.

We know we heard the government protest loudly, saying that was never the intention of this legislation, this schedule, that this is merely boilerplate, and that the government has no intention—we can be assured that the government would never privatize Ontario Place.

Quite frankly, Speaker, it's hard not to take that with a bit of a grain of salt. I was elected in 2013, and some of the first debates that I participated in were around the privatization of Hydro One. I remember having conversations at home in my riding. We were sounding the alarm. The New Democrats were sounding the alarm that this was what the government was planning to do. I had conversations back in London West, feeling it was hard to get our alarms through, because people were saying, "The Liberals would never do that." The Liberals were saying "We would never do that." And then, lo and behold, after the 2014 election—this was not in the Liberal government's platform; it was never discussed during that election campaign—the next thing you know, we see that it's announced that 60% of Hydro One will be put up for sale.

The track record, quite frankly, is troubling. Despite the government's protestations, we have the obligation, as legislators, to ensure that the public interest is protected. The public interest is not protected by writing legal wording into legislation that opens the doors to the future disposition of property at Ontario Place.

Like many MPPs who are in my age cohort, we remember with fondness when Ontario Place was the tourist attraction in the province. I would have relatives visiting from out of province, from out of country, and the first place we would want to take them to show off our province was Ontario Place. The Cinesphere, that iconic form on Toronto's waterfront, is much loved by Ontarians, and the notion that this could now be taken over by the private sector is deeply, deeply troubling and is another reason for us to oppose the bill.

There are a couple of issues that are referenced in the bill that, even though we're not supporting it, it would have been nice to see the government go a little bit further. In particular, I wanted to talk about schedule 9.

Schedule 9 refers to the classification of employees who work with the Office of the Fairness Commissioner. This is the office that oversees access to regulated professions by internationally educated professionals.

I am sure that I'm not the only MPP in this place who hears regularly from foreign-trained professionals who

come to Ontario, who bring high levels of education, who bring incredible skill sets, and yet cannot meet the qualifications in order to enter their profession and practise the skills that they were trained in.

This is a huge loss to our economy and to our communities. It's unfortunate, when the government is looking at the Office of the Fairness Commissioner, that they decided that reclassifying the employees was the only change they were going to make. There is so much work to do around the Office of the Fairness Commissioner, around the recognition of foreign credentials. That is certainly something that we need to keep our eye on and ensure is addressed in this Legislature.

The other schedule I wanted to talk about, of course, is schedule 10 and the amendments to the OEB. Again, this opens the door to a very important conversation about electricity rates in this province. We know that the biggest burden on businesses in Ontario is high hydro costs. It's the cost of electricity that is really preventing small businesses from their ability to be competitive and to grow and expand.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce just released a report last month. They noted that 33% of small businesses in the province believe that increasing energy prices will have a large impact on their organization, causing them to delay or cancel investment; 38% of small businesses claim that electricity prices are having the greatest impact on their ability to remain competitive.

If we are truly interested in creating an environment that supports businesses, that enables businesses to grow and succeed, we have to do something about skyrocketing hydro rates. We see from this Liberal government an 8% rebate on the HST on hydro bills, after putting back in a 10% increase because of the cancellation of the clean energy benefit. That is not what small businesses are asking for. That is not going to make or break a business's ability to succeed.

People in this province understand the connection between the privatization of Hydro One and skyrocketing hydro rates. They also understand the connection between the Conservative government, who introduced the process of privatization, the Liberal government, who has taken privatization to heights that the Conservatives probably never dreamed of, and the New Democrat government—not government yet, but the NDP caucus—who has been outspoken and consistent in our opposition to the privatization of our electricity system in the province.

In the minute and a half I have left, I wanted to share an experience of a business in London who wrote to me about another one of the schedules of this bill, schedule 11, about the EASR. They write, "We are compelled to outline our unfortunate experience with the EASR—the inadequacies of the process, the unprofessionalism of its administration and the lack of fairness in its application." They were requested to register with the EASR and they were actually recommended by the ministry staff person that they were dealing with that they hire a consultant in order to register.

The notion that this very small business was supposed to hire a consultant in order to complete this registration process is offensive. That, quite honestly, is a huge barrier to business growth in this province.

They say, “Our frustration does not come from compliance with any environmental program that benefits us all, at a price, but to the issue of targeting small business to capriciously increase revenues for cash-strapped government. Does government focus on small business because they have neither the resources nor the time to fight such unfair programs?”—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Hon. David Zimmer: I’m happy to make a few comments on this. First of all, what’s the premise of Bill 27? Well, the premise of Bill 27 is to make Ontario more competitive in the national economy, in the world economy and in the local economies amongst themselves. So, given that premise, what are we trying to do here?

0950

We want to reduce the regulatory burden; that’s a part of our economic plan to grow Ontario. To the extent that unnecessary rules and regulations and outdated regulations and so on have woven themselves into the fabric of the economy, we want to remove that to free up the creativity and the initiative of the economy.

So what we have done is, the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth has introduced this package of legislative amendments. They will reduce regulatory burdens and practices that cost businesses time and money while also, at the same time, protecting health and environmental standards, and always keeping an eye on workers’ safety. We’re going to do that in a responsible manner that meets all those imperatives; that is, grows the economy, protects the worker, protects the environment and so on.

I want to comment on one really interesting piece in the bill. One of the measures is to modernize government communication with businesses by allowing the electronic submission of documents. So much time is spent by business filling out paper—piles and piles of paper. It’s time that we get caught up with the electronic age, the digital age. So many of these documents that have to be filled out and submitted will be done—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. Questions and comments.

Mr. John Yakabuski: It’s a pleasure to make a brief comment on Bill 27. I have to point out to the Minister of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation that, yes, the government has brought in Bill 27, and isn’t it interesting? We’re about 17 months away from a general election here in Ontario, and this government, since 2003, has been absolutely addicted to bringing in new regulations, more regulations than any other regime in the past—bringing in more and more regulations to make life difficult for people and for businesses in this province. Maybe they commissioned a poll that we didn’t know about. You know the one where 94% of the people think hydro rates are too high? Maybe there was another one

on regulation, and they finally got the message that the people are sick and tired of having their lives controlled by this Liberal government and business being put on the brink of bankruptcy by being overregulated by this Liberal government.

All of a sudden now, when we’re on the brink of another provincial election within the next year and a half, they’re coming out with a piece of legislation that they think the people are going to fall for, that all of a sudden the leopard has changed its spots. I say nay; not so, sir. They have not changed their spots at all. This is about putting out a new story, a new Liberal package for 2018 that says, “We’re actually in favour of reducing regulation.” They’re not in favour of reducing regulation; they are in favour of getting re-elected in 2018. They know they have been on the wrong side of the people for the last 13 years with the way that they have overregulated businesses and individuals in this province, and now they’re finally getting it.

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, the member for Ottawa South thinks they’ve won four elections. Well, just a minute. Let’s see what happens in 2018—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I want to remind the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke that when I stand, you sit. When I say thank you, you need to stop.

I recognize the member from Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is always a pleasure to listen to my colleague from London West, who had such thoughtful insight into her analysis of the bill. It’s very much appreciated.

I like how polite she was when asking: Why is it that there is a clause that allows the government to privatize Ontario Place? I remember—I’ve been here for nine years—when the Liberals used to say, “It is the Conservatives who do privatizations. We are Liberals. We are progressive. It’s the Conservatives who privatize hydro.” And then, the minute they get elected—they campaign as New Democrats but really, they govern exactly the same way that the Conservatives did. They kept right on at it, privatizing our hydro system, which leads to a poll that 94% of the people of Ontario find their energy bills too high. Why are we worried when we hear, “Oh, it’s not our intention to privatize Ontario Place”? Then why do you put a bill that allows you to do this?

I’m working on Bill 41 right now, the Patients First Act. Why is there a clause in patients first that allows privatizations of our community support system if that’s not your intention? Well, I’m sorry: We don’t deal with intention in this place; we deal with the actual words that are written on the actual bill, and the way the bill is written right now opens the door wide open for privatization of Ontario Place, the same way that the Liberals went at it with privatizations of hydro in suit with the privatizations that the Conservatives had done before them.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments?

Mr. James J. Bradley: The bill we see before us is a result of considerable consultation with members of the business community and those outside the business community, to ensure that regulations that we have in place are going to be there to protect the safety, the health and the environment of people in our province. Our government has already removed some 80,000 regulations which in years gone by under various governments have been developed for the purpose of protecting the public.

We continue with this particular piece of legislation to bring about modernization, reducing duplicative requirements, synchronization of the “tell us once” approach—which I think is very important—streamlining processes, creating new opportunities, increasing efficiencies and bringing about harmonization.

What we always have to be careful about, when we hear the bleatings of members of the official opposition, is that, remember, it’s Donald Trump and the Republicans and the Conservatives in Canada who are constantly wanting to remove regulations. That’s one of their mantras.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Order.

Mr. James J. Bradley: So we remember what happened when they removed regulations in Walkerton. We remember what happened in Walkerton. There are many regulations in this province which are there to assist people right across this province.

Health, safety and labour, for instance—I know there are many of you who would like to see those removed. Our government has taken a very practical approach to the reduction of the burden on business after that consultation, and I think we’ll see continued improvements. We’ve already seen them. We will continue to consult, and I think we’ll have an even better business atmosphere in the province when this bill is concluded in this Legislature.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I return back to the member from London West to wrap up.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I would like to thank the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, the member for St. Catharines, my colleague the member for Nickel Belt and also the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for their comments. I think the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke had a very accurate observation about the number of regulations that are introduced in Ontario.

In my experience, one of the most frequent critiques that we have of any piece of legislation that we’re dealing with is that so much of what’s in the bill is left to regulation, so we don’t even get an opportunity to discuss some of the meat of the legislative changes that we are debating, and that is a concern.

When the member for St. Catharines talks about regulations, what’s important is that they be fairly applied, that they be consistent and that they make sense. We, as MPPs, as the duly elected voices of our communities,

don’t get a chance to participate in the development of these regulations. We don’t get a chance to analyze the content of these regulations. That is all left to bureaucrats.

1000

My colleague from Nickel Belt talked about the privatization of Hydro One and the reason that we are so concerned about this bill in terms of the potential privatization of Ontario Place. We know that the Conservatives began the process of privatizing our electricity system; the Liberals have taken it to new heights. The citizens of this province do not support the privatization of public assets. We have heard that loud and clear.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Hon. Chris Ballard: I will be sharing my time with the member from Kitchener Centre.

I’ve been hearing a lot of specifics, a lot of particular issues with this bill, and that’s all good; that’s all part of healthy debate. I can bring to the table experiences that I’ve had from my business background, things as simple as working with a major manufacturer in my riding. They manufacture massive pressure boiler systems. Most of them are shipped by road to Alberta. Lately, most of them are being shipped by road or by rail to the United States and down to Texas. One of the things they’ve talked to me about over the years is how difficult it is to get their product out of our community. They have municipal road laws they have to follow, they have regional road laws they have to follow, and they have provincial road laws they have to follow. It’s not something that anyone would generally think about, but when you have a massive structure that may take up a lane and a half in size, getting it from my community to where it needs to go is a major part of the logistics, and it makes it really difficult for them to move product when they have these massive loads.

So one little example from what we’re doing in this bill, in terms of making it easier for oversized loads to be moved from the manufacturer to the rail facility or to the end user—that small change alone will make a significant difference in the ability of the company in my riding to do business more effectively and more efficiently. They will be very happy with that, Madam Speaker. Again, it’s not the sort of thing that the average person would even consider, but that’s the sort of depth that we’re going into in this burden reduction bill, which we hear from manufacturers and we hear from business.

The burden reduction bill, 2016, if passed, would support Ontario ministries in updating legislation to remove unintended burden on business and to create savings and benefits for both government and external stakeholders. I know sometimes, if you’ve not been involved with government at all, you wonder why oftentimes things take a long time to get done. One of the things that you soon learn, whether it’s as a town councillor or as an MPP, is that examination for unintended consequences is absolutely key. I know that even after a lot of examination and a lot of thinking, unintended con-

sequences happen either at the beginning or just over years as the business environment and the regulatory environment changes. It's time to look at all of the regulations and legislation and say, "Do we need this anymore? Does it fit with today's modern world?" I'm pleased to see that there are a number of ways that we're addressing that in this bill.

Just to go back to the higher level, Speaker, the bill proposes to make over 150 amendments to more than 50 statutes from 11 ministries. This is a significant bill if you've got 11 ministries working together on it, I can tell you right now. The amendments included in this bill are good for business, but they're also intended to ensure the necessary environmental, health and safety standards are maintained and even enhanced across Ontario. Really, the burden reduction bill, 2016, is the first of annual burden reduction bills serving as a model to meet a commitment to reduce burdens on Ontario businesses. The last such bill, I believe, was passed in 2010. The proposed legislative amendments either demonstrate a reduction of burden on businesses or achieve cost savings for government and external stakeholders.

The cost of savings from the amendments in the bill would build on the government's success of reducing burden on businesses by \$122 million since 2011. I know that, in talking with business organizations out there, while they're not always happy with what government does at any level, they have lauded the Ontario government for the reduction of red tape that we have brought about in this province over the past number of years.

Some of the key themes of this bill, some of the ones that leap out at me: modernization—supporting the use of electronic communication between corporation shareholders, debt obligation holders and holders of warrants. The old days of needing the Pony Express to move documents around are long gone. We can use electronic signatures now. I'm looking forward to that modernization because, in the businesses that I've talked to, the businesses I've worked with before, that will streamline how they do business.

Duplicative requirements: eliminating the Bulk Sales Act—it's out of date. There are new and more effective processes we can call on that will protect business interests. One of the ones that I know drives not just businesses batty but consumers as well is synchronization and the "tell us once" approach. Why do we have to fill in a form, and then, two minutes later, when we're working with another ministry or another government, have to fill the same information in again? That synchronization will really streamline how business is moving ahead.

Streamlining a number of processes—and I spoke of this at the outset: streamlined delivery of superload permits by eliminating the requirement for police escorts, but ensuring safety by allowing for qualified non-police escorts. I said at the outset that there is one major manufacturer in my riding, and this is probably the single biggest thorn in the side they have of getting their product to market: coordinating their efforts with police, mu-

nicipal governments, regional governments and provincial ministries in order to get their very expensive, well-manufactured products to market. That's a very good one there.

Creating opportunities through enacting: There are five statutes in this proposed legislation that we will adopt—internationally recognized rules affecting cross-border business activities that would harmonize Ontario's business laws with international business laws and make Ontario a more attractive jurisdiction for resolving cross-border disputes. We know that Ontario businesses want to grow. We know that they want to grow outside of Ontario and that they have expertise and products that make them attractive to doing business in other parts of the world and vice versa. Ontario is a good place to do business, and we are attracting organizations as well. We'll increase that by adopting these five statutes so that we harmonize Ontario's business laws with international business laws.

A little bit more about that going forward—I'll just touch on that briefly. Increasing efficiencies: Businesses and government are always looking for ways to increase how effective and how efficient they are. Allowing provincial inspectors to get the information they need to do the job they need to do for low-risk activities by making a phone call to collect information—the way it is right now, the provincial inspector has to get in the vehicle, they have to go on-site and they have to get the information face to face—very time-consuming, very inefficient, even from the business's perspective, the business side that is required to pull that information together.

Being able to make a phone call—I suspect that our inspectors are going to be able to make multiple phone calls to multiple businesses where before they might have only gotten to one or two because of the time taken in transportation and moving ahead.

Moving along, Speaker, one of the other areas, as I mentioned before, is Ontario's business law review. I think it's one of the most exciting things that this government has been doing and it's one of the greatest things that's been going on that no one really knows about.

When I was the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, I was tasked with sitting in on a couple of the meetings. We had a round table with some of the brightest business lawyers from across Ontario who had volunteered to help advise government on how to streamline and how to internationalize our business law, to make it easier not only for businesses in Ontario—and doing business in Ontario—but to attract business to Ontario: to make Ontario one of the most attractive places, one of the easiest places to establish a business and to carry on business.

I looked at the wealth of talent sitting around these round tables and could only begin to imagine, if they were billing us on an hourly basis, the thousands of dollars that it would cost. But they were there as volunteers, Speaker, giving us some wonderful advice which we have encapsulated in a great report and a lot of

which is being adopted. Some of the key points are being worked into this legislation.

Another point that I wanted to touch on is regulatory modernization. It's one of the key pillars of this bill, and it strengthens our open-for-business mandate in a whole new suite of initiatives. The plan will foster a more innovative and dynamic environment for businesses to grow by lowering business costs in the province through modernizing regulations.

Regulations for the sake of regulations just don't make any sense. I think that in today's fast-paced world where things change, the business environment changes, the world is changing, we have to make sure that there is room to change and room to grow.

With those comments, Madam Speaker, I'll stop now and I'll pass the floor to the member from Kitchener Centre.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: While I'm very delighted to join the discussion this morning on the Burden Reduction Act, 2016, I want to share with you that in my riding in Kitchener Centre, we have a flourishing tech sector. We also have advanced manufacturing. Here's a little-known fact: in Ontario, the number of manufacturing businesses—about 10% of jobs are in manufacturing. But in my riding, it's double that rate; it's 20%, so one in five jobs in my region is tied to manufacturing. I mentioned the tech sector, which is exploding at this point.

I often meet with my stakeholders, with business people in my community. They have expressed a great need to see these regulatory practices, the way that they deal with government, be streamlined. That is exactly what this bill is going to do.

I know I don't have a lot of time this morning. I first of all feel compelled just to respond to some comments that I heard this morning—and I have been listening.

The member for Niagara Falls: He accused us of sitting here reading the newspaper when in fact what we're doing is looking at our research notes. We're preparing. So I didn't really appreciate that comment. I just want to share that with you, Speaker.

The member for Thornhill talked about the need to reduce red tape. That's exactly what Bill 27 is going to do. In fact, I've heard her leader refer to the fact that one of his pillars is reducing red tape. That's what this bill does, so we look forward to getting support from the opposition on this particular bill.

Speaker, I do want to share with you some important highlights of Bill 27 that are really good for businesses in Ontario. It's going to save money for businesses and for government.

The Ministry of Economic Development and Growth has introduced amendments and they intend to reduce regulatory burdens and practices that do cost businesses time and money. It's going to protect environmental and health standards, enhance worker safety and achieve cost savings for government. That's very important for both business and for government.

The ministry has worked with 11 partner ministries and is looking at amendments of more than 50 different

statutes. We have listened to our stakeholders and we want to work together to see this go through.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Seeing that it is 10:15, I will recess the House until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1014 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Please help me welcome two guests from Richmond Hill, Gwen and Robert Johnstone, sitting in this east members' gallery.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Today I'd like to welcome, on behalf of my colleague from Kitchener–Conestoga, guests of page William Dixon: his grandmother, Sylvia Dixon, and grandfather, Bill Dixon. Sylvia and Bill, welcome to Queen's Park this morning.

ORAL QUESTIONS

BY-ELECTION IN SUDBURY

Mr. Steve Clark: My question is to the Premier. The Sudbury by-election scandal casts a dark shadow over today's by-elections in Niagara West–Glanbrook and Ottawa–Vanier. That's because the Premier refuses to tell us what she knew about the alleged offers that led to bribery charges against her former deputy chief of staff. She's hiding behind the legal process, and that's nonsense. This isn't about the presumption of innocence; it's about the Premier's judgment. She stood by Pat Sorbara when she was under investigation. She said the OPP wouldn't lay charges. She rewarded her by making her head of the Liberal re-election team.

I'm not asking about what's going to happen in court; I'm asking about the Premier's judgment. Will the Premier tell us how she reached those decisions, and does she think she made the right call?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Government House leader.

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

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Good morning, Speaker. Thank you very much for recognizing me to answer this very important question because the question the member opposite is asking is before the court of law. He can spin it however he wants to, but this matter is before the courts. He continues to ask questions that should not be deliberated in this House. Those are matters that should be left before our very competent judicial system, not to be discussed here. He knows that. He thinks it's good political fodder for him. That's why he's asking these questions. He can continue to do so, but on this side of the House we will recognize and we will respect the rule of law. We will respect the standing orders rules that are very clear in terms of respecting the jurisdiction of our courts. That

is a fundamental tenet of our system, and I ask the member opposite to do the same.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Steve Clark: Back to the Premier: Here we go again. More excuses to hide from the question.

I want to thank you, Speaker, because you were very clear about something yesterday. The Attorney General claimed my question was out of order because these matters were before the courts, and you told him he was wrong. You stressed that your only caution under our standing orders was about making allegations, and you allowed my question, so I was in order.

What's not in order, Speaker, are the excuses we're hearing over there to avoid giving Ontarians a straight answer. Speaker, now that you've taken this excuse off the table, will the Premier tell us why she hasn't asked her energy minister to step aside despite the fact that he's named in the OPP's bribery information?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I think we've dealt with that matter repeatedly in this House as well. The Minister of Energy has not been charged with anything. The Minister of Energy and his responsibilities as the minister are not the subject of this matter.

There are two people charged who do not serve in this House. They are entitled to due process. That process is ongoing. It has nothing to do with the Minister of Energy in his role as a minister or as member for Sudbury. What he continues to be focused on and what this government and the Premier are focused on is making sure that we are improving the lives of Ontarians every single day, that we are building Ontario up by investing in our schools, by investing in our hospitals, by building public transit across this province.

That's the priority of this Premier, Speaker. That is the priority of this government. We will remain focused on that.

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

Mr. Steve Clark: Again, Speaker, back to the Premier: Ontarians see what's happening here, and it's why the Liberals are in trouble everywhere, including their stronghold in Ottawa–Vanier. It's understandable, why the Premier is here today: Her brand is so damaged, the Liberal campaigns want her so far away from Niagara and Ottawa–Vanier.

Speaker, you've been very clear. Our standing orders allow me to put these questions on the table, and I deserve an answer. I'm not making allegations or trying to try a case; I don't need to. The fact that the OPP has—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): For two days now, I've had to go to warnings. I'm not afraid to go to a third day. In fact, I'm close.

Finish, please.

Mr. Steve Clark: The fact that the OPP have laid charges against the Premier's trusted ally and named her energy minister in their information is enough.

