

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

No. 67B

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

N° 67B

1st Session
43rd Parliament
Wednesday
19 April 2023

1^{re} session
43^e législature
Mercredi
19 avril 2023

Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
Greffier : Todd Decker

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<https://www.ola.org/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7400.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7400.

House Publications and Language Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service linguistique et des publications parlementaires
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

ISSN 1180-2987

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 19 April 2023 / Mercredi 19 avril 2023

Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023, Bill 98, Mr. Lecce / Loi de 2023 sur l'amélioration des écoles et du rendement des élèves, projet de loi 98, M. Lecce

| | |
|---|------|
| Hon. Kinga Surma | 3703 |
| Mme France Gélinas..... | 3704 |
| Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy..... | 3705 |
| Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens..... | 3705 |
| Mr. Rob Flack..... | 3705 |
| Mrs. Robin Martin | 3705 |
| Ms. Jennifer K. French | 3706 |
| Mr. Mike Harris | 3708 |
| Mme France Gélinas..... | 3709 |
| Mrs. Robin Martin | 3709 |
| Ms. Peggy Sattler..... | 3709 |
| Mr. Billy Pang | 3710 |
| Mr. John Fraser..... | 3710 |
| Mr. Mike Harris..... | 3711 |
| Mme France Gélinas..... | 3711 |
| Mrs. Robin Martin | 3711 |
| Mrs. Robin Martin | 3712 |
| Ms. Natalie Pierre | 3713 |
| Mr. Terence Kernaghan..... | 3715 |
| Mrs. Daisy Wai..... | 3715 |
| Ms. Jennifer K. French | 3715 |
| Mr. Amarjot Sandhu..... | 3715 |
| Mme France Gélinas..... | 3716 |
| Mr. Andrew Dowie..... | 3716 |
| Mr. Sol Mamakwa | 3716 |
| Second reading debate deemed adjourned..... | 3717 |

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS / AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉES ET DÉPUTÉS

Chronic diseases

| | |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Mrs. Robin Martin | 3717 |
| Mme France Gélinas..... | 3719 |
| Mr. Mike Harris | 3720 |
| Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy..... | 3721 |
| Mrs. Robin Martin | 3722 |
| Motion agreed to..... | 3722 |

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 19 April 2023

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 19 avril 2023

Report continued from volume A.

1611

BETTER SCHOOLS AND STUDENT
OUTCOMES ACT, 2023
LOI DE 2023 SUR L'AMÉLIORATION
DES ÉCOLES ET DU RENDEMENT
DES ÉLÈVES

Continuation of debate on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 98, An Act to amend various Acts relating to education and child care / Projet de loi 98, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'éducation et la garde d'enfants.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further debate?

Hon. Kinga Surma: It's a pleasure for me to rise in this chamber to provide my full support to the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act. I say that it is my pleasure because there is nothing more important than preparing our young people for lifelong success. In Etobicoke Centre, the quality of education is so important to the parents that live in my riding. They want to know that their children are receiving the best education possible, but one that will also prepare them for the workforce. That means more math, more science and an introduction to the skilled trades.

Before I get into the merits of the bill, I want to take this opportunity to, of course, thank the Minister of Education and also the parliamentary assistant for putting this forward. I appreciate their hard work. And I also want to emphasize my gratitude, again, to the Minister of Education. Now, the Minister of Education really helped me with an issue in my riding. I haven't had a Catholic school built in my riding since the 1970s, and before COVID the minister joined me in the riding to announce a brand new Catholic elementary school on Buttonwood lands, as well as a brand new Catholic high school in the riding of Etobicoke Centre.

Hon. Todd Smith: Two schools.

Hon. Kinga Surma: Two schools. The Catholic high school, though, is extremely important to my riding because most ridings in the city of Toronto, for example, would have two or three Catholic high schools per riding. In my riding, unfortunately, we only have one and it is severely at over-capacity. So, again, my gratitude to the Minister of Education for his support.

I'd like to briefly discuss why reforming education is so critically important. The world has overcome a great

challenge and everyone was impacted in a different way. Things were not easy and children felt it, too. Now is the time where education must be at the forefront of society.

Speaker, Ontario is facing the largest shortage of skilled labour in a generation. In the words of my friend and colleague Ontario's Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, "Our government is taking an all-hands-on-deck approach to attract and train our next generation of skilled trades workers for better jobs and bigger paycheques for themselves and their families." Right now, there are more than 100,000 unfilled skilled trades jobs across the province and it's projected that by 2026 approximately one in five job openings in Ontario will be in skilled trades-related fields.

These are good-paying, noble jobs. Skilled trades jobs build this province. Skilled trades workers are helping us expand the subway system by 50% in the city of Toronto and York region: public transit that will serve families for 100 years. That's something to be proud of, Madam Speaker. Skilled trade jobs are helping us build highways that are used in order to distribute food across the province of Ontario. Skilled trades are helping us build long-term-care homes, ones that take care of our seniors and our loved ones. Skilled trades workers help us build hospitals, health care facilities that help treat our loved ones and our most vulnerable—and they help us build schools, where our youngest learn every single day.

Children and our youth should be encouraged to explore being a part of building this great province. To ensure that our students are ready, ever since we were elected in 2018, we have been making changes to the province's curriculum to benefit students. More specifically, that meant:

- making financial literacy and digital fluency key priorities;

- investing \$200 million to support a four-year math strategy;

- teaching valuable, transferable skills such as leadership, communication, collaboration, critical thinking;

- promoting the skilled trades as a top-choice career path for young people and increasing awareness of and access to apprenticeship programs; and

- improving science, technology, engineering and math—or STEM—learning.

Parents welcome these changes. Our government has made some incredible progress over the past five years, including an elementary math curriculum that teaches coding starting in grade 1.

Our government is also making incredible progress in building Ontario. For example, the government of Ontario

is once again building new schools after a decade under the previous Liberal government when we saw the closure of over 600 schools across this province. More specifically, our government is investing \$15 billion over 10 years to build new schools, improve existing educational facilities and create new child care spaces for hard-working families.

Since 2019, we have invested \$2 billion into education-related capital projects, including 100 new schools, 88 additions and over 6,400 new licensed child care spaces. And we are not stopping there.

Included in our P3 pipeline, we will be building a bundle of schools using a rapid delivery model—the model we used to build OPP detachments and long-term-care homes faster than ever before during COVID. Those are pretty significant investments, which is why I'm confident that our government is on the right track. But there is only so much that you can accomplish without drafting new legislation.

If passed, the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act will increase accountability by giving parents new tools to navigate and understand the education system and establish basic qualifications for directors of education. Our bill will allow the minister to establish key priorities to ensure students have the skills and the knowledge they need, especially in areas such as reading, writing and math.

We're doing our part. We're providing school boards with valuable resources, but some boards are claiming they can't make do, even with record investments in education. Clearly, some sort of action is required.

What many Ontarians do not realize is that the education sector is sitting on the largest vertical real estate portfolio within the broader public sector with over 4,800 open or operating schools. But there is a lack of standardization on how school boards should manage these considerable assets.

Additionally, parents across the province have found themselves feeling frustrated when boards will not rent or sell unused schools to competing boards or when there are underutilized schools in some areas.

We face this very situation in Etobicoke Centre. For years, even before I was elected, families have been calling for a new Catholic high school. While other ridings, just like I mentioned before, had more than one, we didn't. Scarlett Heights, a public school in my riding, was closed due to low enrolment, and the property remained vacant while the demand for Catholic education grew. It was only through local advocacy from concerned families and stakeholders that the public board finally declared the property surplus. The Catholic board finally had the opportunity to purchase the property for the construction of a brand new Catholic high school.

1620

We need to do better, Madam Speaker. Politics and bureaucracy should never stand in the way of looking after and providing the best learning environment for our children. Our government is listening to the concerns of hard-working families in Etobicoke and across the province, and we are taking action.

The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act will maximize the capital assets held by school boards by:

- strengthening the province's oversight over the use, sale and development of school board real estate, including surplus properties;
- setting authority to direct the joint use of schools;
- streamlining approvals in high-growth areas;
- requiring school boards to work with municipalities on urban planning; and
- setting authority to direct school boards to utilize standardized designs.

I believe that parents and the public will support a more effective use of public resources, as well as making it easier to get schools built when their children are ready to attend them. These are common-sense reforms that will make it easier and faster to get new schools built and allow for a more effective use of existing buildings in order to get more classrooms into communities that need them.

Ontario's school boards receive over \$27 billion in provincial funding and operate over 4,800 school facilities and a complex system of student transportation. Parents, families and taxpayers demand and deserve greater transparency and accountability in how their education system is managed and how the system's resources are managed. Our reforms are very much in line with the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Learning that was chaired by a former Liberal cabinet minister, Monique Bégin, and long-time New Democrat Gerald Caplan in the mid-1990s.

To quote the 1994 report, "We recommend the transfer of several key responsibilities away from boards. We believe that determining the level of each board's expenditures, for example, should be the ministry's job."

Maximizing the capital assets of school boards makes a great deal of sense and is long overdue. We are providing schools and school boards with the resources they need to educate our children, we are once again building and improving schools after a decade of school closures under the Liberals, and we're taking action to ensure precious tax dollars provided to boards are well managed.

I have no doubt parents will be pleased with this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It's time for questions.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I was rather interested at the beginning of her presentation. She talked a lot about the need for more trades. I come from Nickel Belt, where the need for trades in mining and the mining supply is really, really high. But I fail to see how the 19 pages of this bill—20 pages on the French side—actually address any of the promises that you are making regarding trades. None of that is in the bill that we have in front of us.

What's in the bill that we have in front of us is quite different from the vision that you would like us to believe that this is what the bill is going to achieve. Could the member try to reconcile the two? Because, right now, the word "trade" is not in that bill.

Hon. Kinga Surma: I believe I addressed that question in my remarks. I mean, one of the first things that we did in government, under the leadership of the Minister of

Education, was to make sure that younger people had a general greater awareness of the opportunities that exist in the skilled trades. Now, I can speak to my own experience attending high school and the experience that I had. Of course, I was very fortunate; I had some of the, I think, best teachers in the province. But I will say that skilled trades was not something that was fundamentally endorsed by educators when I was young. That is an experience that I have had.

I think it's important that young people know what jobs lie ahead of them, what is available, and how they can get trained to make sure that they do have a meaningful job that will ultimately provide for their future family.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: Thank you to the member for her presentation.

As we know—well, for sure, I know that student success in Ontario is the most important thing, especially as a parent of a young teenager. I know that all members agree that students need to be given the opportunity to succeed.

Recently, our government announced that starting a trade or another path, we are going to assist them—with students entering grade 9 in September 2024, all students will now be able to have a grade 9 or a grade 10 technological education credit as part of their Ontario secondary school diploma. So to the member opposite's point: I ask the member from Etobicoke Centre, how does this—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Back to the minister for a response.

Hon. Kinga Surma: Thank you to the member for the question.

Ultimately, we have to think about the whole purpose of education. The whole purpose of education is to make sure that our children can develop and prosper in life—also open doors for them for a future position or profession that they want to pursue. I think it's so important that young people are aware of the jobs that are coming, that are available to them, so that they can pursue openings in that field.

With that credit that you mentioned, with also our curriculum changes in terms of STEM—science, technology, education, and math—I know we will better prepare our students for the jobs of the future.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: My question is to the member from Etobicoke Centre.

As my colleague mentioned, we don't see trades in this piece of legislation.

