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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 7 April 2022

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 7 avril 2022

The House met at 0900.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Good morning. We will start today with a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GREEN SHIRT DAY ACT, 2022
LOI DE 2022 SUR LA JOURNÉE
DU CHANDAIL VERT

Mr. Parsa moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill 112, An Act to proclaim Green Shirt Day / Projet de loi 112, Loi proclamant la Journée du chandail vert.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I return the floor to the member from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill.

Mr. Michael Parsa: Speaker, good morning to you and to all my colleagues here in the Legislature. Before I start, I'd like to mention that I will be sharing my time with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

As always, it's a real pleasure to be able to stand in the Legislature to discuss a very important bill, not just to me but, as you will see, probably to every single person in this Legislature and every Ontarian, one that will benefit all of us, Mr. Speaker. This particular bill is quite different, as it recognizes a selfless individual who made a decision that saved the lives of others.

I'm sure everyone here in the Legislature and those watching at home remember the tragic accident that took place on April 6, 2018, involving the Humboldt Broncos. Canadians and hockey fans around the world, here in the province, in Canada, were heartbroken to hear about the bus crash that claimed the lives of 16 people and injured 13 others, who still, to this day, are left with both physical and emotional scars. Professional players, staff, and really the entire hockey community rallied behind the entire team, who lost so much in the crash. It was remarkable to see the amount of support the team received along with the close friends and families of each player.

Speaker, one player in particular, named Logan Boulet, who was a defenceman on the team, made a selfless decision to register as an organ donor. When Logan succumbed to his injuries on April 7, 2018, Logan's parents, Toby and Bernadine Boulet, fulfilled Logan's wishes and donated his organs, saving the lives of six other individuals who needed organ and tissue transplants.

Logan's decision to register was influenced by his coach, Ric Suggitt, who also unfortunately passed on June

27, 2018, as a result of the accident. Coach Suggitt was a registered organ donor and also saved the lives of six individuals.

As news spread of Logan's organ donation, it is estimated that almost 150,000 people registered to become organ donors in the weeks that followed his passing. This phenomenon became known across Canada as the Logan Boulet effect. To honour Logan's selfless act, his parents initiated Green Shirt Day to raise awareness for organ and tissue donation. Today is the fourth anniversary of Logan's passing and by proclaiming April 7 as Green Shirt Day, the province of Ontario would recognize the significance of organ and tissue donation and the lasting impact of the Logan Boulet effect. Green Shirt Day serves as an opportunity to spread awareness and educate Ontarians about organ and tissue donation and to honour the victims and survivors of the bus crash.

According to Canadian Blood Services, approximately 90% of Canadians say they support organ donation, but only 32% have actually registered. According to the statistics, we have seen that donation rates have improved over the last 10 years, but we still lose approximately 250 Canadians each year who are waiting for an organ transplant. Today in Ontario, there are over 1,500 people waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. One donor can save up to eight lives and enhance the lives of up to 75 more through tissue donation.

As you can see, Speaker, certainly more work needs to be done. We need more Ontarians and Canadians to register to meet organ and tissue donation demands and to save the lives of others. For those looking to donate, I encourage you to visit beadonor.ca to see if you qualify, and sign up so you can save the lives of other Ontarians and other Canadians. You can also register in person at any ServiceOntario centre, or you can complete a Gift of Life consent form and send it over to the address provided on the Ontario website.

I highly encourage members here in this House and those watching at home to follow Logan's parents, Toby and Bernadine, on the social media platform of their choice to get a true understanding, really, of Logan's story. I highly recommend all of you visit greenshirtday.ca to find out more information about how you can support this initiative. They really are doing a tremendous job honouring their son and the selfless decision that he made.

To Toby and Bernadine, I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf my family, myself and, certainly, my colleagues, to offer my deepest condolences. I know today will be a difficult one for you, but I want you to know that we stand with you. And through this bill, if it passes,

Logan will always be remembered and certainly his selfless decision will always be honoured. To both his parents: You are both setting an example for parents across the country who have faced similar tragedies. Your courage and resilience to honour Logan is something all parents should strive for. You both have managed to turn a tragic situation into a positive one to honour your son. Thank you for leading by example.

I would like to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for advocating for this initiative. When we first spoke about it, I was so touched and honoured to bring this bill forward to remember all the players, the staff, the families who were all impacted by this tragic loss.

Bill 112, Green Shirt Day Act, 2022, is a small gesture that we as members of provincial Parliament can make to carry on Logan's act of kindness and selflessness and to raise awareness for organ and tissue donations. I have no doubt that this bill will encourage Ontarians to donate and to help save lives across the province and the country.

Mr. Speaker, I can't tell you how difficult it was to watch Logan's parents on social media, but it is so comforting to know that two parents have taken this on and are travelling the country to raise awareness on this very important issue. It's very hard, it's very emotional. If you watch their videos, I can tell all of my colleagues here in this Legislature, you'll be touched. You'll be choked up when you're watching them. There's no doubt about that.

0910

But I think it's very important. This is a really, really important initiative that we should all be supporting. So I really thank the minister for bringing this forward and for allowing me to be a part of it and to present it here in the Legislature. I look to all my colleagues here: Hopefully you will support this so that we can pass this so every April 7 from now on we will recognize Logan and his entire family for their great initiative.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The member did state at the start that he would be sharing his time with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and I turn the floor to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Thanks, Speaker. Good morning. It's great to see you in the chair on Green Shirt Day.

I want to thank MPP Parsa, the member for Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill, for being so accepting of this idea of tabling a private member's bill, Bill 112, to proclaim April 7 Green Shirt Day in Ontario. First of all, I want to thank him for his leadership in tabling this bill, and I want to echo his comments. His comments were very moving.

When you look back four years from now, our country was grieving. We turned the lights on on our porches, we put hockey sticks outside and we remembered those individuals who passed in that terrible crash with the Humboldt Broncos. But out of that extremely terrible tragedy, this Logan Boulet effect, this effect for organ donations, is an incredible movement that came right across our wonderful country.

I know MPP Parsa talked about the Boulet family. We've all watched those incredible, incredible social

media posts, those heart-wrenching posts, yet you can hear in their voices their commitment for their cause to have April 7 as Green Shirt Day and organ donation have this incredible effect across the country.

Some might ask, other than the fact that I'm a hockey player and my boys played hockey, what's my connection with this? I want to talk about why I advocated to MPP Parsa for this. I have a young teen in my riding. His name is Ethan Bos, from North Grenville. Ethan turns 16 this year, and the first thing he's going to do—the top of his list—is to sign his organ donor card. That's the first thing this teen is going to do.

Since 2019, he's made it his mission to reach out to municipal councils, to provincial and federal officials to move forward on proclaiming Green Shirt Day. He started in his home municipality of North Grenville, moved over to the city of Ottawa, got those two municipalities, and then in the following year, Speaker, Ethan went out to every council, I think, in Leeds–Grenville, and many of them in Lanark county, to ensure that Logan's memory—that Logan Boulet effect—moved forward in eastern Ontario. He's met with people at the federal level and, after all the work that he did last year, he wanted to take it to the next level. So, after Green Shirt Day, we had a chat with his parents and with Ethan and talked about the possibility of at least tabling a Green Shirt Day bill in the Legislature.

And I have to tell you, we've got an incredible member in Michael Parsa. He's done a great job—and thank you for allowing me to say his name. She's shaking her head, so I won't do it again, but I want to thank the MPP for doing that for me. But he did a lot more than that, Speaker. He believes, as I do, in the Logan Boulet effect. He believes that one of the most selfless things that that young man did was to sign an organ donor card and provide opportunity for a life for others. To have someone at a very young age—as I said, Ethan from my riding is turning 16 this year, but, since 2019, here's a young man who has gone over and above the call of duty to keep Logan's memory alive in our riding. I think it's an incredible opportunity for us to keep the Logan Boulet effect moving across Ontario.

This is a tremendous bill. Again, I want to thank the member for giving me the opportunity, and I want to thank him not just for the Boulet family but for every Ethan Bos who's out there. To have a young person be so moved that he calls into civic action, engaging with all three levels of government—this is incredible for a young person who's turning 16 this year to be able to do this. I think we owe it to the Boulet family, but we also owe it to the Bos family and every other family and every other young person who wanted to make sure that terrible, terrible situation with the Humboldt Broncos—that something good is coming out of it: the fact that we're moving forward with bills like this in the Legislature.

I hope that all members of the Legislature support this. Again, I want to thank the member for Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill for his initiative and I want to thank the members and wish them all the best this morning.

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

Mr. Joel Harden: It's an absolute pleasure to rise on this motion this morning. It's a great initiative. As we think about the significance of Green Shirt Day, I think my neighbour in eastern Ontario hit it on the head just there when he pointed to a young man in his community who has decided to show some leadership and actually spend some time in his life—I was deeply moved by Ethan Bos's story too.

It also takes me, to be honest, to some words that were recently shared at an event I had back home with the great singer-songwriter Craig Cardiff. If he's not on your playlist, get him on there. I'm just going to quote a segment of one of his songs called *Safe Here*, and it will segue to some of my comments on this legislation:

Our words came out sharp like edges of knives
When all we needed was to talk things through—this is
a moment of huge consequences ...
Not what we say but what we do

This is my country
This is your country too
There are so many things we need to change
It'd be too easy to let them overwhelm us
It'd be too easy to let things stay the same.

I think about someone like Ethan Bos, who does that fantastic thing we see in politics sometimes: taking the reins, not waiting for somebody to get change done; taking the reins as a young person and making change happen. Shout-out to Ethan Bos.

I also want to acknowledge something that I think this Green Shirt Day is attempting to highlight for us. It's a policy problem that goes back for as long as policies have been designed. We have a contradiction when it comes to organ donation in this country. I think MPP Parsa would agree. I think other members would agree. Overwhelmingly, when Canadians are asked, when Ontarians are asked, if they support organ donation—90% is the figure I'm familiar with. But, Speaker, we only have 36% of folks signed up. Do I attribute that to lack of interest? No, absolutely not.

The reality is most people don't think about organ donation. Most people don't think about organ donation. Most people don't think about that in their day-to-day lives as they are running from pillar to post, raising children, looking after their neighbours, looking after elders, trying to earn a living. The issues of existentialism, the issues of "What will happen to me when I die?"—perhaps some of us just don't think about it that much. MPP Oosterhoff has talked about this with some of his advocacy in this place.

We don't think about it that much, but we ought to. That's what Ethan Bos has told us. We ought to be thinking about organ donation. And why? Because in the absence of a regime for organ donation, where we massively increase that number up, where people are signed up to donate their organs in the event of their death,

we have people languishing on wait-lists with preventable health illness situations who need not have that.

I do not attribute that 36% figure to people's lack of interest, Speaker. I attribute it to people who want to do well by their neighbour, but who need this place, the House of the people in the province of Ontario, to design policy that makes it happen.

0920

As we talk about the importance of Green Shirt Day, I want to salute someone who stood in this place for years to make precisely this case—a giant in this province, a giant political figure in this province whose impact you can find all over the Hansard of this place: the honourable Peter Kormos, who sat in this singular seat, as I understand it. When then-Premier Rae and he had a disagreement, Premier Rae expelled him to this single seat right over here, right beside me.

Peter was never one to mince words. Peter was one to stand up for what he believed was true. We're remembering April 7 with Green Shirt Day, but another date, when I think about organ donation, that's important to me is March 30. March 30, 2013, was the day we lost Peter Kormos—truly a giant in Ontario politics.

Growing up in poverty, caring about his neighbours in Welland, Ontario—a scrappy place deserving of a scrappy politician—Peter was seized by the issue of organ donations. I invite anybody listening to me right now or reading the Hansard of my speech to simply enter into Google "Peter Kormos" and "organ donation," and you'll be treated to a journey of selfless advocacy, where Peter, in this case, and so many others, decided to use his platform to figure out what we could do to increase that 36% number to 90%—or 100%; let's set the goal where it should be—to make sure we had organs available for people who needed them.

What Peter discovered, after a lot of research, Speaker, was that we needed to shift the regime for organ donations from one of voluntary consent, where somebody preemptively, like Logan Boulet, who was among the Humboldt players, the 16, who lost his life and who had signed ahead of time the rights for his organs to be donated—bless Logan and all those people who make that conscious decision. But MPP Kormos believed that what we needed to do was we needed to make sure that we changed the regime for organ donations to one of presumed consent.

"Presumed consent"—what does that mean? It sounds like fancy jargon. What it means is it operates rather like a pension plan. When you enrol in a workplace with a pension plan, the employer assumes you want to be a member of that pension plan. They don't ask every single employee, "Would you like to opt in or opt out of your pension plan? Would you like to opt in or opt out of your benefits plan?" They presume you want to have a decent retirement and that you're happy to be working in a place where the people before you have bargained those benefits for you. Presumed consent in pensions and benefits: the same regime Peter believed should apply to organ donations.

It should be presumed that citizens of this province want folks with fragile health conditions needing organs

to benefit from what can be harvested from you when you leave this world physically, when your physical body leaves this planet and you have organs that you can contribute to give someone else the gift of life. Peter was fighting for a regime that said, “I’m going to make that assumption that you want your neighbour to live.” That’s what the province of Nova Scotia has done. The province of Nova Scotia moved ahead with the regime of presumed consent. What that has meant in that province is a 40% increase in folks signed up for organ donations.

The MPP from Nickel Belt has a bill before this House right now in Peter Kormos’s memory—Bill 91—called the Peter Kormos Memorial Act (Saving Organs to Save Lives). This is precisely what the member for Nickel Belt is asking us to do, to be inspired by the Ethan Boses of this world, by the Logan Boulets of this world, to actually change policy.

Many times in this place, Speaker, we’ve stood and we’ve made terrific statements of awareness, terrific statements of mutual agreement. Those have been some of my favourite moments, having had the privilege to do this job for the people of Ottawa Centre, when I see people across party lines come together on an issue of concern.

Awareness would seem to be easy, and I am so happy this is before us this morning. But what we really urgently need to do, for people out there desperately in need of a liver, desperately in need of a pancreas, desperately in need of organ donation so they can live, so their families can keep them in their lives for what could be a few years or, in some cases, a few more decades—it could completely change someone’s life. You could give them their mom back. You could give them their brother or sister back, their grandma or grandpa, their father, their uncle, their aunt. It’s truly the gift of life. That is the miracle of modern medicine: Organ transplants can literally save a life for not just a short amount of time, but for a significant period of time.

But if we keep it at awareness and we don’t seize this opportunity to move to a regime of presumed consent, I submit, through you, Speaker, we’re letting Ethan Bos down. That young man has dedicated part of his life to criss-cross Ontario, coming into the city of Ottawa, which is how I know about him, persuading city councillors in the city of Ottawa to sign up for his initiative, to push us to honour April 7, Green Shirt Day. But we’re letting Ethan down if we keep it at awareness. That’s what I remember from Peter Kormos. Words are wonderful. We can do a lot with words. We can build bridges with words. Sometimes we can hold each other accountable with words. Sometimes, as I saw last night, it can get harsh. That’s life in this place. But if words can lead to action, that’s where we really can truly see help being present and help being on the way.

At the moment, 1,500 people in the province of Ontario are waiting for organ transplants. Behind every one of those numbers is a family member who desperately wants to stay here in the province of Ontario with their communities and with their families. As we think about getting those green shirts on, can we also think about what would

do that? What would actually, tangibly do that? How can we move from awareness to action?

I’m going to take the liberty, Speaker, to ask: Can I just hear, from a heckle or a gesticulation of a hand or anything, who in this House would actually like to see Ontario move to a regime of presumed consent as the province of Nova Scotia has done? I’m just going to look across the chamber and see as people wiggle their hands or nod their heads. I’ll give you a few seconds to respond. It’s a very informal poll, Speaker. I’m a political scientist by training and I charge nothing for this. I’m seeing some agreement.

Maybe after I speak, in a question or answer, a member of the government can move a motion of unanimous consent that we actually move to a regime of presumed consent on organ donation or to direct the Ministry of Health to implement that before the end of this Parliament. Because you know what that will be, Speaker? A massive beacon of hope for Green Shirt Day. MPP Parsa could use his platform, as he has done, to get up in communities across this province and say, “We’re doing Green Shirt Day, but we’re also changing the regime of organ donations in this province”—and every single parliamentarian agreed to it. I didn’t see a person with a furrowed brow when I just asked that question.

We are weeks away from an election. Wouldn’t it be great if we could go to the people and say to them: “Oh, man, we disagree on taxes. Oh, boy, do we ever disagree on climate policy. God help you if you were to listen to a debate in this place on housing policy. We are at loggerheads. We disagree. But on organ donation we, as a Legislature, agree that we must move to a regime of presumed consent.”

Green Shirt Day on April 7 is an opportunity for us to pass the Peter Kormos Memorial Act, by unanimous consent.

Let’s even avoid sending it to committee, because I believe—could my colleagues help me? The member for Timiskaming–Cochrane, the member from Manitoulin, how many times has this bill been introduced in the House here? Because I am a rookie.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Many, many times.

Mr. Joel Harden: Several times. So we’ve had the benefit of legislative research. We’ve had the benefit of elected representatives coming into this place, debating it ad nauseam. I would love to get a question—I would like to see a government member stand up in this place and say, “Let’s move a motion of unanimous consent to immediately direct the Ministry of Health to move to a regime of presumed consent.” You can do it on your own and not worry about the member from Nickel Belt’s legislation. It accomplishes the same thing. Fine. Or you can agree to send Bill 91 straight to third reading so we can have a vote on this before the end of this Parliament. What a huge victory that would be.

If people at home are watching me and asking, “What did Joel have for breakfast? Is he on planet Mars, that Parliament would move that fast?” Let me remind folks watching this and folks reading the Hansard, through you, Speaker: It’s happened in this place before.

I'll give you an example. You're going to have to give me some lenience, Speaker, because it's on a different subject, but the goal is the same. You know about this issue because it's something that impacts you in your riding all the time too; we've talked about it: Voula's Law. **0930**

What is Voula's Law? Why am I bringing it up in the context of a discussion about organ donation? Voula's Law was an opportunity through a private member's motion, not a private member's bill, for this House to agree unanimously that residents of care facilities—be it a long-term-care home, a retirement home, a group home, any kind of assisted living—have a right to see family caregivers—they have a right. And in instances where a power of attorney or a family caregiver has a disagreement over the conditions of care in that home and they press complaints, and a care home operator decides to take the complaints as abuse, harassment and shut down discussion and conversation between that family caregiver when they're making reasonable complaints and ban family caregivers from care homes and use the Trespass to Property Act to keep family caregivers out, as a Legislature, on March 4, 2021, we said unanimously, "That's an abuse of the Trespass to Property Act. That's not okay."

I was proud to work with Minister Cho, who is here this morning—nice to see you, Minister. I was proud to work his chief of staff. I was proud to see every single parliamentarian in this place agree that Voula's Law is the principle upon which we agree.

Since that time, I've had occasion to work with many, many families in the province of Ontario who've held up Voula's Law as a huge win, who said advocating for their loved one in a care home is not a crime and shouldn't be treated as such—

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Green Shirt Day.

Mr. Joel Harden: I'm there, Solicitor General, I'm there. Through you, Speaker, I'm just going to mention to the Solicitor General why I'm talking about Voula's Law—because I'm asking the government to contemplate a motion of unanimous consent this morning to immediately—inspired by Green Shirt Day—move organ donation policy in this province to a regime of presumed consent. That would require unanimous agreement, which is precisely what was achieved through Voula's Law, I say to the Solicitor General, through you, Speaker. That's the relevance.

Let's think about what the member from Windsor—Tecumseh accomplished with his poet laureate in honour of Gord Downie. It was another moment in this House where we came together and we realized the importance of the arts, the importance of poetry, and how powerful it will be now to have someone criss-crossing the province, inspiring people, particularly young people, to use the power of the arts to mobilize their communities. That is another instance of unanimous agreement.