Speaker, will the Premier finally tell us what she knows about Pat Sorbara's phone calls to Andrew Olivier and any discussions with the Minister of Energy?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, the member opposite asked about the Premier's priorities. I'll share with you what the Premier's priorities are.

The Premier's priority is to build Ontario up for every single Ontarian. The Premier's priority is to make sure that we give a substantive break to first-time home buyers to make it affordable for them to own a home. The Premier's priority is to continue to invest in the health care system by an additional \$145 million in our hospitals. That is in addition to about \$375 million that we announced in the budget, whereby we're spending over \$40 billion in building our health care system. The Premier's priority is to build 3,500 new child care spaces just this year alone. That is what the Premier's priority is.

The party opposite, the Conservative Party, do not share those priorities, and it is unfortunate, because they have no plan for Ontario. The only thing they know is political sparring—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There are two people who have my attention, and it will be official in a moment, if it carries on.

New question.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is to the Attorney General. The administration of justice is a keystone to a fair, just and free society. Ontario, however, is without equal in its failings of the administration of justice. We have the worst record in the country.

I have repeatedly asked the minister why nearly half of all criminal cases in this province are stayed or withdrawn before trial. Yesterday, another headline emerged: "... Murder Charge Stayed Following Nearly Four-Year Delay."

Adam Picard was arrested and accused of the first-degree murder of Fouad Nayel. He was denied bail and remanded into custody for four years. Today, we know one of two things: Either an innocent man was unfairly incarcerated, or a violent criminal has been released to freedom without conditions.

Speaker, the minister must answer for the miscarriage of justice in nearly one of every two criminal cases.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I appreciate the member asking this very important question. As I said yesterday, I take this matter very seriously, the case he's referring to, and I am concerned, Speaker. It is absolutely important that our justice system works for everyone: works for the victims, works for the accused, and it should work for the public across the province.

My ministry's officials are very closely looking at that decision that was rendered just two days ago. I have asked them to conduct their review in an expeditious manner so that they could determine next steps.

This is a matter that is before the courts. As you know, there is an appeal period right now. It would be highly inappropriate for me to comment on that.

But I do want to stress that this is a serious matter, Speaker, and I take those concerns very seriously.

1040

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Hillier: Again to the Attorney General: The system is not working. It doesn't take a legal expert to see that our justice system is acting in a manner that frustrates and obstructs justice while also failing to protect society from dangerous offenders.

Justice Parfett attributed her decision to the crown's heavy caseload and the crown's refusal to expedite the trial.

While we know the minister has initiated a review of the case, what is needed is a review of the culture of complacency, as Justice Parfett indicated.

How can the crown object to a motion to expedite an already-delayed trial? How can they prosecute thousands of minor, less violent crimes, but disregard murder trials?

Speaker, the minister and his crown attorneys are acting in a manner that is prejudicial to the public good. These are the symptoms of the culture of complacency which starts and ends in the minister's office.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: As I said, the matter is a serious one, and I'm concerned. The decision is being reviewed by my ministry. Given that we're in an appeal period, it would be inappropriate for me to comment.

I do want to take the matter that the member opposite spoke about, and that is the Jordan decision from the Supreme Court of Canada—which, in my opinion, in my conversations with our judiciary and our other partners, presents a very valuable opportunity for our entire justice system.

Fair and timely access to justice is a core value of my ministry and our government. It's a value that's shared and held by all Ontarians.

We are actively working with our justice sector partners to develop strategies to address issues of delay both in the short and the long term. In the supplementary, I will highlight to you some of the steps that we have already taken.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: Again, Speaker, the facts are as simple as they're frightening—but also in their duration. The justice system is either keeping innocent people behind bars or allowing criminals to walk free.

Justice Parfett acknowledged in the decision, "The justice system has failed this accused and the public."

The Auditor General has raised the alarm on these systemic failings for many years. The crown attorneys' association issued a statement on the crisis of trial delays. And the press is consistently reporting on the outrage caused by these stayed and withdrawn cases. Everyone, legal experts or not, can plainly see that injustice is pervasive—everyone except the minister, it appears.

Speaker, when will the Attorney General stop locking up the innocent and stop setting violent criminals free?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, since the Jordan decision has been released, I've been very much focused, along with the Ministry of the Attorney General, and our judiciary and other partners in the justice system on this particular issue. Time to trial is a very important issue and it's fundamental to our justice system.

Since July, my ministry has been working with crowns, court services staff, the judiciary and the criminal defence bar, and we have taken a number of steps. We are assessing the state of cases in the Superior Court of Justice and the Ontario Court of Justice. We've been organizing local bench, crown and bar meetings to discuss local solutions. And in September, the Ontario Court of Justice and the ministry hosted a criminal justice sector workshop which focused on planning justice sector responses to the Jordan decision.

Crown officers are actively reviewing cases in light of the Jordan decision and developing strategies to proactively deal with cases that may be in jeopardy.

Speaker, this is an issue that impacts the entire country. I've had the opportunity to speak to my counterparts, the other ministers of justice, and they're all working on this issue together.

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, my question is for the Premier this morning.

Yesterday, I visited Richelle McDonald at her home in Smithville. Richelle and her husband, Justin, have three children. The whole family struggles, unfortunately, with different illnesses that keep each of them on medication. She told me that for the past few months, her hydro bill has been so high that she has been forced to choose between the medications her family needs and keeping the lights on. How is it possible that a family in this wealthy province—a family that works hard every single day—is forced to make decisions like that?

When will this Premier finally understand that people can't afford her sell-off of Hydro One and put an end to it?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care will want to comment on the issue around medication, but it is unacceptable that someone would have to make that choice. I completely agree with the leader of the third party.

But, again, the leader of the third party is conflating issues. What is unacceptable to me is that there would be people who would be that burdened with electricity prices, which is why we are working to take costs out of the system and to lower those electricity costs. The leader of the third party conflates that issue with the broadening of the ownership of Hydro One, which is strictly about investing in infrastructure, in transit and in projects like the Hamilton LRT, to make sure that we have an inclusive economy that allows people to move around this

province in the best way possible. Those issues are separate. We're working to lower electricity costs.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, Richelle had to tell her 16-, 15- and 13-year-old children that the family was not putting up Christmas lights this year. It devastated her to do that because stringing the lights has been a family tradition since her first son was born. But, thanks to her skyrocketing hydro bills, she just can't afford to light up her home for the holidays.

Why doesn't this Premier understand the effects that her wrong-headed hydro decisions are having on the people of this province? She has her little lines all pat out there, and she repeats them every single day in this Legislature, while families are having to make untenable decisions about their family life and about the history that they expect to be able to continue when it comes to traditions like Christmas.

Why won't she put the interests of families first? Why won't she put the interests of people like Richelle and other families ahead of the interests of her friends on Bay Street and stop the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I will say to the leader of the third party that, as long as she continues to conflate issues that are not related, I will continue to tell her the reality and give her the real information about what is happening.

I am very concerned about the fact that electricity prices that have risen because of the investments we have made in the system, because we have cleaned up a system that was dirty and that had been neglected for years by government after government—we have cleaned that system up. There is a cost attached to that, and we recognize that there are people who are not able to cover their electricity costs, which is why we are taking costs off their bills and why we are working to make sure that they can afford that.

But the Hydro One issue is about investing in infrastructure. Broadening the ownership of Hydro One is about investing in infrastructure.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, it's this Premier that needs a dose of reality. She has to understand what the people of this province are dealing with because of her wrong-headed decisions in the hydro file.

The reality is that it's not just Christmas lights that are going to be missing from this year's Christmas at Richelle's home. She and her husband have told the kids to expect fewer presents under the tree as well. Now, as a parent, I certainly understand how hard it must have been for her to tell her kids that Christmas would not include cherished family traditions like Christmas lights and like the kind of gifts that they expect.

When will this Premier finally stop spinning her message and instead show some real leadership on this file and put Richelle and her family, and families like them, at the top of the agenda, put them first for a change, and

stop her stubborn, wrong-headed, unwanted, totally hated sell-off of Hydro One?

Interjections.

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

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I don't know the situation with Richelle and her family; I don't know the specifics. I don't know, for example—as the leader of the third party was talking about medication—whether she is eligible for supports through the Trillium drug benefit. I don't know if the leader of the third party had the opportunity to talk to her about the Ontario energy support program or the programs that are in place that would help her with her electricity bills.

What I do know is that she will see a reduction as of January 1 because we're taking off the provincial portion of the HST. The leader of the third party is talking about how we should make it permanent. That is a permanent change, Mr. Speaker. We have committed to that. She's trying to say that somehow we haven't made that commitment; in fact, we have.

1050

But Mr. Speaker, it is very important to me that the leader of the third party and the people of Ontario understand that we're going to invest in transit, in bridges, in schools and the hospitals they need across the province.

BY-ELECTION IN SUDBURY

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. The hydro file is not the only area where the Premier is extremely disappointing the people of Ontario. The Sudbury bribery scandal is a stain on the Premier and her Liberal Party, but more importantly, it has shaken trust in the government and our democracy.

For months, the Premier stood by her top aide, Pat Sorbara, until she was formally charged by the OPP, showing Ontarians that her priorities lie not with them but, rather, in protecting Liberal Party insiders. We recently learned that, of course, the Minister of Energy is also implicated in this scandal.

My question is, will the Premier make the same mistake again with her minister, or will she put aside her blind partisanship, ask him to step down and show Ontarians that she will choose them over Liberal Party insiders for a change?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Attorney General.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: As the Premier has been very clear on this issue, she has answered questions on this matter in this House, through the media. She's been very up front and transparent to Ontarians.

I've also stated in many instances that this matter relates to two individuals who have been charged under the Ontario Election Act. That matter is before the courts. Those two individuals do not serve in this Legislature and those charges do not relate to the Minister of Energy. He has not been charged with any offence whatsoever, and the subject matter of those allegations does not deal

with the responsibility of the minister in his role as Minister of Energy.

So there is no such need for what the member is asking. We'll continue to focus on our job, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Bribery is a very serious allegation—both offering a bribe and accepting a bribe. It's unconscionable that a member of the Premier's cabinet should remain—

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Any time now.

The chief government whip will withdraw.

Mr. James J. Bradley: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I would like to ask all members to refrain from making any comments while I'm standing, number one.

Number two, I'm listening carefully to everyone's conversation, and if I hear something unparliamentary, I'll deal with it.

Please finish, member.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's unconscionable that a member of the Premier's cabinet should remain in his role if there's even a hint that he may have been involved in this scandal. As a province, we must be better than this. We must be better than playing silly political games when something as important as people's faith in our democracy is at stake. The Premier needs to step—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. I'm particularly not amused by what's happening, and if I continue to hear the interjections the way I have been, I'll go to warnings and actually may move to naming. This is going to get done properly today.

Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier needs to step up and be the leader she said she was going to be when she was elected in 2014. Will she ask her minister to step aside?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I find it a bit rich hearing from the leader of the third party who talks about political games, who has taken a very serious issue and day after day is only making it a partisan issue.

She herself has recognized, the opposition has recognized, that this is a serious matter, that this is a matter before the courts. There are allegations around certain individuals, and it is only fair, in our system, that we let the courts make the due consideration and due determination based on evidence presented to them.

It's not the time and the place to make it a part of the political rancour in this House. That's what the member opposite is doing. That's beneath the NDP, in my humble opinion. We should be all focusing on issues that are important. That's what the Premier has been focused on.

Interjection.

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

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: She's investing in our schools and daycare spaces; she's investing in our health care. That's where the Premier's priorities are. That's what she ran on in 2014, and she's delivering on it.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I'm disappointed. The people of Sudbury are disappointed. The people of Ontario are disappointed. I guess the Premier really does care more about partisan politics and Liberal insiders than she does about protecting the integrity of Ontario's democratic traditions.

The Premier has a chance to do what so many Premiers have done before her, and I urge her to take that chance. Will the Premier acknowledge that the faith the people have in her government is more important than protecting Liberal Party insiders and ask her Minister of Energy to step down until the Sudbury scandal is completely closed?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: The Premier respects the rule of law. The Premier respects the independence of our judiciary. We ask the member opposite to do the same thing.

The member from Sudbury is not some political insider. He is the elected member of provincial Parliament for Sudbury. He has been duly elected—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): In case he didn't hear it, the Minister of Infrastructure has already been spoken to. And there are a few other people, some of them not even in their seats, who will get my attention.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, the member from Sudbury has been elected not once, not twice, but three times by the people of Sudbury. Why? Because he continues to honourably serve his community. He continues to deliver for his community. That's the kind of man he is, and he will continue to do so.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Premier. Two weeks ago, my constituent Mrs. Karen Rucas wrote to me to voice her frustration over excessive fees and charges on her hydro bill. Let me just summarize her bill for you. Hydro usage: \$179.58. Total cost of her bill: \$512.20. Mrs. Rucas explains that of the whopping \$512 total cost of her bill, \$309 of it is government fees. Mr. Speaker, that's 60% of her bill in fees alone. Mrs. Rucas describes these hydro fees as a "terrible scam" on the people of Ontario. She finds it atrocious that she's being charged taxes piled on top of taxes.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Rucas would like to know: Will residents of Ontario be reimbursed for what she and many people call outrageous overcharges?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: I'd like to thank the honourable member for that question because he does bring forward a good point. Many folks in this province are having a difficult time paying their hydro bills. That's

why, in our speech from the throne, we brought forward many programs to help families and to help individuals like that.

Come January 1, there will be an 8% reduction on those bills, and if that individual is actually in one of the rural or remote communities, she'll actually see a 20% reduction. On top of that, I hope the honourable member is also talking to her about the OESP program, because that is a benefit that many families and many individuals can qualify for. If this is a senior and if they actually heat their home with electricity, they can get up to \$75 a month on top of that. That's a significant reduction to help families who are actually having a difficult time.

For me, Mr. Speaker, I do hope that he is encouraging them to look at the programs and work with the LDC to make sure that they can get the benefits to help them reduce their bill.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?
1100

Mr. Jim Wilson: Back to the Premier: Premier, Mrs. Rucas isn't the only person worried about her hydro bill. Earlier this fall, my constituent Mr. Richard Wiles of Collingwood wrote to me to voice his intense frustration over the high cost of electricity in this province. Mr. Wiles told me that taking the provincial sales tax off of hydro bills is a joke, in his opinion. "Too little, too late" is what he said. Mr. Wiles also noted that it's not right that he is forced to pay huge delivery charges at the cottage when they're not there in the winter months.

Premier, my constituents and our constituents on all sides of the House really want to know: Rather than rebate programs and all that, what are you actually doing to get the system back on track? What are you actually doing to fix the problem over there? That's what they want to know.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: Well, what we've done is fix the system that they left in tatters. We had to build 15,000 kilometres of lines to ensure that families actually get power. We've ensured that we've built a system that is safe and reliable, that doesn't have rolling brownouts or blackouts that actually affect our overall economy and put all families in this province in the black. We've made sure that we've invested in programs and systems to have a clean, reliable system. We no longer have to send out warnings telling Ontarians that they don't have to go outside and worry about breathing. We've eliminated coal. We've made sure that we've got a clean, reliable system for all families, something that that government—when they were in power, they kept kicking this issue to the curb. We acted to make sure that we've made a difference for this province.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. The member from Renfrew will come to order. The member from Leeds–Grenville will come to order. That will probably be my last individual notice until I go to warnings.

New question.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Ms. Catherine Fife: My question is to the Premier. Earlier this week, the people of Toronto found out which neighbourhoods pay the highest car insurance rates. According to a Kanetix study, where you live is a determining factor in how much you pay. People who live in the Malvern and Rouge areas of Scarborough and people who live near Jane and Finch in north York pay an estimated \$1,000 more per year than those living in Forest Hill.

Does the Premier think it's fair that people living in areas that have the highest number of new Canadians, the highest rates of immigration and some of the lowest average incomes in the province are forced to pay the most for their car insurance?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate the question, recognizing of course that we're all concerned about rising rates when it comes to auto insurance. That's why we've taken the steps, deliberate steps, to foster ways to reduce those costs of claims, enabling—premiums now have been reduced over this period of time by almost 9%. We're looking towards reducing them even further on average by working closely with the industry by providing the most generous benefits to the people of Ontario, noting of course, as the member just made reference, that there are certain regions and certain locations of the province that have higher rates of incidents and accidents while in some other parts in the north they do not.

The member opposite is suggesting that maybe we should increase the rates in the north and subsidize the south. We're not going to do that, Mr. Speaker. That is not up to us. We are going to take every step necessary to let the market forces prevail and ensure that it's fair and that everybody pays the appropriate amount, and reduce those rates.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Catherine Fife: This finance minister is living in a completely different reality than the people of this province outside of this building. Ontarians already know they can't trust what this Premier and this minister say about car insurance rates. After all, the Liberal government promised a 15% reduction in rates that New Democrats fought for in 2013, only to call it a "stretch goal" earlier this year.

Just last month, we discovered that auto insurance rate increases were approved by this government twice in 2016. We know that Ontario pays the most in auto insurance in all of Canada. Between 2001 and 2013, the people of this province overpaid for auto insurance by an estimated \$3 billion to \$4 billion.

Can this Premier explain to Ontarians why the high cost of car insurance doesn't matter to her anymore?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Again, I want to reiterate that rates on average have been going down. We want them to go down further. Approximately 20% of the companies in Ontario have actually already reduced their rates by 15%, and 50% of the market have already reduced their

rates by over 10%. We're trying desperately to find ways to foster even greater co-operation and reduction in those costs.

Part of it, of course, is that there has been fraudulent activity. There has been abuse of the system. There have been a number of interplays that are causing rates to be extraordinarily high in Ontario versus other parts of Canada. We're trying to bring more of that into line in order to enable those reductions. But the member opposite has to confer and agree to move more quickly on some of these matters instead of stalling and then not approving the very measures that were taken to reduce those rates.

We're going to continue doing our part, Mr. Speaker. We're going to reduce those rates for the people of Ontario.

HATE CRIMES

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the Attorney General. It's not a question that I want to have to ask, but today we had a third incident in Ottawa of anti-Semitism: the defacing of a couple of synagogues in my riding: Machzikei Hadas, right around the corner from my house, and Beth Israel, which is in Minister Chiarelli's riding. It's not my Ottawa—the Ottawa that I know. In the last year, I've had a mosque defaced and an Islamic school defaced. Given world events, these are really deeply concerning things.

To the Attorney General: Could he please let us know what we're doing to address these kinds of heinous and hateful acts?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, these acts of hate are shocking. They're sad and absolutely unacceptable. It's really troubling to know that this is happening in my community. I know that these acts of hate do not reflect Ontarians or, in fact, Canadians. We, together—every single member of this Legislature—stand together against these acts of hate that have taken place in Ottawa over the last three days. We must all work together to eliminate hatred, racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and all forms of hate.

If police believe that there are hate crimes committed, they will conduct an investigation and, where appropriate, lay a criminal charge. Ontario crown attorneys will prosecute these cases vigorously. We will not tolerate hate crimes in Ontario.

Interjections.

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

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to thank the Attorney General. If we look at the discourse south of the border over the last few months, we see that it has apparently made it okay to openly be hateful, to openly mock people, to be misogynists and to be open about this. I know that we think and believe—and we do have a political culture here—but we are not immune. Don't believe that we're immune. There are shadows of it. We see shadows of it

in the last federal election. We see shadows of it now in our communities.

We all need to stand together. This is a really serious, serious matter. So I would like to ask the Attorney General what we do to prosecute these crimes and to help those victims suffering from these hateful acts.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, the member from Ottawa South is absolutely right: We all are in this together. We all have to protect each other. We all have to stand against acts of hate and racism. There is no place for these types of vile acts to take place in our communities in our province.

In the Ministry of the Attorney General, a team of crown prosecutors specially trained in the legislation and prosecution of these offences provide support to the police, other crowns and communities across the province. It is crown policy that hate-motivated offences be prosecuted vigorously where there is a reasonable prospect of conviction and it is in the public's interest. Victims of hate crimes have access to victim and witness assistance programs on a priority basis after charges are laid. These services are available province-wide.

1110

I ask all members of the House today to stand together to say no to hate, no to racism, no to intolerance in our society.

Interjections.

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

New question.

TREE PLANTING

Mr. Ted Arnott: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. In 2004, the county of Wellington established a Green Legacy Programme which plants more than 150,000 trees across the county each year. It has grown into the largest municipal tree-planting program in North America.

We need to take the county's Green Legacy Programme province-wide. Last year, the House unanimously passed my private member's resolution calling to do just that to celebrate Ontario's 150th anniversary within a united Canada in 2017. Government members were very enthusiastic in support of the idea. This past April, we followed up by arranging a meeting in my office with senior Ministry of Natural Resources officials, including the deputy minister.

The government has now had more than a year since my resolution was passed. What specifically has the ministry done to begin planning to implement an Ontario green legacy program?

Hon. Kathryn McGarry: I thank the member opposite for the question. We made a bold commitment on this side of the House a few years ago to plant 50 million trees in the province of Ontario under the Premier's leadership, and we are starting to accomplish that. In fact, we've planted more than 22 million trees so far, so we are well on track to be able to accomplish that.

I have spoken with the member and with some of the members of Green Legacy, and I really do applaud that particular organization for their implementation program. They have a great way of getting the trees out to school-children and other community groups. I'm going to continue to work towards ensuring that we have our commitment done, including the one million trees that we're planting within the urban areas, not only for beautification but also to try to fill in the gaps where there have been ash trees lost to the emerald ash borers.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I thank the minister for that response, but I would say to her that we can do more—much, much more. The intent of my resolution, which highlighted the excellent work done by the county of Wellington, is to encourage the minister to provide the necessary leadership, urging Ontario residents to get involved, to volunteer, to work with local community organizations and massively increase our tree-planting efforts in Ontario. This would have so many benefits and serve as a tangible community response to the challenge of climate change.

As members will recall, this past September at the International Plowing Match, which was held in Wellington county, Warden George Bridge mentioned our idea for an Ontario green legacy program in his remarks. I was sitting on the stage, directly behind the Premier. She turned around and told me, "It's a great idea."

My question is simple. If the county of Wellington supports it, the Ontario Legislature supports it, the Premier supports it, and the David Suzuki Foundation and many other groups support it, why aren't they doing it?

Hon. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you for the supplementary, but we are already doing it. On this side of the House, we are out planting the trees. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, about a month ago I was at the TD Tree Day in Cambridge, and over 300 people turned out on a chilly, windy, rainy morning to plant a variety of trees. I myself planted a butternut tree in that area.