However, when I speak to parents, they speak about huge classroom sizes, issues with violence, mental health, failing nutrition programs, which I brought up this morning. We are in a shortfall. This Ontario government doesn't seem to recognize the \$400,000 shortfall we are facing in nutrition programs in Ontario. Sixteen schools have closed their nutrition programs in Niagara; 30 more are projected to close; 49 have been affected.

Will this government acknowledge that we need emergency funding within our schools for nutritional programs so children can go to school—if they're not hungry, they can learn, their education is thriving—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Back to the Minister of Infrastructure for a response.

Hon. Kinga Surma: Thank you to the member for the question.

I think what's really important is that I think anyone in this chamber can recognize that the very basic need of even having a school available to them is the greatest priority.

Our government was elected after a government was in power for 15 years—one that closed schools, one that did not rehabilitate and invest enough in capital infrastructure to make sure that the existing schools could continue to educate young people.

Now our government is investing significantly, not only to build the schools so that children have a place to learn every single day; we are also repairing them, and we are also adding many additional child care spaces all at the same time, and we're finding a way to build them faster so that families have a wonderful school facility that they can send their children to, so that their children have an opportunity to—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

1630

Mr. Rob Flack: Coming from a family of educators—my father was a teacher, principal, superintendent; my mother is a teacher; my daughter is a teacher—I like this bill. Why do I like it? Because I have grown up with accountability my entire life. When I take a look at our school boards—when we can make our trustees more accountable, better educated, better trained, I think it brings value not only to the school boards, but it brings value to our kids.

My question simply is, can I ask the minister, what do you believe works best in this bill with respect to bringing accountability to our trustees and our school boards?

Hon. Kinga Surma: Thank you. That's a very good question. I would say there are two things that I'm particularly very supportive of and impressed with the parliamentary assistant and the minister for bringing forward. Of course, on the financial side, the accountability for school boards I think is a very important one. As the members have spoken, many times parents have questions about where this funding is going and often find a very difficult time tracking down those dollars, so greater transparency I think is a benefit to everyone. Then, I would also highlight the changes that we are making in terms of real estate, oversight, joint use of schools, working with municipalities and standardized designs. Families across the province of Ontario sometimes wait years for a school in their community. We can do better, and we will.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Nobody knows better than the Minister of Infrastructure how the population is growing

in Ontario and demands building, building, building, repairing, repairing, repairing, and anything we can do to expedite those projects. So I just wanted to ask the minister, what in this bill do you like that is going to help us make sure that we invest in schools and build schools faster and effectively make sure that the kids have the facilities they need?

Hon. Kinga Surma: Thank you. And for the last question, I really appreciate the member for asking. Joint use, I would say, of schools is a big one. In urban settings where land is extremely expensive, where there's a shortage of land available sometimes for a new school, I think being able to have joint use of a facility is efficient, but it can also be beneficial. Tying services to a building structure that educates children, or a community rec centre, I think all of that can be done, should be done and explored further.

And standardized designs: Schools, when you measure their complexity to tunnelling underground for a subway system or to a hospital, are generally a simpler structure and can be built much faster, I believe. Of course, there are specific needs in communities, but I do believe that with standardized designs, if school boards have access to standardized designs—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I apologize; we have run out of time for questions and answers.

It's now time for further debate.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Any time that I have to stand in my place on behalf of the fine folks of Oshawa and speak about public education is a good day.

I came to this House by way of public education, as a student, but also as a teacher for not enough time—but also any year in the classroom is a lot. I was pleased to spend time in the elementary world as a teacher, and much like my colleague from Thunder Bay–Superior North, I pursued further education for myself, because when you become a teacher, there are some folks who try it and it's not the right fit and they might leave. But those who stick around longer than about three years, they mean it and they're in it.

Part of my journey to this House was because we got kicked in the teeth by the government of the day, the Liberals at the time, who were stealing our sick days and doing all sorts of unconstitutional stuff—Bill 115. That riled a lot of us up and turned us into activists and turned us into politicians. There are many on our benches who realized that that was something worth fighting against and that public education was certainly worth fighting for.

Coming to this space and being in this room, we had an opportunity to share the perspectives of our communities. And I will admit that some of the communities across this province are hard to relate to. The members bring experiences from their constituents that maybe I'm not hearing, and that is part of the value of having so many of us in this space—that I am able to stand and talk about what it was like to have been a teacher, which may be unrelatable for some; I'm able to stand and talk about what it's like for those who maybe don't have the advantages, children who don't have the supports that they need, whereas other

students do. I get to tell those stories, and hopefully, they're respected and they're considered. And that's what I want to do today.

Today, I want to talk about what we could do with public education and why we should do it.

We should be investing in public education. It's frustrating when the minister, who may have the best of intentions—but when the minister talks about investing in public education and the record numbers or this or that, factoring in inflation, we are really, really short. In fact, when inflation is taken into account, it's about \$1,200 less per student per year than it was in 2018-19. I'm not going to diminish it by saying that's a lot of pencils, but it's a lot of educators, it's a lot of support, it's a lot of needs that are not being met. The members opposite have spent the day challenging us on those numbers. But I challenge you to defend that you're putting enough money in—because the government is not. They've been bragging about the capital investment, how much money they're putting in the capital budget, but the capital budget to both build new schools and repair existing ones is \$14 billion over 10 years, at a time when the repair backlog alone is \$16 billion. So when we are—

Interjection.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: The member opposite from Eglinton–Lawrence, I'm going to invite you to ask me questions at the end of it, because I can't quite hear you, and I have the—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): You will direct your comments through the Chair. We will tone everything down.

You may continue.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I appreciate the reminder, Speaker. I will address my comments through the Chair.

I will continue in the same vein, though—that I care.

The kids I taught—many of them are grown-ups now. It's really a fascinating role that we have, because we've all become very public figures, and a lot of my former students can come and find me and are turning into adults in the community. It's really very special to continue some of those relationships. When you hear from them and they tell you about their success stories, it's actually quite heartening to have been a part of their journey, and I think that's true of anyone who goes into education and stays in education, whether they're educational assistants or teachers, administrators, staff, the custodial staff. They love what they do.

Schools are communities, and they require investment.

I want to—actually, I'll use someone else's voice here. I've got a letter from Deborah. Deborah said, "The last few years have undoubtedly revealed the importance of ensuring Ontario's students have access to the staff, resources, and learning supports they need as they fully transition back to the classroom after two-plus years of learning in a global pandemic...."

"Government has reiterated time and time again the need to keep students in the classroom, but those classrooms can't be overcrowded, and our students need to be supported by the teachers, educational assistants, early

childhood educators, custodial staff, and tens of thousands of other education workers who make up the backbone of our public education system. Without them, and the resources they and our students need to learn, Ontario's students will fall even further behind.

“As a voter in Ontario who cares deeply about public education, I want to see our government commit to working with education workers and prioritize our students' needs” and “invest in a safe, strong public education system that shows respect for the work that educators do, gives our students the education that they deserve, and builds a public education system that Ontarians can be proud of.” That's from Deborah. We're all getting letters like that right now.

1640

We, as the official opposition, have been calling for a long time to limit class sizes, to have a maximum—if it's 15—so that teachers are better able to meet the needs, that students have the resources and the space, that it increases the quality of education that those kids receive.

The government has been lauding that \$200 Catch Up Payments program. By the way, our office and probably many others in this province are still supporting parents who are waiting on those payments that were approved and still haven't been received. I'm not looking to see that in this bill; that's something that has already been done. But maybe the government could follow through on something.

But that is the kind of thing that—that money could have been invested into in-classroom supports for students. Smaller classroom sizes not only benefit disabled students but all students. Let's talk about the Universal Design for Learning. I remember implementing strategies that the SERT, or special education resource teacher, had come into my room to help me set up and create an appropriate learning environment for specific children with specific special-learning needs. I remember the visual schedule and some of those things that I put up in the classroom ostensibly for this child, and it turns out it was really useful for me too, having that visual, colour-coordinated schedule. I'm someone who likes her colour-coordinated systems.

That Universal Design for Learning: If we have the resources and supports, we are able to support children and educators and everyone in the school. It also helps to support parents. It helps with the communications pieces.

Also, capping classroom sizes reduces the number of people in a room. We've been living through a pandemic, and we understand that when you have fewer people—we're dealing with spacing—those issues really came to the fore. Here we are underfunding our public education system, which is not the right direction to go.

Something else that I would say: Classroom size affects learning, it affects the health of the workers and the students. But when it comes to special education, specialized classes, the smaller class sizes—they're called different things. “Small-class placement” might be called something different board to board. But what a difference

it makes to children who need more one-on-one support, who need the small-class placements.

To know that those are being reduced in number—I don't mean number of students reduced in this space, but the numbers of those small-class placements across the province, we're seeing board by board, are diminishing, that fewer students are going to have access to those small classes and the small-class placements. That is not okay.

The Human Rights Commission has consistently found that boards are unable to regularly and consistently meet the needs of students with disabilities due to a chronic lack of funding from the Ministry of Education that has been ongoing since before this government came to power. The Human Rights Tribunal has even found that some accommodation requests do constitute an undue burden for boards because the ministry does not live up to its obligations in providing the necessary funding.

We're debating a bill called Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act. I want to talk about better school and student outcomes. Better schools and student outcomes are going to have the students' best interests at heart—all students.

Parent who have disabled children often have to seek their own supports, which come with additional costs. In an ideal world, the ministry would take a proactive approach to identify some of the most common disabilities or some different best practices that they could implement across boards. We don't see that proactive approach, but funding enough speech therapists or occupational therapists, school nurses, mental health professionals, accessible playgrounds, supports for deaf and blind students—some schools may already have this, but it should be the standard. That's a bigger conversation I guess for another day, but I do hope we get to have it. Beyond the conversation, I hope that we do get to see those changes.

At the beginning of the school year we had a mom whose son just started kindergarten. He's diabetic and needs insulin injections. The school was requiring the mom to come in and give them to him. She was on maternity leave, so she could, but when she goes back to work, then what happens? We were able to connect her with some community supports, and that's a specific concern, but we all have those in our communities, right? But parents who don't know what to do, do we turn them to this government? Do you have answers—does the government have answers—sorry; through you, Speaker?

Here's an email from a mom who's writing about her son who “has not had morning or afternoon recess since the beginning of October 2022. At first, I was thinking it was just an occasional matter, depending on” his “day, only to find out recently he hasn't been out since...”

He “is a seven-year-old boy in Oshawa who is diagnosed with autism and recently ADHD.” He “is not a threat. He gets picked on easily and can be impulsive when” provoked, but other than that “he is like every other seven-year-old boy.

“Under the Human Rights Code, a school has a legal duty to provide accommodations that include inclusiveness and dignity within the school environment which

providing” him “with an EA would not be undue hardship for them....

“Due to this behaviour of removing his recess and lunch, it will hurt” his “dignity and made him a target for bullying at the school by other children.”

Now, I’ll say that this situation we’re helping to support in our office—and I know we all have unusual circumstances that we deal with in our community offices, but what this mother has been told by the school is that it’s about “manpower.” In this case, it’s about lack of resources. So we are doing our work as a community office to connect—and this is where, when the government talks about the funding that they’re putting in and we know there’s not enough support staff, not enough educational assistants, the small number of small-class placements across the province, what we’re hearing is that they’re at risk. We’re hearing, school by school or board by board, that there won’t be quite as many classes per board. There isn’t the funding needed. Speaker, again, better schools and student outcomes? Students do better when they have the support they need.