Back to Green Shirt Day: In Ottawa, let me tell you, Ethan Bos, every time you feel discouraged about the future, get on the Google machine and look up someone like Ethan Bos. Look at that young guy's shining face smiling back at you when you feel down in the doldrums

of the 20 case calls you've had to answer in the riding and your inability, perhaps—you feel that way as a politician—to respond effectively. Any time any one of us feels down in the dumps, get on the Google machine and look up Ethan Bos. See how that young guy has voluntarily used his time as a 16-year-old to fight for the principle that people should not be languishing on a wait-list. We shouldn't have 1,500 people on a wait-list waiting for organs. Let's honour that sacrifice. Let's honour that intentional sacrifice of someone like Ethan Bos by saying to him that parliamentarians of this Legislature will unanimously agree, after years and years and years of debate in this place, to move to a regime of presumed consent, to follow the example of the province of Nova Scotia that took this decision, and, upon taking this decision, increased the amount of signups for organ donation by 40%.

I'm also going to end by reflecting on the legacy of someone who has been a controversial figure in the city in which I live, Eugene Melnyk, owner of the Ottawa Senators. Mr. Melnyk, a controversial, outspoken figure, but one of the things he cared a great deal about—he just passed away—was organ donation. Mr. Melnyk gave a lot of his time to try to advocate for precisely what I'm talking about. Think about this: If a business magnate and socialist from the same city can agree on something, isn't that an indication that there's broad agreement to do something urgently? That's across the political spectrum. The late Mr. Melnyk—and I'm thinking of his family today—used his platform to do what Ethan Bos did. I think that's commendable. I truly do.

So in the moments we have in this Legislature, let's remember that we do have a responsibility to fight, to argue, to question each other and to hold each other accountable. That's an important part of this job. We won't be doing right by the people who built this place, by the workers who built this place, if we don't do that. But let's also remember that there always will be moments like the one MPP Parsa has given us today, where we can stand up on a point of principle and say organ donation sign-ups must increase.

But then, the follow-up question to that is: What are we prepared to do to make that happen? Awareness is absolutely critical. But as the great political scientist Isaiah Berlin once said, negative liberty, freedom from discrimination, is never enough. What we need is positive liberty: the resources and the capacity to take action, and the resources and the capacity to empower others to take action.

Moving to a regime of presumed consent, if we're able to do that this morning or within the time of this Parliament, will honour the Ethan Boses of this world. It will honour the Logan Boulets of this world and the 16 folks who lost their lives. It will honour the Peter Kormoses of this world. It will honour all the medical professionals involved in those transplants, saving lives every day, and we should be thankful for those folks who are doing that.

That's how we can move from awareness to action. I know it can happen, because I've seen it before. So let's make it happen.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Just before we continue: Both sides of the House are being

reminded to please only identify members by their ridings or their titles. “MPP last name” is not sufficient. Generally, the only time that a member is named is when they are booted from the chamber. So that is a very different circumstance this morning, as we will continue debate.

Further debate?

Mr. Michael Mantha: I want to comment the member from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill. I’m glad that this is what we’re talking about this morning, because I rise and I’m filled with a lot of emotion. Some of those emotions are questions as to why and how this type of an incident could happen in 2018—the individuals; the losses to those family members that were all affected and impacted by this.

But then, I was just sitting here and I was thinking about some of those outcomes, and how certain lives were significantly changed as well: how a tragedy was taken and where opportunities were available, so that we basically had miracles for others. I wanted to touch on some of that today, because of the impact of the gift of life and what an organ donation can do. I’ll be able to share a story with you today in regard to what I personally experienced on many occasions at my own place where I stay here in Toronto.

It is quite overwhelming, seeing an individual going through the stages, who is waiting for an organ donation. You have the hope and you have the despair. You have the fright, you have the questions, you have the anxieties. Then you have the call, and then you have the wait, then you have the procedure and then you have the outcome. I’ve experienced both negative and positive outcomes, and I’ll try to walk you through it.

But I want to go back to the 16 of the 29 passengers who lost their lives here. I remember we were here in the House, and many of us scrambled to find hockey sticks. We went out on the front lawn here, and we all took pictures. I know that apparently there was a quick word that went around that the MPP for Algoma–Manitoulin has hockey sticks hanging on his wall, so my hockey sticks appeared in many pictures of MPPs who wanted to have those pictures to commemorate and to offer our condolences, our prayers, our thoughts, our care, our love to the many who were affected by this tragedy.

0940

We’ve seen through northern Ontario, through the entire country, different ways of commemorating what happened there. We’ve seen candles on our lawns. We’ve seen flags that were worn. We’ve seen T-shirts, and again, hockey sticks that were being displayed on the lawns and on the doorsteps of individuals who were holding on to Humboldt Broncos memorabilia. Posters were put in windows. Hearts were glued on doors and on cars. We’ve seen teddy bears with candles being put at specific locations. It was something that was really just overwhelming, to see how an incident like that impacted each and every one of our lives and how it affected us all.

I know in my riding of Algoma–Manitoulin, I pride myself—I go out to Junior A hockey games. It’s tough for me at times because I actually have three teams; I have the Espanola Express, the Blind River Beavers and the Elliot

Lake Red Wings. Of course, I have my jersey from each team. Of course, when I go into Blind River, I have the Blind River jersey on. When I’m in Elliot Lake, I have Red Wings jersey on. And when I’m in Espanola, of course I have the Espanola Express jersey on. But being at those initial games where they had commemorative games as well to recognize the tragedy that had happened—if you don’t have a Junior A team in your community, there are many others that have peewee, novice—many, many communities commemorated and had special evenings to recognize what had happened here.

This is what’s inspiring about these young men. A lot of what they bring to our communities goes unnoticed. If you’re not paying attention or if you’re not in need, then you miss the value that these young lives bring to our communities. These young hockey players, these young potential doctors, these young potential business owners, these young potential entrepreneurs come into our communities and they touch us, and this is how they touch us: They come into our homes because we have to billet them. They come and stay with us. So not only are you now benefiting from having this new young life inside your home, but you’re sharing that with your kids. You’re seeing their growth; you’re making that bond.

I wanted to explain that because I think it’s really important that we understand how this incident impacted individuals in those communities on April 6. There were many, many lives that were negatively affected by this, and we offer our hearts, we offer our thoughts each and every day that we think of these individuals. Green Shirt Day will keep that memory of those individuals going forward, will keep that alive.

But now I want to shift over to the benefits and the good things that really came out of this. I say that because how can we grab a tragedy and get the positives out of it? This is what this young man did, or his family did. The phenomenon is referred to as the Logan Boulet effect. I want to touch on that and spend a little bit of time there, Speaker, because I want to share with the House the experiences that I’ve seen personally.

This family provided a miracle to others. That’s what it is. It’s a miracle. It’s an opportunity at a life. I want to talk about a young woman I met. When I was first elected in 2011, after my campaign office, I found an actual office as an MPP, and right next to my office was a hairdresser and pedicurist. I think you and I, Speaker, at one time, have explored and enjoyed those luxuries, and I remember those days. I won’t go into great detail, but I do want to let the Speaker know that I really, really enjoyed those afternoons, and I’ll never be able to look at my feet in that way, I tell you. We went in for this pedicure and manicure and everything. They started with this grinder on my feet, and, I swear to God, I couldn’t stop myself from just bursting out laughing. We had fun. Anyway, I’ll stop now, Speaker. I know it’s torture for you.

I want to spend the time to introduce you to Kim Cloutier. Kim Cloutier was the mother of two boys in Elliot Lake, and her husband was Chris. I met them as an MPP. And what I was doing, to have a little bit of fun, because we had some community members who would

come in to get their nails or their hair done on the next side—she had her regulars in there. I got into this habit of walking into the hair salon, and as they were sitting there, I would grab the daily paper that comes into the various businesses, coffee shops or whatever—they had horoscopes—and I would read their horoscopes. Well, sometimes, those horoscopes weren't very good, so I'd change it up just to make them feel good. Kim really enjoyed that. Kim actually would come and get me in the office to come over. She'd say, "The ladies have gathered. They want to hear their horoscopes." Kim had this way of bringing people together. I often talked to her friends and her sisters, afterwards, and she was described as the glue that brought everybody together.

Kim developed a respiratory problem. It took some time to identify what that problem was, but it was getting worse and worse and worse. She went through many tests. She needed oxygen, and then it got to a point where she was informed that she needed a lung transplant. So she went through a very long and tedious process of, first, "Do I qualify? How do I get on the list?" and finding out about organ donation and so on. It was a roller-coaster ride for her, because it is one thing finding out, "Okay, this is the problem." It was frustrating for her and her family as far as finding out, "What's wrong with me?" We've all had those family members. Once you have that diagnosis, you go, "Oh, it's bad, but at least now I know what it is. So what's the solution?" The solution was to get her on the organ donation list for lungs.

Kim went through that entire process, and then lo and behold, as she's preparing for that, there had to be some medication that had to be provided to her to bring down her immune system in order for it to be weak. I hope I'm describing this properly, but I'm not medically savvy; I just go from memory as to what was shared with me, with the family, as we were all going through this. She had to bring down her immune system so that when the transplant was actually scheduled, her body would not refuse those tissues, the lungs that she was going to be receiving.

When you're on this list for organ donation, there are not that many organs, or it's very difficult to get put on that list and to be considered, because if there are organs that do become available, those who are on the top of the list, who are most in need, are the ones who are going to get considered first. Getting to the top of the list is what's very, very, very scary, because you have to be basically on your last breath. If it's a heart that you need, you have to be basically on your last beat. When you're sitting in a medical room, imagine the amount of pressure that is on those who are making the decision, saying, "Mike, not this time. John, not this time. Paul, not this time. You can wait a little bit longer. We're going to provide it to Kim." Imagine those that are in that role and responsibility to make that decision. Now that's pressure. That's making a gift-of-life decision. That's miracle-making right there.

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So finally, Kim, her condition had gotten so bad that she received the call, because she had to be down here in Toronto. This is where her and I actually had a lot of fun

because she had stayed with me in my condo here for a period of time. When you see an individual going through that roller coaster, you see it in their eyes. You see their skin going grey. You see their hope going down. You see them waiting and waiting and waiting, and that weight is on them. You feel it too. It's on you. You're the one going home. I'm hoping to get home—and this was over a three-month period. And when I go back to the condo—or for a while she stayed with me at the condo, but they did manage to secure a place here because it was difficult to find, first, the finances. Oh, jeez, yes, we didn't even touch on the financing, about how difficult it is on the family to secure the money that you need, because they lived in northern Ontario. Try to find yourself a place here in Toronto—because you have to be within a call's distance of a hospital in order to respond to that call when it comes in.

Anyway, you go in and you see the eyes and you see it in the family as well. But then you walk in that one day and there's Kim sitting at the end: "I got the call. I got the call. We're going in." She finally gets that call and she goes in, and you see that person go through that process of getting some lungs. You come out. And the whole medication that you have to take so your body doesn't reject those—because it's one thing getting that call, but there's also a process that follows that. There's the prep, there's the actual surgery, and then there's the process after the surgery so that you can make sure that—because not every organ transfer, not every gift of life is a successful one.

I want to jump ahead. Kim's was not successful. But it was successful, and I'll explain to you why. Kim got her lungs. After the surgery was done, she went through a short process of a lot of medication. But this is why I say it was successful: because Kim had the opportunity to breathe. Finally, she got to breathe. She got to feel what it feels like to go "Ah."

The unfortunate part for Kim, as I said a little bit earlier, is that her body started rejecting those organs. She eventually lost her battle, but she gained an opportunity to close some doors, to close some issues and to actually have somewhat of a life. I think the thing that she enjoyed the most after she had done the surgery is not having a mask on with oxygen and having the ability to breathe. Just imagine that, Speaker: just having that ability to breathe, something that we just never think about.

I've had other individuals who have come through my place. I've actually had a successful lung-transplant constituent who stayed with me and they went through it successfully. I've had other individuals who have donated organs, and it's something that I've really—it's one of the benefits that I have as far as being an MPP here and having a place that I can offer constituents, being so close to the hospitals.

You've heard me in the past talk about Elijah Hennessy. He is the miracle child from Elliot Lake, who had and continues to have some major heart issues. Elijah has blessed me with so many visits. I've seen so many things that some of these hospitals—and there are miracles that are happening there. I touch on that—oh, and Drew from Blind River. There are so many: Emily from Massey. We

have so many things that we can do here if we so choose to, and I'm not saying that we all have to do it. I choose to do it because I can. It's my choice. So I welcome these individuals when they come over to my condo, because after a day, I'll tell you, like last night, getting home at 10 o'clock at night, it sure is nice seeing a smiling face. And I hear I'm going to be late here tonight as well, so it would be nice having someone there.

I wanted to share Kim Cloutier's story. I want to again give a shout-out to the member for his Green Shirt Day for how important it is, and what the impacts are going to be, and encouraging those, if you have not, to take the time to talk to your family about organ donation. Make the choice. I've seen it, I've lived it. The benefits far outweigh any of the negative impacts. But the key is to make sure that you explain what your choices are to your family members. Make it known. It's a simple check on the back of your licence that you have to do. Pick up a phone and make a call and let them know that you want to be an organ donor. The things that you can—how you can change a life—oh, my goodness, I'm running out of time.

I completely forgot Rick Prashaw, who was an individual who worked with the federal member, Tony Martin. He was one of his assistants. He lost his son due to a seizure, and he offered the organs from his son as well. He's got a fabulous book—unfortunately, the name escapes me right now, but it's a really good read for people who are interested or want to become knowledgeable about the importance of organ donation. Look up the author: Rick Prashaw. His son was just an amazing boy. There are, I believe, nine individuals that benefited from the organ donations from his son.

Again, we see it often, the benefits that this could bring. We've seen it so many times on social media, where an individual meets that person who received their daughter's or their son's heart, and you see them with their hand on their chest.

It's a miracle of life. It's something that we should take seriously. And it's in all of us to give. So, please, think very seriously about providing the gift of life.

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

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I am very, very touched with this ability to talk to this issue this morning and to this bill. I thank the member from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill for bringing forward this bill this morning.

I want to talk about this in a couple of different ways. But first I want to say, in Thunder Bay–Atikokan, we are a hockey town and we actually really hit above our weight with regard to the great hockey players that come from Thunder Bay. So when April 7 occurred, almost every family could know, the idea of how many times they had taken their children to hockey tournaments or were on buses. It was something that was felt throughout our community and there was almost on every doorstep a tribute. People contributed money, there were events to really highlight—to grieve and really feel for those families, those 16 families that lost people, that this could be us. So that was one of the things, I think, to commemorate that spirit that came out throughout Canada, really, I

think is one way of looking at this, just as a good part of this bill.

The second way I want to look at this bill is, all of us come here with our experience. I had an experience with having to make the decision on whether or not organs would be donated. It was my spouse. Fortunately, we had had those discussions. But it was before, I think, the time—because it's been some time—the check-off on the back, or whether or not he just forgot to do that or what the issue was. But the people from the Trillium Foundation came to me while I was sitting in the ICU waiting room, took me aside and had to have that conversation about, “Would your spouse be willing to donate their organs, do you believe?” and “You need to sign. You need to make that decision for someone else.” Even though I knew in my heart—but the other thing is, what you don't realize is when you're sitting there and your family member is on life support, you don't want to let them go. You don't want to let even one piece of them go. So presumed consent would assist with that. It would assist when families have to make those hard choices.

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So, April 7, commemorating and celebrating that families were brave enough to make that choice, is a very important issue. It's something that needs to be talked about more, the awareness that organ donation is important, it matters, and that you can do something good at a time when your life is falling apart. And that's important, because that provided my children, his sisters, his friends something to hold on to, that this man, who died sooner than I, definitely, wanted him to, but sooner than he should have, was able to give a gift. He was a very giving person. He was a great family man. Gary Farrell: I want to say his name.

I signed for Gary, and he was able to donate his kidneys, his liver. Unfortunately, his heart was taken but wasn't able to be used, but it was used to study. That's the other part: Even if the organs are not used in a transplant because they find out, once they're harvested, that they're not suitable, they use them for study so they can know more and develop better treatments or understand what happened. That's a very, very important part of what went on with that transplant.

That is something Green Shirt Day would assist with. It would assist with that understanding, people actually having those conversations, understanding about what a transplant can do for someone and for the family, when you're making those decisions.

The other way that I feel this is so important and why awareness about transplants is important in my community: I have a great friend, Dom Pasqualino, who is the president of the Unifor local at Alstom. We've been friends for many years. Dom was living on a dialysis machine. Even though he was doing all this great activism for his membership, every night, he would hook himself up, or his partner would, and he would have dialysis. Dom was looking frail—and he's a young man. He's a great contributor to our community. He never complained; he was amazing. But he got the call, and Dom is doing so very, very well, is so excited and is doing even better work

because he has his evenings free now. He used to take calls while he was on his dialysis. To Dom Pasqualino, who successfully had a transplant, this bill, raising awareness and making sure that we have more transplants available for folks is so important.

Another experience that I have with transplants is around cystic fibrosis and young people—because you find out when you're very young. We are having better success at keeping people alive for a longer period of time, but parents live with the shadow that their child may not make it for a long time. Once they get to be young adults, often, or teenagers, they have to come to Toronto and live here because they have to be close by in order to have the ability to answer that call if there are lungs available.

I found out a lot from parents of children with cystic fibrosis and their journey. I found out that some of them can't get lung transplants because of a specific bacteria or infection they had at one point. So it's finding that out and then the roller-coaster ride of all that. But once they get that call and they get new lungs and it's successful, that's a very young person that gets to live a life, who gets to get married and have a family. They are in a really, really good place. This is why Green Shirt Day is important, but presumed consent would provide that much more availability of transplants.

I want to also highlight the struggles that people in northern Ontario have accessing this kind of health care. Often they are on very long lists and they have to fly back and forth. I've had people get the call, come to Toronto, prepare, and then they find out, no, they've been bumped off the list and then they have to fly back. All of that is on their own dime because it's not covered by the Northern Health Travel Grant.

This morning, I applaud the member from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill. I applaud our colleague, the MPP from Nickelback—Nickel Belt, not Nickelback.

Laughter.

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: Sorry, France.

Interjection: We needed that laugh.

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: Yes.

They are highlighting this issue, that it is something that we all should be working towards and that we should ensure that we have more transplants available in Ontario.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you to the member for Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill for this initiative. I didn't want to presume that I needed to get up, but clearly I did.

Today is the fourth anniversary of the tragic collision that took place in Saskatchewan, where the Humboldt Broncos were involved in a tragic crash. Their bus, as they were travelling to a hockey game, hit a semi-trailer that failed to stop at the intersection. The semi-trailer was going over 100 kilometres an hour and, tragically, of the 29 passengers on the bus, 16 passengers lost their lives. The remaining 13 will all bear, and continue to bear, the physical and emotional scars for life, as will the family and friends of this community.

This is related to what we are speaking about today because Humboldt Broncos defenceman Logan Boulet was one of the individuals who tragically succumbed to his injuries. His parents, Bernadine and Toby Boulet, offered to donate his organs so that six lives could live on. They did so because Logan told his parents he was registering as an organ donor and that he was inspired by his coach and mentor, Ric Suggitt. In some ways, it's a small amount of hope or consolation in what is an unspeakable tragedy for that community.

Now we have the fourth annual Green Shirt Day to recognize the value of being an organ donor, and once again I want to thank the member for Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill for initiating this conversation this morning.

The process and the organization that needs to happen for people who die, to have their organs transplanted to people who desperately need them, is an initiative that's been going on since the science was developed. I want to recognize some of the organizations that are leaders in this work. That includes the Trillium Gift of Life Network, the Canadian Transplant Association, Canadian Blood Services and the Kidney Foundation. There are many others, but they are some of the leading ones that I would like to recognize today.

What is also important to note is that, as a result of Logan Boulet's decision to register as an organ donor, and the families and friends in the community who decided to highlight that tragedy in order to motivate people to be organ donors, it has led to over 350,000 people in Canada having signed their organ donor card in the last three years. That is a positive outcome from an unspeakable tragedy.

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Earlier this morning, I went to the Trillium Gift of Life Network Facebook page to better understand how organ transplants impact people in a positive way. I'd like to share some of the stories today. This is from Ryley Mitchell:

"I was first diagnosed with dilated cardiomyopathy when I was seven months old in 2006. I was put on the waiting list and only waited 10 days for my new heart. The call came late in January at 2 in the morning. I went into surgery for five hours and when I was out I looked happier and healthier already. I was smiling. This is how I got the nickname Smyley Ryley.