This is ongoing work in every single community. School groups in my riding and surrounding ridings are out there. We are certainly on track to get that 50 million trees.

I know that a lot of people have been talking to me recently about using the opportunity of Canada 150 to plant more trees as a legacy project in their area, but the benefits are beautification, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and certainly employing trees as—

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

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Sarah Campbell: My question is for the Premier. Last month, the Ontario government reannounced a rebate program for energy-efficient retrofits. But in the months between the first announcement—

Applause.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: The government would do well to hold their applause.

But in the months between the first announcement and the reannouncement, the government failed to make this program accessible to homeowners in the north.

To qualify, homeowners are told that they need a home energy audit, but there is not a certified energy adviser to perform one in the Kenora–Rainy River riding. The closest adviser is in Thunder Bay, which is 490 kilometres away from Kenora.

Does the Premier really expect people to travel 490 kilometres just to do a home energy audit?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the Minister of Energy is going to want to comment, but let me just say to the member opposite that if there is that kind of challenge to getting these audits, we need to deal with that because it's very important that people have access to them, that there be the trained personnel within a reasonable geography to perform them.

Certainly, the Minister of Energy will want to hear more details about the situation, but we are committed to making sure that people have access to those audits, so that they can work on the retrofits that are going to save them money.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Here are some more hoops that northern homeowners have to jump through just to get one of government's home energy rebates.

First, homeowners need to reside in an area served by Enbridge or Union Gas, which leaves out whole communities in the north. For those who do, they must find an auditor, who may be 490 kilometres away, and pay their fee plus their travel expenses, which are limited by the program at \$500. Then the homeowner must find a contractor who is available in their community to complete the work and have the auditor return to complete the final assessment within 120 days of the initial assessment.

Northern homeowners pay the highest energy bills in the province and they need this rebate the most, but they are the one who are the least able to benefit from this program. What will the Premier do to improve access to this program for all northern homeowners?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: I do want to thank the member for bringing that question up. As a northerner myself, it is important for us to make sure that we have equal access to all programs that are out there.

It is concerning for me to hear that it isn't something that is necessarily available to the folks in the Kenora and Rainy River area, because conservation is key for all of us. Making sure that we have the programs that we have out there and getting everyone involved will do several things: It will reduce our GHGs, but it will also help us with the cost of electricity and the cost of heating our homes, especially in the north.

It's great, too, that we have a \$200-million loan program and a \$30-million grant program being offered by the Minister of Infrastructure and the Ministry of Infra-

structure to ensure that we can get natural gas rolling out to more communities right across our great province.

I met with the individuals—the mayor and others—from that part of the province, and they would really like to see natural gas in their part of the province, and it's a great program.

ONTARIO PLACE

Mr. Han Dong: My question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. First, I would like to thank the minister for clarifying to my community that there is no plan for more condos at Ontario Place.

This province is moving forward with a vision to revitalize Ontario Place into a vibrant, year-round waterfront destination that builds on its legacy of innovation, fun and live music, which engages residents and visitors of all ages.

As part of this vision, the new urban park and William G. Davis Trail is on track to be completed by summer 2017. The newly designed William G. Davis Trail, located on the east island, will add 7.5 acres of new parkland to Toronto's waterfront.

Mr. Speaker, I know the minister was visiting Ontario Place yesterday. Through you to her: Could she tell the members of this House more about the first phase of the Ontario Place revitalization?

Hon. Eleanor McMahon: I want to take this opportunity to thank the member from Trinity–Spadina for his advocacy for Ontario Place, which is located in his riding, to the benefit of the citizens of Toronto and Ontarians more broadly. I want to thank him for that ongoing and effective advocacy.

Our tour yesterday gave us the opportunity to really look at the developing urban park and trail and to look at not only what has been completed but what's to come, and we're very excited about that.

1120

As my colleague mentioned, the urban park and trail will add 7.5 acres to our beautiful waterfront that all Ontarians will be able to access. It will be free, and it's shaping up to be an absolutely gorgeous spot. I'm very proud of the work that's ongoing.

I just want to highlight a few of the features of this amazing space. In the transformation of what once was a parking lot and a flat parking space, we're creating a beautiful series of vistas eight metres above the lake level, providing stunning panoramic views.

I look forward to adding more in my supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Han Dong: I want to thank the minister for her answer. The urban park and trail is going to dramatically transform Toronto's waterfront with new green spaces. It's fantastic to hear that this vision proposes a mix of outdoor and indoor features, including more green space, a water-based recreational blue park and a waterfront trail around the entire site.

This project continues to create and support jobs for Ontario workers. Nearly 300 people have worked on-site,

and the project has also involved businesses across the province. In fact, 99% of the construction workforce on the park and trail is based in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister, can she tell the members of this House how the public and stakeholders were engaged in the design process of this park?

Hon. Eleanor McMahon: I'm proud to talk about the consultation process that's really being honoured now in the transformation of Ontario Place. I'm happy to say that I was part of this consultation prior to being elected. I had the opportunity to join Ontarians in shaping the future of Ontario Place and engaging with them in that important process. They helped us to shape the park design, they played an important role in its creation, and overwhelmingly, they said to keep Ontario Place accessible to all Ontarians, and that's exactly what we're doing.

Through that revitalization process, it will continue to serve as a vibrant venue for music festivals and events. Next year we will host a number of exciting events as part of Ontario150. I invite all members of this House to join us in celebrating the reopening of the William G. Davis park next year in July.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is to the Premier. A resident in my riding, Tom, sent a letter to the Premier on October 11, 2016. In that letter, Tom expressed his deep frustration and anger over his last hydro bill received from Whitby Hydro—\$912.98.

Tom also outlined in his letter the steps his family had taken to use electricity more efficiently—for example, using appliances at off-peak hours. In his letter, Tom said, “The sudden realization by your government that we have an energy crisis in the province is laughable.”

Speaker, I support Tom in asking the Premier: Why has it taken this government 13 years to realize that an energy crisis exists in Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: Actually, it has taken this government 13 years to build up the electricity system that they left in tatters. That's why it has been so long. They actually never invested in the system. They actually used to import electricity from the United States, at the cost of over \$500 million, \$700 million. When he was the minister, the MPP from Simcoe–Grey used to—

Interjections.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They claim they want lower rates, but they want to rip up contracts that will actually cost us over \$20 billion and increase rates even more.

On this side of the House, we've eliminated coal—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We're now in warnings.

Wrap up, please.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: We have eliminated coal. We're making sure that we have a reliable system, a

clean system, a green system, and we're working to make it more affordable.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Again to the Premier: Tom and his wife recently spent time with friends from Manitoba, and they compared hydro bills. Manitobans pay one rate of 0.0793 cents per kilowatt hour, a number that is less than our best off-peak rate of 0.870 cents per kilowatt hour. Tom's Manitoba friend paid a hydro invoice, for a period of time equivalent to Tom's bill, of \$244.

Speaker, what is clear from this comparison is that a minor sales tax cut from our hydro bills fails to impact the dramatic differences in energy costs among provinces.

When will this government recognize that escalating hydro bills have reached epidemic proportions and are hurting hard-working families?

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: We've brought forward many of these initiatives, that will help families come January 1. We will help businesses as well. But when you're looking at the facts, we are right in the middle of the pack when it comes to competitiveness, when it comes to prices, right across North America. Ontario's 2015 average for electricity prices was lower than New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan and many other states in the US.

When looking at the average price you don't have to take my word, Mr. Speaker; you can take the word of the independent Financial Accountability Officer. That officer outlined that when it comes to electricity prices, only British Columbia is lower than us. When it comes to overall energy prices, we're right in the middle of the pack.

But that doesn't stop us from recognizing that some families are still having a difficult time, and that's why we've brought our 8% reduction, our 20% reduction and the OESP program.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. In the weeks since the Ontario NDP launched our new website, endstudentdebt.ca, stories have come flooding in. For example, Holly Parkinson not only worked during university; she also moved back home to save money. She has now graduated, but at 25 years old she expects to have to live with her parents for years. She writes that if interest was removed from her student loan, she would be able to pay off her debt and start saving for her future.

Student loan debt, compounded by interest on student loans, is keeping young people like Holly from moving forward with their lives after they graduate. Will the Premier act now to remove interest from student loans?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you for the question. As everyone here recognizes, making sure that all students have access to post-secondary education is a very, very high priority for us. That's why we're moving forward with changes to OSAP that are progressive, that

are generous. It will be simpler to use. The benefits are enormous. For those at the lowest end of the income scale, tuition will be free. Grants will exceed the price of tuition.

It's a fundamental principle for us that everyone should have access to post-secondary education based on their potential, not on their pocketbook. We're making real, meaningful changes, Speaker, and I will address the issue of interest on debt in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Speaker, the submissions made to our website tell a bleak story. Many students are working multiple jobs while in school, only to graduate with huge debts and few opportunities for full-time employment.

Saminder Parana was the first in his family to graduate from post-secondary but had to juggle three jobs in order to pay for his education. Now in his 30s and unable to find anything other than minimum-wage work, he has \$30,000 of debt and no real chance of paying it off.

Speaker, how can this Premier justify making a profit off the backs of struggling graduates by charging interest on student loans?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We actually have taken the recommendation of the third party. We've looked at that recommendation and we have calculated that on average, students with student debt would have relief of \$6.11 a month if we were to move forward with the NDP proposal.

We are making a much more profound change, Speaker. Our changes to OSAP will do far more than the changes that they are recommending. Their benefit is \$6.11 a month on average, Speaker. We are offering free tuition for 150,000 students—far, far, far greater savings than their plan.

ROAD SAFETY

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. When I'm knocking on doors in my riding, invariably—and I know we all experience this—people with children, when you knock on their door, the first thing that they talk to you about is road safety. The thing they talk to you about is the safety of their children going to school, their concern to ensure that their son or daughter gets there and gets back.

1130

I know that we passed some legislation last summer about distracted driving and impaired driving, and it was with the support of all the members of this Legislature. So I know that members support the safety of children as well. But I know we need municipal partners, because they govern that area of road safety. Could the minister please tell us what we are doing to partner with our municipalities to ensure the safety of our children going to school?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to begin by thanking the member from Ottawa South for, yet again, a very strong question. Of course, he is an extraordinary advocate for his community of Ottawa South.

But Speaker, through you to that member and our other members from the Ottawa area, particularly the Attorney General and others who have spoken to me and to the Premier over many months about the importance over many months to make sure that we move forward in partnering with our municipalities to improve road safety—particularly in the areas around school zones and community safety zones and also working with municipalities around what is known as the default speed limit—in response to the overwhelming message we heard from a number of key municipalities including Ottawa, Toronto, York region and others, we have moved forward with an initiative that will help, ultimately, to protect our most vulnerable road users: pedestrians, cyclists and others in those school zones and community safety zones.

Just a few days ago, I was proud to introduce legislation in this House which I would be delighted to elaborate on in the follow-up answer to the next question.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Fraser: I would like to thank the minister for the answer to that question. It's not only the safety of our children going to school—and I was very pleased to be there last week when we announced that in Ottawa—but it's other road users as well.

Recently, in my riding of Ottawa South, Perley and Rideau Veterans' on Russell Road put a senior persons' crossing because we have about 700 people living in a concentrated area that go back and forth across the street to walk and to catch the bus. It is of great concern, not just to parents of children, but also sons and daughters of parents who are living in assisted living or in long-term care.

I would like to ask the minister what this legislation will do for that aspect of road safety as we go—

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

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to begin by saying again to the member from Ottawa South thank you for the question, and also for the very important point that he made.

It is true that we made the announcement regarding introducing automated speed enforcement for school zones and community safety zones, Speaker. Certainly, the announcement that was made by the Premier in Ottawa and also by the Premier in Leaside—Leaside is a particular community here in Toronto deeply affected by a road safety tragedy involving a young girl named Georgia Walsh a number of years ago.

The overwhelming message we received back from families in both the Leaside area and also in Ottawa—and I know this is consistently applied in other parts of the province as well, Speaker—is that governments at all levels have to work closely together to collaborate, to make sure that as it relates to protecting our most vulnerable road users, we strike the right balance. That's why we've introduced this legislation. It's why we will continue to work hard on this initiative, and I look forward to

working with that member and all members in this House on these issues.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Point of order: the member from Wellington–Halton Hills.

Mr. Ted Arnott: On a point of order: I just want to introduce two guests who are here today, Les Liversidge and his daughter, Glea Liversidge. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. The member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: The other member from Mississauga–Streetsville. Thank you very much, Speaker. Thank you for giving me the chance to introduce three guests sitting in the members' east gallery: from the consulate of India, Rajender Perindia; the president of the National Association of Indo-Canadians, Manmohan Singh; and the director of the National Association of Indo-Canadians, Manoj Goel. Welcome, and thank you for coming.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Whitby–Oshawa.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I would like to correct the record on my supplementary question. Manitobans pay one rate of 7.93 cents per kilowatt hour, a number that is less than our best off-peak rate of 8.70 cents per kilowatt hour.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Economic Development and Growth.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I've got to learn to wait my turn sometimes, but thank you for that.

I just want to introduce page captain Vishmen Aynkharan's mother, Suba, who is joining us in the public gallery somewhere here today.

ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you, Speaker. I have been waiting almost a week for an order paper question to be responded to by the Minister of Children and Youth, and I would like your assistance to get that order paper filed.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): One moment, please.

It is my understanding that it is overdue. I will turn to the government House leader for a response.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, our sincere apologies. It's not our intention to not submit these on time. I will ensure that the Minister of Children and Youth Services tables this response as soon as possible.

VISITOR

Mr. Arthur Potts: I just want a moment to introduce my friend Howard Brown, who is in the House. He's doing great work with the members of the opposition, bringing to our government—I appreciate having him here.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There are no deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1136 to 1300.

APPOINTMENT OF FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table a copy of the order in council appointing François Boileau as French Language Services Commissioner for the term of five years commencing November 15, 2016.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I'd like to welcome Dr. Darren Cargill, Ana Duma and Laura Duma. They're here to witness the debate today on Dan's Law.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CANADIAN MANUFACTURERS AND EXPORTERS

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm very pleased to rise today to recognize the appointment of Rhonda Barnet as chair of Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, which is Canada's largest trade and industry association and the voice of more than 10,000 leading companies nationwide.

I'm especially proud because Rhonda is a constituent of mine who hails from the village of Bethany and who helped found local company Steelworks Design in 2002.

Rhonda was announced as chair of CME last Thursday, setting a milestone for the organization as the first woman ever to hold the role. As chair of the CME, Rhonda expressed her commitment to advancing the involvement of women in manufacturing, strengthening our small and medium-sized businesses, and also her hope that her role will have an impact locally.

Through her involvement in the Kawartha Manufacturers Association, she plans to connect the two boards to advance manufacturing in the Peterborough area. Under Rhonda's leadership, I have no doubt that CME will be

well positioned to meet its goal of doubling the wealth of manufacturing in Canada.

Finally, I'd also like to take this opportunity to commend CME for their work in engaging women on their national board. I was pleased to learn that about 25% of their directors are women and that the board wants to see that number grow to 40%.

Congratulations to Rhonda and the CME on this important milestone, and best wishes for continued success in the years to come.

DURHAM REGION ACCESSIBILITY FORUM

Ms. Jennifer K. French: My community is an active community, one that strives to be not only inclusive but accessible. I attended and spoke at the Durham Region Accessibility Forum held recently. It was such a great event, both in terms of purpose and participation. Many of our community and disability advocates were there, but it was an event about partnerships and community support for fairness and equity.

The event was held at the Abilities Centre in Whitby, which is a phenomenal example of what access can look like. The physical design is inviting and accessible to all, but so too was the conversation. Advocates Kathryn and Scott Bremner organized the event with their team, and it was a privilege to learn from David Lepofsky, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance chair.

Speaker, as you know, we have a goal in Ontario to be fully accessible by 2025. Members across the Legislature from all parties supported that goal and committed to it. Well, Speaker, we are not on track to achieve it, and we should be. Our communities are stronger and more engaged when more people can access our businesses, community spaces, centres for learning and the workforce.

We have the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, or AODA, and it is a solid piece of legislation that was supported by all parties in this House. Unfortunately, the act doesn't have the strength of our convictions. It doesn't have the teeth it deserves to make the kind of difference it needs to to ensure all Ontarians can access and equitably participate in their communities.

I challenge all of us to recommit to reaching our shared goal of a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. Let's get back on track.

START ME UP NIAGARA

Mr. James J. Bradley: On November 12, I visited the home of a wonderful organization in St. Catharines known as Start Me Up Niagara, which provides assistance to vulnerable individuals, including the homeless in our community. We were there to celebrate the grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to improve the building.

On this occasion, Susan Venditti, the executive director, presented me with a framed poem written by

one of their clients, Sam Mannella. It reads as follows and refers to Remembrance Day:

Let their names shine forever;
 Across the passage of time and generations;
 Beyond the great horizon and
 Night's sad hour;
 Remembered with a flower;
 The poppy; stained with the blood of the brave;
 For it is our lives they did save.
 For they left their lives down the sunlit paths;
 To mark the tragic way with courage and valour
 Never a new generation will forget;
 To respect and protect all epitaphs;
 Like the great monument at (Vimy) Ridge;
 It took a century to design and create.
 The monument echoes brave voices if you listen
 carefully;
 Especially during a strong cross wind.
 A timeless, priceless piece;
 Reaching out to the sky,
 How fitting!
 For soldiers once saw the sky fall;
 Fall on their dreams and aspirations,
 But those dreams became a reality for all of us.
 Thank you brave women and men.
 We all will remember and salute you.

CHAPMAN'S

Mr. Bill Walker: Chapman's Ice Cream has been served up sweet victory after beating out nine other countries to scoop up three of five international awards in Spain. Its premium caramel Saucy Spots earned the Best Ice Cream award, while its Super Saucy Spots Sandwich took the Most Innovative title.

Last year, Chapman's Premium Canadian Collection Oatmeal Stickwich Cookie won the Most Innovative ice cream award from an international association of independent ice cream manufacturers.

With that, Chapman's has successfully solidified its place as one of the most enterprising independent ice cream manufacturers in the world.

Although Chapman's has grown substantially since it opened in 1973, the family is still firmly rooted in the community and deeply loyal to its 525 employees. Last year, they donated \$1 million to the Residential Hospice of Grey Bruce.

Recently, they were praised for standing up for rural schools. Vice-president Ashley Chapman said the company is willing to put its money where its mouth is and buy the school in Markdale, as its closure will be devastating to the community and to the business, including the negative spinoff effect on the agriculture industry, creameries and dairy farmers in the region.

From whipping up winning ice cream recipes to serving up recipes to save local schools, the Chapman family has never been one to shy away from a challenge. In 2009, this family business burned to the ground,

leaving hundreds of people out of work. Imagine the resolve it took to rebuild. But within seven weeks, Chapman's was producing its first brick of ice cream, aptly named Phoenix. Within a year and a half, they had rebuilt bigger and better than ever. And that is Chapman's recipe for success.

I invite the House to join me in congratulating them on their accomplishments and wishing them much continued success.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Wayne Gates: Last Friday, I had the honour and privilege of attending a number of Remembrance Day ceremonies in my riding, and I'm sure many of my colleagues did the same. These ceremonies are always put on by our local Legions. The Legions in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Niagara Falls, Ridgeway, Stevensville, Chippewa, Fort Erie and across the province are organizations I have incredible respect for.

My father was a veteran, and our local Legion was the centre of my mom and dad's social life. I've seen first-hand the incredible services that Legions offer to our veterans in our communities, and I know that without those services—whether it's the fish fries to help cover the costs or just the simple fact of having someone to talk to—more of our veterans would be struggling.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there are very serious problems facing Legions in Ontario. Legions in Niagara are telling me they're struggling to pay their hydro bills. Just like so many others who live in my riding and across the province, they simply can't afford to keep paying for this government's mistakes. In some cases, their bills have gone up thousands of dollars. You have to sell a lot of beer to cover that.

The Legions of our great province offer vital services to our men and women who have served this country. They focus on remembering those who gave their lives for freedom and looking after the needs of our veterans, their dependants and those who are serving in the Canadian Forces.

If the province fails these Legions, then they're failing veterans who rely on the services they provide. The province must make this right. They must immediately halt the sale of Hydro One and take emergency action to reduce hydro rates and—

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

WORLD PREMATURETY DAY

Mr. Mike Colle: Today, across the world, we are recognizing premature babies on World Prematurity Day. With me today, I have the executive director of the Canadian Premature Babies Foundation, Kate Robson; and with Kate is board member Jennifer Crespi. Welcome to Queen's Park.

World Prematurity Day is recognized around the world on November 17 to raise awareness about the prevalence of preterm births, the health issues and struggles that preterm babies and their families face, and

to look at what measures can be taken to minimize the risk of preterm birth. Premature birth is the leading cause—

1310

Interjections.

Mr. Mike Colle: I'm sure the members will be interested in hearing this. It's the leading cause of infant deaths in Canada. That's a serious, serious issue. One in 12 babies are born prematurely in Canada—50 million worldwide.

A baby who is born prematurely is likely to develop lifelong diseases that may affect the heart, kidneys, lungs, intestines and immune system of the baby. Those babies who survive being born premature without complications are at an increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

There are efforts to try and bring more resources to premature babies. Today, we try to bring that light so that we can reduce the number of preterm births in Canada. It's about time we do.

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Mr. Lorne Coe: I rise to speak on financial literacy, as the official opposition critic for advanced education and skills development. I and the other members of the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus want students to succeed in school and beyond. That's why it's important to provide them with a strong understanding of financial management before they graduate high school. That's why my colleague, the MPP for Nipissing, recently introduced the Financial Literacy for Students Act.

There's no doubt that the financial realities that we face as Ontarians indicate that there is a lot at stake in educating young students to be financially prudent. These are important life skills for the future leaders of Ontario communities.

But Speaker, half of Ontario's grade 6 students are failing to meet the provincial standards for mathematics. We need to become global leaders in graduating students who are not only well-versed in mathematics and languages, but in personal finance as well. When we invest in people, we empower people to invest in themselves.

DIABETES

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: As always, it is my pleasure to rise on behalf of my constituents of Windsor West.