Memory lane is a fun place, so I’ll take us on a bit of a journey. I remember early in my teaching, and that was before I had gotten involved in—I mean I was doing professional development, but I was a new teacher, finding my way. I am so grateful that, at that time, in the first few years of teaching, the resources were such that I had an educational assistant that came to my classroom and I knew the periods of the day when they were going to be there.

At that time, it wasn’t about having an educational assistant for just one child, but I knew it was a predictable schedule, and during that time, oh, man, did I appreciate having her there because I could do small group work, I could do small assessments, do one-on-one, sit with a child at my desk, whether it was a reading assessment or something that was a double-check on math skills or whatnot. I could do small group while the educational assistant made herself available or could work, one on one, with a student who had an accommodation in their IEP, their individualized education plan, and was able to work with that student so they did have what they needed. Back then—and the member from London North Centre might remember: Do you remember Dragon NaturallySpeaking?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Yes.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Okay. So Dragon NaturallySpeaking was a chance for a child who maybe didn’t have the same literacy skills to be able to speak and tell their story, and once it learned their voice, it could write the story for them. I’m thinking of a particular student, as I’m telling a story, but he could not do that in the classroom because the microphone would pick up everybody else’s voice. I could not provide a quiet enough environment in a classroom for this child to write his essays with Dragon NaturallySpeaking or whatnot. And so having an educational assistant to work with that child or sit with them in a quiet space—we had opportunities to do whatever it was that was needed in that classroom. There were rough days, but there were good days.

1650

And then you watched things change. At that time I didn’t really understand why, and I still can’t point to exactly what was happening. I just knew I didn’t have an EA anymore and that there were other students that needed one-on-one. That’s fine, but then the educational assistants at other schools later on had their walkie-talkies, and they were in the hall and they were just monitoring runners and behaviours and keeping kids safe. That needs to be done, but at the same time, educational assistants were no longer able to educationally assist. They were doing important work, but whether that’s toileting or behaviour, the children who required the educational support do not get it. They cannot access it the way that they need. I can try, but when you have 25 other kids, 29 other kids, whatever, you can only do so much.

I remember being also frustrated, and this was years ago and things have only gotten worse, but back then, being in IPRCs and the meeting with the SERT and the principal and parents—and this is something as part of the Education Act to ensure that children with special needs get specific accommodations. I’m going to say to the parents watching at home, an IEP that has an IPRC is actually not a wish list. It’s supposed to be a document that folks sign. They say it’s a commitment that this is what this child is going to be getting. If that’s three times a week that they have a quiet space for assessments or whatever the accommodation is—I’m going to be loose with my words here and say legally binding. It’s part of the Education Act. It’s supposed to actually be a thing that we are committing to, not saying, “Okay, best case is Johnny would get this, this, this. We’ll just tell the parents that’s what we’re doing, but we all know there is no dang way that we can provide that because we don’t have the resources, the supports, the space, the assistants that we need.” And I got to the point that I was like, “I’m not signing that. I’m not signing an IEP when I know that we cannot provide what is in that.”

And that was before I got involved with my union. That was before I was really focused on all of the things that are around education. For a long time, I was a teacher who was just excited to be a teacher, and I loved it. I miss my kids—I do—although, like I said, they’re all grown up and they come back and haunt me sometimes. But teachers and education workers are not having the tools that they need. The things that they’re reaching for are not there. Under the Education Act, the Ministry of Education is responsible for setting out the process for identification and accommodation. They have to ensure that all exceptional pupils can access special education programs and services without payment of fees, and time and time again, kids aren’t getting what they need because the government is not funding it.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It’s now time for questions.

Mr. Mike Harris: I think one of the things that really is neat about this place is we all come from very diverse backgrounds. I want to thank the member from Oshawa for all that she’s done for the people of her community. Being a teacher and educator is certainly not an easy job.

But she talked a lot about things that are planned through school boards, and when we talk about transparency—again, I've spoken to this a few times this afternoon—transparency is key to this. When she's saying that there's not enough money being put into the system or there aren't enough EAs or things aren't happening, these are all things that the board dictates. So one of the stipulations of this bill is that the 72 school boards across Ontario will actually have to publicly post their spending of the money that the Ministry of Education provides to them and how they're allocating that across the board. Trying to be as non-partisan as possible with this question to the member from Oshawa, does she support that? Does she support open transparency when it comes to board spending?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Of course, I support transparency with spending, and I encourage the government to pay close and careful attention to how short they are in terms of what is required for spending. When the board is spending, is the government going to ask them what was actually needed? Is the government going to say what more was required? The government is forcing the boards to make impossible choices. They cannot hire enough staff to support the students' needs. And they can tell you where the money's going, they can show you, but are you going to fund them when they show you what is needed?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was very interesting to listen to my colleague about the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act. I come from Nickel Belt. I represent 33 small communities in the north. Most of the kids I represent have to travel very long distances to make it to their school because there have been many, many school closures and the kids go further and further.

A kid from Cartier is four years old, and she spends an hour and 36 minutes to make it to school and an hour and 36 minutes back at night to make it back home. She falls asleep on the bus. She's four years old. She gets picked on, and she hates school. She does not want to go to school anymore. How is the school bus system in your area?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Gosh, we have so many phone calls from parents who are not even in our riding but across Durham, like Seaton parents. If the government wants to spend some time calling them back, that would be great.

I have a letter here from a bus driver in my riding, and he says, "I need your help. Ontario's student transportation sector is in crisis. School bus delays and cancellations are plaguing the system, leaving students and parents stranded. Parents are being forced to take time off work to drive their kids to and from school." As a driver, he takes great pride in driving a school bus. "I want this to change." He talks about the fact that he's going to have to leave the job due to lack of funding.

Earlier the member from Barrie–Innisfil, when we were raising busing, said it was neither here nor there. Actually, it's here and there. That's the whole point of a bus. It's part of Grants for Student Needs. It's part of the GSN funding.

This government, if they were serious about education, would take a really hard look at the experience of all kids across our province when it comes to education.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Just building on my friend from Kitchener–Conestoga, the member opposite said she did not know why but suddenly she didn't have an EA anymore. She said specialized playgrounds should be standard in all schools. She said that small-class placement is different from board to board. They are not doing it anymore, and they don't really know why. Well, we don't either, and that's why we would like to see how boards are spending the money and then we'll know. It may be that what we'll know is, they need more money because they've spent it all on the right things for special education, best practices etc. But let's find out, for goodness sake, because we've increased funding for special education by \$100 million every year since we've been in office approximately and we still don't know where that money is going. So, let's see. Let's deliver for those kids. Can't you support that?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: It's interesting to hear the member talk about accountability when, in this case, there are a lot of decisions in this bill that were made without any consultation with the school board trustees and the folks who are elected to answer to community members. So, let's connect with them as well, because certainly every dollar goes really far in education and anybody in education knows there isn't enough.

Education workers put so much of their own money into the system. That would be a neat thing for you to ask for in terms of accountability, to ask teachers how much they spend to feed kids or on socks or on art supplies. That's paid for by education workers and educators. Put that in your accountability. That would be neat.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I enjoyed hearing my colleague the member for Oshawa talk about education. I think we can all imagine her in a classroom and what an engaging, wonderful experience it would be to have her as a teacher.

I wondered if she would comment on the fact that this bill was developed and introduced by this government with absolutely zero consultation with the education workers who are expected to deliver the new programs that the government is, again, underfunding but wants school boards to introduce. How important is it to consult with teachers and education workers when bringing in new programs?

1700

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I think it's really important. I'm going to also say I think it's important across sectors. We know what it is do this job. As MPPs, we have a pretty good idea of what we need to do our job well. Just like in every other sector, the front lines know what it is that they need. So I think that purposefully leaving them out, that there wasn't any consultation with anyone who does the work, is an interesting approach.

There's still time for the government, as this bill is moving through this House, to invite and involve and take their time—because they would hear things that maybe they already know or things that they do not, and there are lots of recommendations that they would hear from anyone working on the front lines.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Billy Pang: Having heard so much about no consultation—there's very important information you need to know. There was a consultation in 2018—large-scale—with 72,000 responses, from the Ministry of Education; 61% were parents or guardians, 16% were educators. Why does the opposition want to insist on cutting parents off every stage of their children's education? This opposition needs to stop trying to speak on behalf of parents and start allowing them to speak for themselves. We have done a consultation. Parents belong at the table. What makes the member opposite think that they don't?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am grateful that the member opposite is interested in hearing from parents.

So this is from a parent—and I read part of it, about her seven-year-old son. She said, “I have an amazing rapport with his teacher who is fantastic, and his SERT teacher. I know they are also very burnt out from trying to help” him “in the classroom while helping other kids do their work. I am aware” he “is not the only one in his class that needs extra help with academics.” He “could benefit very much from having a ... EA. Although, I know he is struggling with concentration ... children strive after a break of running around with physical activity.” This was the parent whose child isn't getting the recess. She has so many questions.

Parents are flooding our inboxes with concerns about their students, and it's falling at your feet and you're ignoring it, as a government. So you can cite a parent consultation from 2018, but this bill before us, you did not consult on—and that's what everybody who should have been is saying.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Unfortunately, we do not have time for further questions.

Further debate?

Mr. John Fraser: It's really great to be here with all of you this afternoon to talk about Bill 98. I'm going to start off by saying that there are some good things in this bill, but it's not going to be what I'm going to talk about, because there's some stuff outside of this bill and inside this bill that isn't good.

The first thing that we have to recognize is that this government always oversells whatever action they're taking. So it's 1,000 new teachers—well, we have 2,000 less than in 2018. A thousand new teachers over 5,000 schools is one teacher for every five schools, and if you think that's going to solve the kind of challenges our children are facing post-pandemic because they've fallen behind—it's not going to. I'm not saying that's bad. I'm just saying it's not nearly enough. Then, the minister came out and said the GSNs are out and there's a 2.7% increase. Well, it's not even close to inflation. Is inflation not

affecting school boards? I think it is. So don't overstate what it is you're doing. Don't create expectations for parents that you are not going to meet. That's what's happening here.

One of the biggest questions I have in this bill is about the disposal of assets, and I think to take some action on that is a good thing. I think boards should have to take a look at their assets. They are sometimes large development corporations that serve their own interest and don't always serve the broader public interest in terms of transferring schools to other boards and making them available. We all know that.

Here's the thing: I know the rotation, and I'd like an answer from someone on the other side so I can get some clarity on this—and a definitive answer. Now that you've changed the circulation and you've given yourself more power over the disposal of that school, is the value of that asset that the government is going to take its option on still going back to the school board, or is it coming to the province? Because if it's not going back to the school board, that's wrong. We all have boards in our communities, and over decades and decades and decades they have invested local taxpayers' money in land and buildings for their children, for their children's children, and it's their asset. It's not the provincial government's asset.

I hope to God the answer I'm going to get is, “No, we'll dispose of it at fair market value, and that money will go directly to the boards”—preferably that you will put it on the market and get the most you can and have that go back to the boards. Less preferable would be that give them fair market value and then try to upsell it from there.

I don't trust this government or this Premier when it comes to the public interests on public assets, as I said today, like a vacant school property in Oshawa, like the greenbelt, like Ontario Place, because time after time what we've seen is that it's not the public interest that's being served but private interests that are being served.