"My transplant journey is never over but with the support of my family, friends, doctors, nurses and support from SickKids it has been much easier.

"My donor family being so selfless is one of the reasons I feel inspired to help many other people by sharing my story and volunteering."

When I read that story, the first thought that comes to my mind is that "Smyley Ryley" did not have these memories. Those memories were told to her by her parents, who, I can imagine, cannot think of a greater gift than having a selfless donor make the decision to transplant a heart so that their child can live.

This is another quick note, from Rhonda Lee. She just writes a quick note saying, "On March 13, it will be 27 years since I had a heart transplant." And she's still alive

today. “Thank you to the donor family. I would not be here without your kindness.” Why I chose to identify this one is that living 27 years after an organ transplant, especially a heart transplant, is really exceptional. Often transplant recipients do not have the privilege of living that long, but because the science and the technology have improved, people’s life expectancy after receiving a significant organ transplant has increased. It’s wonderful to hear that Rhonda is one individual who has been able to live for that long.

This is another one. It’s from Jane Ross. She speaks about her husband. She writes, “Eleven years ago, on February 14, we got that call. And that call is that my husband was going to get the gift of life, which was a double lung transplant. We never forget, and we are always so grateful to the family who lost someone that they loved and made the decision to support an organ donation. We also recognize the top-notch care that he received, and continues to receive, from the people at UHN and Toronto General. It takes a village for all involved. Please register and don’t take for granted our health care.”

Once again, this is an example of a hospital in University–Rosedale—actually, SickKids is one of them and Toronto General is another. It’s part of the united health network that’s in my riding. I’d like to take a moment to recognize the thousands of health care workers who live in downtown Toronto, including University–Rosedale, who have worked selflessly throughout this pandemic to provide critical care. That care has included continuing with critical transplants in order to save people’s lives. Thank you for that.

Next, I’d like to read out an individual, Deb Brunato—she’s an eight-year double lung transplant survivor. She says, “Without my donor, I would not be here. Thank you to my donor and their family for their most precious gift of life.” Once again, you can see this overwhelming support and feeling of gratefulness towards the individuals who were selfless enough to register to be organ donors before they, tragically, died. We can see the impact of that decision right here.

For those people who are looking at being an organ donor, who are interested in being an organ donor, it’s very—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Sorry to interrupt. It is now time for members’ statements. We will continue your debate at a later time.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS’ STATEMENTS

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Ms. Jessica Bell: The Financial Accountability Office released its report this week on health care, and this is what it showed: It showed that Ontario is spending less on health care per person than any other jurisdiction in Canada; Ontario has the fewest hospital beds per person; Ontario has the fewest registered nurses per person.

That means that we are not able to provide the health care we need, in the time that we need it, because government after government has not wanted to invest in it. It has led to situations where exhausted nurses and health care professionals have had to give up and quit because they are not being paid the wages that they deserve, and it is resulting in up to 400,000 people waiting for necessary surgery because they cannot get that time in an operating room for their heart surgery, their cancer surgery, their hip replacements.

This has got to change, and this is how we can do it: We need to invest in universal public health care; we need to have a plan to clear the surgery backlog; we need to invest in mental health care, pharmacare and dental care; we should pay our health care workers properly, which means repealing Bill 124; and we need to recommit to universal public health care, because we are a healthier and more prosperous province where we can all access health care when we need it, without having to worry about paying for it.

This is what an NDP government will do.

BATTLE OF VIMY RIDGE

Mr. Lorne Coe: I’m wearing the tie of the Ontario Regiment—I’m an honorary member of the Ontario Regiment—and I’m doing that because I’m about to speak about Vimy Ridge.

One hundred and five years ago on a cold Easter Monday in northern France, thousands of Canadians fought together to achieve one of the First World War’s most memorable victories. They came from every corner of Canada. They were francophones, anglophones, new Canadians, Black Canadians and Indigenous peoples. Many of them were young men in their late teens and early twenties, homesick and exhausted, but brave and united in their fight for peace, freedom and justice.

In the early hours of April 9, 1917, after carefully planning and preparing their attack, they climbed from their trenches and stormed Vimy Ridge, an enemy fortress many thought could never be taken. Members of all four divisions of the Canadian Corps battled uphill through a landscape scarred by years of conflict, fighting side by side for the very first time. They did not stop until they had victory. Over the course of four days, through mud, shelling and gunfire, they captured the entire ridge, achieving what no Allied army had done.

Speaker, the Battle of Vimy Ridge was an important chapter in the Great War and in our country’s history. What they accomplished was more than a remarkable military feat. With courage, determination and grit, they taught us that, together, ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things, and in so doing, they helped define Canada as a country.

On April 9, please take a moment to honour the brave Canadians who fought at Vimy Ridge. Nearly 3,600 of them never came back home. Over 7,000 were wounded. Their sacrifice transcends time and reminds us of the immense debt of gratitude we owe all Canadians in

uniform, past and present, for their courage, dedication and service.

Lest we forget. Lest we forget.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: Addictions, mental health and homelessness are at crisis levels in north-western Ontario. I am so pleased that the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association and the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities will be discussing this during their upcoming conferences. But they can't do it alone.

The government received a research paper draft in January from the Northern Policy Institute. In it, it has eight recommendations:

- provide long-term funding for capital repairs on community housing;

- amend the Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1990, to define a “northern service hub” and provide additional funding to these hubs;

- establish a joint task force to collect data and intelligence on the underlying and systemic retention issues of health care professionals in northern Ontario;

- support new and existing Housing First programs;

- support new and existing Indigenous culturally sensitive housing;

- establish a northern mental health and addictions centre of excellence.

1020

There are also recommendations on inter-facility patient transfers and establishing mobile crisis intervention teams. I call on this government to solve this crisis.

Before I end, I want to express my wishes for a healing journey for the MPP for Thunder Bay–Superior North. I'm sure every one of us in this House is wishing you a speedy recovery.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Vincent Ke: Last week was significant for the residents of Don Valley North and beyond. We are preparing our hospitals and long-term-care homes to confront the challenges that lie ahead: two important funding announcements for North York General Hospital to meet the diverse health care needs of the fast-growing population in the community.

Karyn Popovich, president and CEO at North York General Hospital said, “With the generous support of the Ontario government,” North York General Hospital “is moving forward with the largest hospital expansion since we opened our doors more than 50 years ago.”

Speaker, the new patient care tower will include a brand new emergency department, in-patient beds and operating rooms and is anticipated to open in 2029-30. The new long-term-care home to be operated by North York General Hospital will feature 384 beds, making it one of Toronto's largest homes. Construction is expected to start in spring 2024 and be completed in the summer of 2026.

The residents of Don Valley North are absolutely thrilled by this exceptional news that demonstrates we are working hard to end hallway health care as we promised.

HOMELESS HEALTH PEEL

Ms. Sara Singh: We have a housing crisis in Peel, and homelessness is steadily increasing in our region. That's why Homeless Health Peel has stepped up to the plate and offered primary care to over 1,200 clients throughout the pandemic. Homeless Health Peel is a nursing and primary care service for people experiencing homelessness and other vulnerable communities in the Peel region, but they are scheduled to actually lose their funding in a matter of months if the provincial government doesn't step up to the plate.

Homeless Health Peel has helped clients like Bill Smith, who is currently housed at a shelter hotel in Brampton. He's received care that has made a significant difference in his life. As Bill has shared, he ended up having a couple of aneurisms in his leg and couldn't work. The services that Homeless Health Peel have been able to provide have helped him live with dignity and lift his spirits. Bill shares that his primary care nurse, Shaunna Demars, has been helping bring mental health care support and the medication that he needs.

Advocates in our community are calling on this government to ensure that Homeless Health Peel receives the funding it needs, which will end in March. That means that over 1,200 clients and folks in our community may not get the services they need. As nurse practitioner Clinton Baretto, the founder and clinical director of Homeless Health Peel says if these services aren't available, “the health of people experiencing homelessness in the region will suffer.” It's the only place for them to get real care.

Let's do the right thing, as Ameek Singh has said, and add the services into our community. Let's help save lives and help fund Homeless Health Peel.

MEMBER FOR CAMBRIDGE

Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios: I rise to make my final statement in the 42nd Parliament in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as it comes to a close. It has been an honour to serve the people of the constituency of Cambridge over the last four years in this House of democracy. In representing my constituents and my values, I have done my best to put forth important ideas and arguments that often would not have been discussed in this Legislature otherwise.

In tabling my first private member's bill, I wanted to present a bill of consequence and identified the gap in our laws that doesn't outlaw voter fraud in internal party elections. All Ontarians I speak with are shocked when they hear that governments have identified it as a priority to micro-manage every dollar spent on internal party campaigns, but when someone is victim to voter fraud, there is no law to protect them. I know this all too well, having watched voter fraud take place in front of thousands of people at the 2018 PC Party convention. It's

too bad that the current government never proceeded or had any interest in making that historic legislation law.

I am also proud to have stood up for the people of Cambridge when it came to local matters, even those that are controversial in nature, and to stand as the only current or former member of the government benches to vote against Bill 195, which I refer to as the lockdown bill. I am confident that, in time, I will be on the right side of history on that vote.

The challenge of this job is hearing of Ontarians who are struggling, trying to do my best to help and not always being able to immediately solve the problem. On a personal level, the most eye-opening experience is finding out that some of the people who you thought were friends were actually never friends at all.

Despite the challenges of the last four years for Ontarians, perhaps the silver lining in serving as an MPP is the great honour it has been to meet or speak to thousands of constituents and Ontarians outside my riding who I otherwise would never have met, and to receive their words of encouragement at times when it felt like it would have been easier to stop. Those are the memories I will remember and cherish and take away from the 42nd Parliament.

DAVID MYLES

Mr. Norman Miller: As some of my colleagues know, I have hosted 17 interns from the Ontario Legislature Internship Programme, or OLIP, over my time as MPP for Parry Sound–Muskoka. I recently learned that one of these interns, David Myles, has been nominated for a Juno award. David is nominated for Instrumental Album of the Year for his album *That Tall Distance*. If he wins, it will be his second Juno award. He was previously nominated for being a co-writer on *Inner Ninja*, which won Rap Recording of the Year in 2013.

I've had the pleasure of hearing David play several times since he worked in my office in 2004. I must say that, although I wasn't aware at the time that he wanted to be a professional musician, having worked with him, his creativity and dedication to his craft do not surprise me. Even back then he was a great writer, crafting members' statements and speeches that got picked up on the evening news.

I've seen him perform in Toronto and at the Stockey Centre in Parry Sound, and he has only gotten better over the years. David is just one example of the many talented people who have gone through the OLIP program. It has been one of the great joys of my time as MPP to mentor 17 of these bright individuals and follow their careers long after they finished the program.

I congratulate David on his nomination and wish him the best of luck in the Juno awards in May.

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr. Peter Tabuns: The housing crisis is very real. As I've been going door-to-door in my riding, I've had

parents and grandparents come out and say to me, "My children and my grandchildren have no hope of getting a home. They can't afford the rent, let alone buy a place. And so they will not be able to continue living in the community that they grew up in."

I've been in apartment buildings where single moms with children in studios and one-bedrooms have said to me, "I cannot move into a larger unit because when people move out of the bigger ones, the landlords crank up the rent sky-high. Can't do it." And I've talked to tenants in my riding who live in homes and who are fearful that someday their landlord is going to have to renovate, and when they get that eviction notice, they know they're going to leave my community and maybe even leave the city that they've loved.

People need decent homes so they can live decent lives. This government has failed to take action on the rules that allow landlords to crank rents sky-high when someone moves out of a unit. They haven't taken action to stop the games that happen with above-guideline increases, which many corporate landlords use as a way of cleaning tenants out so they can open the door to even higher rents.

Speaker, this has to change. The people of Ontario deserve decent housing. We have to act.

GREEN ENERGY INITIATIVES

Mr. Billy Pang: Today I want to talk about government initiatives in Markham–Unionville that are promoting the development of Ontario's green economy.

Recently I had a chance to visit the Markham headquarters of GE Hitachi, where 80 new jobs are working on a cutting-edge nuclear reactor for Ontario. These jobs are highly skilled and well paying, underlying Ontario's ability to balance economic growth with decarbonization initiatives.

Nuclear power is one of the reasons that Ontario already has such a green power grid, and such projects will further increase our province's carbon-free power generation.

1030

Additionally, in January it was announced that Markham–Unionville would receive development of a hydrogen-blending facility, which will reduce the emissions of 3,600 families and businesses across the riding.

And finally, a Tesla battery factory in Markham has created jobs and will help Ontario reach its goals of becoming a supply chain hub for electric vehicle production.

I'm proud of Markham–Unionville's contribution to Ontario's pursuit of a green economy, and I look forward to seeing the emissions reductions we achieve in years to come.

COVID-19 DEATHS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I have a point of order from the member from Brampton Centre.

Ms. Sara Singh: Speaker, I seek unanimous consent for the House to observe a moment of silence for the 84

Ontarians who have succumbed to COVID-19 over the past week.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The member from Brampton Centre seeks unanimous consent for the House to observe a moment of silence for the 84 Ontarians who have succumbed to COVID-19 over the past week. Is the House in favour? Agreed.

Everyone please rise.

The House observed a moment's silence.

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Point of order, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, I seek to table a document today. It's previously confidential advice that was provided to the government House leader's office with respect to parliamentary privilege and freedom of speech as it relates to members of Parliament and the enacting of their duties both in this House and, more importantly, outside of the House and on social media platforms.

I think it's timely, given that later today we will be hearing members' speeches with respect to a number of members who will be retiring. I think it's also important to remind members who are retiring that many of the resources available to members as they enact their duties in this House are not available to members after they have retired from this place. It highlights, certainly, the importance of certain levels of behaviour with respect to how members conduct themselves both in the House and outside of the House, and again, on social media.

I'd like to table this document now, because I think it would be very valuable for members who are both here and those who will be retiring very soon.

WEARING OF PINS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): A point of order from the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Speaker, if you seek it, I believe you will find unanimous consent to allow members to wear pins in recognition of the 105th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, which took place from April 9 to April 12, 1917, and still remains today a core part of Canada's and Ontario's heritage and our cultural fabric.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Is it the pleasure of the House that consent be granted? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): In the Speaker's gallery this morning are parliamentary interns visiting us from Ottawa as part of their study tour with the Ontario legislative interns. In our galleries are Elizabeth Bergeron, Charles Bernard, Anne Campbell, Harriet Crossfield, Jonathan Ferguson, Annyse Hawkins, Ryan

Jamula, Angelica Kalubiaka, Wynn Rederburg, Rayna Sutherland, and academic director Paul Thomas. How do we show our welcome to Queen's Park?

Applause.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Today there will be a number of tributes given to our colleagues who have chosen to retire from politics after this, and I want to welcome them all and their visitors.

But, today, on behalf of my esteemed colleague and very close friend Jim McDonell, the member for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry: He is visited today by two of his friends, Tom Ayerst and, of course, his long-time assistant and great friend to him and to myself, Marilyn McMahan-Ayerst. Welcome to Queen's Park today, and thank you for being here on behalf of Jim.

Ms. Lindsey Park: I would like to welcome my dear mother, Joan, joining us in the gallery this morning.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Welcome, mom.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I am going to welcome Stephanie and Trevor from the municipality of the township of Warwick. Welcome to Queen's Park today.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to welcome, to the seat of our democracy, Larry, Deepank, Daniel and Sylvana, who are here from King-Vaughan. Welcome to the Legislature this morning.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I want to welcome Jan Borowy and Fay Faraday, who are here from the Equal Pay Coalition; Patty Coates, president of the Ontario Federation of Labour; Cathryn Hoy, president of the Ontario Nurses' Association; and Mina Amrith, executive vice-president of SEIU Healthcare, who are here at Queen's Park today to hold a media conference.

QUESTION PERIOD

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Ms. Sara Singh: My first question is for the Premier. Dr. Peter Jüni, the head of the Premier's own science table, calls this sixth wave a "tidal wave." He says that waste water measurements of COVID mean that Ontario has now between 100,000 and 120,000 new COVID-19 cases a day. That means about 5% of the whole province is infected.

We have more COVID cases than ever before, Speaker, and the Premier is just calling this a little "uptick." The Premier believes that we have the hospital beds to handle this, but the reality here in Ontario is that we don't have the staff for those beds.

As much as the Premier might wish that this pandemic is over, it isn't. Why is the Premier simply waiting for hospital beds to overflow with patients before taking any proactive action?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you to the member opposite for the question. In fact, the increase in cases that

we're seeing now is expected. This is something that Dr. Moore has commented on several times with the release of some of the public health measures, as well as with the increased transmissibility of the BA.2 variant that is now the dominant variant in the province of Ontario.

But the situation has changed very much since the beginning of this pandemic and, to quote Dr. Moore, he has said this: "We have tools that we did not have just two years ago, including highly effective vaccines that have changed the course of the pandemic, high vaccination rates that continue to improve as more and more Ontarians see the value of getting boosted in order to protect themselves, their families and their communities."

We also have the antivirals, which are now being distributed more widely across the province, and we do have the capability within our hospitals. Today, the number of people in ICUs was 157; yesterday it was 166. We're holding steady and will continue to do so.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplementary?

Ms. Sara Singh: If the rising case counts were expected, where, then, is the urgent action from this government to implement the tools that they have to help us curb the spread of COVID-19 in our communities and help do things like make sure that our children are not kept out of classrooms, that working people don't go without paid sick days, for example, or that small businesses won't be further managing disruptions because of COVID-19 spread in our communities? Patients are already having their care delayed; surgeries have been cancelled. Piling up more people into hospitals means those folks are not going to get the surgeries they need.

1040

The science table and other experts are calling for the continued use of masks, paid sick days and more testing in Ontario, but Ontarians haven't actually even heard from the Chief Medical Officer of Health for weeks. What is the Premier's justification for dropping masks in hospitals and long-term-care homes?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Since the beginning of this pandemic, we have always taken the steps necessary to protect the health and safety of the people of the province of Ontario. We are following the recommendations from our Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Moore, and his advisers. Dr. Moore has recommended masks don't need to be worn, except in certain circumstances: in hospitals, in long-term-care homes and in other congregate settings where it's necessary for the protection of people. Should Dr. Moore change his views in the coming days, we will be making those changes as necessary, but as for wearing masks, it is something that is voluntary, although most people are choosing to wear masks in crowded public spaces and we anticipate they will continue to do so.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Final supplementary?

Ms. Sara Singh: Dr. Jüni is worried that without the use of masks, our health care system will be overwhelmed. He also said that the government moved too quickly to drop the mask mandates here in Ontario. He said that he's

"very uneasy" and worried that the wrong signals are being sent to Ontarians.

Ontarians deserve to hear from the best experts we have. That includes bringing the Chief Medical Officer of Health out of hiding to explain what is going on here in Ontario. Why is the Premier ignoring the problem rather than taking proactive measures to help us get through the sixth wave?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Our government has always taken the necessary steps to protect the health and safety of the people of Ontario, and we will continue to do so. We are following the advice of our Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Moore, and his advisers and the science advisory table as well. The view of one physician compared to the views of many is something that we listen to, but we are following the advice of Dr. Moore. He has provided us sound advice throughout, and I know he will continue to do so.

It was Dr. Moore's advice himself several weeks ago to say that we don't need to have regular conferences with him because we need to learn to live with COVID. Sadly, it's not going away immediately. It's going to continue within our system, but we have the measures that we need to keep people in Ontario healthy, with increased vaccinations, including the fourth vaccination that's available as of today, the antivirals, and we do have the capacity in our hospitals to manage.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Sara Singh: My next question is also to the Premier. We know that one of the biggest gaps in mental health care is for our children. As more and more Ontarians seek mental health supports and are openly sharing their struggles, families and children are concerned that the supports they need are out of reach and cost too much. They want their children to thrive and lead happier, healthier lives, but far too often mental health services are out of reach because of horribly long wait-lists and these huge financial barriers. Why won't the government recognize that universal mental health care will help families and kids access mental health supports in Ontario?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you for that question. Our government recognizes the impacts this pandemic has had on the mental health and well-being of children and youth across the province. Building an Ontario where young people are safe, healthy and thriving are the right things to be doing, and our plan impacts on those very issues. That's why we've made targeted investments in intensive mental health supports and services for children and youth that include a \$20-million investment across the board—a 5% increase—to all supports and services for youth; in addition to that, \$2.7 million for four youth wellness hubs in Guelph, Renfrew, Timmins and Windsor; and in addition to that, another eight youth wellness hubs, again to build on the supports necessary for youth. In addition to that, we've looked at specific youth wellness

hubs for Indigenous populations to ensure they have the supports they need.