This November, we once again recognize Diabetes Awareness Month across Ontario. As the New Democratic spokesperson for education, I want to focus on students living with diabetes and their experience at Ontario schools.

All students in Ontario have the right to participate fully in school, without the fear of being excluded, stigmatized or discriminated against. Unfortunately, for many students with diabetes in Ontario, this isn't always the case.

One in 300 children have type 1 diabetes. Access to supports for these children in school varies widely across

Ontario from one school to the next. Some students receive great support while others may be left out of school activities, like field trips, because our schools simply do not have the resources to address their needs. In fact, some parents have had to quit their jobs or take weeks off at the beginning of each new school year to prevent emergencies and ensure their child's daily management needs are met.

Poor management of blood glucose levels can seriously affect academic performance as well as overall health. Children with diabetes need immediate supports to ensure that there is consistent access to the resources they need to stay safe. These students must have the opportunity to excel both inside and outside the classroom.

I hope that the government will follow the leadership of organizations like the Canadian Diabetes Association and the Canadian Paediatric Society and address the needs of school-aged children living with diabetes as a priority before the start of the next school year.

WORLD PANCREATIC CANCER DAY

Mr. John Fraser: Today is World Pancreatic Cancer Day. Canadian awareness of pancreatic cancer is extremely low. Most people learn about pancreatic cancer when they first get a diagnosis. I just learned recently about a friend of mine, Rick, a really wonderful guy, a wonderful person in our community, who has received that diagnosis. His wife, Jenny, called to say that this had happened, and that today was World Pancreatic Cancer Day, and she asked me to say a few words about World Pancreatic Cancer Day. But I'd also like to say to Jenny and Rick that we send you all the strength that we can as you face this challenge. It's a big challenge.

It's often referred to as a silent disease. It grows undetected until later stages. It's the seventh most common cause of cancer-related death in men and women. Early diagnosis is the key, and patients who are diagnosed in time for surgery have a much higher likelihood of surviving.

I want to say again to Rick and Jenny and to your family and all your friends, we send you all the strength we can as you face this challenge.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their statements.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

Mr. Todd Smith: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Estimates.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Trevor Day): Mr. Smith from the Standing Committee on Estimates presents the committee's report as follows:

Pursuant to standing order 62(c), the following supplementary estimates, 2016-17—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense.

Pursuant to standing order 62(c), the report of the committee is deemed to be received and supplementary estimates of the ministries and offices named therein as not being selected for consideration by the committee are deemed to be concurred in.

Report deemed received.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

Mr. Todd Smith: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Estimates.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Trevor Day): Mr. Smith from the Standing Committee on Estimates reports the following resolutions:

Resolved, that supply in the following amounts and to defray the expenses of the following ministries be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017:

Ministry of Finance: vote—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense.

Pursuant to standing order 63(d), an order for concurrence for each of the resolutions reported from the committee will be placed on the Orders and Notices paper.

Report deemed received.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Chris Ballard: I believe that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

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

Minister.

Hon. Chris Ballard: I move that notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item 26 be waived.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister is seeking that notice for ballot item number 26 be waived. Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Mr. Bill Walker: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas under the current Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines (PARG), one in eight Ontario schools is at risk of closure; and

"Whereas the value of a school to the local economy and community has been removed from the PARG; and

"Whereas the PARG outlines consultation requirements that are insufficient to allow for meaningful community involvement, including the establishment of community hubs; and

"Whereas school closures have a significant negative impact on families and their children, resulting in inequitable access to extracurricular activities and other essential school involvement, and after-school work opportunities;

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

"To place a moratorium on all school closures across Ontario and to suspend all pupil accommodation reviews until the PARG has been subject to a substantive review by an all-party committee that will examine the effects of extensive school closures on the health of our communities and children."

I fully support it, and will affix my name and send it with page Henry.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Mr. Norm Miller: I have a petition.

"SOS Save our Schools—Honey Harbour Petition.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board and the Trillium Lakelands District School Board both plan to conduct pupil accommodation reviews with the intent of closing both Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School and Honey Harbour Public School;

"Whereas the loss of both schools in Honey Harbour will further destabilize the community and impede on elementary students' ability to attend school within a reasonable distance;

"Whereas the lack of a local school will negatively impact those students with special needs, accessibility challenges, students of a young age and those living below the poverty level;

"Whereas the prosperity, productivity and participation of local children depends on a viable, accessible school;

"Whereas there are no other elementary schools to serve Georgian Bay township's population within less than a 55-minute bus drive;

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

"We petition the Minister of Education to work with said school boards to co-locate both schools into one location in Honey Harbour, thus protecting the quality and child-focused education that the residents of Georgian Bay township require and deserve."

I've signed this petition, Mr. Speaker. I support it and I'll give it to Will.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Speaker, good afternoon to you. A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Privatizing Hydro One: Another Wrong Choice.

“Whereas once you privatize hydro, there’s no return; and

“We’ll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

“We’ll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

“We’ll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what’s happened elsewhere;

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

“To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come.”

I fully agree, as I’m sure everyone voting in the by-election today would as well. I’ll give the petition to William and send it up to the front.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Ms. Daiene Vernile: This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas one in three women will experience some form of sexual assault in her lifetime.

“When public education about sexual violence and harassment is not prioritized, myths and attitudes informed by misogyny become prevalent. This promotes rape culture.

“Less than 10% of sexual violence cases are reported to police. For every 33 that are reported, only three result in a conviction.

“Sexual violence and harassment survivors too often feel revictimized by the systems set in place to support them. The voices of survivors, in all their diversity, need to be amplified....

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

“Support the findings and recommendations of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment’s final report, highlighting the need for inclusive and open dialogue to address misogyny and rape culture; educate about sexual violence and harassment to promote social change ... and address attrition rates within our justice system, including examining ‘unfounded’ cases, developing enhanced prosecution models and providing free legal advice for survivors.”

Speaker, I agree with this petition, will put my initials to it and give it to page Victoria to bring down to you.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Ted Arnott: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the price of electricity has skyrocketed under the Ontario Liberal government;

“Whereas ever-higher hydro bills are a huge concern for everyone in the province, especially seniors and others on fixed incomes, who can’t afford to pay more;

“Whereas Ontario’s businesses say high electricity costs are making them uncompetitive, and have contributed to the loss of hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs;

“Whereas the recent Auditor General’s report found Ontarians overpaid for electricity by \$37 billion over the past eight years and estimates that we will overpay by an additional \$133 billion over the next 18 years if nothing changes;

“Whereas the cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants costing \$1.1 billion, feed-in tariff (FIT) contracts with wind and solar companies, the sale of surplus energy to neighbouring jurisdictions at a loss, the debt retirement charge, the global adjustment and smart meters that haven’t met their conservation targets have all put upward pressure on hydro bills;

“Whereas the sale of 60% of Hydro One is opposed by a majority of Ontarians and will likely only lead to even higher hydro bills;

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

“To listen to Ontarians, reverse course on the Liberal government’s current hydro policies and take immediate steps to stabilize hydro bills.”

Mr. Speaker, I agree with this petition, and I have affixed my signature to it as well.

ACCIDENT BENEFITS

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: “Petitioning the removal of the minor injury guideline, sections 18(1) and 18(2) of the Ontario Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule and incorporate rebuttal examination reports back into the system

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario Regulation 347/13 has made four changes to the Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule (SABS), also known as Ontario Regulation 34/10 effective Feb 1, 2014. These regulations have considerably reduced the dollar amounts allocated for patients receiving assessments and treatment following a motor vehicle accident;

“Whereas the \$3,500 minor injury guideline cap is an insufficient amount of funds provided, since assessments on all patients are required to ensure their safe ability in performing tasks associated with attendant care, house-keeping and caregiving. Furthermore repetitive muscular strain as a result of performing household tasks daily can lead to chronic long-term impairment ...;

“Whereas this petition is to validate that the \$3,500 minor injury guideline monetary fund is an insufficient amount to enable auto accident patients with soft tissue injury ... to reach optimal recovery to their pre-accident status. Removing sections 18(1) and 18(2) from the Ontario Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule will enable the right efforts for accident victims with” these injuries

“to receive the adequate assessment and treatment required...;

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

“To remove the minor injury guideline, sections 18(1) and 18(2) of the Ontario Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule and incorporate rebuttal examination reports back into the system.”

I agree with this petition and I will affix my signature.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Todd Smith: A short and sweet one here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there is a growing energy affordability crisis in Ontario; and

“Whereas the government’s proposed hydro rebate is a band-aid solution that’s simply too little, too late;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, call on the Liberal government to take immediate action to give the people of Ontario real relief from high energy bills.”

I agree with this, will sign it and send it to the table with page Victoria.

SHINGLES VACCINE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that was collected by Mrs. Shirley Litt, and she is from Foleyet in the north of my riding. It reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario announced that starting September 15, 2016, the shingles vaccine would be available to all seniors 65 years to 70 years of age free of charge...;

“Whereas seniors over the age of 70 years will still be required to pay for the vaccine if they choose;

“Whereas the government of Ontario claims that studies show that the vaccine is highly effective when seniors are vaccinated between the ages of 65 and 70 and will not cover the vaccine for all Ontario seniors;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“This is unfair to seniors over the age of 70 and we urge the government to expand the coverage so that all Ontario seniors are eligible for the free shingles vaccine.”

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

CURRICULUM

Mrs. Gila Martow: I don’t know if it’s unparliamentary, but I really like the blazer that the member from Nickel Belt is wearing.

The petition I have is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Education removed the teaching of cursive writing as a mandatory component of the Ontario education curriculum; and

“Whereas numerous independent psychological studies have proven that the learning of cursive writing at a young age improves cognitive development, improves the development of fine motor skills, creativity, the integration of visual and tactile information; and

“Whereas many students are now reaching their teens and are unable to even sign their name on legal documents, government forms, drivers’ licences, etc., including petitions such as this; and

“Whereas future generations of adults will be unable to not only write in cursive but will be unable to read historical documents, genealogical documents such as birth, death and marriage certificates, prior to the 20th century, which were prepared primarily using cursive, nor will they be able to understand family letters and documents passed from one generation to the next;

“Whereas the loss of cursive writing represents a significant loss in an important component of our cultural heritage;

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

“That the Minister of Education for Ontario take the necessary action to ensure that the teaching of cursive writing is reintroduced as a mandatory element within the Ontario education system at the early public school level, at the soonest possible time.”

I will affix my signature and give it to page Lauren, who I’m sure has beautiful cursive writing.

HOME CARE

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Canadians returning to or setting up residence in Ontario for the first time after residing in another province must wait three months for access to care, including end-of-life care, at home or in a community setting;

“Whereas the majority of Canadians die in hospital while two thirds would rather die in their home;

“Whereas Dan’s Law would remove the waiting period for end-of-life home and community care as well as home care more generally for Canadians returning home or coming to Ontario for the first time after residing other provinces or territories;

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“Whereas passing Dan’s Law would allow people at the end of life to be with their families, at home in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Home Care and Community Services Amendment Act (Dan’s Law).”

I fully support it, since it’s my bill, will affix my name and send it to the table with page Calida.

HYDRO RATES

Mrs. Gila Martow: I have another petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the price of electricity has skyrocketed under the Ontario Liberal government;

“Whereas ever-higher hydro bills are a huge concern for everyone in the province, especially seniors and others on fixed incomes, who can’t afford to pay more;

“Whereas Ontario’s businesses say high electricity costs are making them uncompetitive, and have contributed to the loss of hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs;

“Whereas the recent Auditor General’s report found Ontarians overpaid for electricity by \$37 billion over the past eight years and estimates that we will overpay by an additional \$133 billion over the next 18 years if nothing changes;

“Whereas the cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants costing \$1.1 billion, feed-in tariff (FIT) contracts with wind and solar companies, the sale of surplus energy to neighbouring jurisdictions at a loss, the debt retirement charge, the global adjustment and smart meters that haven’t met their conservation targets have all put upward pressure on hydro bills;

“Whereas the sale of 60% of Hydro One is opposed by a majority of Ontarians and will likely only lead to even higher hydro bills;

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

“To listen to Ontarians, reverse course on the Liberal government’s current hydro policies and take immediate steps to stabilize hydro bills.”

Of course I agree, and I affix my signature and pass it on to page Fallon.

ONTARIO NORTHLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition, and I’d like to thank Shelley Kendall from Wahnapiatae, in my riding. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the residents of northern Ontario, particularly people who are sick or elderly, depend on public transportation for appointments in southern Ontario;

“Whereas intercity bus routes have been eliminated by Greyhound, for example, all daytime routes between Sudbury and Ottawa; and

“Whereas there have been serious reductions at Ontario Northland, including the elimination of Northland’s train services;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to: Ensure that Ontario Northland offers adequate and equitable intercity transportation service from northern to southern Ontario.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Charlie to bring it to the Clerk.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I have a very long petition but I will shorten it down for you this afternoon.

“Petition to Battle Energy Poverty.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas our hydro rates have tripled since Conservative governments started privatizing our electricity system, and since Premier Wynne took office less than four years ago, peak hydro rates have increased by more than 50%—faster than the rise in family income and more than 10 times faster than inflation; and

“Whereas the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) has reported that the number of residential customers’ hydro accounts in arrears skyrocketed between 2014 and 2015 from 2,172 to 6,078, representing \$1,180,762 in the city of Windsor; and

“Whereas the Ontario Chamber of Commerce has reported that it expects one in 20 businesses to close in the next five years due to rising energy costs; and...” as I go through the petition to shorten it down;

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

“To take immediate and tangible steps to reduce the costs of energy paid by Ontarians....”

I will fully support this, Speaker. I will sign it and give it to Henry to bring up to the desk.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The time for petitions is over.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

LEBANESE HERITAGE MONTH ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR LE MOIS DU PATRIMOINE LIBANAIS

Mr. Fraser moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 60, An Act to proclaim the month of November Lebanese Heritage Month/ Projet de loi 60, Loi proclamant le mois de novembre Mois du patrimoine libanais.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes to make his presentation.

Mr. John Fraser: It’s an honour and a privilege to stand here to debate Bill 60, An Act to proclaim the month of November Lebanese Heritage Month, every year. November is a significant month in the Lebanese community. Each year, Lebanese people around the world celebrate Lebanese Independence Day on November 22.

Earlier today, in commemoration of that, we here at Queen’s Park raised the flag. I want to thank the World Lebanese Cultural Union for sponsoring that event today and for all their work. I know that they’re here in the gallery today. They do a lot of work to support the diaspora around the world, especially in Canada. I want to thank them for being here today and for being here every year. Thank you very much.

The riding I represent, the one I've lived in all my life, has I think the highest concentration of Canadians of Lebanese descent of all of Ontario. I think we're in the top three in Canada. I certainly knew that growing up. Since I was very young, I've always had Lebanese neighbours and Lebanese stores and restaurants. So as I said earlier today, it's not just part of the Lebanese culture in Ottawa South; it's the Ottawa South culture.

Every November, I'm here at Queen's Park. We usually raise the flag and celebrate while I'm here. The fact that they organize this every year—I appreciate that as well too.

Lebanese Independence Day is a national day that marks the liberation from the French mandate over Lebanese territory. Despite the French delegation proclaiming Lebanese independence in 1941 and having international recognition of that independence, Lebanon remained under the French directive until November 22, 1943. That was the day that France finally yielded to the increasing pressure of the Lebanese people, as well as demands of numerous countries around the world, and released the Lebanese officials and MPs being held as prisoners. Since that day, it has been celebrated as the independence day of Lebanon.

Earlier today, the Speaker was talking about the fact that liberation—that ability to govern one's self, that autonomy—having to fight for that is something that we don't know in this present day or we really don't know in this country. I think it's important that we celebrate with those communities that gained their independence as a reminder to all of us that it's something that we have to continually look at and fight for and guard against.

If you take a look at some of the things happening in the world today—and I don't want to get into too much about what we discussed this morning, but the risks of it becoming about the “me” and not the “us.” This celebration and the community that I live with in Ottawa South and, I know, throughout Ontario, the Lebanese community, are about the “us,” and it's important that we celebrate that independence day.

In the late 19th century, the first immigrants from Lebanon arrived in Canada. Today, the Lebanese population is mostly concentrated in Ontario. As I said, my riding of Ottawa South has a very high concentration. Somebody told me today it was about 150,000 if you take a look at how it has spread out over time in the Ottawa-Gatineau area, because Gatineau is kind of in the National Capital Region. In a census that's about 10 years old, about 2% of the population in Ottawa was Lebanese, so we would have over 70,000 Lebanese Canadians living in Ontario.

As I said earlier, I have the privilege of representing many Lebanese Canadians in Ottawa South. Growing up, throughout my lifetime, I always had neighbours and friends. If I talk about, just in my riding and outside, the Boushey family owned a store for years and years. There were a number of different Boushey families. They just recently closed the one on Elgin Street. I think it had been there for 60 or 70 years. It was a landmark. I

remember that my father would go every Christmas Eve to buy fruit. They would always bring in large Indian River grapefruit—oversized, size 72—and Red Delicious apples. The reason I can talk about this is that I spent a lot of time in the food business, so I have a lot of affinity. There are many, many Lebanese Canadians in my community who were in the grocery business and the restaurant business.

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“Heritage” means something that has been handed down from the past, a tradition or achievement or belief that is carried forward by generations. Here in Ontario, we're so fortunate to have many cultures from around the world that are represented in our communities. Being exposed to the customs and traditions of others, we truly enrich our own lives and the multicultural diversity of this province.

We have a rich Lebanese heritage. Again, in my riding of Ottawa South—and I know it happens throughout Ontario—families of Lebanese descent celebrate every year, not just in November, which is a really important time, but the summer is a great time for food in Ottawa. In my riding of Ottawa South, St. Elias has an annual festival that I think they instituted in 1990. It's one of the biggest festivals in Ottawa; it's a five-day festival. The whole community, the whole church—everybody gets together and they have a fair. It's a great, great celebration. It jams up the neighbourhood with cars. Every year, we have to park at Mooney's Bay. The thing about it is, it's not just a celebration of the culture and the heritage and the food. It's also a charitable endeavour. They use it to support the church, but they also go outside to support many, many other charities, like the Ottawa Heart Institute. Every year, they pick a charity. They're very outward-focused in their celebrations.

I also know that at St. Charbel, which is just outside my riding, they have an equally great festival that I go to every year. Again, it's a community coming together—St. Peter and St. Paul's churches as well.

There's a masjid in my riding, Imam Ali Masjid, which celebrates in the summer as well. They just recently built their masjid. There's a very vibrant outward-looking community that's quite focused on youth in the community and the needs of their seniors.

As you can tell, I have, Mr. Speaker, a lot of Lebanese Canadians living in my community.

The Lebanese Canadian community has made, and continues to make, significant contributions across this province and country. These contributions include but are not limited to the fields of science, law, politics, business and culture.

If you look at the history of Lebanon, you see that science, culture, arts and literature are very deep and rich inside the culture, and that's something that has been brought to our nation. They're also traders—they've always been traders. So the Lebanese business community is a very vibrant community in Canada.

I'm going to mention some names, at the risk of not mentioning or forgetting somebody. There are so many names, I probably wouldn't have enough time to mention

them all. But in my riding, I want to speak to Father Hajal, who, every year, helps to work with the community to do the festival.

Joseph Mehri, in my community as well, has been a constant source of connection to the community.

We can talk about Canadians like Paul Anka. Of course, I had to bring in Andy Kim. I'm sure that I can see the member from Windsor shaking his head. We're showing our age. And you have Nazem Kadri and Ed Hatoum in hockey.

Of course, in levels of government—a very good friend of mine from Ottawa is Mac Harb, who was a very good friend of my predecessor in this seat, and also a very good friend of mine. He has such a big family. He has a cottage close to mine. It's not a cottage; it's actually part of an annex of an old hotel, at a place called Norway Bay. He has always been very generous. He was a truly great parliamentarian representing Ottawa Centre.

Of course, we have the Ghiz dynasty in PEI—I'm going to miss somebody along here, and I apologize if I do.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to finish by saying it's not just about Ottawa South or Ottawa; it's about Ontario and all of Canada. I know Windsor has a big community. I know that my colleague Minister Ballard has a big community. I know all across Ottawa—

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: London, as well.

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: Sudbury.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: Mississauga.

Mr. John Fraser: Mississauga.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: Brampton.

Mr. John Fraser: Brampton. Kingston.

So it's a big community, and it's important for us to recognize their contribution, not just to Canada, but to the world, and to build on that rich cultural mosaic that we have by celebrating our differences, our uniqueness, our capacities.

I'm really proud to have brought this bill forward. I know that in talking to my colleagues on all sides of the House, they're supportive of it. They understand and know the contributions of Lebanese Canadians to our country and to Ontario.

I look forward to the rest of the debate.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: We've been having a lot of fun here in the Legislature the last month or so, debating on a lot of different cultures and learning about a lot of the cultures along the way. We always think we know so much, but it isn't until we listen to our colleagues, meet people from the communities, do our research, talk here, and get feedback from people through social media and back home—sometimes people are watching and send us little messages to encourage us and to invite us to events, and we really do enjoy that part of our job.

We're here today talking about making November Lebanese Heritage Month. It was put forward by the member for Ottawa South, my colleague in government.

We're joined here today by a lot of people from the World Lebanese Cultural Union. There was a beautiful cake, but I had to come here and do some speaking in the Legislature, so—I don't know if it's a good thing or a bad thing—I didn't get to taste the cake. Maybe I'll pop over there afterwards. It was a beautiful cake of the Lebanese flag. Congratulations to whoever brought the cake and made the cake.

Just a tiny bit of background information on Lebanon: We all know that the Lebanese community chose November because there's a national holiday on November 22 to remember the end of the French mandate over Lebanon in 1943, after 23 years of colonial rule.

I want to remind everybody here that many in the Lebanese community—when we go to events—do speak French and, *comme la porte-parole pour les affaires francophones de notre caucus PC, c'est une opportunité souvent de parler français avec les membres de la communauté libanaise; we say "Liban" in French for Lebanon.*

I really enjoy those opportunities, as well as being the interim chargée de mission Amérique for the parliamentary branch of the world Francophonie organization. Lebanon is very well represented, sometimes, at the meetings. We always get to meet people from around the world and understand some of the problems that they're facing. Not to be trite or anything, but sometimes it's good to come back home from these meetings after hearing what hardships there are in some of the countries.