So that's a really critical question in this bill. When you're changing the circulation, are you going to take the value of that asset and ensure that the people who live in a community, who have invested in their schools for decades and decades and decades are going to see the benefit of that? It's really important. I haven't heard an answer. I haven't heard the government say anything about that. Please, for God's sake, don't tell me you're going to do it in regulations. It should be clear. And I think asking that is a fair thing to ask. There are things, like I said, in this bill that I think are good. This piece really concerns me. I think it should really concern communities; it should concern all of us, because we all live in communities, again, where people have invested over decades in their schools, in the properties their school boards purchased to build a school that they may not have used, and they should realize the value of that asset to benefit their communities, whether that's to build a new school, whether that's to fix an old school, whether that's to add an addition onto a school. That money that comes from that asset has to go back to that community; it's not just the board we're talking about.

So if you can give me that answer today, I'll be really happy. I don't know who might have that answer for me today. If you can't get it for me today, tomorrow's fine, too.

Interjection: We've got an answer for you, John.

Mr. John Fraser: You do? That's great. Okay, guaranteed. I know you have—yes, Speaker, I will continue to go through you: I know they have a heck of an answer. They've got an answer for everything. But that's what governments do, right? But you guys are particularly good at it.

I want to finish by wrapping up and saying, look, a thousand teachers sounds good. That's one in every five schools. Is that going to help the kids that have fallen behind over the pandemic? Is that actually going to help in special education? I heard my colleague from Oshawa talking about that. I have a family member who is an EA. So we all know what's going on in special education in schools. There's not enough. And I heard a member on the other side say, "We don't know where the money's going." Well, first of all, there's not enough, and kids aren't getting what they need. So I'm more concerned about kids getting what they need—

Mrs. Robin Martin: Me too.

Mr. John Fraser: Well, because you're not giving them enough—because of what the government is giving, what the government's allocating.

I think to ask that question really fundamentally shows that there is a lack of understanding as to what's actually happening in special education in our schools.

And here's the kicker, folks: A couple of thousand kids are going to come off the OAP this June, and they're going to be integrated in schools. And do you know what? Nobody is talking to anybody. The resources for those kids who are going into schools—not there. If you think you've got a problem now, you're going to have a bigger problem in September, unless somebody takes some action, unless people start talking to each other.

1710

The 2.7% on the GSNs is not something to crow about when inflation is way much more than that. There are things in this bill that I can support, but on these things that I've mentioned and the government's oversell of what they're doing to support kids post-pandemic, especially kids with exceptional needs, it's not enough.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It is now time for questions.

Mr. Mike Harris: I'm just curious what the member from Ottawa South would have to say about where the \$2 billion in the gas plant just magically disappeared to while he was chief of staff to then-Premier Dalton McGuinty, if he's able to maybe discuss that a little bit further.

Mr. John Fraser: First of all—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much, Speaker, and through you: It would be good if the member across got some facts straight.

Number one, I was the constituency lead for the Premier of Ontario for 14 years. It had nothing to do—
Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: This was in southwestern Ontario.

And number two, if you take a look at actually the loss that was calculated—and I wouldn't be talking, because you guys are spending \$6 billion annually for a broken promise on hydro that you made. What was actually calculated in that over 20 years was line loss, and that's the amount of energy that might have been lost because we had to build a plant in Bath instead of in Mississauga.

If you guys want to talk about throwing money out the door: every year, \$6 billion, and you didn't lower hydro prices.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to ask the member—he comes from an area of the province where there are quite a few French-speaking kids who would like to be able to attend French-speaking schools. I know that in my areas of the province, we have a number of French schools that would love to be able to get abandoned English schools where there are very few kids left in that school. The negotiations between the English board and the French board, let's just say, are not amicable, so we go years and years and years where everybody agrees that we need a new French school.

Do you see any resolution to this issue with this bill?

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you, that's a really good question. It is a problem. That's why I think it should be in here, but we've got to have a better way of solving it, which is how can we guarantee that that school that they're having a problem negotiating with between the—it could be two French boards, because that has happened in our city. How can we get that asset to where it's needed in a fair way?

I don't see anything from the government saying to me, "Well, we're actually going to say to a school board, 'You need to sell it to them, and here's the price.'" That would be a good way to solve that. That would solve that problem. Right?

But what we're hearing is, "We're going to take control over it." What I'm concerned about is that they're going to take the value of that asset—by the way, nobody answered my question yet—and hold that value as a provincial asset instead of a local asset that should go back to the school board that owned it.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you to the member from Ottawa South for his comments. My concern about the special-needs funding is that we know what it is spent on. We need to know that. We have increased special-needs funding by about \$100 million every year since we've been in government, and we would like to see what they're buying with that money so that we can make sure the money is being used for the people that need it. The special-needs funding, which it was allocated for—but it's sometimes being used for other things.

Once we see what they're funding, then we'll be able to say whether they need more funding for special needs. But right now, we can't tell, so that's part of what this is about, to make it accountable, make it transparent so we know.

Don't you think that's a good idea?

Mr. John Fraser: Number one, you're not giving enough money, because I know that boards are spending more money outside of the pocket that they have for special education. Number one, I know that.

Number two, I know, not just from my family member who is an EA in a school but from other EAs, children's needs aren't getting met. That's awful for those children.

But do you want to know what? It's not just that child who is going to be affected. Every child in that classroom is. All I'm saying—you say, "We need to know." You know. You have powers. You have the ability to go in there. You can audit. You know that. You don't have to do that in here. You don't have to claim that.

You're not giving them enough money: 2.7% on the GSNs isn't enough. Children's needs aren't being met by this government.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): We do not have time for further questions.

Further debate?

Mrs. Robin Martin: I'd like to just start by, before I forget, saying that I'm going to be sharing my time with the member from Burlington.

I'm delighted to stand up and speak today. I think that what we're trying to do here is actually get the kind of accountability we've been talking about, so we know exactly where the money is going, so we can make sure that the needs of children—especially, from my point of view, special-needs children—are being met.

We don't see that right now. No, we don't have the ability to see that because boards are allowed to make decisions, like taking away the member from Oshawa's EA without any notice. They make those decisions; we don't even know that they did it. Let's find out where that money is going.

I want to talk about the legislation, and of course begin my remarks by thanking the Minister of Education and his parliamentary assistant for their incredible work on this legislation and what they're doing to update and modernize Ontario's education system, ensuring our young people are better prepared for the jobs of tomorrow.

Students in Ontario are already benefiting from a stronger focus on STEM learning and math, including instruction in financial literacy, coding and greater access to training and work in the skilled trades.

After a decade and a half of the previous Liberal government, which closed 600 schools across the province and refused to listen to the concerns of parents in this province, this government is taking concrete action by investing \$15 billion over 10 years to build new schools and improve existing facilities and create new child care spaces. That investment includes \$1.4 billion in capital funding for the 2022-23 academic year alone. Since 2019, this government has invested over \$2 billion in building

education projects for 100 new schools, 88 school additions and over 6,400 new licensed child care spaces.

Speaker, I also wish to take a moment to thank our Minister of Education for taking a strong stance against anti-Semitism in schools and making mandatory learning on the Holocaust a compulsory subject in the grade 6 curriculum.

Back in February, secondary school teachers within the Toronto District School Board were subjected to a professional day presentation by an OSSTF teacher union regarding a false narrative of "Anti-Palestinian Racism." Many teachers who attended described the presentation as hateful, anti-Semitic and anti-Israel.

Anti-Semitism in schools is a real concern for families in Toronto and in my riding of Eglinton–Lawrence in particular. One mother asked me how it could be acceptable that her daughters, who are Jewish, are subjected to anti-Israel rhetoric in a public elementary school, in the classroom, and why it is allowed.

I had to agree with her that putting her young daughters in such a position is completely unacceptable. For that mother and for many other concerned students and parents in my riding, including myself, I applaud the minister for taking a strong and consistent stand against anti-Semitic hatred.

Speaker, parents in Eglinton–Lawrence have told me that they support Ontario's education system and its ability to transform lives, but they also believe that school boards must be more accountable and transparent than they currently are for the taxpayer dollars they are spending, and the results and outcomes that students under their charge are achieving.

Not long ago, this House debated an opposition day motion regarding our government's funding for school boards. While it was not the will of this House to adopt the motion, I do believe that a few facts from the debate are worth repeating, even if the opposition doesn't want to hear them.

Speaker, this government has increased education funding every year since taking office in 2018. That includes \$26.7 billion for the 2023-24 school year alone, an increase of \$693 million over the previous school year. This represents the single-largest investment in public education in Ontario's history, representing a 14% increase from 2017-18 when the Liberals were last in power.

1720

Speaker, the Toronto District School Board, or the TDSB, which manages the English-language public schools in my riding of Eglinton–Lawrence, has enjoyed a \$188-million increase in base funding for GSN since the 2017-18 school year, despite enrolment having fallen by 9,000 students over the same time frame.

The TCDSB is also running schools in my riding. It has seen an increase in funding of \$52.9 million since the 2017-18 school year, even though its enrolment has also decreased, by over 6,300 students during that period.

Similarly, the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board has seen an increase of over \$86 million in base

funding since the 2017-18 school year, and the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board has seen an increase of \$49.8 million in base funding since 2017-18.

The Ottawa Catholic district school board has seen an increase of \$116.2 million in base funding since 2017-18. And I want to specifically mention that the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board has seen an increase of \$137.9 million in funding since 2017-18 as well. I'd like to specifically point out that staffing has increased by over 667, with 268 of those being teachers during that same time period in Ottawa-Carleton.

Our government has made these investments because we believe in public education and we want to see all young people succeed. You see, Speaker, it is clear that school boards are being provided with substantial resources to provide supports to students, even in the face of lower enrolment.

As a result of the way that our education system has historically been organized, the Ministry of Education is limited in its ability to drive or enforce provincial priorities centred on student achievement through to the schools. Parents have expressed frustration because information about school board performance and the relationship between tax dollars provided to boards and the way those dollars are used by the boards to support quality outcomes in local schools is not readily apparent or easily accessible to the public at large.

Across the province, about 700 elected trustees provide local governance over a \$27-billion education system through different boards with different policies. Trustees and boards lack a consistent set of skills, training and a standard code of conduct. The public has at times been distracted by disputes among trustees that are costly and time-consuming.

Even worse, many parents do not know exactly what school boards do or how their decisions impact what happens in local schools and sometimes see their local school boards as big and exclusive bureaucracies. Parents, who care about nothing more than the education of their children, are left feeling as though they have limited knowledge or ability to improve the education of their children.

Clearly, parents, students and taxpayers deserve better accountability from their school boards, and that's what the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act is all about.

Speaker, many of my colleagues are quite enthusiastic. You heard here from the Markham-Unionville member about provincial information for parents that will spell out their rights, their roles and responsibilities within the education system. This government strongly believes in enshrining parental rights. I'm sure this information will prove to be incredibly useful during parent-teacher conferences.

But I'm pleased to say that the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act goes further than simply sharing information with parents. Many may not know that school boards sit on the largest real estate portfolio—we've talked about it a little bit here today—in the broader public sector, with over 4,800 open or operating schools. Our

legislation, if passed, would strengthen the ministry's oversight over the use, sale and development of a school board's real estate, including the power to direct a board to establish a framework for surplus properties along with the ability to direct a sale or sever a property. Maximizing capital assets will help the boards improve student achievement as well as the effective, efficient and sustainable use of school board funding and property.

But there's even more in this act, Speaker. Our legislation, if passed, would also strengthen accountability over school board spending, including providing additional resources for financial investigations when needed and requiring transparent reporting on school board spending and how school boards support student outcomes.