We've made investments, including in eating disorders. They are solid investments to ensure that all children and youth have the supports they need, when and where they need them.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplementary?

Ms. Sara Singh: Children's Mental Health Ontario has called on all of us to take the #kidscantwait pledge to invest in mental health supports for our youngest people here in the province. Mary Kloosterman, the CEO of the organization, says, "Some kids are currently waiting up to two and a half years to see a mental health professional." I know in my community of Brampton, that's an unfortunate reality for many young people who need supports.

It shouldn't be like this in Ontario. We're lagging behind in the country and we need to do better for children, with immediate investments to cut the waits and invest in the services that they need. Speaker, why hasn't the Premier recognized that children in this province can't wait any longer for the mental health supports that they need, and when are they going to make the investments to help us save lives and ensure children have access to the supports?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Once again, I'd like to reiterate that our government is actively investing. Our government is at the forefront across Canada from the standpoint of investments that are being made in mental health and addictions. In fact, not only are we investing through the ministry of mental health and addictions, we're investing through education. And the amount of money that's been invested is above and beyond any money that's ever been invested by any government, even the one when your party was in power.

We are making a substantial difference and laying transformational change in a system that was broken long before we came in to power, and the pandemic, which exacerbated the situation, is being addressed as well, with the investments that are being made which now total over \$525 million annually. In fact, Children's Mental Health Ontario said, "The ... government's new mental health and addictions strategy," the Roadmap to Wellness, "is a start towards making transformational changes to address the gaps in service and wait times for child and youth mental health and addictions," and we will continue making those investments, notwithstanding—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you. The deputy leader.

Ms. Sara Singh: I'd like to remind the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions that it was this government that cut planned increases in 2018 to the mental health budget.

But it doesn't have to be this way for children in our province, Speaker. When experts like Children's Mental Health Ontario call on us to invest, to cut the wait-lists and build capacity, they can count on New Democrats to support that call to action. But children in Ontario can't

count on this government to do the same. Under the Liberals, the wait-list should have never reached two and a half years for children to see a mental health care professional, and the wait-lists were made even worse when this Premier made cuts rather than investments when taking office.

Will the government recognize that now is the time for universal mental health care services to be a part of OHIP, and use the upcoming budget to build a better mental health care system for our children and people across Ontario?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I thought this issue was addressed the last time I was asked. The \$325 million that's being referred to is in fact a campaign promise by a government that got seven seats in the last election. This government invested a 5% increase over the amount that was invested previously by previous governments. This government is making transformational changes in a system that was broken long before we came to power. In 2010, with your members as part of that standing committee, they talked about lack of access, fragmentation, a broken system. It took this government to build a Roadmap to Wellness that is making transformational changes, and it's backed by an investment of \$525 million annualized, \$3.8 billion over 10 years.

We will not take lessons nor listen to the delusions that somehow we've reduced spending on mental health. That's preposterous. I can't even comment on that. And this is not the first, it's the 10th time I have heard the same nonsense coming out of the side of the opposition.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. This morning, the Equal Pay Coalition was at Queen's Park, together with leaders of the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Ontario Nurses' Association and SEIU Healthcare. They were here to sound the alarm on the Ford government's attack on the collective bargaining and pay equity rights of nurses, PSWs and many other women workers in health care and social services. The coalition and labour leaders are united in calling on this government to repeal Bill 124, withdraw Bill 106, pay health care workers what they deserve and stop overriding women's rights to pay equity.

Why did this government decide to gut pay equity in Bill 106 instead of simply paying PSWs, nurses and other public sector workers what they deserve?

1050

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the Minister of Labour.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I thank the member opposite for this question. First, I want to begin by thanking all of those front-line health care workers who have worked every single day to protect our families and all of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take this opportunity to personally pay tribute to a trailblazer in this province, and

that is former Premier Kathleen Wynne, the member from Don Valley West. She blazed a trail and she inspired many people across this province.

I just want to share a story. We all know that Premiers have a hectic schedule, a busy schedule. But for me, I remember this one moment at Queen's Park when I was back in opposition, critical of the former government. My daughter was out front of the Legislature, and the Premier took time to come over and talk to her as a young lady. So I want to say to the former Premier, on behalf of the province of Ontario, on behalf of this government, thank you for your service.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you.

New question. I recognize the member for—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Oh, sorry. My apology.

Supplementary?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you, Speaker. They say there's a reason why this is called question period and not answer period.

Bill 106 overturns hard-won Supreme Court victories on pay equity. It is a direct attack on the rights of women in health and social services who have carried us through this pandemic. It is unconstitutional interference with collective bargaining rights, just like the Ford government's earlier attack on workers with Bill 124.

An Environics poll commissioned by the Equal Pay Coalition was released this morning, showing that 85% of Ontarians believe it is important for the government to do more to promote women's economic equality. That means decent wages and working conditions like permanent paid sick days.

Ontario voters care about women's economic equality. Why doesn't this government?

Hon. Monte McNaughton: It is a priority of this government. I want to remind the member opposite that everyone deserves equal pay, regardless of their gender.

I want to thank the Pay Equity Commissioner, Kadie Ward, who I appointed a couple of years ago. She is doing great work to ensure that women have equal pay in this province. Kadie Ward, the new Pay Equity Commissioner, comes with a wealth of experience. She has worked in Ukraine, and I think it's important to note that many of the Ukrainian refugees that are going to be coming here are going to be women and children. We're going to be there with supports for these women and children that come here. That's why I was proud to join the Minister of Health, the Premier, the Minister of Infrastructure and Ukrainian Canadian leaders yesterday to announce over \$300 million in supports for Ukrainian refugees to find safe haven here in Ontario and to build better lives for them—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you. That was a test just to make sure the House was paying attention to hold the Speaker accountable, so thank you very much.

It is now time for a new question.

TAXATION

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Good morning. My question is to the Minister of Finance. Minister, I've heard from so many constituents in my riding of Mississauga Centre who are very concerned after the federal government raised the price of the carbon tax last Friday. These people are hard-working Ontario families, moms, dads, seniors and our young people who have had a very, very long two years. As the costs continue to rise, especially the cost of living, this tax increase almost couldn't come at a worse time.

Speaker, through you, how are the minister and the government planning to address these tax hikes imposed by the federal government and cut costs for Ontario families?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you to the member from Mississauga Centre. If I could just say here in the House, I would like to personally thank her for her incredible work, not just on the front lines through the pandemic as a nurse and representing her profession, but also and especially her incredible advocacy for the most vulnerable and marginalized in her community, and indeed, across the entire province of Ontario.

But my colleague is completely right. Our government understands that taxpayers are under pressure. We recognize the impact that inflation, and especially the significant impact that rising gasoline and fuel prices are having on businesses and families, and our government is here for them. That's why, as part of our plan to provide relief across the board, our government has introduced the Tax Relief at the Pumps Act that would, if passed, temporarily cut the gas tax by 5.7 cents per litre and the fuel tax by 5.3 cents per litre for six months, beginning on July 1. Speaker, this is just one part of our plan to cut costs for every Ontarian.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplementary?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you to the parliamentary assistant for that response. It's great to hear that our government has taken the initiative so quickly after a disappointing increase in the carbon tax by the federal government, ensuring Ontarians keep more money in their pockets, not the government's pockets. After 15 long years of Liberal mismanagement, it's great to be a part of a government that is working for the taxpayer, for the people in so many ways.

But with so much ongoing economic and world uncertainty, the pressure that so many Ontarians are under, due to inflation and rising costs, is becoming very difficult to bear. Speaker, through you, what is the minister's and the government's plan to help build Ontario and cut costs for Ontario's hard-working families?

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you again for the great question from the member from Mississauga Centre. She's absolutely right. Ontarians have faced a tough two years from the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impacts. No government better understands that. That's why we are

continuing to call on the federal government to do the right thing and join Ontario in providing relief for families and workers by cutting the carbon tax.

The Tax Relief at the Pumps Act is just one part of our plan to continue to build Ontario and to keep more money flowing into the pockets of hard-working Ontarians. From removing unfair road tolls on Highways 412 and 418 imposed by the Del Duca government, to eliminating licence plate renewal fees and stickers, to providing tax relief for seniors, workers and families, this government is keeping costs down for the people of Ontario.

Speaker, we, on this side of the House, are the only party that says yes to the people of Ontario and has a plan to fight for them.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: My question is for the Premier. Speaker, Northwestern Ontario has a dire shortage of physicians, and it needs to be addressed now. For example, the CEO of the Lake of the Woods District Hospital told KenoraOnline he has never seen this many vacancies. Because of the lack of staff, the ICU had to close 14 times since September.

One of the biggest barriers to solving this problem is that the hospital has great difficulty recruiting doctors. The government knows that even with the expansion of the spots at NOSM, it will take many years to clear the current physician shortage of 325 doctors, and that number will continue to rise. What is this government going to do to immediately address the physician shortage in northwestern Ontario?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Our government did make a commitment to end hallway health care, and that starts with improving access to primary care services for those living in rural and northern Ontario. We do understand that there is a particular concern in northern Ontario with attracting and retaining physicians, but we have both long-term and short-term solutions to that problem. We are providing \$6.2 million across 32 primary care teams to improve access to primary care in high-needs communities across the province. We also have, in terms of short-term solutions—I know it's not ideal, but we do have locum placements in many northern communities.

But I think the biggest long-term solution that we have is increasing the number of placements in our medical schools across the province of Ontario, which were not dealt with by previous governments. But I can speak to that more specifically in the supplemental.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The supplementary.

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: Again to the Premier: Almost every day I hear from constituents who have trouble accessing primary health care. This has impacts. When we tell people in a pandemic that you need to consult with your physician, and they don't have one, it's a problem.

As the NOSM Physician Workforce Strategy makes clear, we need short-, medium- and long-term solutions to ensure that health care needs of northerners are taken care of. Experts say solutions involve training new doctors, of course; recruiting doctors from other places; and retaining doctors we have working in the region now. Physicians are burning out. They're desperate; they're leaving. This needs to be a systemic, coordinated approach. What is this government going to do to ensure that there is a systemic approach to the physician shortage in northern Ontario?

1100

Hon. Christine Elliott: We are taking a systemic approach to dealing with this situation, with a variety of solutions. One is, as I previously said, increasing the allocations to our primary health care teams, but there's also virtual care, which is becoming more and more common. More and more Ontarians want to use that. We are digitizing our health care records. We are also allowing people in northern Ontario to obtain the solutions and assistance from physicians in other locations.

As you've mentioned, the most important thing that we're doing is increasing the number of doctors that we actually have in the province of Ontario. We're increasing the number of placements by 160 undergraduate seats and 295 postgraduate seats, of which the Northern Ontario School of Medicine will be receiving 30 undergraduate and 41 postgraduate seats. That's really important for people who live in northern Ontario to be able to train in northern Ontario, and it's much more likely that they will stay in northern Ontario. That is a true long-term solution to this problem.

COVID-19 IMMUNIZATION

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Speaker, through you to the Minister of Colleges and Universities: The objectives of directive 6 issued by Dr. Moore were to set out a provincially consistent approach to COVID-19 immunization policies, but directive 6 also allowed for unvaccinated students to continue to learn online, and that seemed to work okay for students whose personal choice was to not get vaccinated.

It was immoral that the colleges and universities decided on their own and were allowed to further jeopardize students and teachers when they implemented an unnecessary policy of vaccinate or terminate, or even lose your academic year. Students had their personal reasons for not wanting the vaccine, and it was obvious that these non-medical "powers to be" disregarded personal choice.

Your government continued to allow these institutions to move far beyond directive 6 into a heavy-handed, authoritarian approach. So, Minister, will you step in and stop these non-medical educational institutions from forcing an invasive medical procedure on staff and students?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Obviously, our colleges and universities are independent institutions that make independent decisions. The good news is that, as the Minister of Health has highlighted, with the high vaccination rates in the province of Ontario and, really, the groundbreaking investments we've made in hospital capacity in preparing the province of Ontario, following 15 years of failure to make these types of investments, Ontario is in a very good spot to weather the storm.

At the same time, it's also important to note that our colleges and universities really pivoted very quickly. It took a lot of resources and additional funding to prepare them so that our students could continue to learn online when the pivot was necessary. The Minister of Colleges and Universities did some great work on that, as did the Minister of Education for our elementary and secondary school students.

We're very proud of the fact that, despite a global pandemic, our students have been able to continue to work, they've continued to graduate and they've continued to provide exceptional benefit to the province of Ontario and will continue to do so—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Back to the minister: These educational institutions continue to go even further by mandating vaccines for all students and lecturers, regardless of whether students take the courses online or on campus. Does that make any sense? Students have no option; they're being coerced. Colleges and universities are now forcing students, if they want to pass, to attend classes in person to be vaccinated; if not, they are disenrolled. Students who have been disenrolled and whose educational institution claimed that they are unable to confirm if the student will be returning must repay their OSAP six months after that point of disenrolment. Why? Perhaps your ministry could reconsider its stand and implement a no-vaccine mandate and tell these institutions they can no longer mandate vaccines.

It has been said that education is something no one can take away from you. Minister, don't take students' education away. Minister, what are you prepared to do to protect unvaccinated students, who are entitled to an education and a good job?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, I thank the member for the question. We're obviously prepared to do everything it takes to keep the people of the province of Ontario safe, including our students. That is why the Minister of Education, when it comes to elementary and secondary students, has ensured that we have one of—if not the—safest return-to-school protocols in the entire country.

The Minister of Colleges and Universities—when the pandemic hit, we knew very well how important it was to allow these students to continue their education so that they could graduate, so that they could progress into the careers of their choice, what they had worked so hard to do. That is why we put enormous resources in to allow our colleges and universities to pivot very quickly, something that they were going to do over a long period of time. We

allowed it to happen seamlessly and very quickly so that they could continue to get the education that they're paying for, Mr. Speaker, and that is so vital, not only to their future but to the future of the people of the province of Ontario.

As the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade adds so many new jobs in so many different sectors of the economy, we need these students to continue to graduate so that they can fill the thousands of jobs that are empty and that are needing to be filled in the province of Ontario. They have a great future, as do all Ontarians, because of the decisions of this government.

LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. We saw the minister in Hamilton just last week make an exciting announcement at McMaster Innovation Park to support our life sciences sector. Ontario's life sciences sector is a key part of Ontario's economy and employs thousands of workers across the province.

Now, more than ever, Ontarians are counting on our government to grow Ontario's life sciences sector and secure new investments in next-generation health technology, medicines and vaccine manufacturing. Speaker, through you, can the minister tell us how his ministry and our government plans to grow Ontario's biomanufacturing and life sciences sector?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Companies have made a streak of game-changing investments in Ontario in the auto sector recently. In the past 17 months, we've seen \$12 billion in investments, adding thousands of jobs.

But as the member pointed out, other sectors in Ontario have been seeing similar success. Over that same period of time, Ontario has welcomed investments of almost \$2 billion by leading life science companies, including Sanofi, Resilience and Roche. Last week OmniaBio announced a \$580-million investment to build a new cell and gene therapy manufacturing facility at McMaster University in Hamilton. And Invest Ontario, our investment attraction agency, made their very first investment by providing \$40 million.

Speaker, whether it's a game-changing auto investment one day or a half-a-billion-dollar life science investment another day, it's clear that Ontario is getting stronger.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplementary?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. Through you, Speaker, we've seen a number of investments over the past few years, which have contributed to the growth of Ontario's life sciences sector. I'm sure my constituents, and all Ontarians, are excited to hear about the record-breaking investments we've attracted, as opposed to the mass exodus of jobs caused by the previous Liberal government.

Speaker, through you: Could the minister tell us what new investments have been made and how his ministry is

positioning Ontario to be the life sciences sector hub of Canada?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Last week we also announced a new life sciences strategy, the very first provincial strategy for that sector in more than a decade. This announcement included \$15 million for the Life Sciences Innovation Program, which helps position the sector for long-term growth, investment and job creation.

We set a lofty goal of 85,000 high-value jobs by 2030, focusing on four areas: growing our business biomanufacturing, building domestic PPE, boosting commercialization and adopting innovations. Our vision, Speaker, is to establish Ontario as a global leader in biomanufacturing and life sciences. We will continue making the right strategic investments to support critical industries like our life sciences sector.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Gurratan Singh: My question is to the Premier. Times are really tough right now. People are struggling with how expensive life is becoming, from the cost of gas, to groceries, to auto insurance. But instead of helping people, the Conservative government is allowing billion-dollar car insurance companies to rip off Ontarians.

Does the Premier think it's okay that there are people in Ontario who are paying more for car insurance than for the mortgage of their own home? Does the Premier think it's okay that there are people with clear driving records who are being charged higher rates, purely based on where they live? Does the Premier think it's okay that there are people who are struggling to make ends meet because of the crushing cost of car insurance?

Well, it's not okay, but the Premier is allowing it to happen. Will the Premier do the right thing and vote yes to our NDP bill to lower car insurance rates to make life more affordable?

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The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Will Bouma: I appreciate that question, because the member is absolutely right. The people of Ontario work hard, and our government understands that the taxpayers are under pressure. That's why we have been following the auto insurance sector so very, very closely. That's also why we had a clear message to insurance companies as we went through the COVID pandemic: You should provide relief that reflects the financial hardships your customers are facing because of COVID-19. By encouraging and promoting timely action by insurers, our government enabled more than \$1 billion in consumer savings, affecting 93% of Ontario drivers.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to remove barriers to relief, and by doing that, we will be able to provide options and choice to consumers in the province of Ontario. In fact, David Marshall's new report stated that FSRA, since 2019, "has been active in reducing regulatory burden." We support the work the regulator is doing to cut red tape. I'll say more in the supplemental.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplementary?

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Back to the Premier: The only thing that the Conservative government is following is whatever their insider friends and buddies want in the insurance companies. If we look at the track record of this Conservative government, it's very clear: They allowed rates to go up in 2018 when they first got elected; they allowed rates to go up when we saw traffic drop to some of its lowest during the height of the pandemic; and now, as people struggle to make ends meet, they continue to let rates go up.

In case the Conservative government was confused, let me make it clear: The buck stops with the Premier. Rates only go up when the Conservative government allows them to go up. People deserve better. They deserve to live an affordable life where they're not suffering under these crushing auto insurance premiums. Will the Premier do the right thing and vote yes to our NDP bill and make life more affordable to Ontarians?

Mr. Will Bouma: David Marshall's new report mentioned that the future of consumer services, like insurance, lies in being responsive to rapid changes, such as pricing and innovation. We recently implemented, through FSRA, a new regulatory sandbox to test new initiatives to respond to changing consumer needs. Successful innovations from this sandbox would be delivered to the consumer market. We will continue to increase consumer choice through enabling our auto insurers to offer optional direct compensation property damage, savings for good drivers with telematics and develop stronger anti-fraud measures.

Mr. Speaker, the key is affordability. We understand that the people of the province of Ontario need relief. That's why we are taking measures in the auto insurance industry, at the gas pumps, with your vehicle licence plate stickers in order to provide that relief to the people of Ontario.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Stephen Blais: In fact, the key is affordability. In 2018, this government made a number of promises—big promises—that they failed to deliver on, including their promise not to touch rent control. I believe the quote from the Premier at the time was, "I have listened to the people, and I won't take rent control away from anyone. Period. When it comes to rent control, we're going to maintain the status quo." That was May 2018, Mr. Speaker. Lo and behold, one of the very first things this Premier did was to take rent control away from thousands of Ontarians. And a year later, tenants were reporting double-digit increases.

With skyrocketing housing costs right across the province, these rent controls could have provided much-needed relief to thousands of renters who are struggling to make ends meet. This is just another broken promise in the long list of broken promises from this Premier.