I just want to mention that on the Lebanese flag, there's a cedar tree, and it's because the cedar forests are a very well-known part of the Lebanese landscape. The wood was prized by Egyptians for shipbuilding. Because of, I guess, the influence of the French, Beirut was once known as the Paris of the Middle East. It was a high-fashion city, and I think that many people who knew that Lebanon really want to go back to those days.

We are joined here by some people I've gotten to know by going to Lebanese events and working in the community. First, I want to mention George Khouri. He's a judge. He was born in Lebanon. He's here in the members' gallery. Welcome, George. He arrived in Canada 39 years ago. He studied law in Windsor, where he founded the university's Lebanese students' club and the Canadian Lebanese League, as well as a Lebanese program for the government of Canada to facilitate Lebanese immigration. His family has had three successful enterprises, and he has been the chairman of so many groups. I don't want to list too many, but I'll mention the board of trade and the Rotary Club. He's just always a smiling face. I believe his wife's name is Leila. He's always a smiling face and always there to greet me whenever I go to events. So, thank you, George, for always making me feel welcome.

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Abraham Elias also sent me some notes to mention that he's so happy that we are debating this today. He is looking forward to coming down to celebrate many Lebanese events at Queen's Park and throughout Ontario.

Abraham is the financial controller in a real estate group, but the way I know him so well is that he is now the treasurer of the PC Ontario executive. Thank you, Abraham, for all you do. It's a volunteer position and we all really appreciate it and we need you desperately to help us in all of our endeavours.

Cozette Giannini helps me. I actually called her this week. I had to give a French speech on Tuesday on French-language services. I called Cozette, read my speech to her and she made corrections. She has a beautiful accent in French. I think her mother was a French teacher in Lebanon.

She also helps at a lot of the community events. I went with her to Our Lady of Lebanon annual festival at the Parya centre, which is actually a Persian secular centre in my riding. I went with Cozette and Michael Parsa, who is here and who has been a candidate for the Conservatives in Richmond Hill. We went to the Lebanese Friends of Canada annual barbecue by the lake, as well as the Jesus the King annual summer festival, which is at a church in my riding. Cozette likes to remind me that it was the first time I ate knafeh, which is our leader, Patrick Brown's, favourite Lebanese dessert. He was in Lebanon earlier this year with our friend Robert Faissal, who is also from Lebanon.

I just want to mention a few tidbits that people may or may not know. Lebanon has the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world, called Byblos. It's over 7,000 years old. The ancestors, the Phoenicians, invented the alphabet and the numerals that we use today. There's a huge Lebanese diaspora—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): If members want to yell to each other, they can go out in the lobby and do it.

Continue.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Sorry, Mr. Speaker. They weren't disturbing me, but I appreciate it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Well, they were disturbing me.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Yes. I know you were listening intently to me.

The first documented immigrants from Lebanon came to Canada in the 1860s to escape massacres under the Ottoman Turks' occupation. It's really hard for us to ascertain how many Lebanese descendants there are because sometimes it's one parent, such as Céline Dion's late husband, René Angélil. His mother was Lebanese but his father was Syrian, so do we call him Lebanese? Do we call him Syrian? A mixture? It's really hard to put exact numbers on people, but we know that there are many Lebanese communities in Ontario.

Lebanon was one of the founding nations of the UN. The WCLU world president is Mr. Elias Kassab, who happens to be from the GTA and I believe was here today at the event, as well, from the organization. Welcome, everybody who came.

I want to mention—because I also represent the Jewish community in Ontario and everybody knows that

somehow I tie everything to either Israel or the Jewish community—that for a very long time the border between Israel and Lebanon was one of the calmest frontiers for Israel. I don't think it was just for that reason. I think that it was a sort of shared respect that the new state of Israel had for the Lebanese country. So many things in Israel that many people might attribute to Israeli culture are maybe borrowed or shared with Lebanon. One of the things is falafel; another is shawarma—I know I'm mentioning a lot of food—hummus, baba ghanouj, tabbouleh, but also in terms of music and dance. When I was a kid going to Jewish summer camp, one of the folk dances we learned was the debka, and then I go to Lebanese festivals and they're calling it the dabke. So I think that there are more similarities than differences between all of us, but particularly between the Israelis and the Lebanese.

I'm sure everybody here would agree with me that we look forward to having that calm frontier again and sharing more cultural exchanges. Being able to visit across the border is a real dream for me and, I think, for everybody else who is here today. I hope that sometime we'll be able to come here to celebrate Lebanese Heritage Month but to celebrate it for more peaceful times and more prosperity and to bring back the Paris of the Middle East to not just Beirut but across Lebanon as well.

On a sadder note, unfortunately, I have a story here about Marc Diab, who served in Afghanistan. He died because of a roadside bomb in 2009. His family owns a restaurant in—I'm trying to see. His family moved to Mississauga, but I think they went to Petawawa and they opened the restaurant Madameek. It's a shawarma restaurant. Every year, they give to the community by having free food for a day. There are long lineups. They have a picture of their son—I don't know if the Speaker would give me leave to hold up a picture of their son, Marc, for everybody to see—in his uniform. It hangs in the restaurant.

It's a sacrifice when we have wars, not just in Afghanistan and the Middle East, but there are too many countries across the world where people are losing their lives so unnecessarily. We wish for peace in all of those countries.

I have a quote that I want to read from a very well-known poet named Kahlil Gibran. I'm just going to say that he's supposedly very well loved by the Lebanese community. "My Lebanon is a flock of birds fluttering in the early morning as shepherds lead their sheep into the meadow and rising in the evening as farmers return from their fields and vineyards."

It's such a calming effect when you read words like that because it reminds you of peaceful times, of beautiful times. You can hear the birds singing in the sky and the fluffy clouds floating by, and I think we wish for that landscape for Lebanon. I know that everybody who's here today is enjoying today, but there's always a little part of them every day remembering their family members who are presently in Lebanon, and friends and family members who came from Lebanon, and would

like to see the country go back to the beautiful landscape that it once was.

In the last couple of seconds here that I have left, I just want to mention a few other famous people of Lebanese descent: Nazem Kadri, the NHL hockey player for the Maple Leafs; Paul Anka—I don't even have to say, he's such a famous singer; Kevin O'Leary—what a personality; I already mentioned René Angélil; Eddie Francis, the 33rd mayor of Windsor; Tom Leon from Leon's Furniture; Milad Mansour from Sudbury, Ontario, who started a diamond lathe refinishing business; Mary Jo Haddad, former president and CEO of the Hospital for Sick Children; Marie Henein—boy, was she famous for representing Jian Ghomeshi not that long ago; Mr. George Hanna, who owns a pizza chain in Ottawa with 30 stores; and Mohammad Fakih, who owns the Paramount Fine Foods chain in Ontario.

Welcome, everybody who's here today, and congratulations. Thank you for coming.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate? The member from Windsor—Tecumseh.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Good afternoon, Speaker. It's always an honour to be called upon to speak in our Legislative Assembly, and today especially so. This bill is to proclaim November as Lebanese Heritage Month in Ontario.

I can't begin to tell you how important our Lebanese community is to the good people in Windsor and Essex county. I guess if we turn back the hands of time, we see that people from Lebanon began coming to Canada 134 years ago, in 1882. Eventually these newcomers from Lebanon found their way to Windsor and Essex.

I know that by the 1920s the first Maronite Catholics built St. Peter's church on the corner of Parent Avenue and Niagara Street just about a block or so from my riding boundary of today. The front doors of that church opened on February 7, 1924. Five years later, settlers from Hungary were holding services there until they could build their own church. In the late 1980s, many of the original families relocated their services to the St. Charbel Church at a monastery just off what is now Herb Gray Parkway in the town of Tecumseh. Saint Charbel was a Lebanese monk who lived like a hermit on top of a mountain and is known for miraculous healing powers.

1400

In 2000, the other members of Saint Peter's parish purchased the former St. Clare of Assisi Catholic Church on Tecumseh Road at Dougall in west Windsor. It's a beautiful art-deco-style facility. And there's nothing quite like the St. Charbel Church and monastery property either. In fact, we just spent a lovely evening there with religious and community leaders a couple of weeks ago. I joined the leader of Ontario's New Democratic Party, Andrea Horwath, as did the members from Essex and Windsor West, during the leader's tour of southwestern Ontario. As a matter of fact, the federal member for Essex, Tracey Ramsey, was part of our delegation that evening at St. Charbel, as well as her constituency and outreach assistant, Nadine Abiraad, a proud Lebanese Canadian.

We also spent time on that tour visiting with the leadership of the various Islamic communities. Yes, many of those leaders came here from Lebanon as well and are very proud of that.

There was a civil war in Lebanon between 1975 and 1990, and Canada was one of only a few western countries to open its arms to those fleeing for their lives. We welcomed hundreds of these newcomers to the Windsor area. Many of the more recent Lebanese immigrants are Muslims and Druzes, and came to Ontario seeking refuge and a peaceful place to work and raise their families.

Lebanon is a fabulous country, the Paris of the Middle East. It's the most democratic country in the Arab world. They have a consensus democracy, whereby the highest political offices are shared among the various religions: The president is a Maronite Christian, the prime minister is a Sunni Muslim and the parliamentary Speaker is a Shia Muslim.

Our local Lebanese population has grown immeasurably from the early days, and they're spreading their wings. There's a huge number of Lebanese Canadians now living and working in Leamington, for example. Some estimates have our regional population of people of Lebanese descent at 20,000. Of course, that pales in comparison to the Dearborn area of Michigan, just a short drive away from Windsor, which is home to 250,000 Lebanese Americans.

Windsor's previous mayor Eddie Francis, at 29, was the youngest mayor in Windsor's history, and he is Lebanese. We have at least 40 medical doctors of Lebanese descent in Windsor and Essex county. Many of our most influential business leaders hail from Lebanon, as do many college teachers and university professors. We have at least 20 Lebanese restaurants and numerous Lebanese bakeries.

Our regional communities have been enriched by our Lebanese friends and neighbours, and they have helped us become one of the most diverse regions in all of Canada.

Speaker, this bill naming November as Lebanese Heritage Month in Ontario is welcomed and overdue. It will have the full support of our leader, Andrea Horwath, and the caucus members of the New Democratic Party of Ontario.

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

Hon. Dipika Damerla: I rise and I'm also pleased to add my voice to this bill that would declare November as Lebanese Heritage Month.

I want to begin by welcoming the Lebanese community that has come here to Queen's Park. You have come out here on a working day, and that just is a tribute and a testimony to how important this honour is for your community. Your presence here brings our debate to life, so thank you so much.

When John Fraser, the MPP for Ottawa South, asked if I would speak to this debate, I was delighted for many, many reasons including, of course, being from Mississauga, which has a thriving Lebanese community. I have

some people here from Mississauga—a special hello to all of you.

Many of you may know—and I know all of my friends in Mississauga know—how well the Lebanese community has done in Ontario. As you well know, the Lebanese community has been a part of Ontario for a very long time. My understanding is that the first Lebanese Ontarians actually came in the 1800s, so you're among the old Canadians as well as, of course, the new Canadians because of the ongoing immigration. So it's about time that we had—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I'd like to remind the minister that you're talking through me. Thank you.

Hon. Dipika Damerla: Through the Speaker to the audience in the gallery, I just wanted to say, as I was saying, the Lebanese community has been here in Ontario for a very long time.

I just want to speak about two particular Lebanese Ontarians in Mississauga. One is, of course, Marc Diab. I know that we've already talked about his sacrifice for Canada and Ontario. Mr. Speaker, every Remembrance Day, in Mississauga, at city hall, a tribute is paid to Marc.

The second Lebanese Canadian that I want to speak of is Mohamad Fakih, who is also in Mississauga. He's a great champion and I think an outstanding example of how well the Lebanese community has done in Canada, with their entrepreneurial zeal. Like so many immigrants to Ontario, Mohamad came to Canada with almost nothing and today has built a restaurant empire right here in Canada.

Once again, thank you to all of you who have come out here. I'm delighted that we're taking this initiative to honour the community.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: First, I'd like to welcome those who have joined us in the gallery today. It was wonderful to be able to meet many of you at today's flag-raising and, of course, to celebrate today's important day.

Speaker, I am very happy to support this motion. I'd like to thank and congratulate our colleague John Fraser, the member from Ottawa South. It's a wonderful motion that definitely recognizes the important contribution of Lebanese Canadians in our communities.

As you have heard, Speaker, and will continue to hear, my region has a rich history of Lebanese immigrants coming here to make a better life for themselves and for their families. They sought peace, freedom and opportunity and found it in Windsor and Essex county and all around the province of Ontario. Our Lebanese friends have long contributed greatly to our community by introducing us to their culture and providing service and leadership in all aspects of life.

Some of the more prominent Lebanese Canadians in our community—I'll just name a few; there are hundreds. You could fill up a series of novels with their stories: former mayor Eddie Francis, who has already been mentioned; Dr. Gordon Muhammad Jasey; Dr. Fouad

Tayfour, a pioneer in laser eye surgery on the planet; Joseph Abdallah; Terry Rafih; Charles Mady; Tony Azar; Albert Mady, who is a karate and martial arts expert and champion—don't mess with that guy, Speaker, because he will teach you lessons—and John Haider, who we all know in Windsor and Essex county as a wonderful ambassador for the community.

Lebanese immigrants came to Canada beginning in the late 1800s. They started arriving in Essex county at the turn of the century.

The first Maronite Lebanese church, St. Peter's, was built in 1924, and St. Charbel monastery is located on the boundary of my riding. I've been fortunate, as the elected official for Essex, to be invited to participate in events at Lebanese community festivals, and specifically, at the St. Charbel festival. I want to thank and give a shout-out to Father Daniel, Father Tony and Chorbishop Père Charles Saad for their hospitality to me and to my wife, Jennifer. We were just there last weekend celebrating the election of the new president, General Michel Aoun. It was a wonderful celebration, with folks from all different ethnocultural backgrounds. Man, oh, man, did we have fun. We ate, we danced, we sang, we hugged. I didn't want to leave. It was wonderful. It's just that graciousness and that hospitality that the Lebanese culture is so famous for that brings you in and speaks volumes about their contribution to our community. It's wonderful.

I had the pleasure of attending the Lebanese festival at both Maronite churches, where thousands of Lebanese Canadians gather every year to promote and celebrate Lebanese culture. As I mentioned, I was able to celebrate the election of Michel Aoun.

In my speech here, somebody wrote, "Expand here with some personal stuff about how much fun you had." I had a lot of fun. It was incredible. If you ever get a chance to participate in Lebanese culture, go and take advantage of it. It will enrich your life, as they enrich our communities.

Monsieur le Président, mes amis libanais m'en parlent toujours : le Liban est un pays magnifique, avec la mer, les montagnes, la gastronomie fabuleuse et beaucoup de religions qui se respectent entre elles. Le sujet préféré des Libanais : la politique. La culture française est très appréciée au Liban : c'est la deuxième langue parlée dans le pays après l'arabe.

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L'hospitalité et la générosité des Libanais dans ma communauté sont toujours évidentes. Ils sont très accueillants et agréables. La communauté libanaise a apporté de précieuses contributions dans notre région. Je suis fier d'être en étroite collaboration avec eux et d'être à leur service dans la circonscription d'Essex. Vive le Liban!

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

Hon. Chris Ballard: When I was asked to say a few words today about Bill 60, I was quite honoured and quite humbled. My riding of Newmarket–Aurora does not enjoy the bounty of other ridings in terms of people

of Lebanese heritage, but what I have learned over the years is that the people who live in Newmarket–Aurora who do have Lebanese heritage play a very important role. I can't think of another group that although small in number, has had such a large impact on our business community and on our social community as well. Whether they be members of the Lions Club, the Rotary Club or the chamber of commerce, I have gotten to know all sorts of people who, I only realized later on when we came together for celebration, were all people who were so proud of their Lebanese heritage. It really is great to be able to stand here—and to have been outside earlier to raise the flag—and to move Bill 60 along.

I can say, I'm always interested in the history and heritage of the people who make up this wonderful multicultural province of Ontario. It's fun to do a little bit of research to learn more about the Lebanese people and the fantastic contributions of Lebanon. Thanks to the wonders of Google, we were able to find some really fascinating facts that I want to share just for a minute here, just to talk about the impact of such a small geographic area, really, when you compare it, say, to the geographic size of Canada—but the real impact that it has had.

The alphabet, for example, was developed around the second millennium B.C. It was the precursor to the Hebrew, the Greek, the Latin, the Arabic and the Armenian alphabets—no small feat there.

We have a judge visiting with us today. For many years, Beirut has been known, right back to Roman times, as the “Mother of Laws,” with one of, in those days, the three best legal schools in the world.

Mathematics: the Pythagorean theorem. Pythagoras was the inventor of not only the multiplication tables, but also the hypotenuse theorem. Any of us who have struggled through high school and elementary school having to memorize all of those will surely remember that name.

Other great things like transparent glass and purple dye and the precursor to paper money—all really important. One of the things that attached me, at a very early age, to Lebanon—I really, just as a young kid, didn't know much about it. My father wasn't necessarily a great romantic, but one of the first books he purchased for my mother when they were first married in the early 1950s was *The Prophet*, by Kahlil Gibran; we heard his name earlier. Published in 1923, it's now published in over 40 languages. Nine million copies are out there today. I can tell you that reading that book as a young fellow really influenced my perception of Lebanon and the people who make up that great part of the world. When I've asked my Lebanese friends about this poet, they speak in almost reverent terms about this man and how he represents their country.

So that's it. I will leave it there. Again, I'm really honoured and humbled to be asked to speak to Bill 60 today. I thank all of my Lebanese friends for the work they do in the riding of Newmarket–Aurora and all of the work that the greater Lebanese community does here in Ontario.

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

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It is my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill 60, Lebanese Heritage Month. I'm not going to speak too long because, as you can tell, I'm losing my voice. Everybody in this House will probably be happy if that does happen, but I do have a bill to debate this afternoon, so I'm going to keep my remarks short.

It was important to me to get up to speak to this bill because I want to recognize the importance of the Lebanese community to my community, to the greater community of Windsor, because they are part of the Windsor and Essex county family.

Nearly 10,000 people living in Windsor and Essex county identify as Lebanese. Specifically in my riding of Windsor West, we have one of the highest Lebanese populations in all of Ontario. I know my colleagues from Windsor–Tecumseh and Essex talked about some of the incredible community leaders and community members we have who are Lebanese. I just want to take a brief moment to thank them all.

I want to recognize that we have an incredible festival, not just in my riding and in my neighbourhood, but in fact just at the end of my street, a couple of blocks away. Every year at St. Peter's parish we have the St. Peter's Festival. It is by far one of the best in our community, as is the St. Charbel festival out in the neighbouring riding. They welcome people from all across not only Essex and Windsor county, but they draw people from outside our area. People come from Leamington. Some people come from as far as London. We have people who come from the United States to take part in the festivals put on by our Lebanese community.

I want to take an opportunity to thank everybody here—I know you're not all from my community, although you're always welcome—for the welcome mat that you roll out within your community for other people, the warm welcome that you give us all and how inclusive you are. I think that's an important piece to talk about when we're talking about people from different backgrounds and different communities.

I'm going to leave some time on the clock because I know my colleague from Nickel Belt wanted to speak as well.

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

Hon. Laura Albanese: I am pleased to speak to Bill 60, An Act to proclaim the month of November Lebanese Heritage Month. I want to thank the member from Ottawa South for putting forward this bill.

Mr. Speaker, today we are here to celebrate and recognize the contributions of the Lebanese Canadians of Ontario. Some of them are here in the gallery, and I wish to say hello to them and thank them for being here.

Our province is home to more than 190,000 Canadian nationals of Lebanese ancestry. Since the early 19th century, the Lebanese Canadian community has made and continues to make significant contributions to the social, economic, cultural and political growth and prosperity of

the province of Ontario. I believe that by proclaiming the month of November as Lebanese Heritage Month, the province of Ontario will recognize the meaningful contribution Lebanese Canadians have made in building and shaping communities throughout our province. As we have heard, their presence is felt in many communities, not only in one region of our province but in many of them.

Lebanon is a country that is more than 5,000 years old and that throughout history has faced enormous challenges but has been able to overcome them because of the strong determination of its people. I don't know if any of my colleagues have done so before, but I want to recall how important and significant their history has been for all of us as humanity. For example, they go back and are descendants of the famous Phoenicians, who invented the alphabet. They travelled the Mediterranean. They were dedicated to commerce, showed the world how they were the first traders and taught us about commerce.

Their history, as we mentioned before, has gone through a lot of challenges. But November 22 marks the celebration of the Lebanese independent state. On that day, Lebanese people from all over the world commemorate the country's liberation in 1943 after 23 years of governance by the French mandate that succeeded Ottoman rule, and that was a long rule. It is now a free nation.

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Lebanese Heritage Month here in Ontario is an opportunity to educate future generations—and I can see some students here in the gallery who can learn from this; hello—about the great contribution that this community has made to the multicultural fabric of Ontario and of Canada. Their knowledge and work ethic has made a significant impact on our economy by creating job opportunities and wealth for all Ontarians.

Our strength in our province, both economically and from a social point of view, comes from our diverse culture. Premier Wynne and many of us in this House are strong believers that all of Ontario's differing communities have helped build Ontario into the great province that it is today. Recognizing November as Lebanese Heritage Month in the province of Ontario reiterates Ontario's commitment to embracing, to welcoming and to celebrating diversity. Mr. Speaker, this will allow all of the residents of Ontario an opportunity to learn about the Lebanese Canadian community, to join the celebrations, while acknowledging the contributions and strong impact that they have made in many of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to end by encouraging all members of the House to join me in celebrating, first of all, the 73rd independence day of Lebanon, and secondly, in recognizing November as Lebanese Heritage Month. Thank you, again, to our member from Ottawa South for bringing this bill forward.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: Je vais utiliser les quelques secondes qu'il me reste pour dire un gros merci une dame

qui est canadienne de descendantes du Liban et qui a été la première personne libanaise que j'ai vraiment appris à connaître. On est devenues amies et elle m'a enseigné tellement de choses; dans un premier temps, la nourriture. La nourriture libanaise, les recettes libanaises—excellentes.