The act would enable the minister to require school boards to report publicly against standardized—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Goldie Ghamari): Pursuant to standing order 50(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there have been six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will, therefore, be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader directs the debate to continue.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Please continue.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Goldie Ghamari): Continue.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I'll just wrap up quickly, because I know my friend also has comments to make, but I want to make this point: The act would enable the minister to require school boards to report publicly against standardized categories of spending such as special-needs funding, for example. This is very important, and that would happen twice annually.

The act would allow for the appointment of professional investigators if boards are in financial distress. There's so much in here and so much that will make a difference for our students' education.

To quote from the report of then-NDP Premier Bob Rae, "We recommend the transfer of several key responsibilities from boards ... as a result, the primary responsibility of school boards will be to translate general ministry guidelines into viable local practice."

Speaker, hard-working families in Eglinton-Lawrence and across Ontario demand and deserve greater accountability from their education system. Our government is listening to their concerns.

And I want to just now pass my time on to the member from Burlington.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Goldie Ghamari): The member from Burlington.

Ms. Natalie Pierre: I'm excited to have the privilege today to rise and speak in support of the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act. As the MPP for Burlington, I know how much families across my riding care about our public education system. I've heard from parents who want to make sure the education system in Ontario is one that sets kids up for lifelong success. Speaker, I'm excited to explain how the actions Ontario's government is proposing through the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act will do just that.

It starts by focusing on the basics. We know Ontario students need to master key skills like reading, writing and math to set themselves up for long-term success. These skills are critical to nearly every aspect of our lives, which is why I'm happy to say to parents: Rest assured, this government is absolutely committed to making sure our students have the support they need to develop and master math and literacy.

On Sunday, it was great to hear the education minister announce more than \$180 million to help our students achieve excellence in reading and math. This investment demonstrates how our government is taking this challenge head on.

For math, the investment we announced on Sunday will support up to 381 educators to help student learning in math. It will double the number of school math coaches in classrooms to provide direct support to teachers and students. It will introduce one math lead per board to support educators in delivering effective math instruction while providing additional supports for math coaches in the classrooms. It will expand access to digital math tools that students and parents can access any time while also increasing live, teacher-led virtual tutoring services focusing on STEM subjects. It will also make sure teachers have the skills they need to help our kids achieve success through dedicated training, including covering the cost of additional math qualification courses to enhance math fluency and competency.

More math educators, stronger student support, better curriculum—these steps we're taking will ensure a brighter future for our students.

But, as I mentioned earlier, Sunday's good news wasn't just about real and meaningful new supports for math. It also made an important investment in literacy. It starts with new, Canada-leading early reading screening requirements for all students in senior kindergarten to grade 2. By utilizing a standardized and fully funded screening tool in addition to new training for educators, we are ensuring students receive the support they need to develop lifelong skills for success.

1730

We're also funding additional specialist teachers to work one on one and in small groups, to help students who need additional support in reading, which is why we're also investing in up to 691 educators to support the development and excellence in literacy for Ontario students. These educators will help introduce and support the overhauled language curriculum in September 2023, with an emphasis on ensuring students can master basic literacy at an early age.

Speaker, these investments clearly demonstrate our focus on preparing our young people with the skills they need, which is critical. We know that to keep Ontario's economy growing, we need to have people with the skills and knowledge to build a new generation of prosperity.

If passed, the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act will build on these important measures and further reinforce Ontario's education system. It would establish new authority for the minister to set education priorities, to

clearly outline that our education system needs to prepare students for their next steps in life. That means, as I've said before, a clear focus on reading, writing and math, and it also means STEM learning, coding, hands-on learning, and apprenticeships—all tools that young people can utilize to achieve lifelong success.

Importantly, school boards would have to report transparently and consistently to parents, providing updates on student success, and tracking their progress in meeting those priorities. That means more information for parents. As a mom, I can tell you that's a big win. We all know that when parents are informed and engaged, equipped with the information they need, their children get a better education. That is why this legislation would also ensure parents are equipped with an easy-to-read guide about their roles and rights within our education system. That's the information parents need at their fingertips to better support their children at school.

If passed, the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, in conjunction with the historic investment in our education system—a \$693-million increase to base GSN funding—will support Ontario students to achieve long-term success with the transparency needed to ensure accountability. And that success is not, cannot be, purely academic. While schools are a place for our young people to develop skills and knowledge, they also need to help young people find and get the support they need, especially when it comes to mental health.

I'm happy to say that mental health leaders are in every school board across the province, currently working with system leaders, educators, and community partners to ensure supports are available to students. These supports include up to 180 mental health workers in secondary schools directly helping students. That means students can get the help they need in a place that is safe, familiar, reliable, and consistent. It's providing direct early interventions to students which can help them not only in the moment when they need support, but it can also guide them to a lifetime of improved mental health. These mental health workers can provide referrals to community child/youth mental health resources and to health care providers for students with acute mental health care needs.

Mental health support is critical. That's why I'm proud our government is investing more than \$106 million in mental health supports for students. This proposed legislation would allow the minister to establish a consistent approach to mental health supports in schools and school boards across Ontario. Schools would also be required to report on student mental health. And that's important because mental health is health. Our schools must be places that help our students get the support they need.

If this legislation passes, our education system will have more tools, across the board:

- more support to develop critical life skills;
- more support to gain the knowledge and experience needed for the jobs of tomorrow;
- more teachers to support our students;
- more tools for parents;
- more mental health supports for our students.

This legislation demonstrates that this government doesn't just talk the talk on education; we walk the walk. We're getting it done for parents and students as we help Ontario's education system achieve excellence for years to come. When our students get the knowledge, skills and support they need for lifelong success, we don't just help them; we help our province grow and thrive for generations to come. We can and must do better for our kids. Speaker, through you, I ask this House to join me in supporting the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act. Together we can make sure Ontario is the best place in the world to live, to work, to learn, to have a family and to thrive.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It is now time for questions. I recognize the member for London North Centre.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the members for their presentation. In particular, my question will be to the member from Burlington. She had mentioned mental health care workers in schools. Quite frankly, that has been on the decline for a number of years because of the lack of funding. In particular, I wanted to ask about the Special Education Grant structure. Many boards have seen their Special Education Grant reduced. In fact, the high-needs amount of this grant is being replaced by the differentiated special needs amount. This relies on the special education statistical prediction model, which is something that is not based on actual need but is a numerical calculation.

My question to the member is, why doesn't the government overhaul their cookie-cutter funding model for students and ensure that students are funded based on their actual special education need?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the member opposite for the question. Our government has increased mental health funding by 460%. Schools are a critical part of the mental health care system in the province, providing much-needed mental health promotion and early intervention supports to students. Under Premier Ford our government has increased mental health funding to school boards to historic levels.

In Ontario, these school-based services are reported as the most prevalent place for students with a mental health issue to initially seek help. That's why I'm thankful to the Minister of Education and to the Premier of this province for having placed such an emphasis on student mental health. With over two million students in our schools, the staff that work there are the important assets in the broader system of mental health care.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member from Richmond Hill.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Thank you, member from Eglinton–Lawrence, as well as the member from Burlington, for your presentation.

Today we have talked a lot about transparency and accountability. I would like to share one of the experiences I had in my riding with one of my constituents. They were sharing that during the COVID time, a lot of the measures that we had—we had been trying to get funding for bus

drivers, the people who drive the children, but they kept on complaining that the services were not there. It's similar to what the member from Eglinton–Lawrence was talking about, that funding is not there for special needs.

My concern is, how will this bill address the lack of transparency when it comes to the relationship between funding and student achievement outcomes?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Back to the member from Burlington.

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the member from Richmond Hill for her question. Our government is taking decisive action to improve accountability and transparency for students, parents and Ontario taxpayers. For the first time in Ontario's history, we will require school boards to make public their plans to improve student achievement and offer every single parent the opportunity to view and review these plans at the start of the year and at the end, to measure progress.

Questions about school board finances and transparency are nothing new; one only has to look at the experience of the previous Liberal government. But nothing seems to have changed. All 72 school boards must be focused on their obligation to improve student achievement by preparing students with life, jobs and critical-thinking skills.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: In my presentation earlier I had shared a bit from the Ontario Human Rights Commission that they had done a consultation report, *The Opportunity to Succeed: Achieving Barrier-Free Education for Students with Disabilities*. They said, "Throughout the consultation, stakeholders stressed that many of the problems experienced by students with disabilities in accessing education are due to funding shortfalls."

That is something we hear over and over again. The member from Burlington had talked about mental health and this government investing in specific needs for children. I'm really curious: Which schools are going to be getting those mental health workers? Which ridings? Which schools? Because over here on these benches, we're wondering if you know something we don't, because we haven't seen them.

1740

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Those decisions will be made by the school boards. The funding will flow through to the school boards, and the school boards will make those decisions.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Next question?

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: Thank you to the member from Burlington for such a wonderful speech.

Madam Speaker, our government is making historic investments in education, and I can affirm that my constituents of Brampton West are very pleased with the investments our government is making in education.

Student success is important to all Ontarians, and I know all members in this House agree that students need to be given every opportunity to learn so they can enter the

workforce ready to succeed, whether they choose university, a trade or another path. Recently, our government announced that, starting with students entering grade 9 in September 2024, all students will now be required to earn a grade 9 or 10 technological education credit as part of their Ontario secondary school diploma. This is just one example of how our government supports students as they prepare for the jobs of tomorrow.

Can the member please explain to this House how this bill further supports student learning?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: A student's education can provide a solid foundation for future success. That's why our government has made record investments in student learning, providing tutoring supports to help students catch up following the pandemic and continuing to strengthen and modernize their curriculum. Our government is making an historic investment in Ontario schools by providing a projected \$27.6 billion in public education for the 2023-24 academic school year.

On Sunday, our minister announced that we are investing more than \$180 million in the 2023-24 academic year for math and reading supports for Ontario students in our classrooms and at home. This builds on our previous \$200-million investment which supported students with our four-year math strategy.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Next question?

M^{me} France Gélinas: My question is for the member from Burlington. You mentioned about the ratio of new teachers that will come on board to help with the reading and the ratio for math. If we do the math, that's one new teacher for 2,850 students for reading and one new teacher for 6,650 students in math.

I represent an area of northern Ontario where the schools are pretty small. In Elliot Lake, we have 28 kids; in Gogama, we have less than 20 kids; in Mattagami First Nation, we have a little bit more. How do figure those ratios will apply to rural northern Ontario, which has a small population of everybody, including students?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the member opposite. Including the almost 2,000 new teachers announced in this bill, if passed, we will have about 10,000 new teachers. We'll have a unified focus on student priorities in all parts of Ontario's education system. The purpose of the proposed Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act is to refocus Ontario's education on student achievement, prioritizing skills development in reading, writing, math and hands-on learning. The focus is back on students, student achievement and the skills that they need in order to be successful. The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act advances a vision for the education system centred on preparing students to succeed in life.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Final question?

Mr. Andrew Dowie: My question—I guess probably the member from Eglinton–Lawrence would be best suited to respond, given her remarks.

I toured a big part of Ontario as part of my file with economic development. One of the employers and actually

parents noted the job skills component was not being well echoed in their local school boards and asked what the province could do. So I'm wondering if you could elaborate as to how the bill addresses that relationship between the job skills that students need and the funding that the province provides to achieve student performance.