After two years of turmoil, does the government regret breaking their 2018 commitment to maintain rent control in Ontario?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. It gives us the opportunity as a government to talk about what we promised Ontarians. We promised Ontarians, from the first day we sat in the Legislature, that we were going to do everything we could to increase housing supply. We also kept our promise to preserve rent control for existing tenants. It was a promise we made during the 2018 election.

So what did that promise that was in the fall economic statement accomplish? Well, we're now seeing purpose-built rental construction, the likes that we haven't seen since the early 1990s, since 1992, Speaker. In each consecutive year after our housing supply action plan, communities across Ontario saw purpose-built rentals being constructed where it had not been even thought about under the previous government.

Your government, sir, over 15 years, neglected purpose-built rental. Nothing was built. Under our government, that changed.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I'll just remind all members to please direct their comments through the Chair.

I recognize the member from Orléans for the supplemental.

Mr. Stephen Blais: Well, let's talk about some of the government's promises, as the minister highlighted in his answer. They promised to lower hydro rates—fail. They promised to lower gas prices—fail. They promised a 20% income tax cut—fail.

The government can come up with any excuse they want, but Ontarians know that their rent is higher today than it was four years ago. The cost of a one-bedroom rental in Ottawa is over \$1,600; in Toronto, it's over \$2,000. This morning, I took a look in Brockville: It's almost \$1,300 in Brockville. Rents are sky-high, and this government has done absolutely nothing to keep them under control or help Ontarians with growing costs.

Will the government admit that they broke their 2018 promise to maintain rent control in Ontario, and immediately bring it back for relief for Ontario families?

Hon. Steve Clark: I laid out the facts on the state of purpose-built rentals in Ontario. We're seeing 30-year highs in communities all across Ontario. We want to build upon that. We want to work with our municipal partners.

And we're all very excited about the federal budget today, to see the measures that the federal government is putting forward, the money that they're spending. I've said it many times here: Dealing with the housing supply crisis is a long-term strategy. We need all three levels of government for it to work.

But you know what, Speaker? I'm not going to take any lessons from this guy across the way and his party. For 15 years, hydro rates—sitting in the constituency office, like I had, sir, and to have every single call, for week after week after week, complaining about this government's inaction on the hydro file, closing rural schools, making life unaffordable, choking off our medium and small

hospitals. I'm not going to take any lessons from this guy at all.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Norman Miller: My question is for the President of the Treasury Board. From day one of this pandemic, our government has been committed to protecting the health, safety and well-being of the people of Ontario. But we all saw that when the pandemic was declared in March 2020, Ontario was not prepared. COVID-19 exposed long-standing gaps across our health care system: unused PPE had expired in provincial stockpiles, Ontario was reliant on other jurisdictions for supplies and provincial pandemic plans had not been updated.

I was pleased to see our government release A Plan to Stay Open, to ensure we are never caught flat-footed in another emergency. Can the President of the Treasury Board tell us exactly what is in our government's plan to stay open?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the parliamentary assistant to the President of the Treasury Board.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Thank you to the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka for that timely question.

The member is exactly right. At the outbreak of this pandemic, we were not prepared. Since March 2020, this government has made historic investments to protect the people of Ontario, but it is clear more must be done. That is why we have released A Plan to Stay Open and introduced the Pandemic and Emergency Preparedness Act to build up our capacity to respond. These steps will expand Ontario's health care workforce, improve the production of critical supplies and build more hospital beds to ensure we have the capacity to meet any future challenges. Unlike the previous government, we understand the importance of investing in Ontario's health care system.

Speaker, I will have more to say in the supplementary about this plan and how we will continue to protect the people of Ontario by keeping Ontario open.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplemental.

Mr. Norman Miller: Thank you to the parliamentary assistant for that response.

The pandemic brought to light long-standing systemic challenges. Hallway health care has been a problem in Ontario for decades. In my riding, our hospitals are frequently well over 100% capacity, largely because of the number of ALC patients who can't get into a long-term-care facility or get home care. Recently, Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare is seeing 40% of our beds occupied by ALC patients.

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Between 2011 and 2018, the Liberal government built only 611 net new long-term-care beds. Meanwhile, our government has 27,148 new and 23,504 upgraded beds in the development pipeline.

Back to the President of the Treasury Board: How will his legislation and A Plan to Stay Open add more beds to our health care system?

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Again, Speaker, I want to thank the member for that question. I want to thank the Minister of Long-Term Care for all the excellent work he is doing to build our long-term-care homes across this province.

I also want to thank Minister Elliott. Through the Ministry of Health we are investing \$22 billion over the next 10 years to address challenges around bed shortages. These investments will increase capacity in the existing hospitals, build new health care facilities in our communities and renew aging hospitals and community health care centres. This investment includes the launch of 50 new major projects and will add over 3,000 new beds over the next decade. This is on top of the 3,100 acute and post-acute care beds this government has already added to the system.

Let me be clear to the people of Ontario: We know it is our responsibility to prepare the province for future generations. And again, this Premier is getting things done.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Ms. Jennifer K. French: My question is to the Minister of Health. The Back Door Mission and its Mission United service partners established a model of care to support the immediate crisis needs of those most in need in Oshawa. The downtown clinic has operated with one nurse practitioner, one RN and rotating doctors providing specialist care. The Mission United clinic provides primary care and a full clinic to about 600 clients—individuals who previously did not receive primary care due to systemic barriers and otherwise might not. This population suffers chronic homelessness, mental health challenges and addictions, and, in most cases, a complex combination of all three.

Unbelievably, the funding from the province through Ontario Health East has evaporated without warning. Days ago, the medical support team found out the funding would not continue beyond March 31, and our community and vulnerable neighbours desperately need this funding to continue. It is not hyperbole to say that lives are at stake.

I've sent the minister a letter outlining the situation. Will the Minister of Health commit to the funding needed immediately to run this desperately needed acute care clinic at the Back Door Mission?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you for that question. Clearly, when it comes to mental health, addictions and, of course, health, they are interrelated. It's extremely important that the supports and services are in place to help everyone, especially our most vulnerable.

I just learned of the Back Door Mission. I'm not familiar with it, but I certainly would like to spend a little bit more time and understand a little bit more about it. I know, for instance, that we have made investments in ensuring that there are beds to deal with mental health and

provide supports for individuals that are homeless. Of course, they are an important part of our population that needs to be taken care of as well.

Our government has made investments in Durham, many investments, including overall spending of over \$77 million in health care in Durham.

I'll follow up with additional information in the supplemental.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplementary.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Back to the Minister of Health: Please understand that many of the vulnerable clients served at Back Door Mission cannot access appropriate care anywhere else. It is my understanding that more than 50% of the clients struggling with mental health or addictions at the Back Door Mission don't have health cards or identification. They will not be served at private clinics. The clients who struggle with addictions, mental health crises, volatility and unpredictability are not going to be successful in scheduling and attending appointments. We cannot in good conscience condemn them to struggle alone without care.

I've been connecting with the medical team and Nathan Gardner, the executive director at the Back Door Mission. It's clear that, without the clinic, the majority of these marginalized neighbours in need will land in the emergency room in an ambulance and, in many cases, will die.

The doctors, nurses and eight partner service providers are distraught over the uncertain future of the people they care for and serve. For two years, this model has proven itself. Mission United partners have been jumping through hoops to achieve that sustainable funding commitment from Ontario Health. Will the minister please address the situation and commit the funds needed to keep this primary care clinic open and our struggling neighbours cared for?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Once again, our government is committed to ensuring that the continuum of care exists for every citizen in the province of Ontario. Durham has seen numerous investments, including in mental health of over \$2.2 million. In every area of public health care spending there have been increases year over year with our government in power. One of the things, as I said before, when it comes to the Roadmap to Wellness and ensuring that there are appropriate supports for all members of our communities—those are in place. Those are things that we are looking at and that we do support.

As I said, this is the first time I've heard of the Back Door Mission. I've never seen an application from them with respect to funding. Our addiction recovery fund—there was no application that came forward from them, but I'm certainly interested in reviewing the situation and seeing what we can do, because everyone in the province, regardless of who they are and where they are, deserves supports and help.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. Roman Baber: My question is to the government House leader. Voters are concerned by the increasing

financial ties between the media and government. Free and independent media is a pillar of democracy, but when this government is one of the biggest advertisers on all media platforms for the last two years—TV, radio, papers, Internet, benches, bus shelters, highway ads and elevator screens paid for by the government of Ontario—I'd like the House leader to tell us, how much money did the government spend on ads, paid for by the government of Ontario, through all media platforms in the last two fiscal years, and will the House leader commit to coming back with a dollar figure next week?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, there's just so much to communicate, right? It is a challenge that we face because there is just so much good news happening across the province of Ontario. Look, the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade has announced record-breaking investments in the automotive sector. We have to tell people about that. Of course we have to tell people about that. A \$5-million investment in new technology: We want to tell people about that. We want to tell people about how we're emerging from the pandemic stronger than almost any other jurisdiction in North America. I think that's good news. People deserve to know about that.

We're not going to apologize for letting people know how the hard work of their government is helping Ontario succeed to become the best place in the world in which to live, work, invest and raise a family. You know what, Mr. Speaker? A strong, stable majority Progressive Conservative government has delivered for the people of the province of Ontario. Over 500,000 people have the dignity of a job now that didn't before. That's good news, and we're going to tell people about it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplementary?

Mr. Roman Baber: Speaker, if the government House leader is so proud of them, why wouldn't he come back with a dollar figure?

We know that this government governs by polls. Dr. Jüni estimates that there are 120,000 new daily cases each day. If three months ago, in January, the government put the health and safety of Ontarians first, then truly they must lock us down again now, especially since protection from the vaccine has further waned and this health minister doesn't believe in natural immunity. So what changed? Is it the polls, months before an election, or the realization that we did not need to lock down in January or last January? But this cabinet looks at polling every time it meets, because the only thing it cares about is re-election.

Will the House leader tell us how many taxpayer dollars were spent on public opinion polling in the last two fiscal years, and will the House leader commit to coming back with a dollar figure next week?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The House will come to order.

I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Here's a dollar figure that the people of the province of Ontario can count on. After question period today, all of the members of this assembly are going to have an opportunity to vote on putting more money back into the pockets of the people of Ontario. I hope that the member opposite will join us in doing that. They're going to have the opportunity to work to support workers, something that has never been done by the previous Liberal government in 15 years. It took this government to get it done, Mr. Speaker.

Why do we have to do this? Why are we making investments in workers? Why are we making investments in apprenticeships? Because of this Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, seizing on the hard work of the Minister of Energy, who brought down energy prices for the people of the province. Let's not forget, colleagues, that when we came to office, the Liberals had scheduled a 19% increase in hydro rates. We cancelled it. And you know what has resulted? Thousands of jobs coming back, 500,000 people working who weren't working before and over 300,000 jobs that need to be filled. Ontario is moving, thanks to a strong, stable Progressive Conservative majority—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Stop the clock.

Start the clock. The next question.

1130

SUBVENTIONS AUX RÉSIDENTS
DU NORD POUR FRAIS DE TRANSPORT
À DES FINS MÉDICALES
NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

M. Guy Bourgouin: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé. Madame la Ministre, comme vous le savez, les résidents du Nord se déplacent à tous les jours pour des rendez-vous médicaux.

Although they are very grateful for the Northern Health Travel Grant, the financial support does not reflect the current cost of living. Looking back at a few years ago, the travel grant covered some of the costs of medical travel, but now, with the rising cost of gas, travelling for medical reasons has become a financial burden.

Speaker, will this government commit to revising their calculation of the payments considering the financial burden travelling for medical reasons puts on northerners?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you to the member opposite for the question. Our government certainly recognizes the unique challenges that people, especially in the north, face when trying to access health care. The Northern Health Travel Grant is continuously undergoing quality improvements to make sure that people get the support they need and, of course, in a timely manner.

The 2021-22 allocation for the Northern Health Travel Grant was \$48.2 million. Just a few extra statistics, Speaker: I can advise that in the 2021 fiscal year, the

Ministry of Health received and processed 143,495 Northern Health Travel Grant applications—96.2% of those applications were approved, and 95% were approved within 30 business days.

Of course, we want to make sure that people can receive it quickly, and so we've also introduced a revised application form that allows clients to provide banking information so that the deposits can be made quickly into their bank account, but cheques are also available.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplementary?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Je comprends bien que le programme de subventions accordées aux résidents du nord de l'Ontario aide à défrayer les coûts des déplacements. Mais les critères d'admissibilité ne répondent plus aux besoins et aux réalités des déplacements.

Parlons d'un résident de mon comté qui demeure à Kapuskasing. Il doit se rendre à Timmins pour un rendez-vous à 3 h du matin, ce qui veut dire qu'il doit coucher à Timmins, à moins qu'il ne voyage sur nos routes en pleine nuit. Le problème? La subvention ne couvre pas son accommodation puisqu'il ne parcourt pas 200 kilomètres dans un sens, donc aucun soutien. Avec le prix de l'essence, le tarif par kilomètre ne couvre non plus son déplacement.

Madame la Ministre, ce scénario se produit à tous les jours—trop souvent—et c'est inacceptable. Quand est-ce que votre gouvernement va comprendre les enjeux du Nord et va redéfinir les conditions d'admissibilité et de paiement pour refléter la réalité actuelle?

Hon. Christine Elliott: As I previously indicated, we are constantly reviewing the Northern Health Travel Grant: the applications, the eligibility, the payments and so on. But we also know that because of the perilous travel conditions that sometimes people are facing in northern Ontario, we also have to have other options for people seeking care. So in addition to travelling, we also have our Digital First for Health Strategy, which expands the virtual care options for all Ontarians. We anticipate that that's going to increase in the coming years as we increase our digitization so that people will be able to see their own health records, they'll be able to make appointments online, and they'll also be able to see specialists, which, right now, they have to physically go to visit. We want to make sure that the care can come directly to people. That's what we need to concentrate on, because it's more convenient and it's more accessible for Ontarians, regardless of where they live in the province.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Mr. John Fraser: The head of the Ontario science table, Dr. Peter Jüni, says that Ontario is seeing 100,000 cases of COVID each day, every day. He adds that if we keep on this way and continue not to mask, there will be a great strain on our health care system—"a tidal wave," as he describes it.

The sixth wave is going to be our biggest wave yet. Yet for one month, we have not heard from the Chief Medical Officer of Health—total radio silence. I find it hard to

believe that Dr. Moore doesn't understand the importance of communication during a pandemic, especially given the risks that we face right now.

It's clear that the Premier doesn't want Dr. Moore to appear publicly and that Dr. Moore is being muzzled. Speaker, will the Premier lift his gag order on the Chief Medical Officer of Health?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I remind all members to not use inflammatory references in the House.

I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Christine Elliott: I'd really like to concentrate on the facts here. The facts are that Dr. Moore has chosen not to appear in regular conferences because, in his words, we have to learn to live with COVID as it is now. We can't continue to have to need weekly updates when we know that we are seeing an increase, but the increase is manageable. Dr. Moore is free to come forward at any time as he sees fit to continue with those conferences, but he is the one that chose not to do so on the basis that we have to learn to live with COVID. So we are respecting that.

We are providing daily updates to people. The information is readily available to everyone. But as Dr. Moore himself has said, we should not be surprised to see an increase in the number of cases that we're seeing in Ontario because we have released a number of the public health measures and we have a more transmissible variant. But vaccination is the key to success to this.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Supplementary?

Mr. John Fraser: The Chief Medical Officer of Health works for the government, so it's clear they don't believe that he should be communicating either.

For two years, Ontarians have relied on regular communications, both from Dr. Williams and Dr. Moore. They relied on those briefings and those doctors for information and tools they needed to keep them and their families safe. And now we're facing what looks like is going to be the biggest wave, and there is a vacuum—a vacuum—of leadership. The Chief Medical Officer of Health is nowhere to be found. It's simply not believable to me—and I think anyone else here—that Dr. Moore doesn't feel a responsibility to do what he's been doing all along and what every other medical officer of health is doing across Ontario.

I know the Premier doesn't want COVID to interfere with his election plans, and that's why he's muzzling the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Once again, will the Premier rescind his gag order on the Chief Medical Officer of Health?

Hon. Christine Elliott: What the member opposite is saying is ridiculous and is not based on fact whatsoever. It's absolutely not the case—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The member from Ottawa South will come to order.

Please resume.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Dr. Moore is independent. He always has been. He's always stated what he believes to be important for the people of Ontario—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The member from Ottawa South will come to order.

Please carry on.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Any suggestion that Dr. Moore is doing anything other than what he thinks is in the best interests of the people of Ontario is absolutely untrue. Dr. Moore—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The member from Ottawa South will come to order.

Hon. Christine Elliott: —can come forward and speak to people as he sees fit. He knows that he can do that and he can do so throughout his term as our Chief Medical Officer of Health.

In the meantime, information is readily available to the people of Ontario. They can find out what the case rates are, what the hospitalization rates are and so on.

We believe in free and public accountability—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you. The next question.

SMALL BUSINESS

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My question is to the Premier. Mike Bernardo owns Bernardo Karate in London and each time he's contacted the support line, he's been told his application is being processed and that he just has to wait, so he's been left in the dark, waiting for the grant.

Another small business owner, Paul Nother, who owns an awards and trophy shop—he, like Michael, received the grant during the first round last year. Paul contacted me and asked why his business was no longer eligible for the grant, despite having to be closed in January. Meanwhile, during the last round, this government gave grants to businesses that didn't qualify and corporations that weren't even in Ontario.

Can the Premier explain what the delay is in distributing the grants to business owners like Michael, and explain to Paul why some businesses that were eligible during the last round are no longer eligible this round and why there's no appeal process for that decision?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Our government's track record proves that we have been there for small businesses during the pandemic. We've provided \$51 billion as part of the COVID-19 action plan, and that includes the small business relief grant.

Now, we are working with all businesses that have submitted applications. It's our duty to verify their eligibility for that program. And because we need to ensure that businesses that applied are in fact eligible, they need to confirm that eligibility by providing correct documentation. We are trying to speed up the review process by encouraging all businesses to respond to our requests for information, submit a complete package, proper CRA numbers, proper banking numbers, and we'll work hard to

deliver those funds quickly while balancing the integrity of the taxpayer-funded program.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): That concludes the time for question period.

HOUSE SITTINGS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 9(h), the Clerk has received written notice from the government House leader indicating that a temporary change in the weekly meeting schedule of the House is required. Therefore, orders of the day on Monday, April 11, 2022, shall commence at 9 a.m.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member from London West has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development concerning the Equal Pay Coalition and Bill 106. This matter will be debated Tuesday, following private members' public business.

DEFERRED VOTES

WORKING FOR WORKERS ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 VISANT À OEUVRER POUR LES TRAVAILLEURS

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

Bill 88, An Act to enact the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022 and to amend various Acts / Projet de loi 88, Loi édictant la Loi de 2022 sur les droits des travailleurs de plateformes numériques et modifiant diverses lois.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1141 to 1146.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): On April 5, 2022, Mr. McNaughton moved third reading of Bill 88, An Act to enact the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022 and to amend various Acts.

On April 6, 2022, Mr. Lecce moved that the question be now put.

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

Ayes

Babikian, Aris	Fedeli, Victor	Mulroney, Caroline
Bailey, Robert	Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy
Barrett, Toby	Jones, Sylvia	Parsa, Michael
Bouma, Will	Kanapathi, Logan	Pettapiece, Randy
Calandra, Paul	Ke, Vincent	Rasheed, Kaleed
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kramp, Daryl	Sabawy, Sheref
Cho, Stan	Lecce, Stephen	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh

Clark, Steve
Coe, Lorne
Crawford, Stephen
Cuzzetto, Rudy
Downey, Doug
Elliott, Christine

MacLeod, Lisa
Martin, Robin
McDonell, Jim
McKenna, Jane
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Norman

Skelly, Donna
Smith, Dave
Thompson, Lisa M.
Tibollo, Michael A.
Wai, Daisy
Yakabuski, John

Bourgouin, Guy
Fraser, John
French, Jennifer K.