Certaines des cultures—la richesse de leur patrimoine culturel est impressionnante. C'est un pays de plusieurs milliers d'années. Ça paraît, et ils sont bienvenus en Ontario. Félicitations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Merci beaucoup.

The member from Ottawa South has two minutes.

M. John Fraser: Merci, monsieur le Président, et merci à mes collègues les députés de Windsor–Tecumseh, Essex, Thornhill, Windsor-Ouest et Nickel Belt; et merci à la ministre des « seniors » au ministre du Logement, à la ministre responsable pour l'immigration; et merci à toutes les personnes libanaises dans la galerie. If I've forgotten anybody, I'm sorry.

We have here the chargé d'affaires, Sami Haddad, from the embassy in Ottawa; thank you very much. We also have World Lebanese Cultural Union president Elias Kassab. We have the North American president, Judge George Khouri. We also have here Hassin Ali, Souha Albaradie, Leila Hajje, Anis Hajje, Camille Gedeon, Nadeen Hamdanieh, Hicham Baradehi, Karine Hajje, Dunia Raouda-Balah, Wafaa El-Osta, Nouhad Ansara, Marie Madi, Sasilia Rassy, Harry Ansara, Leila Hobeika, Eddy Rossy, Samir Hobeika, Ghaleb Hijazi, Youssef Zebian, Samir Chams, Delal Abboud, Edward Abboud, Rola Radan, Charbel Bassil, Adnan Nuredinne, Walid Elawar, Marwan Sader, Naji El-Achhab, Viviane El Hihab and Mirrielle Bou-Zadi.

I want to thank you, and I'm sorry if I forgot anybody. I want to thank all my colleagues. Marhaba. Cukran.

HOME CARE AND COMMUNITY
SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT
(DAN'S LAW), 2016

LOI DE 2016 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LES SERVICES DE SOINS
À DOMICILE ET LES SERVICES
COMMUNAUTAIRES (LOI DAN)

Ms. Gretzky moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 54, An Act to amend the Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994 in respect of funded services for new residents / Projet de loi 54, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1994 sur les services de soins à domicile et les services communautaires en ce qui concerne les services financés pour les nouveaux résidents.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It's my pleasure to rise today on behalf of my constituents of Windsor West and speak to

my private member's bill, Bill 54, titled Dan's Law after Dan Duma, a gentleman who personally, along with his family, experienced the issues my bill aims to address. If passed, this legislation would amend the Home Care and Community Services Act to close the gaps in home and community care.

Speaker, I'd like to point out from the beginning that this bill has the support of the Ontario Medical Association, the Ontario Nurses' Association, Hospice Palliative Care Ontario, Home Care Ontario and CUPE Ontario, who represent thousands of health care workers.

Joining us at Queen's Park for the debate today on Dan's Law is Dr. Darren Cargill, the palliative care leader for the Erie St. Clair Regional Cancer Program. Dr. Cargill was also Dan Duma's palliative care doctor. Also joining us are Ana, Dan Duma's wife, and Laura Duma, the daughter of Dan Duma. I will be sharing Dan's story this afternoon, as well as that of what his family experienced during a very difficult time for them all. I'd like to thank them all for being with us here today to watch the debate on my bill, which is named after someone who is so special to them.

I think that's important to point out: The people who have come today, Dan's family members and his doctor, have travelled a great distance. Some have come from Windsor, and some have come from as far away as Alberta, because that's how important it is to them.

Under the current law, in the interprovincial billing agreement, residents of any Canadian province or territory who move to Ontario must apply for provincial health care coverage in Ontario—or, as we know it, OHIP—and complete a three-month waiting period before health care that is not deemed medically necessary is covered. This means that they can access physician and in-hospital care but do not qualify for home or community care. This is the health care gap that Dan Duma and his family were caught in.

Speaker, I'm going to take some time to speak about the man who this bill was named after and some of the obstacles that he and his family faced. Although the ending is sad, because Dan is no longer with his family, there's an opportunity for a happy ending for other people.

Dan was an auto worker at General Motors in Windsor for many years. When General Motors closed, not only were several people put out of work, but several had to leave our province to go find employment. Dan and his wife, Ana, left their two daughters behind and moved to Fort McMurray for Dan to find stable employment. While in Alberta, Dan was diagnosed with liver cancer. In May, he was admitted to a hospital in Fort McMurray with some complications.

At the height of the forest fires that were ravaging Fort McMurray and Alberta this year, Dan had to be evacuated to Edmonton, and his wife, Ana, joined him. Unfortunately, because they don't have a home in Edmonton, Ana had to take up residence in a hotel.

While Dan was in Edmonton, he was told that he was not going to survive his illness, and he had basically two

choices: because he and his wife could not return to their home in Fort McMurray because of the fires, he could either live out his final days in a hotel room with his wife or he could return to Windsor, his real hometown, and be with his children.

When Dan moved back to Windsor, his family assumed, like most of us in this chamber and most of us in this province and this country, that because we have universal health care, that meant Dan was going to have full access to all the health care services that he needs. Unfortunately, they found out that that's not the case. If Dan was in hospital, he would receive all the health care services he needed for his end-of-life care, and that would be covered under the reciprocal billing agreement between provinces.

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As we know, not only has the province of Ontario, the government, recognized but everyone in the health care sector has recognized the importance of people who are facing end-of-life care having the option to live their final days in the comfort of their home, surrounded by those that love them, and to have the opportunity to die with dignity. They shouldn't be faced with having to die in a hospital. That's not where anybody wants to be. The government side has also recognized the financial importance of people having an opportunity to choose where it is they want to face their final days.

Dan didn't have three months to wait for his OHIP coverage to come into effect. Dan passed away on July 18, just one month into his three-month waiting period for care here in Ontario.

Speaker, this isn't about the quality of care that somebody is receiving. We know that the health care professionals in our hospitals do the very best they can every day with the resources that they are given. This is not about, necessarily, the quality of care that somebody is going to receive. It's about where they're going to receive that quality of care.

I'm going to talk about the fact that during many interviews that I've done on this issue, there has been a lot of interest in this issue. I've had many media outlets reach out to me. As I said, there are many professional organizations who have contacted me and are in support of this bill. Many private citizens, not only in Ontario but in other provinces, have reached out to me in support of this. I think everybody like them recognizes the importance of what it is that the Dumas have faced, and how we would all feel if it was one of our family members, or ourselves, who had to move to another province for work and found out that we were facing the end of our lives and we wanted to be back home with our families. I think that's something that we can all relate to.

There is a gap that needs to be addressed. The Minister of Health, I believe, had acknowledged that he's interested in engaging in conversations with other provinces and looking at filling this gap. But we have an opportunity, as a province, to be the leaders when it comes to home care and hospice care.

We have the opportunity to say to other provinces, when you enter into those talks, that we've already done

it; we've already said you're welcome to come and be with your loved ones; we understand the importance of you receiving care at home—or in hospice, if that is the best setting—and we're addressing that; we're providing that care to people; we're providing that choice, without a financial burden; we're providing that access; and that we've set the examples and we want the other provinces to follow our lead.

I believe that by supporting my bill, we'll set that example, and that will move those talks along faster. What we'll see, hopefully, is an end, very quickly, to people who have the same story as Dan. One more story like Dan's is one too many. Dan's story should not have to be told. Dan should have been provided with the care that he deserved, in a place where he wanted to be, surrounded by the people he wanted to be surrounded by.

My hope is that this bill will address that; that it will have support from all sides; that it won't just go to committee; that it will actually be called before committee so that we can have those discussions; that it will come back to this House and it will become law, and that it will happen quickly.

Like I said, nobody in this country should have to go through what Dan and his family did. It's all too common that we have people who have to move out of province—and not just in Ontario. Other provinces have it too, where people have to move out of province for work. They don't have a choice. They shouldn't be limited in their ability to return home to be with their loved ones in their final moments.

As I had said, Dan didn't have three months. Many people don't have three months to wait for health coverage. I just want it to be clear—because that's something that came up during many of the conversations that I had, too—on what the bill addresses. The three-month waiting period would still apply for all other health care services that weren't deemed medically necessary. This bill only addresses home care and palliative care in a hospice. Those are the people who we are looking to help with this bill.

I know that's not fixing the entire health care system, and I know there's work to be done with other provinces, but I just wanted to be clear, because some people were a little confused. All this is addressing is those people who need home care or palliative care in a hospice. It would eliminate that three-month waiting period. They would still have to apply for OHIP coverage for anything above and beyond that that wasn't already covered under the interprovincial billing model. As I said, we have an opportunity to be the leader on this, and I think that if we do take the lead on this and we set the example for other provinces, you'll find that they will come on board and they will do what's right as well.

It's something that maybe we don't want to talk about when we're talking about a story like Dan's, because Dan's story is important and that's really what people want to hear, but another question I've been asked about is the cost. What would the cost be of passing this law and providing the care that I'm asking for? Speaker, as

the Minister of Health probably well knows, the cost of care in hospital far exceeds the cost of home care. In fact, the numbers that I've been given are that the average hospital stay—now, this will vary, depending on the needs of the patient, clearly—is \$1,000 a day. The number that I've been given for home care—again, an average—is \$100 a day.

What I'm hoping is that if you want to look at it not just from the compassionate side of things—because we do need to look at it from the compassionate side of things—but if you want to look at it from a financial side of things, look at the cost. Look at the fact that for someone to be in hospital for end-of-life care, the average cost is 10 times more than to grant them their wish to die at home, in the comfort of their home, with dignity and surrounded by family and friends—the place they want to be and the place the government has recognized they should be.

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

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you to the member from Windsor West for the introduction of this bill. I'm pleased to speak to Bill 54, Dan's Law, An Act to amend the Home Care and Community Services Act.

I am a recipient of seeing the excellent service in Ontario of home care. My mom, who passed away in July from cancer, wanted to die at home, and she spent the last few months at home. That was her wish, and my dad, who is 80 years old, worked hard along with the home care providers to see my mom's last wishes come true. The service was excellent and it was always there. I know the importance of that. It was comforting to family members to have that happen at home. I am supportive of this bill for that, and I wish every Ontarian who wants the same thing and has the same wish, that this can happen for them as well.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, our government is aware that health care is always the number one priority for Ontarians. We recognize the need for affordable and accessible care for all. Our government is transforming health care to make Ontario the healthiest place in North America for Ontarians of all ages. We know that home care is a very important part of that transformation.

While we support this bill in principle, I am compelled to highlight the work that is already under way between Ontario and our partners at provincial and territorial levels to resolve these concerns through reciprocal agreements. Many of the costs associated with care would be included under reciprocal agreements between the provinces. We are aware that certain expenses may not be covered.

1440

This is an issue of concern for our government. That is why the Minister of Health raised this issue earlier this year with our provincial and territorial colleagues and partners.

We are making the necessary changes to better accommodate all patients. We recognize the many challenges that families face when they are away from their home in

this province, and it's something that this bill somewhat addresses. It's a good first step. This is why our government is investing \$100 million in home care; \$80 million of that will go to supporting and enhancing care for those who need it most. The other \$20 million will be for caregivers' respite.

It is a priority for our government to ensure that Ontarians are receiving appropriate and timely access to health care. We are getting strong results when it comes to meeting our commitments to a five-day home care guarantee. Province-wide, 93% of Ontarians receive a nursing visit in their first five days; 84% receive a visit from a personal support worker.

This topic was also raised again at the most recent federal, provincial and territorial health ministers' meeting. Based on conversations our government, and in particular the Minister of Health, has had with other fellow health ministers, many of the provinces are very supportive and have agreed to form a working group to examine how we can ensure Ontarians and all Canadians receive the highest quality of health care and coverage, regardless of where they are in Canada. That's the right thing to do, and that's one of the reasons why I am supporting this bill.

Over the past decade, Ontario's health care system has improved significantly. It's our hope that with our government's continued investment, this pattern will continue. It's a great first step, as I said, Mr. Speaker, and I again commend the member for bringing this bill forward. Thank you to the member from Windsor West for introducing this bill.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'm pleased to be able to speak on Bill 54, An Act to amend the Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994. My views on this bill are shaped from my experiences as the past president of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, the chair of the region of Durham's health and social services committee for the better part of seven years and as a civil servant with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

The proposed bill, in my view, effectively bridges a gap in home care and community services provided to Canadians when they move to Ontario from another province or territory. What's clear when you examine the bill is that under the current legislation for home care and community care services, there's a three-month waiting period before Ontario residents who have moved from another Canadian jurisdiction can access those services. The effect of this proposed bill will be to eliminate that wait period.

The government has spoken often about putting patients first. The Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus has been justly critical of the proposed legislation, Bill 41, that in our estimation does the exact opposite. But what's clear is that patients are the very reason we have a health care safety net, aren't they? It's they who should truly benefit from the legislative amendments. Bill 54 does in fact place patients first.

Provinces have taken very different approaches when dealing with wait times. For example, Alberta, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and the Northwest Territories provide immediate coverage for Canadians moving from other provinces; the others do not. There aren't any sound medical reasons for maintaining a wait period but many to support its removal.

The Ontario Medical Association in a 2011 report said that people without health insurance tend to go to emergency departments for care, and sometimes they wait longer than advisable to seek medical treatment. In addition, data from the same report suggested that any immediate savings gained by not providing coverage for newcomers is subsequently depleted by the overuse of emergency departments.

I recently read a report from the Wellesley Institute, and the institute pointed out that the three-month wait may worsen the health conditions of some newcomers to the province. It predicts that, due to this delay in care, some individuals will require more complex and costly health care down the road, once they're covered by OHIP. The institute's report continues on to say that the three-month wait builds inequality into our health care system by preventing newcomers from having the same access to health care as the rest of Ontarians. The simple conclusion: It is now time to re-examine the current policy and practice.

Home care and palliative care have a growing importance within our health care network. Like the member from Windsor West, I've heard similar stories in my experiences outside this Legislature and, in particular, as the president of Ontario Association of Local Public Health Agencies. It's important, in my view, that we do all that we can to recognize that fact.

What's clear, Speaker, is that we have an aging population. People are not only living longer; they're remaining in their homes for a longer period of time. Evidence has shown that, when properly resourced, home-based palliative care services result in higher patient and caregiver satisfaction with end-of-life care.

There is a growing recognition that providers must work together, not only to shift care to the community but to operate from the assumption that home is where care must be provided. In addition, significant shifts in society and the needs of individuals from the health care system are driving change, and as members of provincial Parliament we're hearing it on a daily basis. Social and medical advances mean that people live longer even with diseases that, only a few years ago, would have been life-limiting.

This being the case, where we recognize the growing importance of home care and palliative care services, it seems fair and proper that we remove this wait-time barrier for those entering Ontario from other provinces and territories.

Most of us will speak with pride about the national health care system, the fact that it provides care for all Canadians, but at the same time we also recognize we

have an obligation to strive to make it even better, in particular in Canada's largest province.

I, therefore, will be supporting Bill 54, as the proposed legislation would clearly put patients first by removing a barrier to accessing care and by providing coverage for all Ontarians when they need it and without delay.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's my pleasure to rise to speak to the Home Care and Community Services Amendment Act (Dan's Law), brought forward by my colleague the MPP from Windsor West. I didn't have the pleasure of meeting Dan Duma, but as a former automotive worker and former president of CAW Local 199, I know first-hand the hard work and dedication every auto worker brings to the job each and every day.

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When auto jobs disappear, communities are devastated. For each auto job lost, we lose 10 times the number of spinoff jobs. That means that every single time someone in our province loses an auto job, there are 10 other families that are left wondering how they're going to pay for food and raise their children.

I hope these jobs will return to Ontario one day. That is why I know that making sure that happens is something that my colleagues will make a priority.

I remember when GM left Windsor over a decade ago. We were wondering what those workers and their families would do. Where would they go to find work? Many, like Dan, were forced to leave their homes and their communities and seek employment elsewhere. Dan happened to be in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, Dan left his home so he could continue to provide for his family, who are here today. He left because the government had abandoned the auto sector in our province. Then the worst thing happened: Tragedy struck Dan and his family. When that happens, when tragedy strikes a family, women and men like Dan should be able to count on their province—that they spent their lives paying taxes to—being there for them.

Unfortunately for Dan and his family, this government abandoned them when they needed it most. He was diagnosed with liver cancer while living in Fort McMurray. At the height of the forest fires this past May, he was evacuated to Edmonton. Then, when the situation got even worse and he knew he was nearing the end of his life, Dan's only thoughts were of his two daughters in his hometown of Windsor, Ontario. Dan chose to come back to Windsor. Dan chose to spend his final moments with his family, who he loved dearly, only to be told that he'd have to wait three months for the public, in-home end-of-life care he rightly deserved.

Mr. Speaker, Dan didn't have three months to wait. Dan passed away before the waiting period elapsed. It was only in the last few days that he benefited from what our health care system has to offer, largely thanks to the work of the health care providers in Windsor. Like Windsor, Niagara, Fort Erie and Niagara-on-the-Lake and so many other communities across our province

benefit from the amazing work of our dedicated health care providers.

Today, the government has an opportunity to do their part. They have an opportunity to address the gap in our health care system that is cruelly unfair to those who are affected. No one—and I mean no one—should ever have to go through the end of their life not knowing if they'll be able to spend the time with their loving family. Passing Dan's Law would make Ontario a leader in home and end-of-life care. Let's take this opportunity to do that.

I want to thank my colleague from Windsor West for raising this issue in the House. I look forward to supporting this bill. I urge my colleagues across both aisles to do the same.

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

Mr. John Fraser: It's a pleasure to speak to Bill 54, An Act to amend the Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994 in respect of funded services for new residents—or, more appropriately named, Dan's Law.

I know that for the member from Windsor West—I was sorry that I missed some of her remarks—this is something that's very close to her heart, and that she has done a good thing by putting this bill forward, and I support it.

As you know, some of the work I've been doing in government—the work in the ministry, I would say, that is most important to me—is palliative and end-of-life care. I certainly believe that everybody who is dying needs to have access and that we have to remove all barriers, whether that be an interprovincial barrier that we have right here, and that we have to find a mechanism so that does not happen.

We are very fortunate to have people—I know Dr. Darren Cargill is with us here today. People who find a situation like this—they shouldn't have to be in this situation. But you take action. You act out of compassion and love and do what you need to do and figure out the rest.

We had that in Ottawa last year—Sarah Stott, who unfortunately passed away this year. You may remember, she lost both her legs and most of her fingers in an accident. She came home from Montreal. There were problems around getting her prosthesis and sorting out some of the care that was there. That's a problem, and we need to be able to address that.

The same thing happened that happened in Windsor, which was that somebody picked up and said, "We've got to get this thing done and we're going to figure it out."

It's up to us to figure that out in a larger sense as a legislative body and as a government, and as governments across Canada. I was just at a Palliative Care Matters conference, where the assistants' panel said basically, "We'd like to have home care as something that's written into the Canada Health Act." Personally, myself, I believe that should be the case.

I'm not sure of exactly all the mechanisms, but what I do know is, if someone needs compassionate care at the

end of their life, or they are suffering, we have to remove those barriers. We don't have any choice. That's what our common humanity is. That's why I know the member from Windsor West brought this forward, and I want to thank her and I want to congratulate her for her work in this regard.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to speak to Bill 54, the Home Care and Community Services Amendment Act (Dan's Law), 2016.

All Canadians, all Ontarians, deserve timely access to health care services, especially at the end of life. Sadly, we've seen that this government is rationing health care services and our palliative care system is failing. We need more. The demographics are coming across. It's going to continue to increase, and we need to address that.

The government has done some work on it, but there's still lots to do, Mr. Speaker. I'm reminded that 39% of all money from home care, as per the Auditor General's report, is going to bureaucracy, not to front-line care. Hopefully, this bill will help move some of that.

It reminds me that in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, I had a case, an 89-year-old lady and a former resident of Ontario who was sadly driven across the border from the States and basically dropped. The people who dropped her off left a six-page letter detailing her likes and dislikes, one wheelchair, two sets of clothing and one bag of diapers, a bag of medication, two pairs of socks and an envelope with some papers in it, one of which was her birth certificate and one her marriage certificate. Sadly, even though she had been an Ontario and Canadian resident for many years, she'd left and lived in the States for a number of years. She was denied access and care right away because she had lived out of the country and had an expired OHIP card. Obviously, she was in clear need of support and care for many different reasons and in a timely manner.

It is cases like Flora's that make this bill a compelling case for passage as quickly as possible. We want to ensure that people at the end of life have the care and compassion—we all need to ensure that they have that compassion and dignity in those last days and hours of their life.

Many other provinces have done this. Sadly, we, along with Nunavut, Yukon and Quebec, are the remaining ones with that three-month wait for health care coverage for that end-of-life care. It's something that I think if all of us just stepped back a little bit and said, "If this was our loved one, what would we want to do?"—hopefully everyone in the room voting will take a look at it from that perspective.

As I said right at the very start of my opening remarks, every Canadian, every Ontarian, deserves timely access for all health care services.

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

Ms. Sarah Campbell: It is an honour to rise and contribute to the debate on my colleague from Windsor

West's bill, entitled the Home Care and Community Services Amendment Act, better known as Dan's Law.

I think it's important to start off my comments by recognizing the strength and courage that's been shown by Dan's family, his wife and his children, in coming forward and exposing themselves to the spotlight and the inevitable pain that this discussion will bring in an effort to make changes that will benefit other people in similar situations. I want to thank you for that. It's got to be tremendously difficult.

When I first heard about this health insurance gap, I, like many others, was shocked to hear that this gap even exists. In Canada, we often take for granted that we will have our health care needs covered no matter where we move, even if it's interprovince. But as this bill points out, that is sadly not the case. We have all found ourselves or someone we know in a position where they have to move, oftentimes for work. Certainly, with the tight economy that we've had, we are seeing more and more people travel to other provinces, like Alberta, just as Dan himself did.

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Increasingly, we're finding that work takes us out of province, and we expect our universal health care needs to reflect these life changes. Our health care needs to be there for us when we count on it the most, and as was mentioned by many, there isn't a medical reason to have a three-month wait. It's most likely for bureaucratic reasons, to minimize the paperwork when individuals hop between provinces and territories for short-term work, vacationing or visiting family members, and probably in an effort to cut down on medical tourism.