Mrs. Robin Martin: There's not much time, but I think that what we're doing is emphasizing reading, writing, math. We're emphasizing the basics, the foundations, so that kids will be able to adapt when needed to the requirements of those jobs and make sure we get the STEM training in because we definitely need the skilled trades.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It's now time for further debate.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Speaker. Thank you. It's always an honour to be able to stand up and speak in this place but also, again, to speak on Bill 98 on behalf of the people in Kiiwetinoong. Bill 98 is An Act to amend various Acts relating to education and child care.

I know that the Kiiwetinoong riding is a very unique riding. There are four small municipalities. There are 31 First Nations and then 24 fly-in First Nations. When we talk about provincial services, we get into the weeds of jurisdiction, jurisdictional weeds.

Just a shout-out to some of the public schools in Kiiwetinoong, Red Lake-Madsen Public School, Golden Learning Centre, Red Lake District High School, Ear Falls Public School, Sioux Mountain Public School, Sioux North High School, Savant Lake Public School, Crolancia elementary and secondary school in Pickle Lake, and also the boards: Keewatin Patricia District School Board, Kenora Catholic District School Board and also the North-west Catholic District School Board in Red Lake.

I know that with this bill we are being told that this bill was introduced without the input of educators. To begin, I'd like to share what was told by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation. I think that it's important to share that perspective that they have, as they have 60,000 members across Ontario and their members are public high school teachers, occasional teachers, teaching assistants, psycho-educational consultants, social workers, child and youth counsellors, speech-language pathologists, continuing education teachers and early childhood educators. They represent those who work on the front lines of the schools across Ontario, and it's important to acknowledge them as experts.

I want to share some of the comments that the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation has to say about the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act: "The legislation announced today has very little in terms of supports or resources for students, despite its misleading title," said the president, Karen Littlewood. She also continues on to say—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I'm going to ask the member to withdraw.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Withdraw.

"This legislation seems primarily focused on how school boards operate, and not on how we can better support students and make up for the learning loss experienced during the pandemic."

1750

It continues on to say that “This government likes to put the blame on others and say schools are underperforming, when in reality these schools are being purposely underfunded by the Ford government,” stated President Littlewood. “The province has been shortchanging public education since 2018, delivering underfunded budgets and then underspending against their own subpar budgets”—these are not my words. I’m just reading what they have said. “Nothing in yesterday’s announcements or in today’s legislation addresses this government’s years of cuts.”

“On Sunday, the Minister of Education announced over \$170 million in funding for early reading and math supports, with a focus on schools deemed to be in the bottom 20% in terms of student performance.” They continue on to say, “Instead of properly funding public education in Ontario, this government continues to play the blame-game, refusing to take responsibility for the fallout from their ongoing underfunding of the system. This legislation focuses on streamlining and ‘maximizing school capital assets’ instead of streamlining access to the supports that students need.”

Another quote: “Yesterday, the minister said they had been working on their plans for improving literacy and math skills for over a year, yet the government chose not to consult with any education union that represents the teachers and education workers who deliver education every day to Ontario’s two million students. Ministry overreach into the autonomy of education workers, teachers, and school boards continues to be a tactic of this government to undermine the excellent work being done in the public education system. This type of legislation ignores the uniqueness of our learners and our communities,” added President Littlewood.

“Once again, the Ford government is bypassing front-line educators and moving ahead with their own with surprise legislation.... Delivering quality education is too important to cut corners when it comes to planning and implementation. There is no reason for this government to not work with the people who will be delivering the updated math and literacy programs in September.”

Speaker, if this bill is supposed to help improve student learning and well-being, why is this government not working with those who work with the learners to find out what is needed? Why has there been no consultation with teachers and parents and school boards?

I know that since the 2018-19 school year, nearly 2,000 teachers have been cut from Ontario’s public education system, based on school board estimates. These job cuts would be even higher without the temporary federal funding from the COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund, which is set to expire at the end of the 2022-23 school year. The government has not shared whether that funding will be extended.

I want to go into a little bit of some of the previous curriculum changes that this government has implemented previously. And I’m sharing this because we were told by Indigenous educators that this was not done in a good way.

We need to do things in a good way. I’m also sharing this because it speaks to the track record of how this ministry and all others undertake consultation.

Professor Jennifer Brant told CBC News in June 2021 that the province’s Indigenous content in schools came without the necessary consultations to effectively address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s calls to action that are specific to education.

At the same time, Nataka Pucan, the co-chair of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Association of Ontario, said the province’s revisions up to that time had not been done in a reciprocal way. She said, “The ministry’s idea of consultation is they make the changes and then give us a short timeline to respond. I don’t think they’ve consulted the Indigenous community at all. I don’t know what the hesitation there is, but it would be a good offering for the province to sit down and really look at developing scope and sequence for dealing with curriculum around truth and reconciliation.”

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Association of Ontario is a subject association for First Nations, Métis and Inuit education in Ontario and Canada. They support and help all educators understand issues related to First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, as well as offer strategies for teaching this content to all learners.

When we talk about consultation, I know the first thing that happened in 2018 was removing the Indigenous curriculum-writing sessions that were supposed to provide the real history of Canada—the real history, when we talk about Indian residential schools, where they were taken away from their families, from their homes, from their communities; the real history of, even today—there were 18 Indian residential schools in Ontario, and today we are still searching for them.

It’s really important that we continue to consult people when we want to change things—how it impacts the future of people in—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I apologize to the member from Kiiwetinoong. It is now 6 o’clock and time for private members’ public business.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

1800

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

CHRONIC DISEASES

Mrs. Robin Martin: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Health and Ontario Health should develop a provincial framework that ensures that every Ontarian has access to quality care for chronic diseases and that is designed to improve chronic disease care, addressing prevention, management and treatment with an official focus on diabetes and aligned with the existing Indigenous diabetes strategy, and that Ontario Health table its progress through public reporting within one year and

provide annual updates on the state of care for persons with chronic diseases in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Ms. Martin has moved private members' notice of motion number 45. Pursuant to standing order 100, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you so much, Madam Speaker. I have to say, I'm humbled, as I am every day I get to do so, to be able to rise today in the Legislature to speak about an incredibly important issue and one that will touch all of us in the Legislature today, probably many people who are watching and most of us personally or through our relatives in some way or another or our friends, and that's the issue of chronic disease.

Chronic diseases are long-term diseases. They're diseases that develop slowly over time, often progressing in severity. They can be controlled but rarely cured. They include conditions such as cardiovascular disease, heart disease, or stroke, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, back problems, asthma, chronic depression, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder. Chronic diseases may significantly impair and reduce one's ability to perform even activities of daily living.

The reality in Canada is that many people will have a chronic disease in their lifetime or will have a loved one who does, and because chronic disease impacts so many of us and is chronic and ongoing, I have long believed that it is one of the greatest challenges facing our health care system.

In 2019, Public Health Ontario partnered with Cancer Care Ontario and released a report called the Burden of Chronic Disease in Ontario. They found that, in 2015, nearly 75% of all deaths in Ontario were caused by chronic diseases. Of the actual 74.2%, 40% were from cancer, over 35% were from cardiovascular diseases, 6% were from chronic lower respiratory diseases or chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder, almost 4% were from diabetes, and nearly 15% could be classified as other chronic diseases.

These chronic diseases not only reduce the quality and the length of people's lives; they are also expensive to treat. The direct health care costs associated with chronic diseases are estimated to be \$10.5 billion every year in Ontario.

I think it's important to recognize in this Legislature that the prevalence of chronic diseases and demand for care is only going to increase over time, and of course there are three trends that we can identify—I think all of us—that will increase this pressure.

The growing population and, with it, the growing number of patients with chronic diseases: Ontario's population is projected to increase by almost 15% over the next 10 years.

The aging population in Ontario: The population of seniors aged 75 and older is expected to increase by nearly 50%, from 1.2 million to 1.8 million in the next 10 years; and Ontario's 65-plus seniors population will increase from 2.5 million in 2019 to 4.6 million in 2046, and seniors 65 and over will make up nearly 23% of all Ontarians at that point. So almost a quarter of all the people in Ontario will be over the age of 65 by 2046.

The third factor, the third pressure, which is going to increase chronic diseases is new advances in health care—sorry, it's not going to increase chronic diseases, but it's going to help us treat them, the new advances in health care and life-saving and life-prolonging possibilities. But that will increase the cost because we'll be able to treat those things more.

These statistics demonstrate clearly why I think a chronic disease strategy is vital in Ontario right now and why I'm sure everybody in this Legislature will agree, anybody watching would agree, that it's really important that we get this right. That's why I brought this motion. The motion is really about people and about making sure that our health care system focuses on ensuring that we have the best care for the many people in Ontario who suffer from chronic disease and also for those people who care for them, as well. I know that there has been much historical work done in Ontario, in Canada and around the world—and much ongoing work, frankly, as well—that is being done on chronic disease, particularly on chronic disease prevention, which is great if we can prevent it. But I also think we need to look at some of the other factors.

So I just wanted to go through why I brought this motion today and why I think it's important now. While I think that any time is a good time to draw attention to and focus on this incredibly large part of our health care challenge, chronic diseases, and what we can do about them, I think that this is a particularly important time to do so for a couple of reasons. Refocusing now, as we are doing, on the most pressing health system challenges that we have in Ontario as we come out from under the all-encompassing demands of the pandemic, chronic disease is a, if not the, most pressing health system challenge that we have.

In addition, why I think it's a good time right now to focus on this is because of the reorganization of health care services that we started to undertake when we were first elected in 2018. We did a lot of work, in the last Parliament, to provide an integrated patient-centred model of care with clinical leadership from Ontario Health and team-based care through our Ontario health teams. At this point, our Ontario Health teams now cover approximately 95% of the province and I think this opens up new and relevant opportunities for the treatment of chronic diseases for prevention, for treatment, for management and, hopefully, it's going to be a brave new world and have a lot of positive impact on that.

At this moment, I think, therefore, it is an apt time to express the will of this Legislation on this idea, on whether Ontario Health and the Minister of Health should develop a provincial framework to ensure that every Ontarian has access to quality care for chronic diseases and that is designed to improve our chronic disease care, addressing, as I said, prevention, management and treatment, focusing at the outset on diabetes, aligned with our Indigenous diabetes strategy.

I also think it's important to ask to ensure the accountability. We've been talking a lot about that concept today for the Ministry of Health and for Ontario Health for developing this important provincial framework by requiring

that they table their progress through public reporting within one year and provide annual updates on the state of care for persons with chronic diseases in Ontario.

I believe this public and annual reporting is a vital component of the motion. When a provincial framework is developed, the public will have a benchmark about what the state is of the care we can provide for chronic diseases. And we'll be able to assess annual progress against a benchmark, which will help us inform, and you could say ground true, our approach to chronic diseases and make sure that we do better as we go along.

Up to this point in time, chronic care in Ontario has been described pretty much as a patchwork of services, with very little integration, little overlap and significant gaps. Like I've said, there have been many bodies with many recommendations. I don't have a lot of time, but let me just name a few: Monitoring Chronic Diseases in Canada: The Chronic Disease Indicator Framework, from the Public Health Agency of Canada in 2014; Self-Management Support for Canadians with Chronic Health Conditions, from the Health Council of Canada; The Way Forward, which is the report from Newfoundland; a chronic disease prevention and management framework from the Northwest Territories; there's one from New Brunswick, as well.