Karahalios, Belinda C.
Mantha, Michael
Monteith-Farrell, Judith

Tabuns, Peter
Vanthof, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Blais, Stephen
Bourgouin, Guy
Fraser, John
French, Jennifer K.
Glover, Chris
Harden, Joel

Hatfield, Percy
Karahalios, Belinda C.
Mantha, Michael
Monteith-Farrell, Judith
Nicholls, Rick
Park, Lindsey
Rakocevic, Tom

Sattler, Peggy
Schreiner, Mike
Tabuns, Peter
Vanthof, John
Wynne, Kathleen O.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 39; the nays are 19.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I declare the motion carried.

Mr. McNaughton has moved third reading of Bill 88, An Act to enact the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022 and to amend various Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

I believe the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1149 to 1150.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): On April 5, 2022, Mr. McNaughton moved third reading of Bill 88, An Act to enact the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022 and to amend various Acts.

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

Ayes

Babikian, Aris
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Bouma, Will
Calandra, Paul
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon
Cho, Stan
Clark, Steve
Coe, Lorne
Crawford, Stephen
Cuzzetto, Rudy
Downey, Doug
Elliott, Christine
Fedeli, Victor

Fullerton, Merrilee
Jones, Sylvia
Kanapathi, Logan
Ke, Vincent
Kramp, Daryl
Lecce, Stephen
MacLeod, Lisa
Martin, Robin
McDonell, Jim
McKenna, Jane
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Norman
Mulroney, Caroline
Nicholls, Rick

Pang, Billy
Park, Lindsey
Parsa, Michael
Pettapiece, Randy
Rasheed, Kaleed
Sabawy, Sheref
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Skelly, Donna
Smith, Dave
Thompson, Lisa M.
Tibollo, Michael A.
Wai, Daisy
Yakabuski, John

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Bell, Jessica
Blais, Stephen

Glover, Chris
Harden, Joel
Hatfield, Percy

Rakocevic, Tom
Sattler, Peggy
Schreiner, Mike

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 41; the nays are 18.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I declare the motion carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

TAX RELIEF AT THE PUMPS ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR L'ALLÈGEMENT DE LA TAXE À LA POMPE

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

Bill 111, An Act to amend the Fuel Tax Act and the Gasoline Tax Act with respect to a temporary reduction to the tax payable on certain clear fuel and on gasoline / Projet de loi 111, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur les carburants et la Loi de la taxe sur l'essence en ce qui concerne la réduction temporaire de la taxe à payer sur certains types de carburant incolore et sur l'essence.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1153 to 1154.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Babikian, Aris
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Bouma, Will
Calandra, Paul
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon
Cho, Stan
Clark, Steve
Coe, Lorne
Crawford, Stephen
Cuzzetto, Rudy
Downey, Doug
Elliott, Christine
Fedeli, Victor

Fullerton, Merrilee
Jones, Sylvia
Kanapathi, Logan
Ke, Vincent
Kramp, Daryl
Kusendova, Natalia
Lecce, Stephen
MacLeod, Lisa
Martin, Robin
McDonell, Jim
McKenna, Jane
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Norman
Mulroney, Caroline

Nicholls, Rick
Pang, Billy
Park, Lindsey
Parsa, Michael
Pettapiece, Randy
Rasheed, Kaleed
Sabawy, Sheref
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Skelly, Donna
Smith, Dave
Thompson, Lisa M.
Tibollo, Michael A.
Wai, Daisy
Yakabuski, John

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Bell, Jessica
Bourgouin, Guy
French, Jennifer K.
Glover, Chris

Harden, Joel
Hatfield, Percy
Karahalios, Belinda C.
Mantha, Michael
Monteith-Farrell, Judith

Rakocevic, Tom
Sattler, Peggy
Schreiner, Mike
Tabuns, Peter
Vanthof, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 42; the nays are 15.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? I heard a no. I look to the deputy House leader.

Mr. Michael Parsa: I refer the bill to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, and pursuant to standing order 79, I'm requesting a waiver of the five-day interval before the bill may be considered in committee.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The parliamentary assistant has requested a waiver of the five-day interval preceding the bill's consideration by a standing committee pursuant to standing order 79. Shall the motion carry? I heard a no.

Twelve members not having registered their objection, the request is granted.

There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. today.

The House recessed from 1157 to 1300.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Stephen Blais: I beg leave to present a report on the Value-for-Money Audit: Electrical Safety Authority, 2020 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Mr. Blais presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Stephen Blais: As a member of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, I'm pleased to table the committee's report today on the value-for-money audit of the Electrical Safety Authority from the 2020 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the permanent membership of the committee and substitute members who participated in the public hearings and the report-writing process.

The committee extends its appreciation to officials from the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and the Electrical Safety Authority. The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during the hearings and report-writing deliberations by the Office of the Auditor General, the Clerk of the Committee and legislative research.

With that, I move adjournment of the debate.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

PETITIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms. Jessica Bell: This petition is entitled "Demand Filters for Washing Machines to Reduce Microfiber Pollution Getting into Waterways."

"To Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas microfibers are ubiquitous pollution in the environment; and

"Whereas there is scientific evidence suggesting microfibers cause harm to animal life; and

"Whereas to date, the largest documented source of environmental microfibers is from laundering synthetic plastic and non-synthetic textiles in washing machine; and

"Whereas scientific studies indicate washing machine filters divert the majority of microfibers released during laundering and significantly reduce loadings to the environment;

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

"—pass Ontario Bill 279, requiring built-in washing machine filters that capture microfibers at a filter force size set of 100 microns;

"—provide a tax credit to consumers that retrofit machines with after-market filters; and

"—legislate that laundry filters be required in industrial textile facilities, as well as commercial, public and institutional laundry facilities."

I support this petition. I'm going to affix my signature to it. This was given to me by 350 Kingston and Georgian Bay Forever. Thank you for your work.

I'll be giving this petition to page Vivian.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Joel Harden: I have a petition here brought to me by Dr. Sally Palmer from McMaster University. I want to thank her for her organizing work. It's called "Raise Social Assistance Rates."

To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's social assistance rates are well below Canada's official Market Basket Measure poverty line and woefully inadequate to cover the basic costs of food and rent;

"Whereas individuals on the Ontario Works program receive just \$733 per month and individuals on the Ontario Disability Support Program receive just \$1,169 per month" as a maximum benefit, "only 41% and 65% of the poverty line;

"Whereas the Ontario government has not increased social assistance rates" meaningfully "since 2018, and Canada's inflation rate in January 2022 was 5.1%, the highest rate in 30 years;

"Whereas the government of Canada recognized through the CERB program that a 'basic income' of \$2,000 per month was the standard support required by individuals who lost their employment during the pandemic;

“We, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly to increase social assistance rates to a base of \$2,000 per month for those on Ontario Works and to increase other programs accordingly.”

I'll be signing this petition and sending it with page Vivian to the Clerk's table.

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I want to thank Highbury Huron Optometry for delivering this petition to my office.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has underfunded optometric eye care for 30 years; and

“Whereas the government only pays on average \$44.65 for an OHIP-insured visit—the lowest rate in Canada; and

“Whereas optometrists are being forced to pay substantially out of their own pocket to provide over four million services each year to Ontarians under OHIP; and

“Whereas optometrists have never been given a formal negotiation process with the government; and

“Whereas the government's continued neglect resulted in 96% of Ontario optometrists voting to withdraw OHIP services beginning September 1, 2021;

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

“To instruct the Ontario government to immediately commit to legally binding, formal negotiations to ensure any future OHIP-insured optometry services are, at a minimum, funded at the cost of delivery.”

I fully support this petition and give it to page Mila to deliver to the table.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I went to rally this week and I got these petitions demanding fair funding for provincial schools.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the provincial schools for the deaf and blind provide high-quality education in an accessible, supportive and affirming environments; but

“Whereas under successive Liberal and Conservative governments, these schools have been faced with deep cuts and are under constant threat of closure; and

“Whereas these cuts have led to fewer teachers, support staff and less specialized support and resources for students with disabilities; and

“Whereas provincial schools for the deaf and blind have seen programs, resources, staff and services cut and downsized to a skeleton staff while infrastructure like pools and heating systems are left in disrepair; and

“Whereas deaf and blind children are being denied access to services and programs, or forced onto growing wait-lists for services from the resource department, including painful waits for psychology and psycho-educational assessments; and

“Whereas parents of students at the schools have been forced to advocate in the media and at public rallies because the ministry has not addressed their concerns;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to call on the Ontario government to immediately increase funding for services, staffing, infrastructure and resources at the provincial schools, and act to improve transparency and accountability while improving the working and learning conditions at the provincial schools.”

I fully support this petition, sign it and pass it on to page Jackson to deliver the table.

VISITS IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Mr. Joel Harden: I have an additional petition here.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Office of the Solicitor General has not issued a resumption of public visits at least in three provincial correctional facilities and two detention centres in Canada, namely Central North Correctional Centre, Maplehurst Correctional Complex, Monteith Correctional Complex, Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre and Toronto South Detention Centre;

“Whereas five correctional facilities and four detention centres in Ontario require visitors to pre-register to obtain authorization to visit a prisoner, namely Central East Correctional Centre, Central North Correctional Centre, Maplehurst Correctional Complex, Monteith Correctional Complex, Thunder Bay Correctional Centre, Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre, South West Detention Centre, Toronto East Detention Centre, Toronto South Detention Centre;

“Whereas all correctional facilities and detention centres require visitors to pre-book a visit 24 hours in advance;

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

“Immediately resume visits to all provincial correctional facilities and detention centres in Ontario;

“Remove the ‘visitors list’ policy that requires visitors to pre-register and wait for approval until authorized to schedule a visit;

“Remove the pre-booking requirement to schedule visits in all provincial correctional facilities and detention centres.”

I wholeheartedly support this petition. I'll be signing it and sending it with page Emily to the Clerk's table.

1310

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Jessica Bell: This petition is called “Housing Crisis: Rent Stabilization Act: Pay What the Last Tenant Paid.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas average rent has increased by over 50% in the past 10 years;

“Whereas average monthly rent in Ontario is now over \$2,000; and

“Whereas nearly half of Ontarians pay unaffordable rental housing costs because they spend more than a third of their income on rent;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass our Rent Stabilization Act to establish:

“—rent control that operates during and between tenancies...;

“—a public rent registry so tenants can find out what a former tenant paid in rent;

“—access to legal aid for tenants that want to contest an illegal rent hike; and

“—stronger enforcement and tougher penalties for landlords who do not properly maintain a renter’s home.”

I support this petition. I’ll be affixing my signature to it and giving it to page Brianna.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: These petitions still keep coming. It’s the Time to Care Act.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the LTC Homes Act (2007) for a legislated minimum care standard to provide an average of four hours per resident per day, adjusted for acuity level and case mix.”

I fully support this petition. I will sign it and pass it to page Ria to deliver to the table.

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Ms. Jessica Bell: This petition is entitled “Petition to Save Eye Care in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has underfunded optometric eye care for 30 years; and

“Whereas the government only pays on average \$44.65 for an OHIP-insured visit—the lowest rate in Canada; and

“Whereas optometrists are being forced to pay substantially out of ... pocket to provide over four million services each year to Ontarians under OHIP; and

“Whereas optometrists have never been given a formal negotiation process with the government; and

“Whereas the government’s continued neglect resulted in 96% of Ontario optometrists voting to withdraw OHIP services beginning September 1, 2021;

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

“To instruct the Ontario government to immediately commit to legally binding, formal negotiations to ensure any future OHIP-insured optometry services are, at a minimum, funded at the cost of delivery.”

This was given to me by optometrists recently, because they continue to work without a contract, and they still continue to have to pay out of pocket to deliver eye services to seniors and children.

I’ll be giving this to page Vivian, and I support this petition.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to recess the House for 10 minutes to allow for individuals to pass through security in support of the members who are making speeches today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to recess the House for 10 minutes. Is the motion approved? Agreed.

The House stands recessed for 10 minutes.

The House recessed from 1314 to 1324.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

RETIRING MEMBERS OF PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT

DÉPUTÉES ET DÉPUTÉS DU PARLEMENT PROVINCIAL SORTANTS

Hon. Paul Calandra: I move that this House take note of the distinguished service of retiring members.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The government House leader has introduced government notice of motion number 13. I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you, Speaker. I’ll be very brief. I know that some people would perhaps like that I’d do a retiring speech today, but it’s not happening—at least not by choice, sir. So I’d like just to start off by congratulating members on all sides of the House, on behalf of the government and all our colleagues, for the extraordinary service that they have provided to the people of the province of Ontario, and to direct, to the extent that I may, the table and the Speaker to be extraordinarily lenient with the 10 minutes, and perhaps just ignore that entirely for the balance of this special debate.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further debate?

Mr. Norman Miller: It’s an honour to stand today to speak about my 21-year career here at the Ontario Legislature. Thank you to my wife, Christine, and our children,

Abigale, Renee, Stuart and Winston, for their support and understanding for those years.

I'd like to begin by thanking current and past members of my team, some of whom have joined us today:

Christine Marshall, from my Bracebridge office, and Emily Britton, from my Parry Sound office, have joined us here today. Karen Gauvreau is holding the fort back in Bracebridge. Thank you all for your great work helping constituents with a variety of constituency issues. I run into people all the time who tell me how they were well treated and looked after when they contacted my office.

Lesley Daw has been my executive assistant for the past five years and past campaign manager: dedicated, creative, hard-working and a key part of my current team. Thanks for always keeping it fun, for the many ideas and for thinking of little things that I would not think of.

I've had a lot of staff over the years.

Thank you, Jess Fargher-Lee, who is currently away on maternity leave with Penelope. Jess, you did a fantastic job. I wish you well in whatever you choose to do next.

Also, I would like to thank my past staff members. Thank you to my original staff when I was first elected in 2001: Kelly Krist-Hergaarden of Parry Sound, my first legislative assistant, now keeper of our boat at Parry Sound Marine; Mandy Davis from Huntsville, who worked in the Bracebridge constituency office; and my first executive assistant, Katie McCann, who got the challenging job of organizing our team from scratch. Thank you all.

Marcia Morrison was for many years my key person at Queen's Park and always so pleasant and helpful. Thank you. I hope you're enjoying your retirement.

Yvonne Parkhill provided great service in Bracebridge for many years.

Inge Juneau, who was my executive assistant for 11 years and did an amazing job before moving on to bigger and better things, has joined us in the gallery. I will never forget our week-long road trip around the north, when I was northern critic: six nights, seven days, 44 hours of driving and a multitude of meetings along the way, all perfectly organized by you.

Also in the gallery is Adam Bloskie, who was my EA for five years, and helped out with a few campaigns: lots of good memories along the way, and hopefully the odd golf game together in retirement.

Finally, thank you to Jessie Crisp, who worked for over 40 years as a constituency assistant for Ernie Eves and then for me in Parry Sound, before retiring last year. I think that may be some kind of record. I appreciate your many years of dedicated support to me.

I've also been privileged to have been selected by 17 Ontario legislative interns for their placements. That, I'm told, is a record as well. It has been a pleasure to have these bright, enthusiastic younger people in my office. Thank you for choosing me.

My current legislative intern, Clare Simon, is in the gallery, and I think I see Melody Greaves up there as well. So welcome, and thank you. To those MPPs who have never applied to host an OLIP intern in your office, I

strongly encourage you to do so. They bring energy, enthusiasm and a fresh perspective to the office.

Today I'm wearing, in memory of my father, Frank Miller, his Royal Stuart tartan jacket, the same jacket that he wore to deliver a number of Ontario budgets as Treasurer, as it was then called in the Davis government, from 1978-83. I don't think I would have become involved in politics had I not shared an apartment with him while attending Ryerson from 1975 to 1979. It motivated me to start the Muskoka young PCs, get involved in his campaigns and develop an interest in politics. Although at the end of his career, there were a few unpleasant things that happened that made me wonder aloud on a few occasions, "Why would anyone in their right mind want to be a politician?", that question was answered loud and clear to me at his funeral in July 2000, when hundreds and hundreds of people told me stories of how he had helped them in so many different ways.

1330

The next year, when then-finance minister Ernie Eves resigned as the MPP for Parry Sound-Muskoka, the opportunity arose and I decided to take the plunge to see if it was going to be as bad as I thought it might be. It wasn't.

I'd also like to pay tribute to my mother, Ann McArthur Norman, the rock who kept our family grounded. Of course, when my father was first elected in 1971, there were no constituency offices, so our home was the constituency office and the calls came in on the phone in our kitchen. I will point out that the phone was also used for our family business, Patterson Kaye Lodge, so when the phone rang, it could be a personal call, someone wanting to reserve a cottage or it could be a constituent looking for help with a provincial issue. Luckily, my mother was a very strong woman who could balance serving as Father's unpaid constituency assistant as well as running a lodge and raising four children, who might or might not have always been well behaved.

After my mother passed away in 2016, my brothers and sister and I all purchased MacArthur tartan kilts in memory of my mother, who was born in Glasgow, Scotland.

As the son of an MPP, it is interesting to be serving with the children of former colleagues in the member for Kitchener-Conestoga, Mike Harris, and the member for Simcoe North, Jill Dunlop. I know their parents are very proud of them.

And it has been a pleasure to work closely with some other second-generation politicians, in particular two who were elected shortly after I was in 2003: John Yakabuski and Laurie Scott. I hope the Speaker will excuse my using their names on this occasion. Yak does seem to make it his mission to life to poke at fun at me, but I have managed to play the odd trick on him as well. We have shared many experiences together, some good, some not so good. I consider you both to be good friends and look forward to staying in touch.

I would also like to congratulate other members who are retiring, in particular some I have served the longest time with.

Deputy Premier and Minister of Health Christine Elliott: Christine, thank you for your terrific service to the

people of this province, especially the past two very challenging years. I hope you get to enjoy your cottage in Haliburton and have some well-deserved time for yourself and your family.

And the member for Simcoe–Grey, Jim Wilson: Jim was MPP long before I was elected. I was appointed as his parliamentary assistant in 2002, when he was Minister of Northern Development and Mines. I thank him for his many years of service in a variety of positions. Best of luck in whatever you do next.

There are a few other members who were here before I arrived and who, I expect, will be back after the next election: Toby Barrett, Ernie Hardeman and, of course, our Speaker, Ted Arnott. Thank you all for your friendship and support throughout my career.

While Ontario is a big province with a huge population, it is amazing how our lives can be interconnected. The Speaker's wife, Lisa, has taught three of our four grandchildren. In fact, when Lisa told four-year-old Malcolm that she knew his granddad, Malcolm ran up to her and gave her a big hug.

On the other side of the House, the member for Timmins—I want to share a quick story. Early on in my career, Gilles Bisson had a private member's bill, Bill 97, the First Nations Resource Revenue Sharing Act, that was considered by the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. I was on the committees for a series of hearings around northern Ontario, mainly in his riding, in Attawapiskat and Moosonee. I jokingly referred to the tour as the "Gilles Bisson re-election tour."

Travelling committees are one of the ways that members on opposite sides of this House get to know each other, something that I think is a very good thing. As the pandemic subsides, I would encourage future governments to resume having committee travel, because it gives people outside of Toronto a chance to interact with government and influence government decisions, but also because it has the side effect of improving relations between government and opposition members, which helps to turn down the temperature here in the chamber, something I'm sure the Speaker would appreciate.

Of course, I will miss many other friends on both sides of the aisle, but if I try to tell a story about each one, I'm sure the Speaker would have to cut me off.

I would like to thank the people of Parry Sound–Muskoka for your trust and support. Many of the elections I ran in were not great for the PC Party province-wide. I thank you for your trust in me. I hope you feel that I have represented you faithfully.

Thank you to the staff here at the Legislative Assembly, without whom we as elected members wouldn't be able to do our jobs. The table staff, protocol, cleaners, cafeteria, security—always professional, friendly and helpful.

I also want to thank the hundreds of young people who come to the Legislature to serve as our pages. Meeting these young people who are so interested in politics and government has been one of the joys of being an MPP.

I never did get to say goodbye to Frank Filice, the legislative barber, who retired in the midst of COVID. He

cut my father's hair, he cut Yakabuski's hair—although there wasn't much to work with there—and he cut my hair. He could probably write a book with all the stories he has heard. Frank, as you can see, I haven't found a replacement for when I need a haircut here at Queen's Park.

I would also like to thank the leaders of our party I've served with. I was elected when Mike Harris was Premier; then Ernie Eves came out of retirement to be leader and Premier; John Tory; Tim Hudak; Patrick Brown; and then Premier Ford. It's not an easy job leading a party, and I thank you for all of your hard work and dedication.

I hope that I have made a lasting impact, particularly on the environment, with my private members' bills: product stewardship, producer responsibility, waste diversion, composting and reducing dock foam pollution.

As a long-standing member of the all-party cycling caucus, I look forward to seeing more paved shoulders continue to make cycling safer in rural Ontario. Hopefully in retirement my wife, Christine, and I will make use of some of them.

And I hope that one of my colleagues will bring back my Lifejackets for Life Act PMB in the next Parliament.

I have had great experiences as MPP: the opportunity to meet people like my all-time favourite hockey player, Bobby Orr, at the opening of the Bobby Orr Hall of Fame and annually at the induction ceremony.

During my time as MPP, I have travelled around northern Ontario many times. I've toured the Ring of Fire and remote northern fly-in communities. I've visited multiple mines, including a gold mine where I got the opportunity to hold but not keep a very heavy bar of gold.

In opposition, I served as whip for six and a half years, as Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts through the contentious Ornge air ambulance hearings. Thank you, William Short, for your guidance and support as Clerk of that committee.

I had the opportunity to learn about issues and try to fix them, issues like high and increasing costs of insurance for snow removal contractors. My private member's bill, the Occupiers' Liability Amendment Act that became law last year, should make a difference to help keep insurance costs down.

I'm looking forward to more freedom after a very busy 21 years as MPP. I won't miss the schedule or being away from home, but I will miss the people in this place on both sides of the House and the staff and the ability to help people.

Finally, I would like to again thank my family for all their support: my wife, Christine; and the kids, Abigale, Renee, Stuart and Winston; my brothers and sister, Larry, Ross and Mary; and all my in-laws. As my father always said, "Family is the most important thing in life."

When I was first elected, our children were teenagers. In my early Christmas cards, Stuart and Winston were both shorter than me. I'm very proud of the people that they have become.

Earlier this week, I did a tribute to former member David Ramsay and noted that he had retired to spend more time with his grandkids. I, too, look forward to having

more time to spend with Beatrice, Noelle, Malcolm and Oscar—more time to take them fishing, more time to take them flying and more time to spend trying to keep up with them on the ski hills.

Speaker, I'm sorry, I've gone on a little long, but I want to thank you for your indulgence. Thank you to all the members of the chamber. I wish you all the very best in your future, whether it be here at the Legislature or elsewhere. Thank you.

Applause.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Will Bouma): Thank you for that. Further debate?

1340

Mr. Percy Hatfield: My apologies to real poets, Speaker, but

Today I will be spending my entire time

Stringing together words that may, or may not, actually rhyme.

Four score and seven years ago I say
Ontario MPPs were still known as MLAs.

So here's more history as we say goodbye
I apprenticed for this job, I'm just that kind
of guy.

I was never a partisan supporter
When I made my living as a political reporter

Mainly for municipal purposes at Windsor city hall—
But sometimes on a leader's media bus when a
provincial election was called.

I was on the campaign bus with David Peterson when
he became Premier in 1985.

And with Bob Rae when he lost the job in '95.

Twice, with the NDP, I criss-crossed Ontario with
Howard Hampton in 1999 and again in 2003.

When I left the CBC I became a city councillor in
Windsor and was elected to the board of the Federation of
Canadian Municipalities.

And I was elected to AMO, and became a vice-
president and chair of the large urban caucus, with even
more responsibilities.

Then, Speaker, this apprentice ended up here.

And now, I have reached the end of my political career.

Speaker—it is always an honour to be called to speak
in this legislative hall.

And for this “take note” debate I thank the government
House leader—the man we all know as Paul.

I'm a bit of a rookie here today, as most other retiring
members have so many more years of service.

First—I wish to thank the legislative staff—who are
here every day to serve us.

Yes—in the broadcast studio, the interpreters, pages,
security, Hansard and the Clerks at the table.

We can't do what we do without them and they
combine to keep our lives here most stable.

As do those in maintenance, or those who clean the
floors, or help us all down in the cafeteria, or in gifts and
protocol.

Regrets—I've had a few
But only two that I will mention.

Getting a Silver Cross Mother licence plate for Ontario
was always my intention.

Other provinces have them—it was a good idea—but—
sadly, it was not to be

Several ministers told me they couldn't
Overcome the resistance from a stubborn bureaucracy.

And my time here, Speaker, has been served entirely on
this side of the aisle.

I probably would have enjoyed being over there for a
while.

Yes, serving on the government side would have
perhaps been more interesting.

But still, it was fun watching the flips and flops that I've
enjoyed witnessing.

What members say and do while in opposition

Is really quite different when they make it to the
government side—or at least—that's my submission.

But on the whole—my almost nine years here will have
been most positive

Choosing the glass half full has always been my
prerogative

Since this magnificent building opened in 1893

There have been fewer than 2,000 members, folks—
just like you and me

And only 96 presiding officers, I've especially enjoyed
my time spent in the Speaker's chair.

It's really a different view you get when you're sitting on the throne up there.

PMBs were good to me I was lucky to have four

That's a legacy I carry as I head out the Legislature's big front door

The Day of Mourning bill and, in memory of Gord Downie—the poet laureate.

The co-sponsored bills for—Lawren Harris Day and the one for Mississauga's Hazel McCallion—who we'll never forget

She's now 101, and still in her prime

We've just put her name on the Hurontario LRT transit line.

And motions as opposed to bills—I had two that helped me as well as most of you

One allowed our Legions to once again hold a weekly progressive draw for a buck or two

The other, early on, had management board tell big construction companies

They couldn't bid on Ontario's next big job

Until they paid for the small ones they contracted out on other jobs to all of their subs.

This one came after “Girder Gate”—the sloppy work on the Herb Gray Parkway

I helped expose that travesty here which led to our much safer highway.

Another highlight that came my way
Came in 2017, on the 17th of May.

The one and only poll of all members by the legislative interns, the OLIP

Named me—the most collegial MPP.

Look, I didn't come here to yell across the aisle and try to push the government around

I was here to lobby for the money we needed for a new regional hospital as we fought to get shovels in the ground

My real goal in coming here was to make sure people knew where Windsor was

To prove the 401 doesn't end in London—it begins or ends in Windsor—on Detroit's border with us.

Windsor is the tourism and commercial gateway to Canada or the last thing in Ontario you see as you leave

Windsor is an automotive town and home to whisky barons, tourism, agriculture and hospitality.

That's just the way we are

We build minivans and engines for trucks and cars.

We win awards for the way they're made

We can't afford to lose those jobs because of protests or illegal blockades.

Soon we'll be building a new factory

To create automotive electric batteries

Windsor is a city with a heart and a city that is a great place to live, work and play

And our homes are still affordable compared to those up here in the GTHA.

So I say to all the members present

Life down my way can really be much more pleasant

To the other members retiring this year

I do have some Windsor real estate listings on my desk over here.

I want to say thank you to every one of you, but especially to Gale, my long-suffering wife of 46 and a half years

Who always reminds me to find the humour, to retain my integrity, and yes, sometimes, it is appropriate to share a tear.

I've had excellent office staff who have propped me up and helped keep me sane

Friends for life now—that we've shared our final campaign.

To my neighbours and constituents in Windsor–Tecumseh

Thank you—it's been the honour of my life to serve you and in your debt I will always be.

Speaker, I look around this room and I can honestly say

There's no one I wouldn't consider a friend

Even though we may have been in the occasional fray

There's almost always been a level of respect

That's something we've come to expect

Just like hearing poetry whether that's wrong or correct

We can all make our points in whatever way we choose.

We can make time to be serious or sometimes just try to amuse

Take note—in debate—there is no wrong and there is no right—it's just what we say

And I hope I've proven that again here in the House today

So Speaker, thank you for your time

And dear friends thank you for putting up with my weak attempt to do this all in simplistic rhyme.

Applause.

1350

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

Hon. Christine Elliott: Good afternoon, Speaker, and good afternoon, colleagues.

I am deeply grateful to have had the opportunity to serve the people of Ontario for the last 16 years. It has been truly an honour and a great privilege.

I first got involved politically following my volunteer experience in my community in 2006 because of my strong desire to improve quality of life for people with special needs and people facing mental health and addictions challenges. I saw gaps in care and that motivated me to take action and, over time, my passion for these issues evolved to include the challenges facing us in our entire health care system.

Five elections later, I'm very proud and thankful to have been able to work on these issues, first of all, as the health critic for the official opposition, then as Ontario's first Patient Ombudsperson and, most recently, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

It is, however, very bittersweet to rise today in this Legislature to make my last personal statement. This chamber has been my work home for over 14 years, and it is going to be difficult to leave. There is a lot that I could say, but I thought that I would limit my remarks to just a few personal reflections but a lot of thank-yous.

Many of us here on the government side started and served many years on the opposition side, and I was no different. You might think I might not have many fond memories of my time in opposition, but I do, and that arose mostly out of the two select committees that came from private members' bills that I brought forward. One was on mental health and addictions and the other one was on developmental services. As the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka has indicated, those were committees where everybody, all parties in the Legislature, had the opportunity to come together to work on a common cause. We did have the opportunity to travel together, to share meals together, to discuss endlessly the suggestions that

we had to make for a stronger mental health and addictions system and a developmental services system.

And there aren't many people who are still in this Legislature today who were there then, but I would like to especially thank the Solicitor General for incredible work on both of these files, as well as the member for Nickel Belt and the member for Hamilton Mountain. They did tremendous work on these committees. I will always remember the collegiality that came from that, and the fact that we were able to come together at the end of the day and literally write both reports together with unanimous recommendations. That is truly a highlight for me of my time here at Queen's Park.

I would also say that I think that work really paid off because one of the things that I am very proud of is our Roadmap to Wellness that resulted largely in the recommendations that we made those many years ago that have stood the test of time. It took a long time from 2010 to 2018 to start bringing these things into place, but we did.

And in addition, to better connect and coordinate our health care system, we successfully transferred and integrated over 22 agencies into Ontario Health, and my view is that this allowed us to have a quicker response to the ongoing pandemic that would have taken far more time if we had to coordinate amongst 14 different local health integration networks. So I think that that has been good work, and with Ontario health teams, we're really trying to integrate and coordinate the patient care experience by having a team that takes care of a patient through every step of their health care journey.

There's a lot that I could reflect on in terms of policy, but I think what I'm mostly going to remember is the people here at Queen's Park.

I really want to acknowledge the many people who are doing selfless work and have been for many years across the province. I'd like to start, first of all, with the front-line health care workers because I have been working—I won't say alongside them; they've been doing the front-line work, not me. But they've been doing selfless work and really sacrificing time with their family and friends and putting themselves in harm's way. Thank you, everyone on the front line. You've done a tremendous job and are continuing to do so.

I also want to thank everyone in our hospitals and universities and researchers who are doing really world-class work that most of us don't ever even hear about. They're developing wonderful, life-saving, and in many cases, life-altering therapies to allow for better quality of life for people with chronic diseases and what we call orphan diseases, which not many people have. We've also got proton beam therapy being developed here, which is world-class, to treat cancer patients. We've got ultrasound therapy that can now be used for people with tremors, who can't be helped with traditional medications. And the list goes on and on and on. So thank you everyone that's doing this groundbreaking, really innovative work on behalf of patients and families in Ontario. It's world-saving.

Next, to the people of, first of all, Whitby–Ajax, then Whitby–Oshawa and, most recently, Newmarket–Aurora,

who have allowed me to serve them as MPP: I am very grateful to have had this honour to be there as your MPP.

Along with that, I want to thank my amazing team and my community office, who have done so much to help the people in Newmarket–Aurora, especially over the last two years, when I wasn't able to be there as often as I wanted to be because of the pandemic.

Next, to everyone here at Queen's Park, everyone here in this legislative chamber: Thank you for trying to keep us focused on the work at hand and, more or less, doing so in a civil manner, most of the time. Thank you for that. And thank you to everyone else at Queen's Park for the work that they do, whether it's the security team, the cleaners, the people in the cafeteria. You've all been so kind, and you've all allowed us to continue to do the work that we're doing here. So thank you, everyone here at Queen's Park.

Next, to the true professionals at the Ministry of Health that I've had the pleasure of working with over the last four years: I don't think people realize that you have been working around the clock, especially over the last two years, to keep the people of Ontario safe. It has been a true honour and a pleasure to work with all of you, and I really am going to miss all of you. So thank you, everyone at the ministry.

Next, to Premier Ford: Thank you very much for your confidence in me and for allowing me to serve in my dream job, really, as Minister of Health, as well as Deputy Premier—although I didn't anticipate a pandemic, which made it somewhat less of a dream job, but nonetheless, it is what it is and I'm grateful. You've been a great friend, Premier Ford, and a great leader. So thank you very much for this tremendous opportunity.

And to all of my colleagues, thank you very much for your friendship and your support—most of the time; not always. But that's what keeps you on your toes and, hopefully, doing a good job. Although I won't be here for the next session, I am going to be watching by the sidelines, wishing all of you who come back here the best of everything. Thank you, everyone here, as well.

Next, to my staff team at the Ministry of Health: Many of you have been with me since day one and you've always given me tremendous advice, but I'd also like to thank you for your dedication and your professionalism in serving the people of the province of Ontario. There is one person, especially, that I do want to thank, who was my absolutely incredible chief of staff, Heather Watt. Heather has been with me since day one. I'll never forget that, just after being sworn in, Heather and I walked over to the Ministry of Health. There we were, the two of us and Deputy Minister Angus, as she then was, and a huge, empty office. It was really quite challenging to get things underway, but we did. I know that I could never have done it without you, Heather. Thank you.

Finally, I do want to thank all of my family, but I would say, especially to my sons, John, Galen and Quinn: Thank you for your unconditional love and support over these many years. I have to say that my sons are in somewhat of a unique position as political children, I guess. They're

now 31, but since they were four years old, they've had one parent or another—and sometimes both—involved in politics, so I think that they are going to be happy to see me leave politics. I love them very much and I look forward to spending more time with them.

1400

In conclusion, Speaker, I just really do want to say that this has been a true honour and privilege, to have had the opportunity to serve here at Queen's Park. I certainly look forward to what the next chapter is going to bring.

Applause.

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

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: It has been an absolutely enormous honour to represent the people of Beaches–East York at the Ontario Legislature for the past four years. As a child who was continually told she didn't belong at all in Canada and who was paralytically shy, I could never have imagined that becoming the elected representative for my community would be in my future.

I want to begin by thanking absolutely everyone who has been with me and who has supported me on this journey, beginning with the incredible residents of Beaches–East York, who shouted out warm comments to me online, on the street and on the boardwalk, and who have been by my side every step of the way.

Thank you to all the members of the incredible NDP riding association. You're honestly the best. I have been so blessed.

Thanks especially to my power team: Laura Nguyen, Ohana Oliveira, Ahmer Khan and Janessa Duran, who have worked their hearts out for everyone who needed it and gone above and beyond every single day.

And obviously, the most enormous thanks to my beloved partner, David McGown; my four amazing kids, Katie, Michael, Taryn and Kay; my dad, poppa bear, Mark Berns, and his partner, Ethel, without whom I couldn't have managed a day.

When I got elected, David said to me, "It is my job to make sure you are well fed and that home is always a safe and welcoming space." And oh my goodness, David, you did just that. You are my shoulder, my rock, my comfort. Your advice was always, always brilliant. I do want to say that David didn't want me to quit now, so it was the one time I think that I've not listened to him, but there you go.

I also want to shout-out my mom, Jean Berns, and my grandmothers Ruth and Esther. They're no longer with us, but I feel their strength, their presence and their love with me every single day.

Thanks, too, to the friends and advisers who have stepped up to offer me ears and shoulders. If I had 12 hours, I couldn't name you all, but I want to give a special shout-out to Mohammed Hashim, Jen Hassum, Michael Champagne, Sarah Jama, Sima Atri, Sam Nithiananthan, People's Defence and the Crescent Town and Goodwood Park Tenants Unions, Mitch Robertson, Birgit Siber and the Friends of Small's Creek, Don McCutcheon and most especially, Zahra Dhanani and the community of love at Old's Cool General Store and community hub.

I need to also thank Mimi Ayele of Curl Ambassadors for keeping my hair looking okay as it grew out during the pandemic and before. Thank you, Mimi.

Thanks to my fabulous colleagues for your fellowship, your friendship and for being such amazing comrades in arms through all the tough times.

I want to thank all the staff at the Legislature, all of you. Every last one of you has been kind and helpful, and I'm so grateful for the smiles and good cheer.

I want to leave you all with some thoughts. It is, in fact, possible to do politics differently. It is possible to not see our time here as a time of horse trading, smiling and nodding while doing as little as possible to anger as few people as possible. It is absolutely possible to begin by centring the needs and the interests of the people who have the least power and then to amplify those needs and those stories, change those narratives and make policy accordingly.

Never forget that poverty is a policy choice. Homelessness is a policy choice and so is, frankly, the ongoing marginalization of communities that experience anti-Indigeneity, anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, ableism—the kinds of policies that result in communities being underrepresented on the sunshine list and overrepresented in homelessness and incarceration, and with a shorter average lifespan to boot. All of these are policy choices that are initiated in this House, in this chamber, in these seats. And if the members who sit in these seats don't, in fact, understand the issues, or if they do and they don't care, they cannot possibly create better policies.

Here's what I loved about the last four years. I loved with my whole heart being able to work with community groups who are lifting up and centring the most vulnerable among us. I let them lead. I listened to what they needed. I figured out how to support and amplify what they said they wanted the powerful to hear. And then I did my job of walking in here and connecting the dots for government members, holding them to account for their refusal to make the systemic and structural changes that would create the equitable society we need.

We did some amazing things together. I have been proud to support the Wiigwaasikaa land back camp, which has flourished with the help of many allies in the riding. When Black workers at a local hospital construction site were targeted by nooses left for them, I worked with the community for change. I'm proud to say that we were able to get both the company and many unions to double down on the need to create safe workplaces. There's a lot of work still to be done, but I know that CSARC, Community Solidarity Against Racism in Construction, made a huge mark. Their work has been cited as far away as Vancouver, and I'm so proud of the work we did together.

When Black parents in Beaches–East York confronted racism in their schools, I was able to support them, but also to connect them to one another so that they weren't facing these issues alone. It is enormously encouraging to watch the institutional changes happening in some of these schools as parents recognize the power they have and how

they can best use it, and it has been truly an honour to work with them on that journey.

When two financialized landlords tried to use the pandemic to evict hard-working tenants, mostly racialized newcomers to Canada, even though they were doing everything they could to make up for the rent they missed due to lost hours and lost jobs, I worked with them and with their lawyers at the Community Justice Collective—Harvard- and McGill-trained lawyers who work for free to make the world a better place, funded by donations from their corporate classmates and by grants.

I was proud to be a witness, at CJC's request, at a signature landmark case they presented at the Landlord and Tenant Board, where they argued that the evictions were attempts by the landlord to punish the tenants for creating a tenants' union. In an exhilarating win, they got every single eviction attempt thrown out. All those tenants are still housed, and the principle that tenants are permitted to create unions in order to bargain for better rents and for clean, pest-free living spaces that are in good repair—that principle was strengthened.

As the critic for poverty and homelessness, I continually made the case that homelessness is not the result of poor lifestyle choices, as one former Ontario Conservative cabinet minister, not sitting in the House at this moment—or in this Parliament—insisted to me near the beginning of my tenure as MPP, but rather is the result of structural issues, and oftentimes violence, that push people into deep poverty.

We cannot fix homelessness if we tell falsehoods to ourselves about why it exists. People are forced into the position of being unhoused, by which I mean that their housing is taken from them by unliveable incomes and by the forces of racism, discrimination, ableism and the intergenerational trauma of colonial violence and anti-Black racism. I was proud to stand with encampment residents who were terrified of shelters—which were full to the brim, in any case—during the pandemic, asking the Ford government, as well as municipal and federal governments, to follow the advice of housing advocates in terms of how to support people experiencing homelessness. None of that advice included violent encampment clearances, but because the province did not have a plan and wasn't prepared to invest in housing people, and cities weren't prepared to push the province to do better, those violent clearances were the results. At the very least, I was able to bear witness and to dispel the lies that were being told about what was happening on the ground.

I was exceptionally proud to work with the Friends of Small's Creek community group, shining light on Metrolinx's terrible and lazy plans to clear-cut a beloved ravine and wetland because it refused to follow the advice of respected architects, landscape architects and engineers that there was a better way. There is still so much work to be done on all of these files and more, and I intend to keep being loud and louder, but the bigger point I want to make is that every single MPP should be working this way, not pacifying people for whom the system doesn't work but rather centring them and their issues.

1410

Every one of the MPPs in this Legislature has folks in their ridings who experience these kinds of issues. Think about the systemic and structural issues that have brought them to that place, work to change them from the bottom up and inside out, and don't stop until it's done. Don't be advocates for the rich and powerful who already have everything. Instead, work to make Ontario the equitable place it has the capacity to be. Thank you so much for the honour of being here.

Applause.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you very much. Further debate?

Mr. Jim McDonell: Speaker, I look back at my time here with awe and great pride that I was one of the 107 members, now 124, elected to this provincial Legislature. I follow in the footsteps of Hugh McDonell and John McDonell, both representing Glengarry county in the first Legislature of Upper Canada in 1792; John was elected as the first Speaker.

I grew up on a small mixed farm in Bridge End, Ontario, about a mile from the Quebec border in a house with no running water, something that was common in the majority of homes in rural Ontario at that time. Farming of the day involved a lot of manual labour and a large family made work light and easy.

I started my schooling in a one-room Bridge End public school, moving up to three-room Lancaster township school—later named Sam J. McLeod, after my uncle, a long-time trustee—on to Glengarry District High School and Queen's University, graduating as part of Science '77 in mechanical engineering.

I will say one thing: Engineering frosh week in 1973 was an eye-opener, and to say the beer was a 'pouring would have been an extreme understatement, especially if you were from Glengarry county. Speaker, the industrious young men and women of Science '77 smashed the prestigious grease-pole record by more than two thirds of the previous record, and at 17 minutes, it still stands today. Orientation was a great way to meet and get to know almost 400 of your first-year classmates, for you needed everyone's help to get through first-year engineering.

But things got serious fast, and in the 1970s, the average annual failure rate in first-year engineering was about a third, and for Science 76, the rate was almost two thirds. During our orientation week, it seemed like most of the second-year FRECs were scrambling to rewrite exams, something that was new to the university. Our high school science and math were not the quality we experience today.

But I do want to thank Mr. MacGillivray, my grade 11 chemistry teacher, and my math teachers, Mrs. Clingen and Mr. Simpson, whose excellent teaching got me through the first year. The first term of the first year was definitely the hardest, and I never worked harder in my education experience. I truly expected it to be my last, but somehow I got through. I guess it was because of my math and my grade 11 physics. Many people gave up and just quit.

When I look back at my time at Queen's, it was a lot of work, but it was also a lot of fun. I made many friends, and I still see many of them today at homecoming. It really was a scene out of the movie *Animal House*. I remain in contact with my roommates, Mike Mitchell and Earl Ferguson, and many others.

I want to acknowledge another Queen's mate, Kathleen Wynne of Artsci '77, part of Queen's pride. I'm wearing the Queen's tartan today with great pride.

I spent a summer working at Great Canada Oil Sands in Fort McMurray and one at Ontario Hydro's Bruce Power nuclear plant, then spending 33 years with Bell Canada.

In 1983, Margie and I were married, definitely the hottest day of the year. Over the next six years, Marion, Chelsea and Bernie arrived on the scene. As they grew up and got involved in school, life got a lot busier, driving, coaching and volunteering. I started off coaching and volunteering for Char-Lan minor hockey and soccer, spending 15 years there in both. Getting volunteers was always a challenge, and we were lucky to have some great ones and we had some fun. Jobs were not hard to get. I remember showing up to my first hockey AGM and being asked if I would be president. Shocked, I just didn't think I was ready for the top job, so that year we operated without a president, and that's not a good scenario. The next year I agreed and things fell into place.

I was always surprised how well Char-Lan minor soccer ran. It was a relatively new organization, started just a few years before by a high school teacher, Robbie MacLachlan, and a retired Austrian semi-pro, Rudi Payer. Between the two schools, we had six full-sized fields and five micro fields. With a family plan of \$20 and all games between 6 o'clock and 8 o'clock on Thursday nights, the league quickly grew to over 600 players between four and 18 years old.

Coaches were a problem because very few had ever played organized soccer. Parents would say, "I'd like to, but I've just never played. I know nothing about it," and I'd say, "Neither do I. We just need somebody to change the players."

Almost none of our coaches had ever played the game. They just changed the players, and the improvement was remarkable. Within years, our high school teams were winning locally and heading off to the provincial championships.

I remember one night a parent gave one of our organizers a hard time, so Cindy, a little perturbed, asked the guy for his name and number, saying he sounds like someone with some good ideas, and we could use someone with good ideas because we don't have many people. The guy quickly disappeared. Another guy came up and said, "I heard what went on there, and I just want to say you're doing a great job, because I can barely drop my kids off, let alone volunteer." It was a fun time.

As far as politics go, I got my interest from my dad, who was on Lancaster township council. People approached him to run but he just didn't think he would enjoy it. Then one year, he finally agreed to put his name on the docket but he said he had no time to canvass. My

mom was kind of a say-what-she-thought person, so when a neighbour called up, concerned that my dad had no signs and no brochures out, she responded with, “Well, there would be no one happier than myself if Bernie didn’t win.”

He came first in the election, and they both truly enjoyed it for 13 years, until he lost his battle with cancer.

In 1994, I thought I would give it a try. I got signatures and dropped off my application after work, about an hour before nominations closed. It was homecoming weekend and I was off. In the previous election, there were about 15 or more councillors running who ran for Charlottenburgh township, and I assumed it would be a similar situation.

When I got back Sunday, a little under the weather, I was down serving coffee at a church supper, not aware that I have been acclaimed. People were congratulating me; I assumed they were just wishing me good luck.

We had a great council and it was very rewarding as I met many good people.

In the next election, our township amalgamated with Lancaster village and Lancaster township to form South Glengarry. It started off fairly rough. We almost cancelled the first meeting as it was the start of the 1998 ice storm. We had people without power for over a month in January. Between council and my work at Bell Canada, it was a busy time, and it brought the community together as neighbours helped neighbours.

During my 17 years on council, we had some trying times, but council came together. We had good people on council, with a few characters who added a few twists and turns and some fun times. During this time, I was lucky to have some people come forth and help me out with my political career.

Gary Robertson helped me run my first election in South Glengarry and really showed me the ropes. Signs, debates and door to door were all new to me. With his help, everything worked out, giving me my spot as the top vote-getter.

After a couple of terms, I ran for mayor, and a few people stepped up and we really had some fun. Rick Marvell, Barry Millet, Joan P. MacDonald and Sherry Davis joined Gary as our key group, joining family and friends to defeat the incumbent. Cindy Vogel, Dawn Smits, Lynn Hamer and Annie Richard helped me with a phone campaign.

During the middle of the campaign, I raised a few eyebrows when I took a few days off to go again to the annual Queen’s homecoming. I’m a bit superstitious and I had never missed one and I didn’t want to be starting during the campaign. In fact, last year was the first year I had not been in Kingston for homecoming, only because it was cancelled.

My daughters organized high school friends to go door to door, making it possible to get to a large number of residents. I certainly could not have done it without them.

During my third term as mayor, I retired from Bell, and with my extra time, I thought I would try my hand at provincial politics. So I got involved with Guy Lauzon’s federal EDA for several years and volunteered on a couple

of campaigns. He was a hard worker and out-signed his opponents, blanketing the riding within the first 24 hours.

Marilyn McMahon had approached me to run and helped me win a tough nomination. In my first election, my two major opponents were Elaine MacDonald and Mark MacDonald, so it was a battle of the Macs.

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Eric Duncan, Guy’s young executive assistant, helped organize the campaign with Glen Grant and Les O’Shaughnessy—both Cornwall councillors—Tammy Hart from South Stormont and Elaine Lalonde, who joined my township volunteers to help with an effective campaign; and, as always, my brothers, Chris, Randy and David helped with getting signs out, with Pierre Roy and Terry Ouderkirk, Hubert McDonnell, Kenny MacDonald and many more.

We took over 50% of the vote on that day and it was a great celebration, as I was the first Progressive Conservative to take that combined riding.

On my first visit to Queen’s Park, when I walked up to security, I was surprised to be called by name as I fumbled for my ID. Over the years, there have been some memorable times—some of the best not to be repeated until a few more people retire.

I would be remiss if I didn’t mention my legislative assistant from my first two terms, Luca Manfredi. Luca was a recent graduate of McGill, with a master’s in engineering. He was a terrific worker and a great volunteer for me and the party, but he loved to eat. He used to contact the kitchen every day so he could let the MPPs know which reception had the best food.

And my office staff: Marilyn McMahan, Al Smith, Greg Peerenboom and the late Marcel Lapierre, a senior team, but always ready to help our constituents and friends. I would get daily calls from my office with a list of things to do, and my first comment would be, “Marilyn, it’s been 30 minutes. If I don’t get off, I won’t get the job done.” My second comment would be, “Marilyn, it’s 45 minutes. If I don’t get off the call”—and so on.

My ministry assistant, Charles, was always there to keep me on time and keep me up to date with political gossip.

And my family: my mom and dad, Bessie and Bernie; and siblings Chris, Lorraine, Harold, Shannon, Colleen, Barbara, Kathy and baby David. Speaker, my mom had three boys in just over three years—myself, Steven and Randy—and we grew up very close, playing sports, wrestling constantly and staying busy with my cousin Leighton. My mom’s favourite saying was, “Outside, keep out of trouble, and don’t be late for dinner.”

Sadly, we lost Steven in a motorcycle accident in 1981, and as a close family, it really set us back.

Margie and the kids: I couldn’t have done it without you. We were blessed with great kids, and Margie had a busy career as a teacher, but always had time to cover for me. I know we couldn’t be more proud of my children, Chelsie, Bernie, and Marion and her spouse, Rock—great educations and surprisingly few problems. I believe it had a lot to do with rural life and terrific friends.

And I do want to mention our grandchildren, Alice and George—lots of fun. Alice wore out her princess dress twirling around, and George was always playing with his toy trucks.

Lastly, I want to thank the people of the Legislature: the officers, the staff, security staff, kitchen staff and the MPPs on both sides of the House. My friends in eastern Ontario, Lisa, Steve and Yak, were a special group who helped me get elected and showed me the ropes.

Our government, under Premier Doug Ford, has turned this province around. Our reduction of red tape, hydro rates and more have created more good-paying jobs than we can fill. Ontario is back as Canada's economic powerhouse.

To the class of 2011, there's a special connection as we worked hard but always had time for some fun. I will miss the friendship and the camaraderie of all.

Finally, a proud grandfather story—let me just have a second. My daughter Chelsea made some muffins one day, asking George if he wanted a treat. George looked at it, climbed up on the stool, looked at the treat, got down and pulled the stool over to the counter. Chelsea said, "George, I thought you wanted a treat." He blurts out, "That no treat. That muffin." He was going for the candy.

Finally, thank you to all the residents of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Applause.

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

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: "It is an honour and a privilege to represent the people of Perth–Wellington. Our first and foremost responsibility is to the people of our ridings, our constituents. We're here to serve them." I said those words in my maiden speech here in this House in 2012. They were true then, and they still hold true today.

I spoke about the importance of public service, which Jean Wilson, my English and civics teacher at Ridgetown College, instilled in me at a very young age. Her message was, "No matter what you do, no matter where you go, get involved in your community." For me, that meant the Monkton Lions Club, to North Perth municipal council and then on to this place.

I spoke about what public service requires us to do: to listen, to assist where possible, and to act. Most of my time has been in opposition. Listening to the people I represent, we took on their priorities:

- by pushing back, successfully, to help cancel the proposed wind turbine project in North Perth;

- by promoting fairness in municipal infrastructure funding;

- by holding the government to account on hydro rates;

- by securing funding for the Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth; and

- by demanding that long-term beds at Hillside Manor stay in the area—and succeeding.

Nobody runs to wind up in opposition, but as I soon found out, you don't have to be on the government side to get things done for your constituents.

In recent years, I continued focusing on long-term care. In Perth–Wellington alone, we have built or approved

hundreds of new and upgraded long-term-care beds in every part of our riding. That includes rebuilding the long-awaited peopleCare in Stratford.

Our area has also benefited from expanding GO transit service, extending broadband Internet service to countless rural households and businesses, opening the Louise Marshall Hospital expansion and so many other projects. I have enjoyed playing my part to support these initiatives.

Just as meaningful to me, however, has been the chance to promote Perth–Wellington here at Queen's Park: our thriving agriculture and food industry; our strong manufacturing base; our vibrant arts community and world-class festivals, including the Stratford and Drayton festivals, and Stratford Summer Music; our many attractions, like the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame; and the list goes on. We have so much to be proud of.

Speaker, as you go out of this chamber and go to the granite wall, you know our names are engraved on that granite wall. Mine will be there three times when I leave. I thought that it was kind of neat to see your name engraved in granite before the final slab is put on.

Laughter.

Ms. Donna Skelly: You don't see that one.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: You never get to see that one. Oh dear, I'm sorry.

In fact, I leave this job even prouder of our province and its people than I was when I first began. I'm proud of the farmers and farm workers; the grocery store clerks; the small business owners; and the front-line health care and long-term-care workers—the people who work so hard, who did their best for their communities, even in the darkest days of COVID.

The past two years have been another learning experience for me, as they have been for all of us. They haven't been easy. The world as we know it is filled with chaos and uncertainty, but I've seen the strength of our people. I've seen their goodness, their generosity of spirit magnified in difficult times.

That's what I saw in the days after March 17, 2011, when fire took the lives of North Perth deputy district chief Ken Rea and firefighter Ray Walter when the roof of a burning building unexpectedly collapsed. With the support of firefighters in Perth–Wellington and across the province, I introduced the Rea and Walter Act, a bill designed to identify truss and lightweight construction, so that firefighters would have the information they need to stay safe.

We didn't pass the bill, but we did raise awareness of this crucial issue. And more importantly, we worked with the government to make key changes to the Ontario building code. We worked with the fire marshal to ensure that lightweight construction systems are identified and recorded. I was honoured to announce these changes last month, on the 11th anniversary of that tragic fire. It was another day we'll never forget.

Speaker, before I conclude, I want to recognize a few people in the members' gallery today. First, some of my staff members: Jake Shuker, Patti Ladd, Lindsay Rennick

and Stephen Yantzi. Many times, I've depended on them, and I thank them for all their work.

I also want to thank—I have been honoured to be the PA to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs for these last number of years, and I want to thank the member from Huron–Bruce and the member from Oxford. They have been tremendous. It's been quite a learning curve, and they so helped me there.

And finally, my wife, Jane, who has stood beside me for all these years since 2011—and 49 years before that. No, I read that wrong: a total of 49.

Laughter.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Oh, dear. Anyway, we have three boys, three great daughters-in-law and six great grandchildren in those 49 years, so it's been great. She still stands with me. She's going to have to stand with me a lot more now, so I hope we're successful that way, and I'm sure we will be.

There's also a matter that I wanted to bring up and it concerns a member of this House—Speaker, I hope you will give me the latitude to address it. It concerns the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. We all know, especially the class of 2011, from both sides of the House—when we all met, we were strangers, but we all got to know each other quite quickly. And we all picked up that responsibility of trying to keep the member on a straight and narrow learning curve.

Interjection: It was tough.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: We all know that that was quite a mission.

I had it planned before he decided to retire—I was going to ask all of you; I was going to get your phone numbers and get a monthly report on how things were progressing, because this has been a project. It really has. I'm still going to get your phone numbers, because now I've got the total responsibility because he's not going to be here. I'm going to probably be phoning all of you and saying, "I've got an issue with my friend. Give me a hand with it." I also want your phone numbers because it would

sure be great to visit you once in a while and see how you're doing in your ridings.

To conclude, I want to return—there was something else I wanted to do; I had another thing to do here. Oh, yes, I have a confession to make. A number of years ago, we were asked to submit our baby pictures for a baby shower.

Interjection: And you won. That's right.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes. I was the cutest kid there, apparently. The problem was, it wasn't my picture.

Interjections.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Now, I thought it was my picture. Truly, I did. But that was my sister. I didn't realize it until I was talking to her about it, about the picture, and she said, "You submitted my picture. That was me." But it's understandable, because she's pretty good-looking, too.

Interjection: "Too."

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: They didn't get that.

Speaker, to conclude, I want to return to what public service requires of us. In my maiden speech, I ended with this: "We should all look for ways to keep the focus where it belongs: on service to the community. We should support it and we should lead it, whenever and wherever there is a need. We should promote its value at every opportunity and encourage that spirit in others."

In doing so, we may be true to ourselves and to our communities.

Shakespeare puts it well. In Hamlet, Polonius gives what I think is some pretty good advice:

This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Thank you.

Applause.

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

Report continues in volume B.

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. Ted Arnott

Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Valerie Quioc Lim, Wai Lam (William) Wong,
Meghan Stenson, Christopher Tyrell

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Arthur, Ian (NDP)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Baber, Roman (IND)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Legislative Affairs / Ministre des Affaires législatives Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	Associate Minister of Transportation (GTA) / Ministre associé des Transports (RGT)
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)	Milton	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiles et du Multiculturalisme
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor—Tecumseh	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hillier, Randy (IND)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Solicitor General / Solliciteure générale
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda C. (NBP)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries / ministre des Industries du patrimoine, du sport, du tourisme et de la culture
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Hon. / L'hon. Jane (PC)	Burlington	Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues / Ministre associée déléguée au dossier de l'Enfance et à la Condition féminine
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (IND)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (OP)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (IND)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	Associate Minister of Digital Government / Ministre associé délégué de l'Action pour un gouvernement numérique
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines, des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Hon. / L'hon. Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (LIB)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction / Ministre associée déléguée aux Petites Entreprises et à la Réduction des formalités administratives
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Vacant	Ajax / Ajax	
Vacant	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Vacant	Elgin—Middlesex—London	

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COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Randy Pettapiece
Teresa J. Armstrong, Toby Barrett
Lorne Coe, Rudy Cuzzetto
Goldie Ghamari, Randy Hillier
Christina Maria Mitas, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Michael Parsa, Randy Pettapiece
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

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

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ian Arthur
Ian Arthur, Will Bouma
Stephen Crawford, Catherine Fife
Ernie Hardeman, Mitzie Hunter
Logan Kanapathi, Sol Mamakwa
Jeremy Roberts, Dave Smith
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Michael Bushara

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Logan Kanapathi
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Mike Schreiner
Jill Andrew, Robert Bailey
Will Bouma, Guy Bourgouin
Chris Glover, Mike Harris
Logan Kanapathi, Sheref Sabawy
Amarjot Sandhu, Mike Schreiner
Daisy Wai
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: Gilles Bisson
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian
Deepak Anand, Aris Babikian
Gilles Bisson, Lorne Coe
Wayne Gates, Robin Martin
Norman Miller, Billy Pang
Amanda Simard, Marit Stiles
John Yakabuski
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tanzima Khan

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Daryl Kramp
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lucille Collard
Lucille Collard, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Natalia Kusendova
Jim McDonell, Suze Morrison
Randy Pettapiece, Gurratan Singh
Donna Skelly, Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Kevin Yarde
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: France Gélinas
Rima Berns-McGown, France Gélinas
Goldie Ghamari, Mike Harris
Faisal Hassan, Jim McDonell
Sam Oosterhoff, Laurie Scott
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tanzima Khan

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

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Jessica Bell, Stephen Blais
Stephen Crawford, Rudy Cuzzetto
Christine Hogarth, Michael Mantha
Taras Natyshak, Michael Parsa
Amarjot Sandhu
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

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Aris Babikian, Lorne Coe
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Billy Pang, Jeremy Roberts
Dave Smith, Daisy Wai
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Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale

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Committee Clerk / Greffière: Vanessa Kattar

Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight / Comité spécial de la surveillance de la gestion des situations d'urgence

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Tom Rakocevic
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
John Fraser, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Robin Martin
Sam Oosterhoff, Tom Rakocevic
Sara Singh, Donna Skelly
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