But this is clearly not the case when people are returning home to die and need palliative care services. This amendment is the right thing to do, and it is in line with what people expect from universal health care. For these reasons, I am proud to support the member from Windsor West, my colleague, and her amendment, and I hope that everyone in this chamber votes to support this as well.

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

Hon. Kathryn McGarry: It's my honour and privilege to stand on behalf of the constituents of Cambridge to add a few comments to the debate this afternoon. I first of all wanted to commend the member from Windsor West for bringing this bill forward, increasing awareness and some of the discussion about where we need to be on this issue.

This is an issue I know about first-hand. Not only was I a care coordinator for community care access; I worked very hard to be a founding member of the Hospice of Waterloo Region in the mid-1990s, and I also provided care at home and in the hospital in critical care situations, including pediatrics, for the palliative care patient population. It's something that I really understand very well and had a lot of success in, in assisting patients and their families to move through the journey of their end-of-life care in the most dignified and cared-for way

possible. I really do understand a lot of the issues that are facing us today.

In saying that, I also did manage some patients who found themselves in Dan's situation. I also wanted to reach out to the family and thank you for being here today, because in honouring Dan's memory, you've been able to help us enter into the discussion this afternoon to try to provide a way forward on how to avoid this happening to another family, which I'm quite sure is part of your motivation to be here. So again, I reach out and give you my best wishes for the situation you've found yourselves in.

In saying that, I also wanted to note that providing care for a family at the end of their life's journey is very complex. Most patients and families wish to be at home; sometimes those journeys start at home and end up in the hospital or end up in palliative care. Wherever they end up, it's our duty as a government and also as care providers to ensure that that dignified care is provided in the very best place possible for the patient and for the families, and that can be a changing circumstance at the end of that journey.

But again, I want to also note that those folks who do provide the care—physicians, PSWs, families, nurses and all the other members of the health care team that provide that care—deserve a lot of credit for really trying to make the best possible outcome of that situation.

I also wanted to note that there is work under way between Ontario and our partners at the provincial and territorial level to resolve some of the care and concerns through the most appropriate channel: reciprocal agreements. We recognize that there are challenges for families who receive medical care when away from their home province, and although many of the costs associated with care would be included under reciprocal agreements between the provinces, certain expenses may not be covered.

It's an issue of concern for our government, one of the reasons why the Minister of Health raised the issue earlier this year with our provincial and territorial colleagues. This topic was also raised again at the most recent federal, provincial and territorial health ministers' meeting.

Based on conversations our government and particularly the Minister of Health have had with our fellow health ministers, many of the provinces are very supportive and have agreed to form a working group to examine how we can ensure that Ontarians and, indeed, all Canadians receive the highest quality of care and coverage, regardless of where they are in Canada. It's not an issue that Ontario can address alone. So our government will continue to work closely with our provincial and territorial colleagues as we seek to modernize and expand our reciprocal agreements.

In closing, I really wanted to point out again that I know I've addressed these situations up closely. We all try to make sure that that care is provided in a timely, dignified way, no matter what the circumstances.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I think it's pretty obvious that everybody here is speaking in support of Bill 54, brought forward by the member from Windsor West. It's the Home Care and Community Services Amendment Act. What it's addressing is the fact that, yes, we all understand there's a three-month wait for OHIP in the province—when you move to the province, if you're Canadian, and move from another province—but what people don't realize is that there's also a three-month wait for home care and for community care if you're in a hospice. I think that other provinces have recognized that that's not fair: that we're all Canadians, that we have loved ones in other provinces, and that, at a difficult time in families' and friends' lives when they make difficult decisions, this isn't something where they should have this type of hardship. Dan's family is here to see that this bill moves forward. We recognize that more needs to be done.

While we understand that there's bureaucracy and there are difficulties when people are just visiting other provinces or having short-term work and just want to take care of a health care problem rather than waiting, we all know that emergency care would be covered. But I think that, when it comes to home care, when it comes to hospice care, that's a little bit of a different story. I think that a lot more needs to be done.

We have to look at the other side. We have to look at why: If the government is speaking in support of this, why aren't they just able to put it in the budget or make the necessary changes very quickly? We don't have to spend time debating. We don't have to have the community come in and hear more stories like Dan's. Why can't that be done? Is it perhaps because they want to hide from the fact that almost 40% of the budget for home care is going to bureaucracy? Do they want to hide from the fact that so much money is being wasted that could be going to front-line health care?

Let's focus on getting things done right. Let's focus on getting front-line health care dollars for what needs to be addressed for the home care of patients, for hospice care, for family members and loved ones. Let's ensure that we don't have to debate this bill again, because that's too often what happens: Bills move so slowly that there's a change in government or proroguing and we have to start with them again.

These are Ontario citizens we're talking about. We're supposed to be the leader in the country, I think, in health care. At one time, we certainly were. People wanted to live in Ontario just for our great health care. Let's ensure that we make our health care system as great as it can be.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: J'aimerais commencer en vous présentant un de mes bons amis, M. Alain Bouchard, qui est ici avec nous dans la galerie est. Alain et moi sommes allés à l'université en physiothérapie ensemble. Il est ici à Toronto pour un congrès pour les médecines alternatives, dont il est devenu ostéopathe. Bienvenue à Queen's Park, Alain. Merci d'être venu.

I'm happy to share a few words regarding the situation that Dan Duma and his family had to go through. I want to start by saying that every Canadian, every Ontarian—we are all proud of medicare. In some ways, it defines us. When we look at what's happening south of the border, we call ourselves Canadians. Everybody knows that we have access to care based on need, not on ability to pay.

But this is only half of the story, Speaker, because what medicare is, really, is that we can go to the hospital and it's free, and we can go see a physician and it's free. Everything else is kind of a hodgepodge of services. Some are accessible; some are not. Some are private; some are public. But they don't always work for us.

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Add to this the phenomenal shift that we have seen in hospital care. When Alain and I graduated, for a lot of procedures, you were in the hospital for one or two days before you had your surgical procedure, and we would follow you for three or four days, sometimes a whole week, after. Now, you come in that morning, you have your surgery, and you are out the door before the end of the day—which is not bad, which is very good. It means that medical care has progressed.

But what has not progressed is the fact that as more and more care is shifted from hospital—where it would be covered no matter where we go in this country of ours—it moves into the community. And because of the location of the care, all of a sudden there are barriers to access. All of a sudden, if you haven't been in Ontario for three months, you don't have access. All of a sudden, if you don't live in the right part of the CCAC, or you happen to need care more at the end of the fiscal year rather than at the beginning of the fiscal year, you don't have access.

The story that was shared with us of the last days, the last week, of Dan was gut-wrenching. We all know that what happened to this family is wrong. We all know that we failed that family, that we should have done better.

We have an opportunity to do better. I remember, in this House—and you were there with me, Speaker—where we did the right thing. A similar situation was presented to us, but it had to do with people who served in the armed forces. Remember, if you serve in the armed forces, you don't have a choice: If they move you, you move. So people who belonged to the armed forces were being moved from a base in Saskatchewan, I think, to a base in Ontario. All of a sudden, the child gets sick. We did the right thing. We said that for those families, we will do away with the three-month waiting period and we will treat them based on needs, not on ability to pay. I see and I heard a lot of goodwill from the people in this chamber today to do the same thing.

If Dan had chosen to spend his last days in hospital, it would have been fine. It would have been terrible for the family, but it would have cost him nothing. But because he made the choice to stay home, where he was more comfortable, then nothing was available to him anymore.

It is fine to move services from hospital to the community; this is what people want. It makes sense

technologically, it makes sense care-wise, and it makes sense financially. But the rules have to change with them.

We are the rule makers. Each and every one of us, we are elected by our constituents to do the right thing. Well, we have an opportunity to do the right thing, like we did—you and I, Speaker, and the other 105—when we decided that what had happened to the military families was wrong and we did away with the three-month waiting period.

We have this opportunity today to do the right thing, to see that there will never be another Dan Duma family let down by this province. If you need palliative care that would be accessible to you if you chose to stay in the hospital, we will make it available to you if you choose to have it in the community or in a hospice. It's as easy as that.

If you look at the list of exceptions that we have for the three months, it goes on for two pages. Let's add one more line, the line that says if you qualify for palliative care within our hospitals, we will cover you in the community—and we'll call this Dan's Law.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member for Windsor has two minutes.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I'd like to thank all the speakers who have risen and spoken to my bill, Dan's Law.

I would also like to take a moment to thank the Minister of Health. The Minister of Health was here to listen to the debate. I think all of us in this room understand that ministers' schedules do not always allow for a minister to be here for private members' bills. He made the time to come down and listen, so I want to acknowledge the effort he has made to come down. Clearly, this is a subject that is important to him.

I'm hoping, because there is such importance—and he had his parliamentary assistant, the member from Ottawa South, also speak to it because they recognize the importance—that it will pass today, and it sounds as though it is going to pass, that it will go to committee and it won't just sit in committee, it will actually get called in committee and we'll have an opportunity for all parties to enter into more discussion about the bill, to offer anything that they think might strengthen the bill and to move it back into the House for third reading and get it passed into law so that we don't have any more stories like Dan's and his family's.

I'd like to also acknowledge Dan's family for the difficulty—I mean, I know I struggled in the beginning to share Dan's story, and I'm just sharing his story; I didn't live it like they have. So I want to thank you for reaching out and being here and repeating the story over and over again, because they have many times now and I know how difficult that must be.

I want to thank Dr. Cargill, as well. Dr. Cargill, as I had said, is the palliative care physician from Windsor. Dan's story is not the first story he has raised with me; there have been others. Had it not been for the leadership of Dr. Cargill and Dan's family, we wouldn't be here today discussing this bill.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I move that, in the opinion of the House, Ontario should recognize the objectives agreed to in Paris in 2015 by the Conference of the Parties in an effort to fight climate change, and should do its part in supporting national efforts to meet Canada's determined contributions, while also supporting the implementation of the agreement's provisions by continuing to implement carbon pricing coupled with strategic investments in low-carbon technologies.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Mrs. Martins has moved private member's notice of motion number 32. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I'm extremely proud to rise and speak to my private member's motion this afternoon.

Scientists have identified climate change as one of the biggest threats facing the world today. Collectively, humans are responsible for climate change, and we all have a responsibility to do our part to help solve the problem.

Climate change is already present in our daily lives, Mr. Speaker. It's real. It's happening. Climate change is raising the cost of our food, causing extreme weather that damages property and infrastructure, threatening the outdoor activities we love and melting winter roads that provide critical seasonal access to remote northern indigenous communities.

We recognize the need to take immediate action, because the cost of doing nothing is enormous. We are not willing to impose those costs on our children and future generations. Taking action now to reduce greenhouse gas pollution will mean cleaner air, less time spent in traffic, more comfortable homes and offices, and more convenient, livable cities.

But we need to do much, much more and we need to work together to do it. Last year at this time, the world's attention was focused on the Conference of Parties 21, better known as COP21, in Paris and the historic agreement that came from that conference.

The main goal of the agreement is to, for the first time, bring "all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change." To many, this agreement represents a positive shift towards global co-operation in meeting the enormous challenge we face in climate change. The motion I present to all of you today, if passed, would have this Legislature recognize the objectives and provisions agreed to in last year's Paris agreement at COP21.

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I believe I speak for all when I say that I hope it will be an important turning point in history in how global leaders respond to the challenge of climate change. And as well, how as Ontarians and Canadians, we take positive change within our lives.

On November 4, 2016, the Paris agreement came into effect. Over 100 countries have already ratified with more to come. I was particularly proud that the Canadian

government ratified the agreement on October 4, 2016, and is now moving forward with a national framework on carbon pricing.

At the provincial level, it is incumbent that we do our part to support national efforts to meet Canada's greenhouse gas reduction targets and support the provisions within the Paris agreement.

Earlier this year, the Ontario Legislature voted to enshrine the greenhouse gas emissions targets into law. Only the PCs voted against a reduction of 15% by the end of 2020, a reduction of 37% by the end of 2030 and a reduction of 80% by the end of 2050. Meeting Ontario's targets, which are enshrined in law, will be vital in helping Canada meet its national targets.

This motion, if passed, will also demonstrate the support all MPPs in the House have for both the Canadian and Ontario delegations representing us at COP22. Right now, the Ontario delegation, led by Minister Murray, is working closely with world and subnational leaders towards meaningful actions and results.

Ontario is viewed by our international partners as a leader in the fight against climate change. Ontario is already leading the way by permanently ending coal-fired electricity generation, setting aggressive greenhouse gas reduction targets, establishing a cap-and-trade program and releasing an ambitious climate change action plan to combat climate change.

Our presence at COP22 helps build Ontario's reputation as a climate change leader and connects us with other subnational jurisdictions working to fight climate change. By working together, our collective actions are that much stronger.

Our climate change action plan, which includes cap-and-trade, will help Ontario meet its GHG targets at the cheapest possible price for people and the economy. The plan brings together practical and effective climate-saving actions from across government. Whether you live in northern or southern Ontario, in a rural area or in a big city, the actions in this plan will help you reduce your emissions, use less energy and save more money.

It will also help us to support up to \$8.3 billion in green projects that fight climate change, like public transit, electric vehicle incentives and home energy retrofits. More specifically, our plan will help people and businesses reduce emissions, use less energy and save money by providing rebates of up to \$14,000 to make buying or leasing an electric vehicle more affordable; support for buying and installing chargers for private home and business use; more public charging stations in cities along highways and in condos and workplace parking lots; and free overnight charging for your electric vehicle.

I have many cyclists in my riding of Davenport, so this plan would also allow for more bike lanes and better cycling infrastructure to make it easier to get around on two wheels. It will also provide grants to lower the cost to homeowners of installing low-carbon technology, like a solar water heating system and other retrofits that will help improve home energy efficiency and save you money.

Our plan will also establish a green bank that would help homeowners and businesses access and finance energy efficient technologies to reduce greenhouse gas pollution from buildings, work in partnership with First Nation and Métis communities to address climate change, and offer better protection for rural and agricultural lands in rural areas from urban sprawl, which will benefit us all.

Many of my constituents in the riding of Davenport see climate change as a critical issue facing the entire world. They want to make personal changes by switching to lower carbon technologies.

Just last month, I was pleased to take part in an announcement in my riding with Premier Wynne, showcasing efforts made by the local O'Hara family to go green. The O'Haras had made important changes in their home heating and cooling system. They installed a Nest thermostat, as well as brand new windows and doors. The result? Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and lower monthly bills. That's a win for the environment and a win for the pocketbook of the O'Haras.

This plan is good for business too. Our government is helping industries and manufacturers transform their operations and move off fossil fuels and peak electricity, while also creating good jobs in the clean tech sector and skilled trades. And we're helping small and medium-sized businesses reduce greenhouse gas pollution and become more energy efficient.

Fighting climate change while supporting economic growth is part of the province's plan to create jobs, grow our economy and help people in their everyday lives. The fight against climate change is about respecting this province and this planet, whose care has been entrusted to all of us.

Ontario's climate action plan is a springboard to progress. It's a five-year plan that builds on work already done and achievements already made in reducing Ontario's greenhouse gas pollution. Its investments will help families reduce costs and make the switch to non-polluting choices easier and less expensive.

Fighting climate change requires the involvement of everyone—individuals, businesses, diverse communities, governments—separately and collectively, both short and long-term. We all have a role to play. Ontario's climate change action plan sets us on that path forward. Together, we have an opportunity to lead a climate change movement that will transform our province and ensure a healthy, prosperous and greener future.

All over the world, households and businesses are making these types of decisions and realizing the cost savings. These are the types of investments we need to make across all sectors to ensure we are effectively and responsibly reducing greenhouse gas pollution. By moving ahead now, we can reduce pollution and move toward a low-carbon economy. In recognizing the 2015 Paris agreement, the Ontario Legislature can send a strong signal of co-operation and unwavering support on fighting climate change.

I want to note that we have made great progress here in Ontario in the way we think about climate change, as well as our efforts to mitigate and adapt to its impacts. On this side of the House, we strongly believe that we are moving forward with a balanced approach that guarantees reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and also helps Ontario households and businesses make that transition successfully.

We've had great support from the NDP on our plan in fighting climate change. Just last week, that party called for even more ambitious reduction targets for the province than what we are currently proposing. Even the official opposition have come around to supporting some form of carbon pricing. While we feel we've charted the most responsible, balanced path forward for the environment and the economy, we appreciate the dialogue both parties have engaged in.

Madam Speaker, I will end by saying that it is imperative that we as Ontarians show support for the federal government, and that it's crucial that all of the countries in the world come together to reduce greenhouse gas pollution. With world leaders of all political stripes coming together to ratify this historic agreement, it's clear that the appetite for meaningful action to fight climate change cuts across party lines.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I recognize the member from Huron—Bruce.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I must say, you look good in that chair.

I'm pleased to add my voice to the debate today. I recognize that the motion presented by the member from Davenport absolutely is something that crosses all party lines.

I wish to begin by saying that the PC party will be supporting this motion, but—there's a "but" here—we find it a little redundant because, you see, the provincial government has already pushed through legislation regarding climate change, specifically Bill 172, and the federal government has also announced its own plan, which prescriptively directs provinces to price carbon.

1530

Because of that, I'm not really sure why the Liberals feel it's necessary to bring this motion forward at this time, because the reality is this, Speaker: We all recognize that climate change is indeed a serious challenge that requires a credible plan that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions while protecting Ontarians and our provincial economy.

Around the world, businesses, industry and everyday people are making conscious decisions already to lower their carbon footprint and adopt greener, more environmentally friendly practices. But I would like to be clear that, as a government, our participation in addressing the impact of climate change should never come at the cost of forcing the market to adopt practices and technologies that make them uncompetitive. This is a position that we in the PC Party have advocated for quite some time now,

and it's one that we've heard echoed from stakeholders at all levels.

Through the years, innovators and leading visionaries have driven the development of technologies that address the climate change concern and, most importantly, reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We have heard from the member from Davenport that Ontario is leading the way, and indeed we have. We must recognize that because we are already leading the way, Ontario's total contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions is less than half a percentage point. That's 0.05%.

But again, in the spirit of celebrating how Ontario is leading the way, I must say that everyone in the House today would recall that the first coal plant to be closed was under the direction of then-environment minister Elizabeth Witmer and Minister of Energy Jim Wilson. It was under their order that the very first coal plant in Ontario was closed down: the Lakeview station in Mississauga. So Ontario does indeed, as the member from Davenport said, absolutely lead the way.

I want to talk, during my time during this debate, about more innovation that has led the way in Ontario. I think it's really important to recognize and celebrate what already has happened in the spirit of embracing what can continue to happen in the future.

A great historical example is the catalytic converter. The EPA told automakers in 1975 that cars needed to be equipped with catalytic converters. The adoption of the catalytic converter removed noxious gases from car emissions, meaning that the market adapted to the challenges of the day.

In doing research for the debate today, we found an old General Motors ad explaining these new catalytic converters to consumers. They were proud that they had proactively solved a problem of their generation.

While we all know that emissions continue to present challenges today in 2016, again the market has voluntarily responded with a wide range of initiatives to lower emissions. I'd be remiss if I didn't say that the market and a whole host of a variety of industry sectors have volunteered, and that's the important part. For instance, automakers are recognizing that there is public demand for lower-emission vehicles, and they've responded with great cars in that regard. For instance, we now have, time and time again, turbos being inputted into four-cylinder cars, and that is a great initiative to better engine performance and most importantly reduce emissions.

My husband works at Wescast Industries in product launch, and not only are they focused on a variety of manifolds, but the production of turbos has really taken over and actually keeps them just as busy as manifolds.

Only 15 years ago, Speaker, hybrid vehicles were only beginning to be viewed as an option when Ontario families went to buy cars, but people were concerned with the batteries in these vehicles and a perceived lack of power and range in terms of the distance they could go. But they were also intrigued and excited. They were intrigued and excited by the fuel savings and the emission reductions that these vehicles offered. Again,

the marketplace was driven by consumers who wanted to do their part.

As hybrid vehicles in turn were adopted by the public and as people embraced these vehicles, the skepticism surrounding the whole concept of hybrid started to disappear. Now we're at a point where we see hybrids everywhere. Dozens upon dozens of models are available, and this was achieved due to private sector investment and consumer demand driving innovation with a better product.

Now technological advances have taken us a step further with electric vehicles, better known as EVs. The EVs available today are great cars that many people want to buy, and there's a whole range of vehicles for every price point.

I must say that I hope everyone here at Queen's Park took the opportunity to test-drive an EV during Plug'n Drive's EV Day. I have to tell you that they had a great variety of EV cars to drive that day. What I left most excited about, given that I'm from the country—we live on a farm—I learned that day that there's a Ford F-150 hybrid coming down the pipeline. If you know Dennis and I, you'll know that we'll be in line to snag one of those when they become available, because we all need to do our part.

You know how we have "take kids to work day," Speaker? He hopes that next year, "bring my husband to work day" happens on the EV Plug'n Drive day. It's some fun that we have at home.

We have to recognize that the EV vehicles are evolving. At one point, there was a high price tag, and the range in terms of distance was minimal. But technology is evolving, and that's not so much a worry these days.

People who can afford a \$100,000-plus EV probably don't need the incentive that we see today from this government, because as demand evolves, the price points vary, as technologies bring more and more variety onto the marketplace.

The neat thing about what's happening with automakers these days is that they're indicating that they're investing the revenue generated from the sales of EVs back into research and development, to improve these cars while driving down their price. That truly is market innovation that will benefit consumers.

Over time, electric vehicles will prove to be a great success. Think about it: Every time somebody chooses an electric car over a traditional combustion engine, they reduce four tonnes per year of CO₂ emissions. I'm sure we all know somebody who drives an electric car, and when somebody likes their car, they tell their friends, and they'll tell two friends—that's right—and so on and so on. That's right. Thanks. I was hoping somebody would get that.

Interjection.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Very good. Yes.

It's our wish that more and more people become familiar with electric vehicles and that the trust will build with consumers, and those four tonnes of CO₂ emissions per vehicle will multiply thousands of times over.

In terms of innovations, I'd also like to recognize our Ontario farmers. Ontario farmers have worked very hard for decades now, in terms of embracing environmental farming practices. A lot of the practices embraced today are growing and sustaining carbon sinks, which we also need. The new technologies include no-tillage equipment, meaning we're not turning over the ground, and many fields now are covered with cover crops. They're very, very cognizant of the importance of maintaining our soil in good health as well as providing carbon sinks.