1810

In 2021, it was 100 years from the discovery of insulin, one of the main modes of treatment for diabetes—and that was right here in Toronto. In 2021, I know a federal member of the Liberal Party brought forward a motion for a national framework on diabetes, and that was followed by, I think, or it may have been preceded, by the federal government deciding that they were going to do a national framework on diabetes prevention.

All of these things are working toward the same end.

We do, I think, have an opportunity here in Ontario. There's lots of discussion. Now we have this unique opportunity, and I want to ensure that we seize that opportunity.

With the motion we're discussing today, our chronic care strategy would focus initially on diabetes and align with the diabetes strategy for Aboriginals, which has a number of principles, including a holistic perspective, self-determination being fundamental—they can choose Aboriginal models of health care. Those kinds of principles which we can find in that strategy are all very important. These principles align with our government's patient-first approach to health care.

In 2019, we introduced the Ontario health team model, as I said, to help with that kind of a model, going forward, and that is where I think the opportunity lies.

Over the last few years, we've been putting this legislation in place, getting the Ontario health teams stood up. We're at the point with the Ontario health teams where we're focused on primary care integration. And really, primary care is the level at which chronic disease prevention and often management can happen, because they have the day-to-day relationships with their patients. In our Ontario health team confirmed commitment we get from

all of the teams, we make sure that it includes digital self-care support for chronic disease management.

With the development of this framework, I think Ontario health teams will be able and better equipped to help people deal with chronic diseases and prevent them, hopefully, as much as possible.

Speaker, like many here, I have met many people with chronic diseases; I have relatives with chronic diseases; I have seen the impact of chronic diseases.

I believe that we can do better with the right system in place, here in Ontario, and that's why I brought forward this motion today.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I was quite pleased to see this motion come forward. The motion talks about how Ontario should develop a provincial framework that ensures that every Ontarian has access to quality care for chronic disease. I would have liked to ask for a chronic disease strategy, not just a framework, but I'm still happy that we are going to be talking about chronic disease in this chamber today.

Chronic diseases are long-term diseases that develop slowly and over time. They often progress in severity. They can often be controlled but are rarely cured. They include conditions such as cardiovascular diseases—heart disease and stroke—cancer, diabetes, arthritis, back problems, asthma, chronic depression, just to name a few. Most chronic diseases may significantly impair everyday physical and mental function and reduce one's ability to perform activities of daily living.

Just to give you an idea, 80% of Ontarians aged over 45—this is 3.7 million Ontarians, right here, right now—have at least one chronic disease, and of those, 34% have arthritis, 9% have diabetes, 30% have high blood pressure, 12% have osteoporosis. If we look at multiple chronic diseases in people over the age of 45, 70% of Ontarians have multiple conditions.

The member chose to focus on diabetes, which I think is a good idea. Ontarians with diabetes account for 30% of strokes, 32% of heart attacks, 43% of heart failures, 51% of new dialysis and 70% of amputations. Let that sink in a bit: If you get diagnosed with diabetes, it has serious effects on your health. And, as mentioned, in Ontario chronic diseases account for 55% of direct and indirect health care costs. It is very expensive.

As more Ontarians with multiple serious chronic conditions—in the jargon, we say they consume disproportionately more health care than any other diseases. To give you some idea of what we mean by that, someone with multiple chronic diseases will use seven times the amount of in-patient hospital days than somebody without. They will have four times the amount of physician visits than somebody without. They will use five times as many home care visits—and that's all-inclusive: nursing, rehab home care visits—than somebody without, and 2.5 times the amount of home support than somebody without. So is this something that we should look at? Yes, absolutely.

Is this something that Ontario is good at? Sometimes, but most times, no. When you look at chronic diseases, we

have other provinces in this country that have good frameworks, that have good chronic disease strategies. We can look at British Columbia, where their statistics compared to ours make Ontario look really bad. It's the same thing with Alberta, same thing with Saskatchewan, same thing with Manitoba: They have had frameworks in place with reporting to the people about chronic disease management in their province.

Ontario—and I pulled it out, because I was still working in health care at the time—in 2007 had Preventing and Managing Chronic Disease: Ontario's Framework. The first framework came out in Ontario in 2007 and was very warmly received by every interdisciplinary primary health care team. So if you look at the community health centres in our province, if you look at the 25 nurse-practitioner-led clinics, the 12 Aboriginal health access centres, the community-governed family health teams, they have all implemented chronic disease management plans that work.

I will give an example. In Sault Ste. Marie, it's actually the Group Health Centre that did—basically, they offer coordination of care and education of clients and families after they get discharged from congestive heart failure. That small program in Sault Ste. Marie by the Group Health Centre means a 66% decrease in readmission rates for people with congestive heart failure. In Ontario right now, if you get discharged with congestive heart failure, there's a very good chance 28% of patients will get readmitted within a month. When you start to put in place chronic disease management, all of this changes.

There's a difference between a chronic disease framework and a chronic disease strategy. A framework will focus on care—on primary care, secondary care, tertiary care—for people who have the disease. This is something important, but we all know that chronic diseases are preventable. So in a chronic disease strategy you would look at health promotion: How do we keep all of us healthy? You would look at disease prevention. If you have the early signs of any of those chronic diseases, what can we do to keep you healthy, to make sure that the disease doesn't progress with all of the complications that I have named before?

1820

How do we do that, Speaker? Well, we all know how to do this. There are the big four. The big four are tobacco, eating, physical activity and alcohol. If we could stop people from smoking and vaping, 90% of all lung cancers would disappear; 30% of all cancers disappear. If we can do a little bit more and add to this maybe a little bit of exercise and healthy eating, we're talking about 90% of type 2 diabetes disappear, 80% of coronary heart diseases disappear and one third of all cancers in Ontario disappear. This is huge.

If you add to this, as I say, no smoking, a healthy diet and a healthy weight—if you look at making regular physical activity and limiting alcohol, it's up to 80% of all cancers that disappear. Let that sink in: 80%. We all know people that have had cancer. If you knew 10 of them, eight of them would not have had to go through their cancer

diagnosis and all of that if we had strong health promotion/disease prevention initiatives for the big four.

Think about it, Speaker: When was the last time this government did anything to help people quit smoking? There is no health promotion minister in this government. We used to have a health promotion minister. We don't have one any more.

We have no chronic disease strategy, but we have to. How do you decrease the need for in-patient beds, for visits to physicians, for home care, for palliative care, for all of this? You keep people healthy. How do you keep people healthy? You help them quit smoking. You make sure that a litre of milk is cheaper than a litre of Coke or Pepsi or whatever, so that people make the healthy choice the easy choice. None of that is happening.

Look at other jurisdictions that have decreased the amount of sugar and the amount of salt in the food that they consume. They've done this and it works. You give people healthy food, they are able to keep a healthy weight and they avoid getting sick.

The same thing with physical activity: When was the last time you saw a big campaign to show people how physical activity is important? During the pandemic, when all of us were having a really tough time staying home, what a good opportunity to put that forward. None of that happened.

With alcohol, we have the new listings that have come out. At the end of the day, if you reduce your alcohol consumption, you reduce the chances of chronic diseases. All of this goes together and all of this exists in our interdisciplinary primary care models of care. But since this government has been here, there hasn't been a single new community health centre funded.

We need more nurse-practitioner-led clinics. We have the nurses underemployed in northern Ontario. They could take thousands of people that are unattached, that don't have a primary care physician. We have the staff, we have the knowledge and we haven't got a government that's willing to fund—we don't even need a new nurse practitioner. Give us a satellite clinic of an existing one; we will be happy with this. But, no, there is no money for that.

The same thing when we looked at Aboriginal health access centres. They do tremendously good work. The one in southwestern Ontario right now—there's a physician—I'm running out of time.

This is something we can support. A framework is a step in the right direction. I would like to see a full strategy.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Harris: It truly is a privilege to stand here and support this motion tonight, put forward by—dare I use the term from the Premier?—the all-star member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

I just want to go back and highlight the motion. It reads as follows: “That, in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Health and Ontario Health should develop a provincial framework that ensures that every Ontarian has access to quality care for chronic diseases and that is designed to

improve chronic disease care, addressing prevention, management and treatment with an initial focus on diabetes and aligned with the existing Indigenous diabetes strategy, and that Ontario Health table its progress through public reporting within one year and provide annual updates on the state of care for persons with chronic diseases in Ontario.”

Again, I just really want to thank the member from Eglinton–Lawrence. Being the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, I know it’s been an interesting time, certainly, over the last few years, but she stuck with it and she really does have, I think, the best in her heart when it comes to this motion today and, of course, what we see put forward through the people of Ontario.

When it comes to treating chronic illnesses like diabetes, we know it’s important to address prevention, management and treatment. This motion is one of many steps our government has taken to help manage these chronic conditions.

As a quick side note, I’d like to highlight our recent investments. Of course, I’d be remiss if I didn’t talk a little bit about Waterloo region. I’d like to talk about some of the recent investments into health technology research in the region of Waterloo and their impact. The following quote comes from a press release issued late last year: “University of Waterloo researchers are developing a new patch that would offer diabetics an affordable, accurate, pain-free, round-the-clock alternative to traditional tests that require pricking a finger for a blood sample every few hours.”

In the future, we may have an easier and affordable way to monitor glucose levels, and I think this is very important. Innovations like these will be game-changers for those living with diabetes and chronic illnesses across the province. This is why our support for the entire innovation ecosystem in my region, and, of course, across Ontario, is so important.

Managing chronic diseases like diabetes is critical as it can increase the likelihood of developing other health issues—and I’ll go into this a little bit, Madam Speaker.

People with diabetes tend to develop heart disease at a much younger age. High blood glucose can damage your blood vessels and the nerves that control your heart and blood vessels. Diabetes is also a leading cause of kidney disease here in Ontario and across the world. Up to 50% of people with diabetes will have signs of kidney damage in their lifetime.

When chronic diseases start to pile on, the cost to our public health care system goes up and so does the emotional toll on patients and their families. I think that’s really the crux of what the member from Eglinton–Lawrence is trying to achieve with this motion.

In September 2019, our government announced public funding for intermittently scanned continuous glucose monitoring systems for all Ontarian Drug Benefit clients who use insulin and have a valid prescription from their physician or nurse practitioner. In November 2021, the government expanded public funding to include the very popular FreeStyle Libre 2 for those on the Ontario Drug Benefit plan.

So what does this mean for patients, Madam Speaker? I’ll use an example of an ODSP recipient in their sixties who was able to use the FreeStyle Libre 2 after that funding was expanded. In addition to diabetes, this person was experiencing heart failure, which required daily weigh-ins to monitor fluid retention, blood pressure monitoring and limiting fluid intake to only two litres per day. Add to that kidney failure, which required the close monitoring of food for potassium and phosphorous, and eventually dialysis treatment.

Speaker, that’s a lot of things to keep track of. In this example, the patient appreciated not having to prick their finger several times a day and was able to take good advantage of that new device. Their family appreciated not having to ask, “Did you check your sugar levels this morning?” They also appreciated the care received from the publicly funded dialysis treatment, the publicly funded heart failure clinic, the publicly funded specialists and dietitians who helped explain how to manage these diseases to the patient and the family.

1830

Maybe you’re asking how I know this, Madam Speaker. Her son works in my office and was very happy to give me this example.

Through this motion, we will ensure that every Ontarian has access to quality care for chronic diseases. I want to thank the member from Eglinton–Lawrence for bringing this forward. This is a very worthwhile motion, Madam Speaker. I’m sure we will advocate for improvements to public health. By providing annual updates, we can make sure that vulnerable patients continue to get the proper care they deserve.

This motion is another step forward in our efforts to help the people of Ontario manage chronic diseases. Continuing this good work will lead to better outcomes for patients and their families, and I’m very proud to support this motion. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further debate?

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I am honoured to have the opportunity today to speak to the member for Eglinton–Lawrence’s private member’s motion, a framework for chronic diseases. I have to agree with the member and I’m very supportive of her helping to seize the opportunity because I believe she’s absolutely correct that it’s vital that we do this now and that we get it right.

In addition to that, the accountability that this framework will bring our system is huge. What we want is to ensure that we can table that progress, as the member from Eglinton–Lawrence has noted, and we are in a position now that our health care system has been reorganized, so it is perfect timing. So thank you to the member, and do know, obviously, that I’m supporting you and want to help seize this opportunity.

That being said, the motion would set a framework that would allow all Ontarians to have access to quality care for chronic diseases across our province. By creating a provincial framework for chronic disease management,

we can improve chronic disease care, addressing prevention, management and treatment through a coordinated approach.

While there are many chronic diseases, some of the more common ones could affect your brain, such as mental illnesses, your lungs through chronic respiratory diseases, your body cells through various cancers or your pancreas through diabetes. Oftentimes chronic diseases are connected, leaving the patient vulnerable to several chronic diseases due to their poor state of overall health.

Eating healthy foods, being physically active, as the member from Nickel Belt mentioned, and avoiding alcohol and tobacco while managing stress effectively will drastically reduce one's chances of falling ill to chronic disease. However, we also have to take into consideration that family history, your access to healthy food, adverse childhood experiences, as well as where you work and live also have a significant impact on whether one will develop a chronic disease.

Our Indigenous population experiences chronic disease drastically different than other Ontarians. Factors such as their history, geographic location, culture and past experiences intersect and lead to higher rates of diabetes, chronic kidney disease, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer, obesity, as well as mental illness.

Our government is working collaboratively with Indigenous partners and communities to co-develop programs that will improve access to safe and effective health services. To best serve the Indigenous population, these programs and services must be designed, delivered and evaluated in collaboration with Indigenous partners to effectively meet the needs of Indigenous peoples, communities and families.

We've invested over \$41 million in Indigenous organizations and communities to support culturally safe mental health and wellness services to Indigenous youth, children, families and communities in Ontario. Our government has made clear that we will do everything we can to protect our most vulnerable, which includes Ontario's Indigenous populations. Through the Roadmap to Wellness, our government has pledged to make supporting the mental health and well-being of all Ontarians a key priority.

Since 2019, we have invested \$525 million in new annualized funding for mental health and addiction services. This includes funding for addiction treatment services and supports, as well as youth wellness hubs that are delivering developmentally appropriate care to youth aged 12 to 25 experiencing substance-use issues.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a very considerable impact on the overall health and well-being of all of us. Even if you did not fall ill to COVID, the long-term effects of the stress and isolation during the pandemic have negatively affected our mental health. As a way to deal with this stress, substance abuse numbers have significantly increased.

Our government recognized the pandemic's impact on substance use and announced the Addictions Recovery Fund, an additional one-time investment of \$90 million over three years. That is adding more detox spaces, more

treatment beds and eight new youth wellness hubs. Every year, our government invests nearly \$300 million in addiction treatment services and supports delivered across over 200 not-for-profit agencies.

Speaker, I was going to talk a bit about diabetes, but since the member from Kitchener–Conestoga did that, I'm going to go straight to chronic diseases affecting all Ontarians living in every part of our province. By developing a standardized chronic disease framework which prioritizes prevention, management and treatment, we can take a new approach to chronic diseases. This will ensure that all Ontarians receive the same world-class treatment that our province can offer.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): The member now has two minutes for a reply.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I want to thank the member from Nickel Belt, the member from Newmarket–Aurora and the member from Kitchener–Conestoga for their contributions to the debate on the motion. I expected that it would be something that everybody could get behind, because who doesn't want to fix this problem? It's just interesting to even hear on the floor of the Legislature the different perspectives that people offer about what needs to be done and what can be done.

One of the interesting things, I think, about chronic disease is that, as the member from Nickel Belt pointed out, if we just all lived healthy, we wouldn't have this problem. Even though we all know—and we've heard it again here tonight, if we didn't know it before—how to do that, I suspect not all of us are always living as healthy as we should. So, after having brought this motion, I made sure I started exercising every day again. But it is hard, I think, to dictate healthy living to people. We can't do that. What we can do is find the best practices.

I agree that we should take what has been done elsewhere and look at that, and say, "What is the best practice in that jurisdiction that we can use and implement here?" At the end of the day, what we want to do is make sure that we're giving people the best support we can, so that they can make the best choices we can, so that we can reduce the burden of chronic disease here in Ontario and make sure that people actually live healthier lifestyles, because although it is an enormous expense for our health care system to pay for all the care for chronic diseases—seven times more likely to use hospital care and use more hospital care etc.—that isn't the issue; the issue is people's quality of life.

Amputations are pretty ugly things. We don't want that to happen. We want to make sure we keep them healthy.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

Mrs. Martin has moved private member's notice of motion number 45. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member from Kiiwetinoong.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Just a point of order: I just came from downstairs. There's a group called Ducks Unlimited. They're giving out duck calls, so they're calling you to come grab a duck call.

Interruption.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I'm not sure that's appropriate.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): That's very appropriate, especially considering today's proceedings.

All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1840.

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

Temporary Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes par intérim: Mike Civil

| 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 |
| Babikian, Aris (PC) | Scarborough—Agincourt | |
| Bailey, Robert (PC) | Sarnia—Lambton | |
| Barnes, Patrice (PC) | Ajax | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative |
| Begum, Doly (NDP) | Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough- Sud-Ouest | Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle |
| Bell, Jessica (NDP) | University—Rosedale | |
| Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC) | Pickering—Uxbridge | Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances |
| Blais, Stephen (LIB) | Orléans | |
| Bouma, Will (PC) | Brantford—Brant | |
| Bourgouin, Guy (NDP) | Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James | |
| Bowman, Stephanie (LIB) | Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest | |
| Brady, Bobbi Ann (IND) | Haldimand—Norfolk | |
| Bresee, Ric (PC) | Hastings—Lennox and Addington | |
| Burch, Jeff (NDP) | Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre | |
| Byers, Rick (PC) | Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound | |
| 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 / Ministre associé des Transports |
| 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 | Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative |
| Crawford, Stephen (PC) | Oakville | |
| Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC) | Mississauga—Lakeshore | |
| Dixon, Jess (PC) | Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler | |
| Dowie, Andrew (PC) | Windsor—Tecumseh | |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| Fife, Catherine (NDP) | Waterloo | |
| Flack, Rob (PC) | Elgin—Middlesex—London | |

| 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 Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario |
| Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Michael D. (PC) | York South—Weston / York-Sud—Weston | Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiles et du Multiculturalisme |
| Fraser, John (LIB) | Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud | |
| French, Jennifer K. (NDP) | Oshawa | |
| Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC) | Newmarket—Aurora | |
| Gates, Wayne (NDP) | Niagara Falls | |
| Gélinas, France (NDP) | Nickel Belt | |
| Ghamari, Goldie (PC) | Carleton | |
| Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC) | Milton | Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives |
| Glover, Chris (NDP) | Spadina—Fort York | |
| Gretzky, Lisa (NDP) | Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest | |
| Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC) | Brampton East / Brampton-Est | |
| Hardeman, Ernie (PC) | Oxford | |
| Harden, Joel (NDP) | Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre | |
| Harris, Mike (PC) | Kitchener—Conestoga | |
| Hogarth, Christine (PC) | Etobicoke—Lakeshore | |
| Holland, Kevin (PC) | Thunder Bay—Atikokan | |
| Hsu, Ted (LIB) | Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles | |
| Hunter, Mitzie (LIB) | Scarborough—Guildwood | |
| Jama, Sarah (NDP) | Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre | |
| Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC) | Dufferin—Caledon | Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé |
| Jones, Trevor (PC) | Chatham-Kent—Leamington | |
| Jordan, John (PC) | Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston | |
| Kanapathi, Logan (PC) | Markham—Thornhill | |
| Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP) | Parkdale—High Park | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée |
| Ke, Vincent (IND) | Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord | |
| Kernaghan, Terence (NDP) | London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord | Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle |
| Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC) | York Centre / York-Centre | Solicitor General / Solliciteur général |
| Khanjin, Andrea (PC) | Barrie—Innisfil | Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement |
| Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia (PC) | Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre | |
| Leardi, Anthony (PC) | Essex | |
| Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC) | King—Vaughan | Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation |
| Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP) | Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre | |
| Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC) | Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek | Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport |
| MacLeod, Lisa (PC) | Nepean | |
| Mamakwa, Sol (NDP) | Kiiwetinoong | Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle |
| Mantha, Michael (IND) | Algoma—Manitoulin | |
| Martin, Robin (PC) | Eglinton—Lawrence | |
| McCarthy, Todd J. (PC) | Durham | |
| McGregor, Graham (PC) | Brampton North / Brampton-Nord | |
| McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB) | Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York | |
| McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC) | Lambton—Kent—Middlesex | Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences |
| Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC) | York—Simcoe | Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports |
| Oosterhoff, Sam (PC) | Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest | |

| Member and Party / Député(e) et parti | Constituency / Circonscription | Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités |
|--|---|--|
| Pang, Billy (PC) | Markham—Unionville | |
| Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC) | Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill | Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires |
| Pasma, Chandra (NDP) | Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean | |
| 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 |
| Pierre, Natalie (PC) | Burlington | |
| Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC) | Timmins | Minister of Mines / Ministre des Mines |
| Quinn, Nolan (PC) | Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry | |
| Rae, Matthew (PC) | Perth—Wellington | |
| Rakocevic, Tom (NDP) | Humber River—Black Creek | |
| Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC) | Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville | Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises |
| Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC) | Kenora—Rainy River | Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Northern Development / Ministre du Développement du Nord |
| Riddell, Brian (PC) | Cambridge | |
| Romano, Ross (PC) | Sault Ste. Marie | |
| 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 |
| Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC) | Glengarry—Prescott—Russell | |
| Sattler, Peggy (NDP) | London West / London-Ouest | |
| Saunderson, Brian (PC) | Simcoe—Grey | |
| Schreiner, Mike (GRN) | Guelph | |
| Scott, Laurie (PC) | Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock | |
| Shamji, Adil (LIB) | Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est | |
| Shaw, Sandy (NDP) | Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas | |
| Skelly, Donna (PC) | Flamborough—Glanbrook | Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-présidente et présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente |
| Smith, Dave (PC) | Peterborough—Kawartha | |
| Smith, David (PC) | Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre | |
| Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC) | Parry Sound—Muskoka | Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts |
| Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC) | Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte | Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie |
| Smith, Laura (PC) | Thornhill | |
| Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP) | St. Catharines | |
| Stiles, Marit (NDP) | Davenport | Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario |
| 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 Housing / Ministre associée du Logement |
| Taylor, Monique (NDP) | Hamilton Mountain / 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 | Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle |
| Vaugeois, Lise (NDP) | Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord | |
| Wai, Daisy (PC) | Richmond Hill | |

| Member and Party / Député(e) et parti | Constituency / Circonscription | Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités |
|--|---|--|
| West, Jamie (NDP) | Sudbury | |
| Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC) | Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre | Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes |
| Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP) | Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre | |
| Yakabuski, John (PC) | Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke | |
| Vacant | Kanata—Carleton | |