But the sad part about all of this is, as we focus in on adapting and improving our ways to reduce emissions, some industries are not being allowed, to date, to be at the table with this Liberal government. I can tell you with 100% certainty that Ontario farmers want to be part of the solution, and because of that, they want to be at the table. Currently, they're excluded from the discussions on offsets, and I find that quite shameful. I hope that changes over the months.

Another industry that we need to recognize is the chemical industry. Nova Chemicals is doing a great job cutting emissions on their own. Every year, they report their reductions, and they are looking to continue to make incremental changes every year to lower their emissions footprint.

When we talk about Ontario farmers, when we talk about Nova Chemicals, it's clear that everyone wants to be good environmental stewards.

Speaker, I just want to reflect on the fact that as we move forward and continue to talk about the serious issue of climate change, we need to be mindful of the fact that we all agree, in this House, on this motion. We all agree that climate change is indeed a serious issue. But I also want to be clear that because we're supporting the member from Davenport today and her motion—I want to be perfectly clear that the Ontario PC Party will never support the Liberal cap-and-trade cash-grab scheme. Speaker, you know and everyone in this House knows, and Ontarians know as well, that we can't use the environment as an excuse for a cash grab.

1540

The PC Party of Ontario has long maintained that the government needs to develop a credible plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, all the while protecting Ontarians and our economy. Unfortunately, the Liberals' cap-and-trade scheme will not effectively tackle climate change, as we've seen with many examples across the globe that have also pursued cap-and-trade. The Liberals' approach to generating their slush fund, if you will, will only make life more complicated and less affordable for Ontarians, and increase the cost of doing business in our province.

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

Hon. Chris Ballard: I'm happy to move the debate along with regard to the private member's motion on recognizing the 2015 Paris agreement. It's so good to hear conversation in the House where we all agree on

something. We all agree that climate change is real, and it appears that we all agree that the main cause of climate change is human activity. It's good to hear that there is very positive input and very positive support for the member's motion today recognizing the 2015 Paris agreement.

We hear the terms "Paris accord" and "Paris agreement" bandied about. It's good to take a step back for a second and remind ourselves just how big an accord this really is. There are currently 109 parties that have ratified it. Of course, as the member said earlier, the Canadian government ratified the accord back in October 2016. It's good to hear today that we agree that it's incumbent that we do our part to support national efforts to meet Canada's greenhouse gas reduction targets and support all the provisions within the Paris agreement. Meeting Ontario's targets, which are enshrined in law, will be vital in helping all of Canada meet our national targets.

This motion, if passed, will also show support from all MPPs in this House to delegations from the governments of Canada and Ontario at the Conference of the Parties 22, currently being led by our Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, Glen Murray. Right now, as the minister is there working closely with the world and subnational leaders towards meaningful action, meaningful results, Ontario is already viewed by our international partners as a leader in the fight against climate change. Our presence at COP22, as it's known, helps build our reputation as a climate change leader and helps to connect Ontario with other subnational jurisdictions working to fight climate change. By working together, our collective actions are much stronger. Ontario is viewed by our international partners as a subnational leader in fighting climate change, and I have certainly heard that as I've had the opportunity to meet with colleagues from across Canada and the United States.

The Climate Change Action Plan, announced in June 2016, which includes cap-and-trade, will help Ontario meet its GHG targets at the cheapest price possible for the people and the economy. It will also allow us to support up to \$8.3 billion in green projects that fight climate change, like public transit, electric vehicle incentives and home energy retrofits. These investments will help families and businesses reduce costs and make the switch to non-polluting choices easier and less expensive, while helping people save more money through investments in home energy retrofits, public transit, electric vehicle incentives and social housing retrofits.

It's imperative that, as Ontarians, we show support for the federal government and all of the countries in the world to come together to reduce greenhouse gas pollution. Some people want us to do nothing, but inaction when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions is not an option. Ontarians recognize that climate change is already causing increased insurance rates, higher food costs and more weather-related damage.

That's why it's so important for Ontario to continue building on the historic Paris climate change agreement signed earlier this year. Minister Murray, as I mentioned

earlier, is currently at the conference, working alongside leaders of all political stripes to do just that.

We're moving forward with a cap-and-trade system because it's best for Ontario and will result in real emissions reductions. Our aim is to meet our GHG targets at the cheapest price possible for the people and our economy. Our investments will help families and businesses reduce costs and make the switch to non-polluting choices easier and less expensive.

Third-party economic analysis has shown that Ontario's cap-and-trade program, linked with California and Quebec, achieves the best environmental and economic outcomes when compared to a carbon tax or to an unlinked cap-and-trade program. The same study shows that a carbon tax could cost households up to \$50 more per month, as opposed to \$13 under our plan, just to get the same carbon reductions.

Most importantly, this plan builds on what we've achieved already. By becoming the first jurisdiction in North America to eliminate coal, we successfully met our 2014 greenhouse gas reduction target. Thanks to Ontario's leadership, we're well positioned to take advantage of the opportunities and new jobs that will come with the global shift to a low-carbon economy.

Mr. Speaker, with political leaders of all stripes coming together to ratify this historic agreement, it's clear that the appetite for meaningful action on climate change cuts across party lines. The member's motion calls on all parties here today to recognize the important climate change objectives set out in the 2015 Paris agreement. Ontario is already a climate change leader, and supporting this motion is another step in the right direction.

We know that action by Ontario and other subnational governments will continue to play a vital role moving forward. That's why we're confident our climate change action plan is the next step in Ontario's fight against climate change. Our plan, which we mentioned includes cap-and-trade, will help Ontario meet its target at the cheapest possible price, as I've said before, for people and the economy.

It's important to note that on average, over 80% of total current allowances offered have been sold at auction. In fact, the flexibility in the market-based program is a major advantage of a cap-and-trade approach. Covered entities are able to choose when to make their investments and allowances—for example, waiting until further auctions.

In eliminating coal, generating 90% of our power emissions-free and ensuring that our system is clean and reliable, we're already leading by example.

Mr. Speaker, I'll leave it there for now, but I fully support the motion that our member has put on the floor, and I look forward to support from all parties.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate? The member from Toronto—Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I'm glad you remembered me, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Well, you didn't get up the first time, so I thought you'd get up this time.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: And you were right. You were right, and that's something about you that everyone in this House appreciates.

Speaker, I'll be supporting this motion. I know you won't be surprised. I don't think anyone else in the House would be surprised. I have no doubt—none—that the Liberals who are present here and who may come for a vote will support it as well.

But I have to say that I don't have any confidence that the Liberals will actually meet the climate targets set out in the Paris agreement. I don't think they'll do it provincially, and I'm quite certain they won't do it federally either, and that is of great consequence.

1550

Just a reminder—and I actually printed out a copy of the Paris agreement in case you, Speaker, are curious to see exactly what's there. There's a lot in there. It's a useful agreement, well thought out, some really good language. But the central thing for us having this debate today is a commitment to keeping the increase in global temperatures to two degrees—actually, a target less than two degrees and, hopefully, 1.5 degrees centigrade. Here in Ontario, the government actions won't meet the two-degrees target, let alone the 1.5-degrees target.

I have to say that for many who may be watching this on television, many who are here in this chamber, those are just numbers. What's 1.5? What's two? What's three? Really, it's not part of our everyday lives. When we get up, we look at the thermometer and we listen to the weather report. If it's 10 degrees out or eight degrees out, it's not a big difference in our lives.

But, frankly, as the world heats up around us, right now it seems as though we're able to go through our daily lives with very little disruption—at least, here in Ontario. I would say that in the Arctic, people are seeing disruptions to their daily lives, no doubt about it. If you go to the Pacific, people on small island states are seeing disruptions to their daily lives. If you go to the Philippines or Bangladesh, people are seeing disruption in their lives. It's very real.

But the world as a whole—and not just those territories that I cited—is entering very, very risky territory. Two degrees was set as a limit on the increase, or a red line, because when you get past that, you start getting into some very unpredictable and risky territory. Even under that, you're going to see more extreme weather events, more powerful hurricanes, more tornadoes, more extreme rainfall, drought, flooding and, frankly, more failed crop yields. That is of consequence to us. When you go past two degrees, you start looking at an acceleration of all of those things that will undermine our society and undermine our standard of living.

I know that those who have spoken before have talked a bit about this, but in the middle of the last decade, the British government had a study done about the impact of climate change and the idea that we would go past two

degrees and what that would mean in terms of our daily lives. It would mean, in terms of loss of our economic well-being, a descent to conditions comparable to the Great Depression or to World War II. That's the kind of drop in our standard of living when we go into that area, that very risky and unpredictable area.

When I say I don't have confidence that the Liberal plans will actually keep us within that limit, I want to enlarge on that. But if we're going to talk about the Paris agreement, I think this Liberal government needs to think very concretely about what it's going to do to actually meet those targets—and not just talk about it, not just have a motion here on a Thursday afternoon where we get to talk about our commitment to climate action, but talk about what it means to keep our society and all of us safe in a world that is going to become more and more unpredictable.

I want to start with the sell-off of Hydro One, because, increasingly, as the world transforms its energy systems, electricity is going to become the fundamental energy source that we use. If that is the case, we need to be able to control that energy system. Selling it off means that now there's a group of investors whose interests are not the same as ours. Their interest is in maximizing their return. Our interest is in building this society and dealing with the threat of a hotter world. It will undermine our ability to act.

I'll just give you an example, Speaker. Ontario was able to shut down coal in this province. Conservatives promised it; we promised it; the Liberals promised it. There was a political consensus in this province. Frankly, we were able to shut it down. But in Alberta, where they want to shut it down, because they're privately owned, those coal-fired power plants, the government is looking at dishing out large volumes of compensation to those legal owners. Here we have the legal ability and the financial ability to shut it down. When it's privately owned, it's a very different ball game.

Frankly, in Germany they're facing similar problems, where private interests—some domestic German, some Swedish and some from other countries—own these properties and are making money off them. By God, it's going to be quite a fight to shut those down. It is going to be a very big fight.

Germany, as well, used to have a publicly owned grid. In the 1990s, they sold it off. You need to know that in that country now, there are ongoing political battles to reclaim the grid into the public sector so that people can do what's needed to actually transform the electricity system. That is being fought city by city and it is having concrete impacts on the ability of Germany to build the transmission lines they need, to move renewable power from one part of the country to the another so they can get off those conventional sources of energy.

Speaker, when you want to build a house—if you want to transform the energy system or if you want to build a house—the first thing you do is not sell off your tools. You hold on to the tools you need to do the job. What the Liberals are doing with the sell-off of Hydro One is not

only selling off a central tool to actually meeting our goals, but they're going to make electricity and energy more expensive for everyone. That undermines the credibility of actions needed to address the climate crisis.

People saw the polling that was publicized by the Canadian Press that showed up on CBC, in the Toronto Star and in the Hamilton Spectator within the past week: 94% of people in Ontario want action to reduce the cost of hydro. That's no surprise. Some 64%, though, say that it's more important to deal with the price of hydro than to deal with climate issues. That's something the Liberals have done very well. Whenever they've been attacked on their complete mismanagement of the electricity system, they say it's because of green energy.

Well, Speaker, I'll tell you: Privatization, Liberal hobby horses, looking after their friends—a variety of things—have driven up the cost of electricity dramatically. Green energy is not the heart of the problem. But because they use it as a defence all the time, they've legitimized it. They've undermined our ability to take action. That language, that rhetoric, undermines meeting the Paris agreement. So I'd say, if they're actually going to live by the motion that should be passed today, they should knock it off, admit the mistakes they've made with Hydro, stop privatization, and actually help people in Ontario take on climate action.

Speaker, I also want to note the market rhetoric from the Liberals about cap-and-trade. In California, the bulk of the reductions in emissions are not going to come from higher-priced energy. It's going to come from investments in green energy technologies and it's going to come from new regulations. Cap-and-trade can be useful, but it really is not the heart of what you need to do. That's true not just with cap-and-trade, but with carbon tax. Pricing is not the key thing. Changing regulations and changing how you invest: That's the centre of what has to happen.

But that said, when the Liberals take the cap-and-trade money to pay for energy efficiency in the electricity system, which was already being paid for with rates, then they're undermining their whole argument for cap-and-trade, which was to pay for new additional measures so that we could meet the targets that we need to meet. That, Speaker, undermines this motion, and that needs to change.

I just want to note, because this Liberal motion references the federal Liberal Party and their actions, that in the last federal election there was—justifiably—an attack on the Harper government's climate plan as totally inadequate, the minimum amount that Canada would do, according to the Liberals. And yet, in power, they've adopted it wholesale, completely. A plan that they recognized before the election was completely inadequate is now the policy of the government of Canada. It does not serve us well, Speaker. Even now, as people are analyzing—people in the wider world, in the climate community—and looking at what's going on in this area, they're seeing that Canada's climate plans are inadequate to meet the Paris agreement. Frankly, what they have in

place probably won't even meet the Harper climate targets, which were junk and irrelevant even then.

1600

Speaker, to say that you're doing something and solving a problem is like going out to rescue someone who is drowning one kilometre offshore, towing them in to half a kilometre and letting go of them. They're still going to drown. You actually have to go the distance to make the difference. This motion, if it was going to address those failings, would be far more useful. As it is, I will support it, but I want to be on the record that the planning and the policies put in place by the Liberal government here in Ontario won't meet the Paris agreement, will not do what needs to be done to protect the world from increasing warming, and, frankly, is not responsible. If we want to save the population from disruption, we need to have a much more aggressive plan.

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

Hon. Eleanor McMahon: I'm really delighted to join the conversation today. The member opposite is a very learned member on this subject matter. I have great respect for his knowledge and his advocacy. I just want to address some of the things that he might have missed and perhaps contextualize a little bit of why this motion before us today is so incredibly important.

I want to start, as many of us do in this House, by referencing my riding. I have the good fortune of being the MPP for Burlington, with an exciting array of very innovative companies in my riding, some of whom are already benefiting from the cap-and-trade system that, of course, Ontario is preparing to enter, which is really exciting. They've been into my office to talk to me about how pleased they are with our system and where we're headed, and how it's going to really enhance their bottom line even further because they are, like so many companies, operating in a global marketplace.

This particular company is national in scope. They are already getting credits from Quebec and BC. They're just delighted with what we're doing. It really does my heart good.

It hearkens back to a time in my early career when I had the pleasure of working at an organization called Sustainable Development Technology Canada that I was fortunate enough to help set up. Speaker, it is an organization that was started by the federal Liberal government in the context of climate change and the commercialization of sustainable development technologies. My point here is that SDTC, as it's known, which again is all about demonstrating new technologies, promoting sustainable development, including technologies to address issues related to climate change, the quality of our air, water and soil—fundamentally, when SDTC was started in 2001 with a cash infusion of \$200 million from the then Chrétien government, that created the kind of incentive for clean tech to be commercialized that much further and faster. There's often a gap in the clean technology sector between the commercialization of technologies and when they come out of, say, the incubation stage.

That venture capital gap is real and it exists. SDTC has done a great job. It's leadership like that that reminds me of exactly what we're trying to do right here in Ontario.

Ontario and Canada want to lead the market and lead the world in sustainable development technology. It's going to require systems like the one that we are implementing, like the one we are talking about in today's motion, that will encourage and incent the development of sustainable development technologies and make us a world leader on a global stage, which increasingly includes countries like China.

The Paris climate change accord agreement has been a powerful impetus for the broad recognition that climate change is the challenge of our lifetimes. We all know that, Speaker. That's why our government is showing leadership in terms of ensuring that we remain commercially viable, that our economy doesn't take the kind of hit that we know can happen.

In my own riding, Speaker, in Burlington, I have to tell you, we had an amazing one-in-100-year weather event in 2014. We had a flood where we had the amount of rain in five hours that we usually get in a season. We had 200 millimetres of rain in a very short period of time. It overwhelmed our sewer system. We had \$81 million in insurance claims. We had 1,800 homes that were impacted. As a consequence of that, our mayor and council have worked with us as a government to invest in remediation, of course, but also technologies that are going to help us and help them and help homeowners.

This kind of issue is incredibly important for us, of course. I'm pleased that we're taking action. I'm pleased to see the debate that has happened today, and I thank you for the chance to participate in it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate? The minister has—sorry, the member from Davenport has two minutes to respond.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Well, thank you for that promotion, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): It could happen.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I want to start off by thanking the members who spoke to my motion this afternoon: the member from Huron–Bruce, the Minister of Housing, the member from Toronto–Danforth—I almost called him a minister now—and the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. And I want to thank everyone for their overwhelming support on my motion here this afternoon.

I know that the member from Huron–Bruce mentioned that Ontario is a leader in climate change. I agree, and I think I said that. I think most of us here this afternoon mentioned the fact that we are leaders. Part of that leadership has been due to our leadership in eliminating coal, which has helped attract a new industry here in Ontario and in essence has created over 42,000 new jobs. I want to thank her for acknowledging the importance that we have in fighting climate change, and for acknowledging the farmers in Ontario. I want to thank them for all the great work that they're doing in our province, day in and day out, to also help us fight climate change.

The Minister of Housing spoke about cap-and-trade. We are moving forward with cap-and-trade and it really, truly is the best for Ontario and will result in real emissions reductions.

The member from Toronto–Danforth mentioned that he had no confidence in our government moving forward and meeting our targets. Well, I want to remind the member opposite that we were successful in meeting our 2014 greenhouse gas reduction targets, and we are fully focused on achieving our targets for 2020 and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, this plan builds on what we're achieving already. I look forward to having all parties here today in the House and all members here support this motion that I presented this afternoon. That is important as we move forward to fight climate change.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Members, take your seats. The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

LEBANESE HERITAGE MONTH
ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR LE MOIS
DU PATRIMOINE LIBANAIS

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): We will deal first with ballot item number 19, standing in the name of Mr. Fraser.

Mr. Fraser has moved second reading of Bill 60, An Act to proclaim the month of November Lebanese Heritage Month. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Which committee?

Mr. John Fraser: Social policy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. Do we agree? Okay.

HOME CARE AND COMMUNITY
SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT
(DAN'S LAW), 2016

LOI DE 2016 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LES SERVICES DE SOINS
À DOMICILE ET LES SERVICES
COMMUNAUTAIRES (LOI DAN)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Ms. Gretzky has moved second reading of Bill 54, An Act to amend the Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994 in respect of funded services for new residents. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Which committee?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Justice policy.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Do we agree? Justice policy? Agreed.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Mrs. Martins has moved private member's notice of motion number 32. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

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

Hon. Laura Albanese: I move adjournment of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The minister has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried. We're adjourned.

The House adjourned at 1609.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, William Short

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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Hon. / L'hon. Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Ballard, Hon. / L'hon. Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	Minister of Housing / Ministre du Logement Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Brown, Patrick (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of International Trade / Ministre du Commerce International
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism / Ministre délégué à l'Action contre le racisme
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement économique et de la Croissance
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Gélinas, France (NDP) Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Nickel Belt Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC) Harris, Michael (PC) Hatfield, Percy (NDP) Hillier, Randy (PC)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest Oxford Kitchener–Conestoga Windsor–Tecumseh Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB) Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Barrie Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB) Lalonde, Hon. / L'hon. Marie-France (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre Ottawa–Orléans	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister Responsible for Accessibility / Ministre responsable de l'Accessibilité Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
MacLaren, Jack (PC) MacLeod, Lisa (PC) Malhi, Harinder (LIB) Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills Nepean–Carleton Brampton–Springdale Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP) Martins, Cristina (LIB) Martow, Gila (PC) Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin Davenport Thornhill London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development / Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Formation professionnelle Minister Responsible for Digital Government / Ministre responsable de l'Action pour un gouvernement numérique Minister of Municipal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires municipales
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB) McDonell, Jim (PC) McGarry, Hon. / L'hon. Kathryn (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry Cambridge	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McMahon, Hon. / L'hon. Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC) Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB) Miller, Norm (PC) Miller, Paul (NDP)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex Etobicoke–Lakeshore Parry Sound–Muskoka Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research, Innovation and Science / Ministre de la Recherche, de l'Innovation et des Sciences
Munro, Julia (PC)	York-Simcoe	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Indira (LIB)	Halton	Associate Minister of Education (Early Years and Child Care) / Ministre associée de l'Éducation (Petite enfance et Garde d'enfants)
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	Attorney General / Procureur général
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent-Essex	Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Oraziotti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth-Wellington	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches-East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland-Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea-Gore-Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint de parti reconnu
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward-Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto-Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga-Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Hon. / L'hon. Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron-Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe-Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough-Agincourt	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
		Premier / Première ministre
		Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin-Middlesex-London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation / Ministre des Relations avec les Autochtones et de la Réconciliation
Vacant	Niagara West-Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest-Glanbrook	
Vacant	Ottawa-Vanier	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Présidente: Cheri DiNovo
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bob Delaney, Cheri DiNovo
Joe Dickson, Han Dong
Michael Harris, Sophie Kiwala
Arthur Potts, Todd Smith
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

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

Chair / Président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Ann Hoggarth
Yvan Baker, Toby Barrett
Han Dong, Victor Fedeli
Catherine Fife, Ann Hoggarth
Cristina Martins, Peter Z. Milczyn
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lou Rinaldi
Yvan Baker, Mike Colle
Grant Crack, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Harinder Malhi
Jim McDonnell, Lou Rinaldi
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Présidente: Cristina Martins
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Daiene Vernile
James J. Bradley, Raymond Sung Joon Cho
Wayne Gates, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Cristina Martins
Randy Pettapiece, Shafiq Qaadri
Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Mike Colle
Bob Delaney, Randy Hillier
Michael Mantha, Arthur Potts
Shafiq Qaadri, Laurie Scott
Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

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

Chair / Président: Monte McNaughton
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Steve Clark
Granville Anderson, Robert Bailey
James J. Bradley, Steve Clark
Vic Dhillon, Sophie Kiwala
Michael Mantha, Monte McNaughton
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
John Fraser, Ernie Hardeman
Percy Hatfield, Monte Kwinter
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Peter Z. Milczyn, Julia Munro
Arthur Potts
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

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

Chair / Président: Ted McMeekin
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Jennifer K. French
Ted McMeekin, Mario Sergio
Bill Walker, Soo Wong
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

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

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Lorne Coe
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Ted McMeekin, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch