

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

No. 97A

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

N° 97A

1st Session
43rd Parliament
Tuesday
17 October 2023

1^{re} session
43^e législature
Mardi
17 octobre 2023

Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott
Clerk: Trevor Day

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
Greffier : Trevor Day

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

Tuesday 17 October 2023 / Mardi 17 octobre 2023

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Attacks on Israel / Attaques en Israël

Mr. Trevor Jones	5389
Hon. Michael S. Kerzner.....	5389
Hon. Andrea Khanjin	5391
Hon. Doug Ford	5393
Mr. John Vanthof.....	5394
Ms. Doly Begum.....	5395
Debate deemed adjourned.....	5397

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉES ET DÉPUTÉS

Atara Cohen

Ms. Laura Smith.....	5397
----------------------	------

Long-term care / Soins de longue durée

Mr. Guy Bourgouin.....	5397
------------------------	------

Scarehouse Windsor

Mr. Andrew Dowie	5397
------------------------	------

Child care

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	5397
------------------------------	------

International trade

Mr. Anthony Leardi	5398
--------------------------	------

Centennial College A-Building

Ms. Doly Begum.....	5398
---------------------	------

Brantford Bulldogs

Mr. Will Bouma	5398
----------------------	------

Missy Knott

Mr. Dave Smith.....	5398
---------------------	------

Ontario economy

Mr. Matthew Rae	5399
-----------------------	------

House sittings

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott)	5399
-------------------------------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEUSES ET VISITEURS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott)	5399
Mr. Will Bouma	5399
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	5399
Ms. Laura Smith.....	5399
Miss Monique Taylor.....	5399
Mrs. Daisy Wai	5399
Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens	5399
Hon. Sylvia Jones.....	5399
Ms. Sandy Shaw.....	5400

Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	5400
MPP Jill Andrew	5400
Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria	5400
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong	5400
Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy	5400
MPP Lise Vaugeois.....	5400
Mr. Matthew Rae	5400
Hon. Vijay Thanigasalam.....	5400
Ms. Doly Begum	5400
Hon. Michael Parsa	5400
Ms. Christine Hogarth.....	5400
Mr. Trevor Jones	5400

Legislative pages

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott).....	5400
------------------------------------	------

QUESTION PERIOD / PÉRIODE DE QUESTIONS

Government accountability

Ms. Marit Stiles.....	5401
Hon. Paul Calandra	5401

Government accountability

Ms. Marit Stiles.....	5401
Hon. Paul Calandra	5402

Government accountability

Ms. Marit Stiles.....	5403
Hon. Paul Calandra	5403

Electric vehicles

Mr. Ric Bresee	5404
Hon. Victor Fedeli.....	5404

Government appointments

Ms. Peggy Sattler	5404
Hon. Andrea Khanjin	5404

Small business

Mr. Sheref Sabawy.....	5405
Hon. Nina Tangri	5405

Long-term care

Mr. Wayne Gates	5405
Hon. Paul Calandra	5405

Government accountability

MPP Karen McCrimmon	5406
Hon. Kinga Surma.....	5406

School nutrition programs

Mrs. Daisy Wai	5406
Hon. Michael Parsa	5407

Government accountability

MPP Lise Vaugeois.....	5407
Hon. Paul Calandra	5407

Forest industry	
Mr. Michael Mantha	5408
Hon. Graydon Smith	5408
Forest firefighting / Forest industry	
Ms. Natalie Pierre	5408
Hon. Graydon Smith	5408
Autism treatment	
Miss Monique Taylor	5409
Hon. Michael Parsa	5409
Public transit	
Ms. Laura Smith	5410
Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria	5410
Child care	
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong	5410
Hon. Stephen Lecce	5410
Notice of dissatisfaction	
The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott)	5411

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Addiction services	
Mme France Gélinas	5411
Access to health care	
MPP Jamie West	5411
Alzheimer's disease	
Mme France Gélinas	5411
Labour legislation	
MPP Jamie West	5412
Subventions aux résidents du Nord pour frais de transport à des fins médicales	
Mme France Gélinas	5412
Public safety	
MPP Jamie West	5412
Winter highway maintenance	
Mme France Gélinas	5412

Labour legislation	
MPP Jamie West	5413
Front-line workers	
Mme France Gélinas	5413
Access to health care	
MPP Jamie West	5413
Children's mental health services	
Mme France Gélinas	5413
Labour legislation	
MPP Jamie West	5414

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Attacks on Israel / Attaques en Israël	
Ms. Doly Begum	5414
Mrs. Robin Martin	5416
Ms. Marit Stiles	5418
Mr. John Fraser	5419
Mr. Stephen Blais	5420
Mr. Ted Hsu	5420
Ms. Stephanie Bowman	5420
Ms. Laura Smith	5421
MPP Jamie West	5423
Hon. Jill Dunlop	5425
Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon	5426
MPP Andrea Hazell	5427
MPP Karen McCrimmon	5427
Mr. Adil Shamji	5427
Mr. Joel Harden	5428
Mr. Will Bouma	5429
M. Guy Bourgouin	5430
Ms. Goldie Ghamari	5432
Debate deemed adjourned	5434

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 17 October 2023

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 17 octobre 2023

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Good morning. Let us pray.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ATTACKS ON ISRAEL

ATTAQUES EN ISRAËL

Mr. Trevor Jones: I move that this House condemn the ongoing and reprehensible attacks being carried out by the terrorist organization Hamas, including the slaughter, rape and kidnapping of innocent Israeli civilians, including babies, children and seniors, and recognize the inalienable right of the State of Israel to defend itself and its people against this horrific violence.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Jones, Chatham-Kent-Leamington, has moved government notice of motion number 18.

Further debate?

Mr. Trevor Jones: I'll be sharing my time with the Premier of Ontario, the member for Etobicoke North; the Solicitor General, the member for York Centre; and the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, the member for Barrie-Innisfil.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: I move that the motion be amended by deleting the words "being carried out by the terrorist organization Hamas" and replacing them with "perpetrated by Hamas terrorists."

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Kerzner has moved that the motion be amended by deleting the words "being carried out by the terrorist organization Hamas" and replacing them with "perpetrated by Hamas terrorists."

The Solicitor General still has the floor. We are now debating the amendment to the motion.

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: A treasure to our Jewish community, the late Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks was correct when he said, "The hate that begins with Jews never ends with Jews." And we make a great mistake if we think anti-Semitism is only about Jews; it's not. It's about anti-Semites; it is about people who cannot accept responsibility for their own failures and instead have to blame someone else. We should all be mindful of this, especially today and in this place.

Mr. Speaker, during this past week, many people have reached out to me. They've called, they've sent messages, and they've sent emails and asked me how I am doing. I

said, like so many people in our Jewish community around the world and in Israel, we are really not okay. How can we be?

To be human is to be a storyteller. All the narratives we construct—the true ones, the untrue ones, and the ones we tell ourselves are true but are not—are acts of self-construction, prisms of understanding by which we build our own identity. We tell all sorts of tales to clean up our prickly pasts. We do it all the time, sometimes not even knowing it.

Today, I want to put a spotlight on a story that is absolutely true and that needs to be told now and in this place.

There are no words any human can say to describe the largest and most vicious attack on Jews since the Holocaust. There are no words. How could there be any other expression to describe the sadistic barbarism of the Hamas terrorists hunting down people, just because they were Jews, in their homes, at bus stops and at a music festival while at the same time, and in real time, happily broadcasting their rampage to exalted crowds in Gaza and around the world? What words could we come up with that convey the terror of Hamas throwing grenades into bomb shelters and burning people alive in front of their loved ones, slaughtering and dismembering parents before their children's own eyes? Hamas terrorists rounded up Holocaust survivors. There is simply no depraved act that you could imagine that they did not do.

Isaac Herzog, president of the democratic State of Israel, told CNN and the world, if you can believe this, that Hamas terrorists who infiltrated Israel were carrying manuals with instructions on how to torture and kidnap those they found. The president noted that many of the hostages—over 200—are elderly or children. He said, "Who are these hostages? Babies, pregnant women, elderly people with dementia, even with caretakers, families, innocent civilians, from 36 nations—people were killed or abducted from 36 nations."

During the onslaught on Israeli border communities, the terrorists killed over 1,300 people, most of them civilians, and, as I said, took almost 200 hostages.

There are simply no adequate words.

Mr. Speaker, we have legitimate agency and control over the decisions we make. We know, as civilized people, there is right and there is wrong—there is no world that Hamas's deeds could find justification amongst civilized peoples. Our eyes are filled with tears, but in those tears, we have found moral clarity—moral clarity that Premier Ford spoke of with such emotion; I was standing right beside him, together with so many from our caucus, a week ago, when 15,000 grieving people attended at Mel Lastman Square, just a few days after the terrorist attack.

Thank you, Premier, for what you said that night and for your support of Israel.

We must see the group Hamas for who they really are. I'll tell you who they are: unabashed, unapologetic, sick and megalomaniac terrorists.

We're here in this chamber of democracy, and we must reject any moral equivalency. This is not a land dispute or competing aspirations for national sovereignty, a he-said-she-said dispute about conflicting dual narratives. This is a face of evil revealed, a violent ideology that would kill Jews for being Jews, that neither represents the Muslim faith or the national interest of the Palestinian people or any future of coexistence. Mr. Speaker, we have a big problem when we cannot call evil "evil"—of condemning targeted violence against innocents.

We also need to understand again that for Israel, when you are dealing with the devil, it is incredibly hard to act like an angel.

Of all the emotions I have experienced since the attack, the most surreal to me has always been shock, horror and anger, and sadness at the lives lost and of the injured.

My wife and I are proud parents of three accomplished children, and we, ourselves, have not found the words we need to comfort our own children for the acts that they have witnessed in their own generation.

We must never be afraid to teach our children the difference between right and wrong and to call out black and white when others just see shades of grey.

Mr. Speaker, the silence is deafening, and right now we cannot be silent. Israel and the Jews everywhere, especially in these days, understand the power of words. You see, words bolster nations, and they build bridges among communities we all call home. They encourage healing. Words matter because the truth matters. And yet, words can also be barriers and curses and weapons. We know that silence, the opposite of words, can be deafening and has the power to create uncertainty and chaos.

0910

As I reflected this week in the aftermath of an unimaginable horror, I was shocked by the words I heard from people in our greater communities that, to me, made very little sense. They spoke of resistance and freedom fighters—words and phrases that sought to justify and approve the Hamas terrorism; unbelievable words that seemed to blame the democratic State of Israel for these horrific attacks; words that, for some, gave an excuse or an explanation to blame innocent children and babies, teenagers at a music festival, Holocaust survivors for their own murder, something that a rational person could never comprehend. There is no modern-day equivalent to any acts in our modern day that remotely comes close. And we waited, as the Jewish community waited, for those to stand up with us in solidarity, and to be honest, some did—our caucus did; our government did; and a few in this place also joined us—but not everyone did, and the silent absence of some left a void in our hearts. We witnessed hurtful statements from student federations on campuses, from unions who could not bring themselves to tell the

truth—the truth that the terrorist acts had an intention to make Jews their victims.

Mr. Speaker, months ago and in the aftermath of the earthquake that ravaged Syria and Türkiye, Israel and the Jewish community stepped forward. I forged bonds personally—wonderful friendships that I consider a privilege—with our Turkish community.

There is, I believe, a common denominator, that we have to treat a person like we want to be treated ourselves.

Today, my words of truth might offend some, and yet at the same time, it's important that we extend a hand of friendship, because it's not too late. I remember the stories, not so many years ago, that many of you might remember, of the Jewish community standing in a circle after mosques in Ontario were threatened. The circle of unity and friendship reminded us what is truly important: the powers that bind one to another. It's not too late.

Intergenerational trauma can never mask or justify the horrific torture and murder of civilians. What we have seen in our province recently is very disconcerting—slogans that we've seen on TV from blatant anti-Semites. "From the River to the Sea"—this means the destruction of Israel. This is completely unacceptable, and we will call them out. Again, they want to blame the Jewish community for no reason.

For anyone who is not sure—and I've said it in this place: Hate is toxic to our democracy.

We need to be clear on a few things. Do not equate Hamas with the Palestinian people. Unlike our enemies, who wish us ill, I am sad—our Jewish community is sad—when we see the loss of life in Gaza. The Palestinians themselves are held hostage by a terrorist regime, and the terrorist regime will not even let them leave. They're standing at the Rafah border crossing in Egypt. They want to get out.

Many may not appreciate or know that thousands of Palestinians crossed into Israel, just before the conflict—daily. I've seen this for myself. If you travel to Eilat, Israel and you go to the Rabin border crossing, you'll see hundreds and hundreds of Jordanians and Palestinians crossing in to work. They come in the morning, and they go home at night—and that was the same at the Gaza crossing, south of Sderot. How many knew that?

Tying these Hamas attacks with Palestinian resistance is an insult to the Palestinians who actually hate Hamas.

Israel is not, contrary to what people say, an apartheid state—this is the purposeful intention of Hamas, to tell you that, thinking that you will believe this. It's not true. For Jews, sovereignty of the land of modern-day Israel goes back a millennium, and the Jews in Israel treasure their homeland.

But I want to tell you who else is in Israel. Our democratic State of Israel has over two million Israeli Arabs who call the land their home as well. They vote, own businesses, are free to be free, and are part of the miracle of Israel that belongs to them as well. For them, this is their country too.

Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you about modern-day Israel. It's a start-up nation. It's incredible. For those who have been

fortunate, like myself and many others in this House, to have travelled to Israel in recent years—it is actually unrecognizable from the minute you get off the plane. It's a miracle. If you go to Jerusalem, you will see something absolutely amazing: the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Western Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the via dolorosa—side by side—and parishioners praying daily and peacefully.

In the wake of horrific darkness, we know there's an opportunity to let the light in again.

I look at our Ontario. It's special, and it's unique. It's a kaleidoscope, a collage of incredible and irreplaceable diversity, of secular and religious, of different faiths, of different creeds. The quilt of Ontario is ours. It is a microcosm of cultures living together. And there are inherent values we share in our Ontario—the values of our rights to live safely in our own homes and communities so we can take our kids to school and wake up our loved ones, we can go to work, we can shop, and we can pray. And we are grateful beyond measure for those who keep our communities safe each and every day.

What I have said and the Premier has said in this place—we will always have the backs of everyone who keeps Ontario safe.

I want to acknowledge the unbelievable support of our police and firefighters in the last few days. They have been so concerned for everyone's welfare in Ontario—but specifically, the Jewish community.

Madame la Présidente, je voudrais remercier chaque personne et tous les premiers intervenants qui travaillent fort pour assurer la sécurité de notre province. Je prends mon rôle sérieusement. C'est un honneur d'assurer la sécurité de notre province.

Our quilt has bonds that have been tested before, and while those bonds—the fabric in the quilt—have been stretched, they never broke. Let's remember that. As many of our clergy said this past Sabbath, we need to be able to get out of our comfort zone. When one hurts, we all hurt. When one needs help, everyone should run to help. What binds us is so much stronger than what separates us. We can never let anyone tear our quilt apart.

Madame la Présidente, la raison de leur service est pour faire une différence dans la vie des gens, lorsqu'ils ne s'y attendent pas, et parce que nous croyons en notre province et en notre avenir; because each of us has the power to make a difference in a person's life every day, because we believe in our Ontario and in our future.

I will always be there for my Jewish community. I know who I am. I know how I stand and where I stand, and I am proud of this. But I'm also here for all of my Ontario. Every day, I will always try to do something for somebody in some group. My commitment to my province will never change. They will always be able to count on me, and I will tell you why: Every day, I try to learn something new. One day, we will all pass through the surly bonds of life and be part of the ages. The only thing we will leave behind is our accomplishments.

0920

Each of us can walk down the street and bump into history. And sometimes we do not know when we will

have a collision with history. Sometimes we are at a fork in our lives.

This moment, as we think about it, might not be our fate; this moment may be our destiny. May we find it together. Thank you, merci beaucoup, and meegwetch.

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

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: I'd like to move an amendment to the amendment: that the amendment is amended by adding the word “being” before “perpetrated.”

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Ms. Khanjin has moved an amendment to the amendment: that the amendment is amended by adding the word “being” before “perpetrated.” Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: Adi Vital-Kaploun, 33 years old; Ben Mizrahi, 22 years old; Alexandre Look, 33 years old; Shir Georgy, 22 years old; Tiferet Lapidot, 23 years old; Vivian Silver, the aunt of my friend Erin Silver, 74 years old; Netta Epstein, 21 years old—these are the names of Canadians who were either murdered by Hamas two Saturdays ago or are still missing or presumed to be hostages in Gaza. These are Canadians, our people, our countrymen and countrywomen. Hamas did not only launch a murderous rampage against Israelis; it also did so against Canadians.

Hamas's worldwide genocide aims are written into their own charter.

Hamas's top leaders recently declared that last Friday would be a global day of jihad—a day for Hamas supporters around the world to threaten Jews wherever they live, including here in Canada. Jews in Canada certainly got the message. This is why, last Friday, on this global day of jihad, many Jews kept their children out of school or daycare. Many cancelled community events and gatherings or stayed home for the day. I spoke to many of these members yesterday as we hosted a vigil at the town of Innisfil with Chabad Innisfil. There are moments that these children are not going to get back. They stayed home for their safety. They missed class photos, they missed hallmark events, all because they weren't safe because of Jewish hatred—they were hated for who they are. That is intolerable for a country that represents religious pluralism.

I'm Jewish, and although my home is Barrie–Innisfil, like many Canadians who immigrated here, my roots are elsewhere. My family's background stretches back into the Jewish community in Russia. Like many Jewish families with Russian ancestry, my ancestors endured pogroms under the Russian Empire and then, later, the Communists, over the 19th and 20th centuries. Other Jews have families who died in the Holocaust and in Europe. Still others were expelled from their homes in the Middle East after the end of the Second World War—refugees with no right to return.

Israel was founded as a safe harbour for people of the Jewish faith, following the despair and loss of the Holocaust.

Today, Jerusalem is home to people of many different faiths—it's nearly 60% Jewish and nearly 40% Muslim, with many Christians making the Holy City their home.

Israel was to be a home for a persecuted people—to return to the place of our ancestors, a place of safety where, after a millennium of oppression, the people of Judea could finally know peace. Israel is a place of hope, the light at the end of a dark tunnel, where we could finally call home. Even for Jews not living in Israel, we know people who do—we have family, we have friends.

Yet Israel—the only democracy in the Middle East, a stalwart ally in the region, and a true friend of all people—has just been viciously attacked by the worst act of terrorism in its entire history.

The fires burning today due to the unconscionable attacks by Hamas terrorists have the same origin as the smoke from the concentration camps of Dachau and Auschwitz. To see the Jewish people vanish, and to kill the safety of the Jewish home, disappear in smoke and oblivion, and for others to call this a celebration—they celebrate the death, and they celebrate the destruction—is the purest form of evil.

But don't just believe me, Speaker. Look at the date Hamas chose their attack—the 50th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War—to begin its latest intifada. This was the assault on the very nation, Israel—its very existence.

Since Israel's founding, it has always been under siege, has always been under attack, has always shown restraint and, despite all of this, humility and a dedication to the rule of law. That's what Israel represents. It has remained a beacon of hope, a light in the darkness of tyranny.

People often question why must Israel exist. Well, this is why: because time and time again, across thousands of years of Jewish history, wherever Jews have been, they have never truly been safe. The State of Israel exists because it must exist as a homeland for the Jewish people, as a safe harbour in a stormy sea—or, if you'll permit me to put the language of the DEI set, Israel is a safe place for the Jewish people. Israel is where Jews can feel safe—safety not only in numbers, but in knowledge of a government focused on their well-being. Israel is a multi-cultural mosaic. Anyone who walks around Tel Aviv or Jerusalem, as I have more times than I can count, cannot help but be struck by how Israel is teeming with ethnic and cultural diversity.

And as diverse as Israel is, its armed forces are united today—united in their mission to secure the future of Israel and Israel's people, to secure the hostages, including our Canadian hostages. I pray and I pray for their success.

Speaker, let me pause for a moment to reflect on how grateful I am at the unity most Canadians have shown with Israel up to this point. The vast majority of Canadian society, including elected politicians from different parties; Christian, Hindu, and other religious leaders; business and community leaders; the Prime Minister of Canada; the Premier; the mayor of Toronto—all have come together to condemn Hamas and to support Israel's right to defend itself, as I stand here now.

Sadly, there are members of the opposition who have a well-documented history of Jewish hate and anti-Semitism. Yet their leader, the Leader of the Opposition, has done nothing about the anti-Semitism that exists in her

own caucus. For a group that claims to be progressive, when given the chance to root out ancient evil, they stay silent. And the silence is deafening.

Let me tell you about a progressive people: the people of Israel. I don't talk about it a lot, but I'm an immigrant, like many of those who are living in Israel now, a proud Jewish woman from Russia—the very same kind of people who went to Israel looking for a better future, free of tyranny and free of death.

The iron lady of Israel, Golda Meir, was a Russian Jewish woman; a leader; a defender of her people; a female Prime Minister, elected decades before anyone else in the West had elected a female, in the heart of the Middle East—an oddity then and still now. In Israel, she is known as the iron lady, as she stood in the face of overwhelming force in the 19 days of the Yom Kippur War 50 years ago and won. She stared down many who thought she couldn't do it—but she did. The cost was high—her political career paid the price. She did so and she must—she defended her people. She stood up to tyranny and pushed it back. The world owes her courage—and definitely gratitude and her debt, as she sacrificed her own health for her actions and the democracy that still is alive in that region.

This is what leadership looks like—doing the right thing, no matter the personal cost. Leaders lead. They do what must be done.

0930

Today, many Canadian institutions and organizations are speaking out against intolerable cruelty and hate—many have not, however.

Despite vile statements condemned by our Minister of Colleges and Universities, our government House leader, and the university itself, the York University student union stands by their words in support of terrorism. This is unfortunate. I wish I could say I'm shocked, but I'm not. Ontario universities are continuing to fail in their obligation to create a safe learning environment for many—and many Jewish students. I echo the Minister of Colleges and Universities, and I want to thank her for standing up for these—

Interjections.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: It is their obligation to protect their students from discrimination.

We certainly have seen how vicious these radicals can be when they defend Hamas's actions. Decolonization studies have been used to defend the rape of women and extrajudicial slaughter of innocent people.

Not to be outdone, last week a York University professor of international criminal law, Heidi Matthews, took to Twitter to excuse Hamas's rape, murder and hostage-taking as part of a so-called right of resistance. Her comments defending Hamas's actions were rightly condemned as vile and disgusting.

To many of these so-called progressive thinkers, Israel is the aggressor; Israel is in the wrong. They are wrong and badly wrong. Let me explain why.

Hamas has committed war crimes, gross and grave breaches of the Geneva Convention—murdering, raping, and taking hostages. Furthermore, Hamas has zero will-

ingness to apply the laws of war to its military units. Hamas acts lawlessly because it does not feel bound by law.

Israel is nothing like that. It is a liberal democracy bound by the rule of law. It has always shown restraint, humility and a dedication to the rule of law. It has remained a beacon of hope and a light in the darkness of tyranny.

As for what is happening in Gaza itself, it is clear that the only way for Israel to exercise its right to self-defence as well as try to rescue its own hostages is to eliminate Hamas from Gaza. Hamas treats Palestinian civilians like human shields to protect its fighters in a conflict zone, which itself is a war crime.

By contrast, Israel has told Palestinian civilians in Gaza to move south, closer to the border with Egypt. Israel, in fact, delayed its own ground invasion of Gaza to give civilians more time to leave the future conflict zone. These are the actions of a country that is doing everything it can to minimize civilian casualties.

While Israel has many fair-weather friends who will abandon her the moment it becomes convenient to do so—this is my fear, as I have seen it time and time again—I know standing here today that this government stands with Israel, with people of Jewish faith and all those who know evil when they see it. The nation of Israel and the Jewish people around the world—it has friends, and I stand with them now.

I look around and I see the member from Eglinton—Lawrence, who has never wavered in her commitment to helping the Jewish people in her riding; the Minister of Education, who is steadfast in his support for rooting out hatred in our education system and who codified Holocaust education in our curriculum—and today we have a Holocaust survivor with us, who was there the day we made the Holocaust education announcement, Nate Leipziger.

Applause.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: But it's not just the importance of Holocaust education or what our Minister of Education is doing; it's our Minister of Labour, who called out the vile, ignorant comments of so-called labour leaders; and, of course, our Premier, who, when all other leaders in this country were silent, called out the demonstrators and what they were trying to do—causing death to Jewish people in Israel.

Speaker, I now want to turn to a prayer from Rabbi Kaufman that I think is very appropriate, which she read this past Saturday at Am Shalom, our synagogue in Barrie. It reads:

“We are in mourning—for the innocent lives lost.

“We are in mourning—for the Israel reality that is now forever changed.

“We are in mourning—for the dreams of yesterday.

“But—we are lifted up by hope, the hope expressed in Hatikvah, Israel's national anthem.

“We are lifted up by hope—for the healing of the wounded and the return of the captives to their homes.

“We are lifted up by hope—the hope demonstrated in the amazing resilience of the” Jewish people; and

“We are lifted up by hope—of a future without war.”

Mr. Speaker, I stand with Israel. As was sung following the Six-Day War, Am Yisrael Chai. As was sung following the Yom Kippur War, Am Yisrael Chai. As is to be sung in the coming days, and for all days, Am Yisrael Chai.

The people of Israel live, and Ontario will always stand with them and those of the Jewish faith.

Thank you. Todah rabah.

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

Hon. Doug Ford: October 7 was a tragic day for Israel, for the Jewish people, for the entire peace-loving world. Each of us watched in horror as children, the elderly, and even Holocaust survivors were stolen, beaten and slaughtered at the hands of Hamas.

Madam Speaker, these attacks are not just another conflict on the other side of the world; the impact is being felt throughout the country, including Ontario.

The Ottawa family of Adi Vital-Kaploun, a 33-year-old Israeli Canadian, is reeling from her senseless murder simply because she was Jewish. By all accounts, Adi was a beautiful person with a warm soul. She was an amazing mother to two boys, a four-year-old and a four-month-old, who will not have a mother now because the terrorists went and killed her. She had her whole life ahead of her. It's so tragic and so unfair.

Sadly, there are others. Six Canadians in Israel are now confirmed dead in the Hamas attack. Two Canadians are still missing, and families are worrying about their loved ones in Gaza.

We must condemn Hamas and Hamas's heinous terror acts—acts of terror that have brought turmoil to the region, acts of terror that are using innocent Palestinians as human shields. Do you believe that, Madam Speaker? They're using Palestinians as human shields to go attack Israel and kill Israelis. Disgusting.

There is no excuse, no justification for the horror we've seen. This is terrorism in its darkest form.

We must be clear: Israel has an absolute right to defend itself and its citizens. We must stand firm in our support for Israel and the Jewish people, both abroad and at home.

Here in Ontario and across Canada, our Jewish friends and neighbours face the constant threat of violence. It's another painful reminder of the work left to do to stomp out the cancer of anti-Semitism once and for all. It's why our government is investing over \$25 million, through our Anti-Hate Security and Prevention Grant, to address the rise of hate against religious and minority groups—including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. It's why our government is investing \$150,000 to support the new Toronto Holocaust Museum. And through our great Minister of Education, it's why we have mandated Holocaust education in our schools.

We cannot hope for a better future if we forget the past, and we cannot hope for a better future if we lose sight of who we are and who we aspire to be.

0940

No one in Ontario should ever be targeted because of their faith. No one in Ontario should ever be afraid to pray to their God.

So today I stand in this House and call on everyone in Ontario to remember who we are as a province—peaceful, tolerant and respectful.

Now, more than ever, Ontario's Jewish community needs our support—and I always say we will always have their backs. They need to be reminded of the best of us. They need to be reminded that there's far more that unites us than divides us. And what unites us is rejecting brutal acts of terror from Hamas and other terrorists around the world

As we stand firm in our support for Israel, we pray for the safety of all innocent people. Hamas's actions and its unrelenting dedication to terror show no regard for human life—Israeli or Palestinian. Now, more than ever, we wish for lasting peace and freedom for everyone in the region, and that can only be achieved by defeating the terrorist group Hamas for the good of Israel and the Palestinian people, and for the good of all humanity.

May God bless the memory of those we've lost. May He bring home those who were stolen. And may God bless the people of Israel.

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

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to speak in the House—particularly on a day and an issue like today.

Before I go too far, I'd like to mention that I would like to share my time with the member from Scarborough Southwest.

I listened very intently. I respect this place; I respect the people in it. I would like to welcome the people in the galleries, particularly the gentleman who survived the Holocaust.

I listened very intently to the Solicitor General. He said that sometimes we bump into history, and that's true. As I was sitting and listening, I was thinking, "I'm a farm boy from northern Ontario. What am I doing speaking in a place like this about tragedies that are happening in the Middle East?"

The one thing I would like to say from the top is that Hamas is a terrorist organization. It terrorized the people of Israel, and it terrorizes the people of Palestine.

The way that I got into politics—I relate everything to personal experiences. I'm not Jewish. A non-Jew could never understand the persecution of the Jewish people—but I'd like to relay something that happened to me as a small child that was the closest I could ever come. Many people have heard me talk about my father, but I've never told this. My father was in Holland in World War II. This isn't about my father. He never talked about World War II. Many people who have gone through calamities don't talk about what they've gone through. My dad had a very difficult personality. He was God to me. I followed him everywhere. We were at a cattle auction, and the man next to him was Jewish; I didn't know that at the time. I was about 10 or 11. He was wearing long sleeves. My dad was

talking to him. I was a kid, just watching the cows go through the ring. But he lifted up his sleeve, and my dad started crying. He was also a survivor. I'd never seen my dad cry before. I looked at my dad's face, and I was incredibly confused. I looked at the other man's face—I can't describe the look on his face. I still remember it. I remembered it on October 7. It was a look of horror and resolve—someone who had been to hell and survived and was never going to let that happen again. I think that is as close as I can come to having any knowledge of what Jewish people face, have faced through history, have faced through time. The look on that survivor's face—it wasn't the same look of sorrow and pain as my father's; it was a look of horror and resolve to never let it happen again to his people.

It is hard to be angelic in times like that—I appreciated the words from the Solicitor General.

My dad never talked about what happened that day. I came home and asked my mom about it, and she told me about World War II, about the Holocaust. It wasn't something that was discussed in our house. The only thing that my dad ever said—and there's no Dutch translation here, so I'm not going to say it in Dutch—was, "The Jews will never back up. They can't back up." I think that is where we are today.

That's a face I can't get out of my head. But there are other faces I can't get out of my head.

Before I continue, I'd like to just say that the one incredible thing about being in this House and being in this province and being in this country is that we can actually talk about tough issues that cause wars in other places.

My son-in-law is Lebanese. He has a different view of what's happening in the Middle East. He was at my place at Thanksgiving, and we watched it—he was as horrified about the terrorist attacks as I was. If he was standing here, he would also say that Hamas is a terrorist organization.

0950

I went to Lebanon two summers ago. My grandson was christened in a Greek Orthodox church in Lebanon. I saw Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, and I looked in those people's faces as well, and in their faces, I saw hopelessness—complete, utter hopelessness. At least from what I saw, all they want is what we all want: to raise our families in peace. I thought about that as I was watching on TV—as everyone else was watching on TV.

We have, in the Middle East, people who have gone through the horror of having to defend their right to exist and feeling they have to do so at all costs. And perhaps—I think they're all on the same side. I think everyone, in my humble opinion—and it truly is a humble opinion, because I am the last person you want to listen to as knowing anything, really, about what's truly going on in the Middle East. But the vast majority of people want to live in peace. It's not an easy situation. Hamas is a terrorist organization. It did acts of terror. The Palestinian people are also suffering for those acts of terror, and that was expressed by the government's side; I respect that.

It's such a complicated place—the birthplace of many faiths and a bastion for the Jewish people, but there are many people who live there.

And it is incumbent on all of us who live in a democracy, who have the ability to agree to disagree, to make sure that we actually try to lessen the temperature and try to come to resolutions. It's not easy. It's not going to happen this morning. But we all need to realize that our words have impact on people who are dying on all sides—dying isn't a side.

I'd like to turn the floor over to the member from Scarborough Southwest.

I'd like to thank you very much for your attention.

And thank you for being here.

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

Ms. Doly Begum: Good morning, everyone, and good morning to the guests we have in the House. It is an honour for me—and I've met some, especially at the recent museum opening, and I've had the privilege of hearing about your stories. So I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this motion and to have you all here this morning. I represent Scarborough Southwest, and as the deputy leader of the official opposition, I also feel a great, great load of responsibility, speaking to this today. I believe I can say this for all of us—and it has been spoken in the House already: The last week has been an extremely, extremely difficult week. So many of our communities are still in shock, while for some, it's even more personal, with family members and loved ones suffering immense loss and trauma triggered from the atrocities.

As an immigrant myself from a nation that was born out of a liberation war and a genocide, and as a daughter of the descendants of people who faced subjugation and were treated as second-class citizens in their own country just for who they are, for their language, for their religion—a country that experienced the horror of genocide, which was committed not too long ago, just in 1971—I stand before this House with a heavy heart, reflecting on the painful and horrifying events that unfolded in Israel and Palestine over the past week.

I know that I stand amongst colleagues and friends on both sides of the House who can relate to the anguish and the sorrow that come with such painful stories and history, and experience of violence, colonial violence—some carrying a much heavier burden of pain and suffering of their families and, in some cases, themselves. We have heard in this House about the Tamil genocide from our colleagues; the Armenian genocide; the Sikh genocide; the horrific killing in Jallianwala Bagh; or, just recently, on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the systemic violence carried out on the people of this land, here in Canada.

And we can never, ever forget the dark chapter in human history of the Holocaust—a harrowing chapter in history, when the world witnessed the systemic genocide of six million Jews by Nazi Germany, a state-sponsored killing. Jews endured unimaginable suffering in concentration camps and extermination camps, with mass shootings and inhumane conditions. It is a stark reminder of the depths to which hatred and bigotry can lead. I was able to have the interactive demonstration that we have at

the museum—which will bring you to tears, to learn about that history.

I want to make this very clear: Hamas's senseless violence—war crimes and attacks on innocent civilians, women, seniors, babies—has caused unimaginable pain and trauma for not only Israelis but for Jewish communities across the world. I know that many Jewish Canadians are feeling unsafe—terrified at seeing targeted violence on this scale.

Last week, we were shocked by the brutal attacks on civilian lives in Israel—over 1,600 dead and thousands injured, children and families kidnapped.

In this House, today, we mourn the lives of the five Canadians who lost their lives in this violent conflict: Shir Georgy, Adi Vital-Kaploun, Ben Mizrachi, Alexandre Look, and Netta Epstein.

We have heard from friends and family members—I have in my community, and I know some of you have as well—who are worried and waiting to hear from family members in Israel. I know that many of you in this House have had similar conversations in the past, and it is heart-wrenching. At the same time, we have also heard from friends and family members who are in fear and waiting to hear from their family in Palestine. So many Palestinian family members are feeling anxious and scared.

1000

I want to be very clear: The Palestinian people do not represent Hamas, just like the State of Israel does not represent all people of Israel and all Jewish people.

Sometimes in this House we talk about or we debate on opposite sides about an action a government does—and it is the people, it is their voice, that should be the loudest, that truly matters.

But more than that, the struggles that we are seeing right now are what I want to talk about. It is an honour for me, also as a Muslim Canadian, to start by saying that there is an Arabic phrase that I will translate: "Harming one single human is a harm to all humanity." If you harm even a hair of a human, an innocent civilian, you're harming all of humanity. That is the belief that I truly believe in as a Muslim and as a Canadian, and it is the deep-rooted understanding that I come with.

Today, when I speak to this issue, I want to share some of the things that I have received over the last five, seven days—because I have talked to community members who come from both sides, and it has been an extremely, extremely painful week. I don't think, in my career as an MPP, as a representative, I have had this difficulty, navigating through this as I did this past week, just hearing the stories, and I cannot imagine what the community is feeling—because it is horrendous, what Hamas did. One of the things that I want to make very clear is that when something like that happens, it doesn't just harm the one side—and their action has also hurt Palestinians. We have heard from those family members who are waiting to hear back.

So when we look at this motion and understand, how do we address the atrocities and how do we make sure that we stand with the people who have suffered this immense

loss—so many Palestinian families are feeling anxious and scared, or, more than that, their struggles are neglected and undermined by the rhetoric of those in power and a lot of mainstream media, and their story has not fully been told.

When I look at the difference between those who return to Canada and Canada's effort in Israel—it has been very different in the reality of Palestinian Canadians and Palestinians in Gaza. While we hear about the stories, we also heard from NCCM—where Hala Alshaer, who lives in Ottawa and is a Canadian, talked about her family, who are still waiting to return. Hala shared about the killing of her 16 family members, who were killed after the Israeli attacks.

I want to thank the federal government—and this is part of something that I want to make clear: I want to thank the federal government for the safe return of 1,300 Canadians from Tel Aviv. I think that we need to make sure that we urge our government to do much more in ensuring that all Canadians, all Jewish Canadians who are stuck, must return safely. I would like to put in a motion to make sure that I add onto the—and so, Speaker, I would like to move that the following sentence be added to the end of the main motion: “And that this House calls on the government of Canada to advocate for immediate release of all hostages and protection of all civilians in accordance with international law, an end to the siege of bombardment of Gaza and for humanitarian aid to reach Palestinian civilians urgently without restriction.”

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I rule this motion out of order. There is already an amendment and an amendment to the amendment before the House. Until the subamendment has been disposed of, no other amendment can be moved.

Further debate?

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, I want to talk a little bit about what has happened as well in our communities over the past few days since this attack. I think it's very important for us to make sure that we act on this. The Toronto police have investigated two recent acts of vandalism at a local mosque, both believed to be hate-driven, one of which occurred on October 12 at a mosque at Danforth Avenue and Donlands Avenue, which was targeted with hate symbols and hateful writings. At the same time, we have heard about the school closure and the horrific anti-Semitic attacks across the city, where police had been called to make sure that people across Toronto can feel safe.

Speaker, the impact that all of this has had—the rise in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian hate has increased immensely. There are people who are Palestinian Canadians, who are Israeli Canadians, who are Jewish Canadians, who are Muslim Canadians. And I think sometimes it's forgotten or missed by many of us that there are Palestinian Christians, there are Palestinian Jews, and there are Palestinians of other religions as well who have been impacted by this—including the 1,100 Christians who are stuck in a church looking for safety.

It is extremely incumbent on us to make sure—and I know that the motion did not go through, and I hope that

the House will listen—that we do everything to push the government of Canada to advocate for an immediate release of all hostages, the protection of all civilians in accordance with international law, an end to the siege of bombardment of Gaza, and humanitarian aid to reach Palestinian civilians urgently.

The reason I say this is because we need to also look at the root cause of all of this. I got to learn a lot from some of the experts—and I say this from lessons that I have learned from people who are family members, are Holocaust survivors who have shared their side of the story. Recently, one of them is David Hearst, a journalist who talked about the impact and looking at the root cause of this.

Right now, when we look at this, we know that we have a responsibility to listen and understand the issue. I know this may be the first time many people across the province are tuning in to the issue of Palestine and Israel. As sad as that sounds, there are a lot of people who have called me with anger and rage, and after we had a conversation, they said, “I will go and find out what the issue is on both sides.” And I know that there are a lot of people who have their own personal stories, who know and learn about what took place. So, today, when we talk about this, we have to make sure that we tell the full story. We have to make sure that we allow for our communities to be heard in a fair way that is important.

1010

The difference between those who have been returned from Israel and those who have returned from Palestine is very simple, and I'll tell you why. While 1,300 Canadians from Tel Aviv were safely returned, there was a stark difference in the way Palestinians were treated when they tried to get back to their homeland, to Canada—so for that, we need to step back and understand what took place. When Palestinian Canadians tried to go back, they had to take a bus to Jordan and book their own flight and return to Canada. They did not have our local MP, Minister Bill Blair, putting out the flight that went and carried them back. They didn't have that. So I ask this House: Do Palestinian Canadians not have the same right? Do their lives not have value in the same way—to make sure that they also return home safely to their loved ones? When Hala talks about her 16 family members who were killed and one family member who is still waiting to return—does that family member not have the right, just like anyone else, just like any other human being?

When we have people who are Palestinian Canadians telling us their side of the story, we need to make sure that we hear that as well. And today, I hope that our government will listen. As a provincial government, we don't have the power to move policies, but we do have power in our voices, in our words, to make sure that we influence the federal government to make that change.

We also need to make sure that we look at the root cause of this. We know that the violence did not start last week—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I apologize to the member from Scarborough Southwest, but we are now moving on to members' statements.

Debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ATARA COHEN

Ms. Laura Smith: Speaker, just over two weeks ago in my community of Thornhill, we experienced an unimaginable tragedy: Atara Cohen, *aleha hashalom*, just nine years old, lost her life. It was devastating not just for her parents and siblings, but for the entire community. Atara was a bright light of joy and warmth. She was kind, compassionate, imaginative and playful. She had an incredible laugh, bubbly personality, and she brought happiness to everyone around her. The Cohen family lives in a small co-op. It's a tight-knit community, a warm group of people, and every single member felt this loss—not only in Thornhill, but in Ontario. It was a vehicle-pedestrian accident—an accident—but that doesn't lessen the impact on the family and the community. She was incredibly loved and will be dearly missed.

Often, when mourners come to a funeral service, they form a long chain along each side of the hearse as it drives past. This path went the entire length of the road from the synagogue to the main street. We were so proud to be there, along with so many community members, in unity.

To Atara's parents and her siblings and her family: My heart is with you. Our community grieves for Atara, now more than ever. We are truly cognizant now of how precious life is. May her memory always be a blessing.

LONG-TERM CARE

SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE

Mr. Guy Bourgoin: As MPP for one of the most northern parts of Ontario, let me tell you what it is like to lack access to health care and long-term-care services in the north.

In March 2022, an announcement by this government was made saying that 68 new and 60 upgraded beds for Extendicare would be in place in Kapuskasing.

Les gens du Nord sont malheureusement trop habitués à une réalité désolante. Les membres de nos familles doivent être envoyés à des centaines de kilomètres de nos proches. Les temps d'attente pour se voir attribuer un lit pour des soins de longue durée sont de plus de trois ans. La pénurie de personnel de soins de santé, empirée par la loi 124, affecte durement la disponibilité des lits dans des petites villes comme Kapuskasing, Hearst, Moonbeam, Cochrane, etc.

Therefore, when the government announces 68 new beds and improved services for long-term care in Kapuskasing, it is that much disappointing when the result is non-existent 18 months later. According to Extendicare, there is a delay due to the high cost of operations and construction of this project, due to taking so much time to be built, and it now needs more additional funding to begin.

We are facing a province-wide housing crisis on all fronts, and some of the elderly do not even have the opportunity to age with dignity, surrounded by their loved ones. That is the sad reality in the north at the moment.

SCAREHOUSE WINDSOR

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Halloween is coming upon us, and last week I had no idea what I would be in store for when I accepted an invite to visit Scarehouse Windsor, my region's premier Halloween experience. On display was the world premiere of *The Boo Crew*, a new television docuseries which chronicles how Scarehouse Windsor truly came to be.

As members here in this House, we have so much to be proud of within our communities. Director Gavin Michael Booth delivered an experience for all viewers that truly captures the many traits that can evoke our hometown pride. The series chronicles owners Shawn and Colleen Lippert and Dario and Michelle Silvaggi. It was their sweat equity that created Scarehouse Windsor as a seasonal attraction that rivals any experience in North America, and it was born out of the demise of their much-beloved past Windsor business, Bentley's Roadhouse.

You cannot help but admire the ambitious and infectious entrepreneurship that was captured throughout the series, but unpredictably, it was the inclusivity and accepting of so many young people who question their place in the world, who were part of Scarehouse Windsor, that truly shone through.

Speaker, you're already able to stream *The Boo Crew* on Bell Fibe TV1 today, so be sure to check it out.

To *The Boo Crew*: Thank you for doing your part to make the Windsor-Essex region, bar none, a place I'm proud to call home, a place I'm proud to represent, and a place that's worth living each and every day.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Today is Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day. These educators create a safe and loving environment where children can flourish and develop essential life skills. They instill a love for learning and curiosity that will last a lifetime. Their role extends beyond mere supervision; they are our children's first mentors and role models, shaping their early experiences and laying the foundation for their future success.

But ECEs tell me that they're not feeling very valued today. So how can this government step up and ensure the child care sector is there for families and children when they need them?

For over a year, we've been raising alarm bells that the workforce crisis threatens child care in this province.

The minister needs to release the report they conducted back in January—where the ministry's own summaries consultations revealed to “pay ECEs more.”

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario, experts and workers have told this government that the

\$10-a-day child care program is under threat because of low pay and poor working conditions, with the average ECE staying in the field for just three years.

You need child care workers in child care spaces.

This minister and this government promised ECEs a wage increase in June. So we are asking the minister: Will he keep his promise and commit today to a salary scale of at least \$30 per hour for RECEs and \$25 for non-RECEs to get the program back on track, and to get parents the affordable child care spots they need and deserve so they can get back to work?

1020

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Mr. Speaker, who is America's number three trading partner? It's not Germany. It's not Japan. And it's not even India. America's number three trading partner is Ontario. But I'm not satisfied with that. I want Ontario to be America's number one trading partner.

That's why I'm excited about the memorandum of understanding, signed by this government, between Ontario and the state of Michigan. Ontario and Michigan are already each other's number one trading partner. But under this new memorandum of understanding, Ontario and Michigan are going to work together to build better vehicle supply chains, technology, cyber security and agriculture. We're going to make our relationship with Michigan even stronger, and we're going to build an end-to-end vehicle supply chain.

Mr. Speaker, once upon a time, Henry Ford crossed the Detroit River and he set up a manufacturing factory at the old Walkerville Wagon Works. That started a manufacturing revolution and made Ontario the economic powerhouse of Canada. Well, keep your eye on Ontario, because we are going to do it again.

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE A-BUILDING

Ms. Doly Begum: I rise today with immense pride and admiration for a transformative project that exemplifies the potential for sustainability, cultural respect and collaboration with Indigenous communities in the field of education and architecture. The A-Building, located at the Progress Campus of Centennial College, is more than just a structure; it is a testament to the power of visionary partnerships and the profound impact such projects can have. At the heart of this remarkable initiative is the college's commitment to fostering reconciliation and collaboration with Indigenous communities. The collaboration with the Indigenous-owned, Ontario-based architecture firm Smoke Architecture serves as a model for how institutions can support and empower Indigenous businesses. This partnership underscores the importance of actively engaging Indigenous voices and perspectives in projects that directly affect their communities.

What truly sets the A-Building apart is its deep-rooted connection to Indigenous culture and heritage. The build-

ing takes inspiration from the beautiful poetry of Chief Stacey LaForme, chief of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Its design reflects traditional Indigenous structures and is constructed using sustainable timber sourced from Quebec, highlighting the significance of sustainable practices and materials in modern construction.

I wholeheartedly commend Centennial College for their visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to reconciliation, sustainability and cultural respect.

BRANTFORD BULLDOGS

Mr. Will Bouma: I'm pleased to rise in this House today to talk about the recent Brantford Bulldogs home opener.

Brantford-Brant is no stranger to hockey. As we all know, we are the birthplace and childhood home of the great one, Wayne Gretzky.

This morning, in the members' gallery, we have Peggy Chapman of the Brantford Bulldogs Foundation, and His Worship Kevin Davis, mayor of Brantford.

If not for the work of Matt Turek and the Bulldogs organization and, of course, Michael Andlauer, the owner of the Brantford Bulldogs, who was also in attendance, there would not have been a home opener—and not to mention the incredible work of Vicano Construction in getting the civic centre ready.

We celebrate the return of OHL hockey to the Brantford civic centre for the first time since 1984, as well as a 5-2 home opener victory against their division rivals, the Oshawa Generals.

Having had the privilege of attending the home opener, I was proud to see over 3,000 Bulldogs fans cheering on their team.

These improvements have ushered in a new chapter in the history of Brantford and its rich hockey culture.

Go, Bulldogs, go. All of Brantford-Brant is in the doghouse, but in a good way.

MISSY KNOTT

Mr. Dave Smith: In my riding, we have a number of exceptional and award-winning musicians, and one of those individuals is Melissa Knott, more commonly known as Missy.

I first met Missy when we were organizing the Special Hockey International tournament in Peterborough. Missy was already well known in the area as a singer and had released a number of albums at that point. She volunteered to sing the national anthems for us at the opening ceremonies, with teams from Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom.

Not only is Missy an artist, but she's also a music producer. Her production company, Wild Rice Records, is focused on helping Indigenous artists succeed. Missy is also an advocate in our community, helping to spread the word about various causes. One of those causes has been to spread the word about the tragic death of one of her

friends, Cileana Taylor, a young lady from Curve Lake First Nation. All of this is to say that Missy is active in the arts, in the Indigenous community and as a spokesperson.

Speaker, I am so proud to announce my friend Missy Knott has been appointed to the Ontario Arts Council. She's the first member of Curve Lake First Nation to ever be appointed to the OAC. Her experiences as an artist, as a music producer and as an Indigenous role model will serve her well in this capacity. She'll provide an invaluable voice at the table and will be someone other Indigenous artists can look up to as an example for success.

Congratulations, Missy. We're all very proud of you.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr. Matthew Rae: It's an honour to rise to talk about Perth–Wellington today, Speaker. I know we talk about our ridings a lot in this place, and it's great to be able to do that. I'm thinking, really, of—we did celebrate agriculture week and Thanksgiving and all the bounty that our farmers collect every year, and the great work our government is doing to support our farm families, whether it's through our Grow Ontario Strategy and the investments we're making there.

As the member from Essex—I heard briefly in his remarks about the trade that we have. The amount of exports and agriculture that we provide to the States and across the world is truly great. I know, with our Minister of Economic Development and under the leadership of our Premier, we'll continue to do that moving forward, ensuring that our agriculture sector remains strong.

But it's not just our agriculture sector that we continue to support; it's also Small Business Week in Ontario—and I know there's plenty of small businesses in my riding of Perth–Wellington. The Minister of Tourism is in front of me here, and I know he has been to the beautiful riding of Perth–Wellington and to Stratford and has seen the many small businesses.

Whether that's in the hospitality sector, whether that's in the manufacturing sector—truly, Ontario is thriving again because of the leadership of our Premier and our ministers in our cabinet.

I think of the great announcement yesterday that was made in eastern Ontario: 600 net new jobs—that's just direct jobs.

We're going to continue to build Ontario for the next generation and going forward.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our members' statements for this morning.

HOUSE SITTINGS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 9(g), the Clerk has received written notice from the government House leader indicating that a temporary change in the weekly meeting schedule of the House is required, and therefore the

afternoon routine on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, shall commence at 1 p.m.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have with us in the Speaker's gallery today a delegation from the Republic of Albania, led by Mrs. Lindita Nikolla, who is the Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Albania. Please join me in warmly welcoming our guests to the Legislature today.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Before I ask the members to commence the introduction of the visitors, I'll remind them that the standing orders provide for five minutes for introduction of visitors. I would ask the members to introduce their guests briefly, without political commentary. If at five minutes there are still members standing up on both sides of the House, it's my intention to seek the will of the House whether or not we should continue, and if one person says no, we'll stop. I hope that's clear.

Introduction of visitors. The member for Brantford—Brant.

1030

Mr. Will Bouma: I'd like to welcome to the west gallery this morning Peggy Chapman of the Brantford Bulldogs Foundation and Mayor Kevin Davis of the city of Brantford. Welcome to the people's House.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I want to welcome Myeloma Canada—specifically, the two people I met with, Lisa Bowden and Martine Elias. Welcome to the Legislature.

Ms. Laura Smith: It is my very great honour and pleasure to introduce members of Shomrim: Avi Grinberg, Kyle Klein, and Noa Golan. They were there beside Atara and were so helpful for our community.

Miss Monique Taylor: I would like to welcome Alina Cameron, who is the president of the Ontario Autism Coalition, families from across the province from the Ontario Autism Coalition, Michau van Speyk from the Ontario Autism Coalition—also, a warm welcome to Peggy Chapman; it's wonderful to see you. Welcome to your House.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: It is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to Vivienne Jiang, who is here with us today as the proud mother of Owen Rao. Owen is one of our legislative pages, from St. Charles Garnier Catholic Elementary School, and he is representing my riding of Richmond Hill.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I would like to welcome Dr. Boyce from St. Catharines and the Niagara region, from the Ontario Dental Association. I look forward to meeting with you this afternoon. Welcome to your House.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: As we've noticed, the Ontario Dental Association represents more than 10,000 dentists across Ontario. I'd like to welcome Dr. Brock Nicolucci, ODA president, and the CEO of ODA, Frank Bevilacqua.

I would like to also welcome Dr. Lisa Bentley, ODA past president—while it is not a political statement, she is a Dufferin–Caledon resident.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: It is my great honour to introduce today's page captain Fallon Noakes. She's from my riding of Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas and is proud to be one of the very few First Nations pages in this House. I also want to welcome her family: Kris Noakes, Beverly Noakes, Bruce Noakes, and David Dreager.

You represent us well. Thank you for your service.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I'd like to recognize page captain of the day Joel Adeoye. He has his mother here today: Adejoke Adeoye. Welcome.

MPP Jill Andrew: I would like to welcome Bev Hershkowitz, a St. Paul's health advocate, and Michelle Milheiras. They joined us this morning at our endometriosis presser—a massive shout-out to Tami Ellis and Leah Haynes, the co-founders of Endometriosis Events.

I want to also say a welcome to Hillcrest Community School; Hillcrest choir; Mr. Jamie Roblin, the choir teacher; Mr. Douglas Cornell, principal; and those fabulous kids who sang our national anthem on native land.

Tarion reform, Barbara Captijn—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member will please take her seat.

Stop the clock. Maybe the member wasn't here when I started off the introduction of visitors. There can be no political statements associated with the introduction of visitors.

Introduction of visitors. Start the clock.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I'd like to introduce a regional councillor from the city of Brampton: Councillor Gurpartap Singh Toor.

Jarnail Mand, Kevin Walia, Mandy Sharma and Bevneet Punia are here today with the Ontario Dump Truck Association.

I also want to welcome my friend Noa Golan, who is also in the Legislature today.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My guests aren't here yet, but I want to welcome the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care and the Association of Early Childhood Educators.

Carolyn Ferns and Alana Powell and all their guests, who are too many to mention—welcome to the Legislature, when you get to the House.

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I'd like to introduce, from Myeloma Canada, Martine Elias and Aidan Robertson, as well as myeloma community members, including Robert McGraw from my constituency of Newmarket–Aurora.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I would like to welcome Madison Schell and Alina Cameron from the Ontario Autism Coalition, who have come here from the neighbouring riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan. Thank you for being here.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There are more members who want to introduce guests. Shall we continue? Agreed? Agreed.

The member for Perth–Wellington.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Beckett Gloor is page captain today, from my beautiful riding of Perth–Wellington. I would like to welcome his parents, Tracy and Steve Gloor, to Queen's Park.

Hon. Vijay Thanigasalam: I want to welcome representatives from CAA Club Group who are here for their annual advocacy day at Queen's Park: Marrianna Bridge, Quentin Broad, Brenda Rideout, Matthew Turack, Rhonda English and Anita Mueller.

Members are encouraged to join CAA at their evening reception beginning at 5 p.m. in the legislative dining room.

Ms. Doly Begum: It is my pleasure to introduce Dr. Stephen Abrams from Scarborough Southwest, who is here with the Ontario Dental Association. Welcome to the House.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I'm very happy to welcome members of the Ontario Autism Coalition to Queen's Park: Alina, Tony, Bruce, Laura and Michau.

Thank you very much for joining me this morning. It's great to see all of you. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I'm very excited to introduce Allison and Craig Koenig, who are the very proud parents of page Margo from Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Welcome to your House.

Mr. Trevor Jones: It's my pleasure to welcome Alfred and Marion Schneider from beautiful Blenheim, Ontario. They are here to visit their granddaughter, our exceptional page Margo Koenig. Welcome to the Legislature.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I will now ask our pages to assemble for their introductions.

Members, it's my honour to introduce this group of legislative pages: from the riding of Oshawa, Saniyah Abbas; from the riding of Oxford, Jesuloba Joel Adeoye; from the riding of Scarborough–Rouge Park, Caesar Beesley; from the riding of Ajax, Simran Bhatt; from the riding of Toronto–St. Paul's, Philippe Boyer; from the riding of London North Centre, Clara Brunet; from the riding of Dufferin–Caledon, Sachkaur Chahal; from the riding of Davenport, Danté Cronier-Thériault; from the riding of Brampton East, Gurkaram Dhillon; from the riding of Perth–Wellington, Beckett Gloor; from the riding of Kenora–Rainy River, Paxten Hughes; from the riding of Kitchener South–Hespeler, Ananya Joshi; from the riding of Northumberland–Peterborough South, Katherine Kennedy; from the riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Margo Koenig; from the riding of Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill, Isolde Li; from the riding of Waterloo, Trent MacDonald; from the riding of Kitchener–Conestoga, Michael Milloy; from the riding of Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas, Fallon Noakes; from the riding of Brampton South, Lillian Park; from the riding of Richmond Hill, Owen Rao; from the riding of Whitby, Bronwyn Renwick; and from the riding of Markham–Thornhill, Yijie Wang.

1040

Welcome to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

Applause.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yesterday, the government House leader took all the Premier's questions—so I was going to try again, to see if the Premier will actually address the disastrous situation he has landed his government in.

Every month, people are struggling to make ends meet. People need a government that's going to help them, but instead they are seeing one mired in scandal.

Speaker, the revelations from the government's \$8-billion greenbelt grab are getting more and more serious every single day, and people deserve answers.

Can the Premier confirm that his government is currently under criminal investigation by the RCMP?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: As I said yesterday, we stand ready to assist the RCMP as they undertake a review. At this point, we have not been contacted by the RCMP.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: I want to remind this Premier and this government that their Premier told voters that he was going to move away from cash-for-access politics, that he was going to end the cronyism that brought down the previous Liberal government. Well, the Premier broke that promise, and five years later the Premier and his government are under criminal investigation by the RCMP.

Speaker, to the Premier: How can the people of this province trust their government when it's under an active RCMP criminal investigation?

Hon. Paul Calandra: We'll continue to do everything that we need to do in order to ensure that we build a bigger, better, stronger and safer province of Ontario.

The Leader of the Opposition, in her first question, talked about affordability. Imagine an NDP Leader of the Opposition talking about affordability when she and her party have voted against every single measure that would put more money back in the pockets of the people of the province of Ontario. They actually voted against—remember the LIFT tax credit. For those colleagues who were here in the last Parliament—they will know that we introduced the LIFT tax credit, which virtually eliminated the lowest income earners from having to pay taxes to the province of Ontario. They voted against it, because there's a fundamental difference between them and us. They want people to rely on government and to be dependent on government. We want to give people the tools to succeed. And each and every day that is what we're doing—working for the people of the province of Ontario to give them the tools to succeed. And that's why 700,000 people have the dignity of a job—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, the people of this province deserve answers from the Premier of this province.

When a government is embattled in this much scandal, it is bad for businesses; it is bad for the economy.

What kind of precedent does it set if people think that succeeding in Ontario is about your connections rather than your merit? It is shameful.

I made this point yesterday, and I want to remind the government again, that the special unit at the RCMP that is investigating the Premier and his government's actions investigates elected officials on "fraud, financial crimes, corruption and breach of trust."

Back to the Premier of this province: How can the Premier maintain the confidence of the people when his government is being investigated by the RCMP?

Interjections.

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

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, do you know what's bad for businesses? Do you know what's bad for the economy? Do you know what's bad for taxpayers across this province? What is bad are policies that are supported by the NDP. When they had the chance, with the Liberals in power for 15 years, they brought this province to its knees.

Yesterday, this minister, along with the Premier, announced another over \$2 billion in investment in the province of Ontario. Do you know who has confidence in the people of the province of Ontario? Investors around the world who have given over \$27 billion of investment to this economy. Do you know who has confidence in this government? The over 700,000 people who have the dignity of a job—that they didn't when they and they were in power. That is what we're doing.

Do you know what the Leader of the Opposition can do to help us on affordability? She can call her leader in Ottawa and say, "Take the 14.3 cents a litre on gas off. Help us remove the carbon tax to put even more money back in the pockets of the people of Ontario."

Will they do it? No, because they don't care about the people of the province of Ontario—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Order.

The next question.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Instead of taking accountability, this government just lobs insults. They vote down accountability measures. They won't answer simple questions about their whereabouts and their actions.

I'm going to get very specific here, Speaker. On September 14, 2022, a senior staffer for this government received greenbelt removal packages from developers at a dinner. The next day, this staffer sought clarity directly

from the Premier, his chief of staff and the former housing minister. The Premier and his chief of staff claimed they don't recall this meeting.

Will the Premier let us know what was discussed in that meeting with Ryan Amato on September 15, 2022?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Do you know what the Integrity Commissioner said? He said not only that the Premier had no knowledge—but more importantly, that the actions of the government were guided on a desire and a belief that we could build more homes for the people of the province of Ontario.

As I've said on a number of occasions, we made a public policy decision that wasn't supported by the people of the province of Ontario. That is why I introduced legislation yesterday to reverse that, Mr. Speaker.

But do you know what's an insult to the people of the province of Ontario? Every time they go to the gas pump and they're paying an extra 14.3 cents a litre because of the NDP and the Liberals; when they go to the grocery store and they see that the price of vegetables is higher—why? Because of the Liberals and the NDP and a carbon tax. When they open their gas bills over the winter season and they see the carbon tax on each of those bills, that's an insult to the people of the province of Ontario.

If the Leader of the Opposition really wants to respect the people of the province of Ontario, she'll call her federal leader in Ottawa and say, "Work with us. Let's remove the carbon tax on the things that matter to the people of the province of Ontario. Let's make this country more affordable, because we can do it."

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: No one believes that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

I'll remind the members of the House that interjections are out of order—always out of order, as a matter of fact—and I have to be able to hear the member who legitimately has the floor. All of us should listen to each other, listen to the member who has the floor.

Start the clock.

Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Speaker.

We have a Premier who still won't come clean or answer that question.

Over three days in September, this government went from a rough notion of a policy framework on the greenbelt to specific properties being identified for removal. Day one: the BILD dinner where developers identified properties for removal from the greenbelt. Day two: a meeting with the Premier and housing minister and their staff on the greenbelt—mysteriously, no one can recall the details of this meeting. Day three: The Ministry of Housing moves forward with site-specific removals and

identified three properties. These properties accounted for 91% of the land this government attempted to remove from the greenbelt, and two of those properties were identified by developers at the BILD dinner.

Speaker, I'm going to ask again: What caused this government to make a policy 180 on the greenbelt file from September 14 to September 16?

Interjections.

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

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

1050

Hon. Paul Calandra: Colleagues, the leader of the NDP said that she doesn't believe a carbon tax is costing the people of the province of Ontario anything. So I ask my colleagues, do you believe it's costing us more? Yes—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

I'd really like to be a part of this, if possible.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Order.

Please start the clock.

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I appreciate, Speaker, the importance of eliminating the carbon tax even in your community, where farmers are paying each and every day, whether it is to plant the seed and the crop in the ground or to harvest the crop in the ground.

I was speaking to Larry Simpson in my riding, a magnificent potato farmer, who was talking about a great crop this year, but the cost of taking that crop out of the ground and then delivering it across the province of Ontario is exorbitant. The cost of heating the potatoes over the winter to keep them available for delivery is incredible, and it's because of the carbon tax.

If the Leader of the Opposition doesn't believe that it is costing the people of Canada enormously, I ask her to call a few people who are struggling each and every day because of a carbon tax.

But we'll continue to work for all people, to put more money—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. The final supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, I understand that the Premier and the government House leader don't want to address the questions about the RCMP criminal investigation of their government.

I bet the RCMP won't accept that the Premier can't recall—I know that the people of Ontario and I don't buy it.

It's not just September 15—there were a number of meetings between the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Premier's office, the Cabinet Office and the Premier's chief of staff. The Cabinet Office booked a meeting on September 7. On September 21, there was a meeting to discuss site-specific removals. An hour-long conversation between the Premier's chief of staff and Mr. Amato on September 23—I could go on.

Does the Premier really expect people to believe he had nothing to do with this?

Hon. Paul Calandra: What this province and this caucus are concerned about is ensuring that life is more affordable for the people of the province of Ontario each and every day.

They can talk about it as much as they want—what they really are saying, and we all know it, is that they want to put obstacles in the way of building more homes for the people of the province of Ontario, because they were so effective at doing it with the Liberals, right? They were so effective at putting obstacles in the way that they put Ontario into a housing crisis. Every single year that we have been in office, we have put measures on the floor of this Legislature to remove those obstacles, and they have voted against it. But we will not stop.

We will continue to make life more affordable for the people of the province of Ontario. We will continue to fight against carbon taxes. We will continue to build infrastructure. We will continue to build long-term care. We will continue to build roads so that we can get our product to market faster. And we will continue to see massive investments, like the over \$27 billion that has come to Ontario, that has created over 700,000 jobs. That is what we'll continue to do each—

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

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Every day, I rise in this House with facts and dates and details on scandals that span ministries and ministers and MPPs and staff. And every day, the government House leader goes on a long-winded rant completely unrelated to the questions that we're asking.

Two senior members of the Premier's staff and a minister of his went down to Vegas with a greenbelt speculator and may have "misled" the Integrity Commissioner about it.

Will the Premier use the ability his cabinet has to ask for a full inquiry from the Integrity Commissioner into the Vegas affair?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I think that really clarifies everything. To the Leader of the Opposition, over \$27 billion of investment in Ontario is a rant. To the Leader of the Opposition, fighting the carbon tax is a rant. To the Leader of the Opposition, putting more money back in your pocket is a rant. So I guess the thousands and millions of Canadians from coast to coast to coast are ranting when they say that life has become less affordable because of the policies of the Liberals and the NDP.

I'll tell you what we have here—we have the mayor of Brantford here. Do you know what he's excited about? He's excited about the groundbreaking of a brand new long-term-care home in his riding. That's what he's excited about. He's excited about the jobs and opportunity that come with that investment. Do you know who never

brought that investment? It was the Liberals and the NDP—because in their time, they brought 611. There are more long-term-care beds being built in that community, in Brantford, than there were in the entire province of Ontario when they had the opportunity.

That's what people are excited about. It's not a rant. It's fact. And that's what the people of Ontario care about.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Order. The House will come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The House will come to order so we can resume question period.

Start the clock. The supplementary question.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, it should actually be quite easy to answer these questions.

This boys' trip to Vegas, with its massage tables and its good luck rituals and its manis and pedis, made international headlines. How embarrassing.

This government wasted no time asking the Integrity Commissioner to look into the actions of a staff member, Mr. Amato. They promised that they would look to the Integrity Commissioner to investigate the actions of someone else who was on that trip—the member for Mississauga East—Cooksville, a former Conservative minister—but they don't seem to have taken any action.

Back to the Premier: Is his government dragging its heels because the Premier himself has something to hide?

Hon. Paul Calandra: This is unbelievable. Dragging our heels? We started in 2018. The very first measures that we took in this place were to build jobs and opportunity for the people of the province of Ontario.

It is they who have been dragging their heels, voting against every single measure that would grow the economy. They dragged their heels when it came to investing in hospitals, building new hospitals, refurbishing some of the old hospitals. They dragged their heels and continue to drag their heels when we talk about building the 413. They're absolutely dead set against people bringing their product to market. They have voted against the investments that we're making to bring back our auto sector. They have voted against the expansion of our colleges and universities. They voted against the changes that we're making to our education curriculum that are finally seeing results for our students, who stagnated over 15 years of policies of the Liberals and NDP.

So when she talks about dragging your heels—the only people who are dragging their heels are the Liberals and NDP, a coalition of the doomed that saw this province brought to its knees.

We're rebuilding this province and we'll continue to do it, and 700,000—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Order. Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The House will come to order. Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member is waiting to ask a question. Let's start the clock.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Mr. Ric Bresee: Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

The previous Liberal government left Ontario fully unprepared for the electric vehicle future. They allowed thousands of auto manufacturing jobs to leave this province and watched as the electric vehicle supply chain was being built somewhere else.

Thankfully, our government recognized that our province has everything we need right here to build a resilient, end-to-end EV supply chain right here in Ontario. That's why we've seen more than \$26 billion in auto and EV-related investments in just the last three years, including a huge investment we welcomed from Umicore just yesterday in Loyalist township, my home.

Can the minister please discuss Umicore's recent investment and what this will mean for the people of Loyalist township, Lennox and Addington county, and all of Ontario?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, we were in the member's riding yesterday, along with Premier Ford, and we turned the sod at a historic \$2.8-billion plant, where Umicore will make battery cathode components. This is an expansion of their previously announced \$1.5-billion facility. But we're not just building a plant; we are building Ontario's future. They are hiring 1,000 workers for two years to build the facility. This will be one of the largest employers in all of eastern Ontario. They will have 600 sought-after, good-paying career jobs. They will hire 700 apprentices—student co-ops. This is the first type of this EV battery supplier in all of North America.

Welcome, Umicore.

1100

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Mr. Ric Bresee: Thank you to the minister for the answer.

Umicore's investment is fabulous news for the auto sector and for the hard-working people of Loyalist township and all of eastern Ontario.

Our government recognizes the massive economic benefits that will stem from Ontario being a global leader in electric vehicle production. That's why we've been laser-focused on securing generational investments like the one from Umicore.

Speaker, will the minister please elaborate on what Umicore's investment means to our end-to-end EV supply chain?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Well, just think about where we were five years ago. We had an auto sector that was failing, no plans for EV production. But under the leadership of Premier Ford, we have a plan. It's called Driving

Prosperity, and it's a plan to make Ontario the EV global centre. We started with all the current automakers—success. We then attracted two major battery manufacturers—success. Now, after \$27 billion of investment, we're working on all of the major supply chain. Umicore is the first of many component suppliers for our EV revolution.

Think of this, Speaker: We went from zero to \$27 billion in three years—that's why Bloomberg named Ontario as the number two in the global EV supply chain.

We are building things here in the province of Ontario, and we're leading.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. In late August, the Premier appointed Sajjad Hussain to the Species at Risk Program Advisory Committee. Mr. Hussain is a developer with no apparent credentials with respect to species at risk. He has also been accused of unlawfully misappropriating millions of dollars from his company for his own personal use.

Why did the Premier appoint Mr. Hussain to this government committee when he knew, or should have known, about these disturbing allegations?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: I want to make one thing clear: Our government holds appointments to the highest regard. This is why this individual in question is no longer an appointee of the government.

Unfortunately, we cannot say the same about the opposition and the standards that this Leader of the Opposition holds her caucus to, following the disturbing comments a certain member of the opposition made this previous week regarding the situation and the massacre in Israel. However, while the opposition continues to coddle this individual, our government is doing the real work, and we are defending Ontario's biodiversity, building Ontario's common resiliency and protecting species at risk.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Again to the Premier: While Sajjad Hussain appears to have had no qualifications or expertise around species at risk, he is certainly an expert when it comes to making donations to the PC Party. Mr. Hussain has donated over \$15,000 to the PC Party since 2019.

Was Mr. Hussain's donor record the reason for the Premier's willingness to overlook the very serious allegations against Mr. Hussain?

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: I want to mention, if you have a Leader of the Opposition whose caucus laughs at massacres that happened in Israel, Speaker—totally unacceptable and definitely shows no leadership.

But when we talk about leadership, we are empowering conservationists, empowering ecologists, empowering biologists—not politicians—to make large-scale strategic investments in protecting species at risk here in Ontario. We're making direct investments in protecting species at risk and the species at risk stewardship program. For

instance, we've engaged over 14,000 volunteers in conservation efforts and created 1,700 jobs. This is how our government is building Ontario and protecting species at risk. And we've restored over 42,000 acres of habitat for species at risk, equal to nearly 100,000 hockey rinks.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: My question is for the Associate Minister of Small Business.

As Small Business Week gets under way, thousands of small businesses across Ontario, including the ones in my riding of Mississauga—Erin Mills, are looking for ways to sustain and grow their businesses.

Small businesses are the economic backbone of communities across our province. However, starting and growing a business is hard work. Business owners and entrepreneurs need real supports and resources that will help them to be innovative and to expand their businesses. That's why our government must continue to help small businesses so they can provide jobs to people from their communities. When small businesses grow and thrive, all of Ontario succeeds.

Can the associate minister please explain how our government is supporting small businesses across Ontario?

Hon. Nina Tangri: I really want to thank the member for Mississauga—Erin Mills for the question.

This Small Business Week, we celebrate the ambition and entrepreneurial spirit of small business owners and their businesses right across our province.

As a former small business owner, I know first-hand the risks and hard work it takes to start and grow a business.

Ontario's more than 435,000 small businesses are the backbone of our communities, employing more than 2.4 million people. These small businesses exist in towns and cities across our province.

For 2022-23 and 2023-24, we are investing an additional \$40 million in the Digital Main Street program, which brings our total investment to over \$57 million. To date, Digital Main Street has helped more than 69,000 small businesses create and increase their digital presence. These are real, tangible resources, and small businesses—

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

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: The associate minister is right in saying that small businesses are critical in building a stronger Ontario.

Unfortunately, the previous Liberal government, supported by the NDP, gave up on small businesses, resulting in hundreds of thousands of jobs leaving our province. Countless opportunities were lost due to the previous Liberal government's agenda of high taxes and red tape.

Fortunately, our government is determined to create the right conditions for new businesses to start up and succeed in our province. That's why our government must remain committed to making investments that will help provide business owners with the resources they need.

Can the associate minister please explain how our government is supporting the development of new businesses in Ontario?

Hon. Nina Tangri: Thank you again for the question.

Our government understands that small businesses are vital to our economic success and essential to regional communities right across our province. Small businesses make up almost 98% of all businesses in Ontario. From family-owned corner stores to brand new start-ups, everyone knows a small business that has made a difference in their community, and we know we need to create the environment for more of these businesses to launch and succeed.

So far, we've provided \$3 million to Futurpreneur Canada, and in 2023-24, the government is providing an additional \$2 million, bringing our total investment to over \$5 million. These investments are critical to our economic success. Now, thousands of young small business owners between the ages of 18 and 39 will be able to access mentorship programs and financial resources.

1110

We will always support and promote our world-class small business sector.

To all of Ontario's small businesses: Happy Small Business Week, and thank you for all that you do to support us all.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Wayne Gates: My question is to the Premier. On June 9, this government gave three minister's zoning orders to Southbridge Care, a for-profit long-term-care facility owned by a real estate investment firm, Yorkville Asset Management. None of these MZO's had been requested by the local municipality. One of the MZO's was for Orchard Villa in Pickering, where 78 seniors died during the COVID-19 pandemic and the military had to be called in to take over. The executives and lobbyists for this particular operator have strong donor and political ties to the Conservative Party.

My question is, did the minister give preferential treatment to Southbridge?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Do you know what I did when I was the Minister of Long-Term Care and that I would do as Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing? I gave preferential treatment to tear down a home that should have been torn down ages ago, but the Liberals and NDP refused to do it.

What we want to do in Pickering is tear down an old, outdated home that still has ward rooms in it and build a brand new long-term-care home. That's what we're doing in Pickering. It's the same MZO that I wanted to do in Port Hope—tear down two old homes that aren't even sprinklered and replace them with brand new long-term-care homes.

And here you have it, on the floor of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: The people of Ontario can see quite

clearly that they don't even want to build brand new long-term-care homes for the people of the province of Ontario. They vote against literally everything.

So will I stop doing MZO to build new long-term-care homes? No, in fact, I'll go just in the opposite direction. If I can do it better—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

The supplementary question.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm not sure I'd be proud of being the minister when 6,000 of our seniors died in long-term-care homes over COVID.

I'm going to tell you what happened. After taking over Southbridge's Orchard Villa, the military reported that residents had been choking from improper feeding, the presence of cockroaches and rotting food, dehydration, and patients were left in soiled diapers. The Premier said—the Premier, not Wayne Gates. The Premier said, "It was the worst report, the most heart-wrenching report I have ever read in my entire life. Ever." But this government rewarded Southbridge with three minister's zoning orders in one day—including Orchard Villa.

Why did the Premier and minister give preferential treatment to Southbridge Care Homes when our seniors were dying and being treated with disrespect every single day in that home?

Hon. Paul Calandra: We gave MZO because we wanted to build brand new long-term-care homes.

We're going to continue to build brand new long-term-care homes, and I won't let obstacles stand in the way. So when this Minister of Long-Term Care comes to me and says, "I want to tear down an old home and replace it with a brand new one," I will say yes.

This is the very same party that held the balance of power for four years in this place—and did they make investments in long-term care? No.

If you want blood on your hands, look in the mirror. You had the option to do something—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Stop the clock.

I'm going to caution the members on the use of language, whether it is in their questions or their responses. It's important that we maintain a high standard of decorum. The people of Ontario expect that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Order. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing will come to order. The member for Niagara Falls will come to order.

Start the clock. The next question.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

MPP Karen McCrimmon: To quote Yogi Berra, "It's déjà vu all over again."

The Auditor General and the Integrity Commissioner identified irregularities in the way the greenbelt lands were awarded to developers. Proper processes and regulations were not followed. Public information was restricted, and

bid fairness protocols were ignored when they favoured their wealthy insider friends and donors. And now the RCMP has launched a criminal investigation into this \$8.2-billion greenbelt scandal.

Now we learn that the government has signed a 95-year lease to allow the building of a luxury exclusive European spa on Ontario Place lands by wealthy connected insiders, with no evidence of due diligence.

My question to the Premier is, with all the similarities between the greenbelt and the Ontario Place projects, how can the people of Ontario believe that this isn't the exact same game?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Infrastructure to reply.

Hon. Kinga Surma: Mr. Speaker, I'm actually very pleased to take this specific question.

I would like to reference an article from July 2, 2018, in the *Globe and Mail*, written by Jeff Gray:

"The previous Ontario government was in the final stages of selecting a private sector bidder to redevelop Ontario Place when it was forced to put the negotiations on hold...."

"Sources said the top three submissions included one from Therme, a German spa-and-water park company which would have included a new beach."

Thank you for asking me this question.

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

MPP Karen McCrimmon: There are times when the government talks about roadblocks, obstacles and things that are in the way. We call those laws.

Again, my question remains the same: How can the people of Ontario have confidence that the same thing that happened with the greenbelt lands is not happening once again with Ontario Place?

Hon. Kinga Surma: Mr. Speaker, we're talking about two separate government procurements led by two separate governments, two separate evaluation criteria—and Therme was one of the awarding proponents for the redevelopment of Ontario Place, through an arm's-length agency called Infrastructure Ontario.

We will do something that they were not capable of doing—and that is bring Ontario Place back to life and make it a place that everyone can enjoy 365 days of the year.

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. As a mother of four, I know that a balanced diet and proper nutrition are important for our children; it is important for their development. Good, nutritious food helps our children's mental and physical health and is a foundation of academic success. That is why it is unacceptable to hear that some children in Ontario will go to school hungry.

Our government must show leadership and do all that we can to set up Ontario's next generation for success by ensuring that they have access to nutritious meals and snacks during their school day.

Can the minister please explain what actions our government is taking to promote healthy food access for children across Ontario?

Hon. Michael Parsa: I want to thank my colleague from Richmond Hill for the great question and all the great work that she does in her riding.

Speaker, our government's investments in the Student Nutrition Program and the First Nations Student Nutrition Program have been instrumental in ensuring that students across Ontario have access to healthy and nutritious meals. Earlier this year, our government invested an additional \$1.1 million into these programs. And just the other week, alongside the Minister of Education, we announced an additional investment of \$5 million in funding, bringing the total provincial funding to \$38 million this year. These investments will help us deliver almost 90 million nutritious meals and snacks to students, ensuring that they have the energy and focus they need to excel in their education.

We'll continue to deliver this vital service to students who depend on it, because—I've said it many times, and I'll say it again—students may be a portion of our population; they're 100%—

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

1120

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Thank you to my great minister.

These additional investments made by our government will help to expand access to nutritious food for students across our province.

However, the reality is that there are children in our communities, including those in my riding of Richmond Hill, who are at risk of going to school hungry every day.

Access to nutritious food helps students to be more alert and ready to learn, and helps to improve their overall physical health and well-being.

Our government's investments will go a long way in helping to provide students with nutritious food at school.

Can the minister please explain how our government is working with all levels of government, community agencies and partners in support of student nutrition programs?

Hon. Michael Parsa: I thank my colleague for the follow-up. Mr. Speaker, our government believes that no student should go to school hungry. That's why we've partnered with organizations—including the Arrell Family Foundation, the Breakfast Club of Canada, the Schad Foundation, and the Grocery Foundation—to improve these programs. The \$1.67 million already raised by partners, alongside our government's \$5-million investment, shows how public and private entities can come together to make a meaningful impact on the lives of Ontario students. I'm grateful for the generous support, and I encourage all Ontarians to get involved and support the success of our students. Together, we can provide a strong foundation for their academic achievement and overall well-being in the province—because, again, they're 100% of our future, and we need to continue to invest in them.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Last week, the Auditor General's office confirmed that they are investigating minister's zoning orders.

MZOs create a two-tier planning system where favoured developers can skip the planning rules that apply to everyone else.

A couple of years ago, in this House, the member for Waterloo asked the Premier about a large number of MZOs that went to his friend Shakir Rehmatullah, who has received more MZOs than any other landowner.

The Integrity Commissioner is now investigating whether MZOs are being improperly issued to favoured developers, overruling responsible municipal planning.

Will the Premier stop overruling critical wetland and farmland protections to benefit his friends?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: What we will continue to do is to provide MZOs when it helps move the province of Ontario forward—MZOs for long-term care, MZOs to build hospitals, MZOs to build supportive housing in the city of Toronto.

Will I stop issuing MZOs when it supports the priorities of the province of Ontario, when it helps people in the province of Ontario, when it helps job creation, when it gives people their first home? No. I won't stop doing that. Will I continue to issue MZOs when it means an old long-term-care home can be torn down and replaced by a brand new one? No. I'll continue to do that.

They want to stand in the way of all of that; I won't.

In fact, some of their own members have asked me for MZOs in their own ridings, so that we can get long-term-care homes, so that we can get socialized housing in their homes.

So I say to the member very clearly, for the caucus members around you: I will continue to issue it when it is in the best interests of the people of the province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Incredibly, this Premier has issued more MZOs benefiting just the guests at his daughter's wedding reception than the previous government issued in total during its 15 years in power.

Without building a single new home or business, an MZO increases the value of a property instantly by generating enormous speculative profits for the owner.

The NDP looked at every MZO this government has issued—more than 100—and in most cases, we were able to find a personal, political or donor tie to the Premier or the PC Party.

Does the Premier finally understand why Ontarians have lost trust in this government?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Well, Mr. Speaker, let's put it in context. MZOs have created over 5,600 long-term-care beds across the province of Ontario. MZOs have supported the building of over 117,000 socialized housing units

across the province of Ontario. MZOs have helped us build brand new hospitals in the province of Ontario. MZOs have helped us create the conditions for over 152,000 new jobs in the province of Ontario.

What you're hearing from the opposition is continued frustration that what we are doing is using the tools that we have to help build a stronger economy, to help restore confidence in industries that had lost it. This is a party that worked with the Liberals to drive out manufacturing. We lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs. The Liberals and the NDP said that we should transition our economy to a service economy.

What we're doing is building a better, stronger Ontario—\$27 billion in investment; over 700,000 people have the dignity of a job. And I will do whatever I can, along with this caucus, to support that.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr. Michael Mantha: My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. The Espanola Domtar mill is set to idle its operations, starting next month, for an indefinite period of time. The impending stoppage has caused a lot of concern and frustration for people across the town of Espanola, Manitoulin and the North Shore area. Arrangements have been made to help employees with the transition and to safely idle the mill's operations. However, there are still many unanswered questions about the fibre that has been unused and left at roadside.

To the minister: What is the government's plan to ensure that this fibre does not simply rot and go to waste?

Hon. Graydon Smith: When we heard that the Domtar mill was idling, we took action right away, reaching out to community officials and having conversations with them about how this could affect them; reaching out to the company to say, "How can we keep this conversation going, and what can we do to facilitate the re-energization of this mill in the future?"

Mr. Speaker, we remain very concerned about the businesses that are attached to this mill—not just the 450 jobs at the mill, but the secondary and tertiary companies that supply the mill and the forestry sector all throughout Ontario. We have taken action when we heard this news. We will continue to work with all parties involved to make sure we get the very, very best outcome, not only for Espanola but for the entire forestry sector. We will continue to work with all these parties as closely as we can every single day.

We have a fantastic forestry sector here in Ontario, and we are extremely proud of it. We'll continue to make sure that that forestry sector remains strong.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Again to the minister: The operators in the Northshore Forest, such as contractors R.J. Whalen Logging, Darcy Alberta, H&R Fabris Industries Ltd., Marvin Ritchie Trucking Ltd., Ranger Logging Ltd., Rejean Cyr Logging Ltd.—and that's just to name a few—who cut the fibre deserve to know when they will get paid

for the work that they have already done. Stopping operations at the mill will be disruptive enough as it is without adding the extra burden of watching harvested timber rot at roadside and worrying about the hundreds of potential job losses.

Forestry is vital in the Algoma area, and this minister needs to show leadership during this difficult time.

Minister, who will pick up the bill for the unused fibre, and how will these forestry companies be compensated for work that has already been done?

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thank you for the question.

As I said in the original answer, we continue to work with all sectors of our forestry partners that are affected by the closure of this mill, and that includes the operators that the member has spoken about.

We continue to make investments in the forestry sector. Our \$20-million forest biomass program is an unprecedented investment to drive the sector forward. Our Forest Sector Investment and Innovation Program, \$10 million—again, to drive the industry forward. We want a strong industry so all the players in the industry have a chance to succeed, and we continue to make those investments. We continue to work with everyone involved.

Last week, I actually joined the member on a call with members from Espanola and the community there to talk about what we can do to assist. So we're there; we're helping; we're making sure the forestry sector in Ontario continues to succeed.

1130

FOREST FIREFIGHTING

FOREST INDUSTRY

Ms. Natalie Pierre: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. The minister recently provided an update on the measures that our government is implementing to strengthen our wildland fire preparedness levels.

This year, Ontario and Canada experienced one of the most challenging fire seasons in recent memory. That is why our government must not lose focus on the importance of keeping people and property safe. The people of Ontario are counting on our government to dedicate the resources that are necessary to ensure Ontario's fire rangers and communities are safe.

Can the minister please explain what actions our government is taking to improve and modernize how we fight wildland fires?

Hon. Graydon Smith: As I was in the north last week talking with forestry companies about the previous question, I was also there to make a very important announcement—an announcement of \$20.5 million further investment in helping us fight wildland fires in Ontario, an investment that looks to the future and recognizes that we may have some challenging fire seasons ahead of us, so we need more technology like aerial drones that can help us with detection and suppression; supporting attraction and retention of forest firefighters; also, making sure that they have a good mental health program attached to that position.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to make investments to ensure that communities, people and infrastructure in Ontario remain safe—and again, \$20.5 million will help advance that. And this is in addition to the over 90% increase that we've included in base budgeting since we took office in 2018. We are—

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

Ms. Natalie Pierre: At a time when the number of wildfires is rising, it is also important that our government focuses on strategies that support forest sustainability. Ontario's forestry sector is of vital importance to the economic prosperity for people and communities across Ontario. Our province has a strong record of responsible forest management, but more must be done to support the forestry sector in reaching its full potential.

Our government must continue to explore long-term strategies that will help to deliver economic benefits to all Ontarians. At the same time, our actions must help to sustain the forestry sector, reduce emissions and support the environment.

Can the minister please explain how our government is strengthening Ontario's forestry sector?

Hon. Graydon Smith: It's time to put on the party hats, because it's the fifth anniversary of the forest sector strategy—so happy fifth anniversary, forest sector strategy. It's doing great things here in Ontario to drive this sector forward. Just a few highlights from it: It has amended Ontario's building code to allow the increased use of wood in mid-rise buildings. It has delivered over \$60 million in forestry resource revenues to 40 First Nations and Métis communities. And it has collaborated with Forests Ontario and the Ontario Forest Industries Association to promote career pathways in the forestry industry.

Also, as I mentioned, the historic \$20-million investment in the forest biomass program and the streams within it—we had an application process open until the end of September. It's all full up—because innovation in the forestry sector is here in Ontario. We are driving this sector forward, and it will prosper here in this province.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Miss Monique Taylor: My question is for the current Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

It has been five years and four ministers, and this government has still only managed to have the same number of children enrolled to receive needs-based core autism services before they changed the program five years ago. Five years ago, there were 23,000 families waiting for these services; now, there are over 60,000. That's more than will fit into Rogers stadium, Speaker. How is this better? Can the minister please tell us where the progress is?

Hon. Michael Parsa: I thank my colleague for the question. I'd be more than happy to tell her why. I've done it many times, and I'll do it again—because the program wasn't working for the people of this province. Mr.

Speaker, 25% of the children and youth who were on the registry were receiving services before. Today, over 40,000 families are receiving supports and services. That's why.

That party supported a failed program under the previous government. The families told them that.

We started from scratch. We worked with those with lived experience—experts, clinicians—to put a program that was put together by the community for the community. We went with more than that—we doubled the funding, to \$600 million. And we didn't stop there. This year, I announced that we further increased the funding of the Ontario Autism Program by an additional 10%.

We're doing what they couldn't do for the people of this province.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Miss Monique Taylor: Speaker, hundreds of autism families have not travelled across the province or been protesting on the front lawn for the past two days because they're happy with the progress of this minister, the last minister, the minister before that or the minister before that. No. They're here because they are desperate. They want and need answers. But more importantly, they want publicly funded, needs-based core therapy for their children before it's too late to make any difference in their children's lives.

According to the reports based on a freedom-of-information, the minister's own transition binder says, "Most children and youth will not receive core clinical services funding in the short to medium term."

What does this minister have to say to the families who are here, who are left struggling? And please, for the love of children—not the same old talking points that we've been listening to for the last five years.

Interjections.

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

Hon. Michael Parsa: Again, I thank my colleague for the question. I would be more than happy to answer that.

We've developed a program that was put together by the community for the community. The programs that she won't list—I will do for her. These are programs that families across the province are accessing every day, as soon as they register on AccessOAP—foundational family services; caregiver-mediated early years programs; the entry to school program; urgent response service. Before, they had access to one service. Today they have multiple streams that they can access—every single family—as soon as they register for AccessOAP.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, the opposition always will come in here and they'll talk to you about what their questions represent—but they held the balance of power. You've been here longer than any one of us. You know the process of Parliament. They could have held the previous government to account and said, "We will no longer support you if you do not double the Ontario Autism Program." But they failed the people of this province. We're not going to—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.
Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. The honourable member for Hamilton Mountain will come to order and the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services will come to order.

Start the clock.

The next question. The member for Thornhill.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Ms. Laura Smith: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Toronto's population is growing rapidly. As our city grows, transportation infrastructure also needs to expand. People need more convenient ways to connect to their jobs and family and other communities in the GTA.

Unfortunately, the previous Liberal government, supported by the NDP, failed to plan ahead for the transit needs of our communities. They left people on crowded subways and buses and stuck in traffic.

That is why our government must continue to implement solutions that will improve transportation options for the people of the GTA and beyond.

Can the minister please provide us with an update on how our government is addressing the need for more public transit?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: The member for Thornhill is absolutely correct; the previous Liberal government refused to find solutions to gridlock or build any public transit. They sat by and did nothing.

But thanks to the advocacy of the member for Thornhill and other members in Toronto, we're not going to stick to the status quo. That's why we're building long-overdue projects like the Ontario Line.

The Ontario Line will take 400,000 people off the road every single day. The Ontario Line will reduce crowding on the TTC in some of the busiest stations and keep people moving across this province.

Unlike the previous Liberal government in the 15 years, we're going to continue to invest in the infrastructure that we need to keep people moving in this province.

1140

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Laura Smith: Speaker, I want to congratulate him on his leadership.

Speaking of leadership, under the leadership of the Premier and this minister, our government is making historic investments that send a clear message that public transit infrastructure is a priority. The investments we're making today will have a lasting impact on future generations.

However, the need for new public transit is urgent, and calls for greater action and investments are growing.

The Toronto Region Board of Trade recently stated: "As the fastest-growing metropolitan region in North America, the Toronto region urgently needs an expanded transportation network."

Can the minister please provide an update on the progress of the Ontario Line and what steps our government is taking to build better transit faster?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: We continue to make very strong progress on our priority subway plans.

Just recently, I joined the Premier and the Minister of Infrastructure as we visited the future Ontario Line at Exhibition Place. Shovels are in the ground on early works, and the full procurement of the Ontario Line is nearly complete. This is a testimony to the unprecedented speed at which we are delivering this project—and that wasn't by chance. Through the Building Transit Faster Act, we cut delays and unnecessary red tape.

However, the members opposite—both the opposition and the Liberal Party—refused to support any measure to build transit faster. They voted against the \$70-billion investment to increase public transit investment in this province. They refused to vote for the Building Transit Faster Act in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue to focus our efforts on building Ontario and keeping this province moving.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My question is to the Minister of Education. Today is Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day, and the stakeholders and ECEs are here today, but I've not been hearing that they're actually feeling valued.

For over a year, we've been raising alarm bells that the workforce crisis threatens child care in this province. Early childhood educators are leaving the field faster than they can be trained.

Back in January, the ministry held consultations on a child care workforce strategy, yet the sector is still waiting for the province's plan. Meanwhile, local child care programs are forced to close rooms and limit enrolment at a time when more parents are hoping to gain access to affordable child care spaces. When will this government release their report and actually act on the recommendations in that report?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to thank the member opposite for the question.

First off, I want to express gratitude to the ECEs of this province for working hard, giving back and really committing themselves to our youngest learners. During the pandemic, when so much closed, our child care centres stayed open. We are grateful for them every day.

Our government's commitment was to reduce fees, increase spaces and lift wages—and we are doing each and every one. In fact, when we started in 2018—when the Liberals and New Democrats coalesced and fees increased by 400%, making the false choice for so many families of their child being in care or a parent, particularly women, working in the economy—we've ended that by cutting child care fees by 50%, saving \$8,000 to \$12,000 for every single child in this province.

With respect to the workforce, whom we value, we've increased wages by \$1 per hour each year—for the agree-

ments that we signed with the federal government. And we'll continue to go further to ensure we lift wages, retain these workers and create good value for them within our child care sector.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: The minister knows what the problem is. ECE workers know what the problem is.

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario and experts and workers have told the government that a \$10-a-day child care program is under threat because of low pay and poor working conditions, with the average ECE in the field for just three years. The minister's own summaries on the consultation showed the government was overwhelmingly told variations of "increase ECE pay."

Ontario is one of the four provinces that still has not introduced a salary scale or a wage grid as part of the Canada-wide early years and child care plan—and the wage floor is the lowest in the country.

The minister promised ECEs a wage increase in June—yet months later, no word.

Will the minister commit today to a salary scale of at least \$30 per hour for RECEs, \$25 for non-RECEs, to get the program back on track and get parents the affordable child care spots they need and deserve so parents can get back to work?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Mr. Speaker, let's not forget, when New Democrats had the chance to vote for our budget, which cut fees by 50%—you voted against it. When you had the chance to support 86,000 additional spaces, given the long wait-lists that were created under the former government, you opposed it. When we created a \$213-million start-up grant to incent the sector to create spaces in under-represented communities, you voted against it. When we increased wages by \$1 per hour, every single year, you voted against that.

You are in no position to lecture any government. You enabled a 400% increase in child care fees—the most expensive in the federation.

This Premier, this government is committed to cutting fees, increasing wages and increasing spaces, and we will take no lessons from the NDP.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our question period this morning—but I will remind members, once again, to please make their comments through the Chair.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Hamilton Mountain has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services concerning autism services. This matter will be debated today following private members' public business.

There being no further business this morning, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1147 to 1500.

PETITIONS

ADDICTION SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm really proud to present on behalf of 926 people in Sudbury who have signed this petition: "Save the Spot," the supervised consumption site.

"Whereas Sudbury's overdose rate is three times the rate of the rest of Ontario;

"Whereas an application was submitted to the government in 2021 for funding of a supervised consumption site in Sudbury called the Spot;

"Whereas the Spot is operated by Réseau Access Network with municipal funding that ends on December 31, 2023, the province must approve funding very soon, or the Spot will close putting many people at risk of death;

"Whereas in 2023 alone, the Spot had" over "1,000 visits, reversed all 17 on-site overdoses, provided drug-checking services and prevented many deaths;"

They "petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Immediately approve funding for the supervised consumption site in Sudbury to save lives."

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

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

MPP Jamie West: This petition is entitled "Support the Gender-Affirming Health Care Act.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas two-spirit, transgender, non-binary, gender-diverse and intersex communities face significant challenges to accessing health care services that are friendly, competent and affirming in Ontario;

"Whereas everyone deserves access to health care, and they shouldn't have to fight for it, shouldn't have to wait for it, and should never receive less care or support because of who they are;

"Whereas gender-affirming care is life-saving care;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam's private member's bill—the Gender-Affirming Health Care Advisory Committee Act—to improve access to and coverage for gender-affirming health care in Ontario."

I support this petition. I'll affix my signature and provide it to page Trent for the table.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Shane Monaghan from Garson in my riding for these petitions.

"Ontario Dementia Strategy....

"Whereas it takes an average of 18 months for people in Ontario to get an official dementia diagnosis, with some

patients often waiting years to complete diagnostic testing and more than half of those suspected of having dementia never get a full diagnosis;

“Whereas a PET scan test approved in Ontario in 2017, which can be key to detecting Alzheimer’s early is still not covered under OHIP and research findings show that Ontario will spend \$27.8 billion between 2023 and 2043 on alternate-level-of-care (ALC) and long-term-care (LTC) costs associated with people living with dementia;

“Whereas the government must follow through with its commitment to ensure Ontario’s health care system has the capacity to meet the current and future needs of people living with dementia and their care partners;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows: “to develop, commit to, and fund a comprehensive Ontario dementia strategy.”

I fully support this petition, Speaker. I will affix my name to it and ask Gurkaram—I got it better, eh?—to bring it to the Clerk. I’m practising his name.

LABOUR LEGISLATION

MPP Jamie West: This petition is entitled “Pass Anti-Scab Labour Legislation.” I want to thank Jerry Thibault, who I know was affected directly by this as a member of USW Local 6500.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the use of replacement workers undermines workers’ collective power, unnecessarily prolongs labour disputes, and removes the essential power that the withdrawal of labour is supposed to give workers to help end a dispute, that is, the ability to apply economic pressure;

“Whereas the use of scab labour contributes to higher-conflict picket lines, jeopardizes workplace safety, destabilizes normalized labour relations between workers and their employers and removes the employer incentive to negotiate and settle fair contracts; and

“Whereas strong and fair anti-scab legislation will help lead to shorter labour disputes, safer workplaces, and less hostile picket lines;

“Whereas similar legislation has been introduced in British Columbia and Quebec with no increases to the number of strike or lockout days;

“Whereas Ontario had anti-scab legislation under an NDP government, that was unfortunately ripped away from workers by the Harris Conservatives;

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

“To prohibit employers from using replacement labour for the duration of any legal strike or lockout;

“To prohibit employers from using both external and internal replacement workers;

“To include significant financial penalties for employers who defy the anti-scab legislation; and

“To support Ontario’s workers and pass anti-scab labour legislation, like the Ontario NDP Bill 90, Anti-Scab Labour Act, 2023.”

I support this petition. I’ll affix my signature and provide it to page Clara for the table.

SUBVENTIONS AUX RÉSIDENTS DU NORD POUR FRAIS DE TRANSPORT À DES FINS MÉDICALES

M^{me} France Gélinas: J’aimerais remercier Arnel Laliberté de Chelmsford dans mon comté pour ces pétitions.

« Réparons les subventions aux résident(e)s du nord de l’Ontario pour frais de transport à des fins médicales...

« Alors que les gens du Nord n’ont pas le même accès aux soins de santé en raison du coût élevé des déplacements et de l’hébergement;

« Alors qu’en refusant d’augmenter les taux des subventions aux résidents » et résidentes « du nord de l’Ontario pour frais de transport à des fins médicales ... le gouvernement Ford impose un lourd fardeau aux Ontarien(ne)s du Nord qui sont malades;

« Alors que le prix de l’essence est plus élevé dans le nord de l’Ontario; »

Ils et elles demandent à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario « de créer un comité ayant pour mandat de corriger et d’améliorer » le programme. « Ce comité consultatif ... réunirait des fournisseurs de soins de santé du Nord ainsi que des bénéficiaires » du programme « pour faire des recommandations à la ministre de la Santé qui amélioreraient l’accès aux soins de santé dans le nord de l’Ontario grâce au remboursement adéquat des frais de déplacement » et d’hébergement.

J’appuie cette pétition. Je vais la signer, et je la donne à Trent pour l’amener à la table des greffiers.

PUBLIC SAFETY

MPP Jamie West: This petition is entitled “Protect 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities and Drag Artists.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas anti-2SLGBTQIA+ hate crimes and harassment are increasing across Ontario;

“Whereas drag artists have been specifically targeted for intimidation by anti-2SLGBTQIA+ extremists;

“Whereas drag performance is a liberating and empowering art form that allows diverse communities to see themselves represented and celebrated;

“Whereas drag artists, small businesses, and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities deserve to feel safe everywhere in Ontario;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Protecting 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities Act so that 2SLGBTQIA+ safety zones can deter bigoted harassment and an advisory committee can be struck to protect 2SLGBTQIA+ communities from hate crimes.”

I support this petition. I’ll affix my signature and provide it to page Owen for the table.

WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Arlene Dault in Val Thérèse in my riding for this petition:

“Improve Winter Road Maintenance on Northern Highways....

“Whereas highways play a critical role in northern Ontario;

“Whereas winter road maintenance has been privatized in Ontario and contract standards are not being enforced;

“Whereas per capita, fatalities are twice as likely to occur on a northern highway than on a highway in southern Ontario;

“Whereas current MTO classification negatively impacts the safety of northern highways;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“To classify Highways 11, 17, 69, 101 and 144 as class 1 highways; require that the pavement be bare within eight hours of the end of a snowfall and bring the management of winter road maintenance back into the public sector, if contract standards” cannot be met.

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

LABOUR LEGISLATION

MPP Jamie West: This petition is also entitled “Pass Anti-Scab Labour Legislation.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the use of replacement workers undermines workers’ collective power, unnecessarily prolongs labour disputes, and removes the essential power that the withdrawal of labour is supposed to give workers to help end a dispute, that is, the ability to apply economic pressure;

“Whereas the use of scab labour contributes to higher-conflict picket lines, jeopardizes workplace safety, destabilizes normalized labour relations between workers and their employers and removes the employer incentive to negotiate and settle fair contracts; and

“Whereas strong and fair anti-scab legislation will lead to shorter labour disputes, safer workplaces, and less hostile picket lines;

“Whereas similar legislation has been introduced in British Columbia and Quebec with no increases to the number of strike or lockout days;

“Whereas Ontario had anti-scab legislation under an NDP government, that was unfortunately ripped away from workers by the Harris Conservatives;

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

“To prohibit employers from using replacement labour for the duration of any legal strike or lockout;

“To prohibit employers from using both external and internal replacement workers;

“To include significant financial penalties for employers who defy the anti-scab legislation; and

“To support Ontario’s workers and pass anti-scab labour legislation, like the Ontario NDP Bill 90, Anti-Scab Labour Act, 2023.”

1510

I support this petition, will affix my signature and provide it to page Trent for the table.

FRONT-LINE WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Colin and Hélène Pick, from Capreol in my riding, for this petition.

“Make PSW a Career.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there has been a shortage of personal support workers ... in long-term care and home care in Ontario for many years” now;

“Whereas Ontario’s personal support workers are overworked, underpaid and underappreciated, leading to many of them leaving the profession;

“Whereas the lack of PSWs has created a crisis in” long-term care, “a broken home care system, and poor-quality care for” long-term-care home “residents and home care clients;

They “petition the Legislative Assembly ... as follows:

“Tell Premier Ford to act now to make PSW jobs a career, with” permanent “full-time employment, good wages, paid sick days, benefits, a pension plan and a manageable workload in order to respect the important work of PSWs and improve patient care.”

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

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

MPP Jamie West: It’s the Sudbury-Nickel Belt hour.

This petition is entitled “Support the Gender-Affirming Health Care Act.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas two-spirit, transgender, non-binary, gender-diverse and intersex communities face significant challenges to accessing health care services that are friendly, competent and affirming in Ontario;

“Whereas everyone deserves access to health care, and they shouldn’t have to fight for it, shouldn’t have to wait for it, and should never receive less care or support because of who they are;

“Whereas gender-affirming care is life-saving care;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam’s private member’s bill—the Gender-Affirming Health Care Advisory Committee Act—to improve access to and coverage for gender-affirming health care in Ontario.”

I support this position. I will affix my signature and provide it to page Isolde for the table.

CHILDREN’S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Lynda Ferguson, from Lively in my riding, for this petition.

“Improve Ontario’s Children and Youth Mental Health Services.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas children and youth across Ontario experience mental health and addiction issues that impact their lives and the lives of those around them;

“Whereas the demand for community child and youth mental health services is increasing, in Sudbury-Nickel Belt, 50% of them are waiting over six months and 20% of them for longer than a year for services;

They “petition the Legislative Assembly ... to tell the Ford government to properly and equitably fund community children’s mental health services immediately to improve access to timely services for children, youth and families in our communities.”

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

LABOUR LEGISLATION

MPP Jamie West: You can never talk about the importance of anti-scab legislation enough. This petition is entitled “Pass Anti-Scab Labour Legislation.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the use of replacement workers undermines workers’ collective power, unnecessarily prolongs labour disputes, and removes the essential power that the withdrawal of labour is supposed to give workers to help end a dispute, that is, the ability to apply economic pressure;

“Whereas the use of scab labour contributes to higher-conflict picket lines, jeopardizes workplace safety, destabilizes normalized labour relations between workers and their employers and removes the employer incentive to negotiate and settle fair contracts; and

“Whereas strong and fair anti-scab legislation will help lead to shorter labour disputes, safer workplaces, and less hostile picket lines;

“Whereas similar legislation has been introduced in British Columbia and Quebec with no increases to the number of strike or lockout days;

“Whereas Ontario had anti-scab legislation under an NDP government, that was unfortunately ripped away from workers by the Harris Conservatives;

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

“To prohibit employers from using replacement labour for the duration of any legal strike or lockout;

“To prohibit employers from using both external and internal replacement workers;

“To include significant financial penalties for employers who defy the anti-scab legislation; and

“To support Ontario’s workers and pass anti-scab labour legislation, like the Ontario NDP Bill 90, Anti-Scab Labour Act, 2023.”

I support this petition. I’ll provide it to page Danté for the table.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes the time we have available for petitions this afternoon.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ATTACKS ON ISRAEL

ATTAQUES EN ISRAËL

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 17, 2023, on the amendment to the amendment to the motion regarding the Hamas attacks.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Further debate? I believe the member for Scarborough Southwest has the floor. I recognize the member for Scarborough Southwest.

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, this morning, we began speaking on the motion to condemn the horrific attacks carried out by Hamas. We spoke about the trauma triggered and the immense pain that so many Jewish community members are feeling across the world. I shared my personal belief that is deeply rooted in the teaching of my faith that forbids and condemns the killings of innocent civilians. And with that belief, I want to reiterate my values, as a Muslim and a human, to condemn killings of all innocent lives. We must join together in condemning the attacks by Hamas, and with that responsibility to human rights and justice, we must also look at the bigger conflict that has brought horror across Israel and Palestine.

As an immigrant from a nation that was born out of a liberation war and as a daughter and descendant of people who faced war crimes in their own country—a country that experienced the horrors of genocide—I come to you asking for a call for peace: peace for the Israeli people; peace for the Palestinian people.

I want to quote an essay that scholar Peter Beinart published in the New York Times here, because it really resonated with me and I think it resonated with a lot of my colleagues and friends that I have spoken to over the last couple of days. Mr. Beinart is a professor of journalism and political science, and editor of the Jewish Currents magazine:

“As Jewish Israelis bury their dead and recite psalms for their captured, few want to hear at this moment that millions of Palestinians lack basic human rights. Neither do many Jews abroad. I understand; this attack has awakened the deepest traumas of our badly scarred people. But the truth remains: The denial of Palestinian freedom sits at the heart of this conflict, which began long before Hamas’s creation in the late 1980s.”

I felt Mr. Beinart’s words were powerful. The violence did not start last weekend with Hamas’s attack. The people of Palestine have endured brutality for decades—violence that has endangered the lives of civilians in Israel and Palestine—and we cannot deny the complex history that has impacted generations in this region and the deep trauma it has caused. Today, we are seeing innocent Palestinians suffering at a scale we have never seen before as a result of the siege of Gaza; two million Palestinians in Gaza, half of whom are children. These children must have the same rights as everyone else, and should not and must not be treated any differently because of where they live, who they are or what their families believe.

Within hours of Saturday's tragedy, shock and horror, we saw what many feared: a massive bombardment on Gaza, killing thousands of innocent Palestinians civilians; a bombardment led by the current Israeli government—a hawkish government, one that has been called out by many of its own citizens in Israel as not reflective of their views, the values and the people it supposedly serves; a government whose defence minister called the people of Palestine “human animals.” These are innocent people who must not be punished for actions they are not responsible for, Speaker. And I want to reiterate: Palestinian people are not human animals. Palestinian people are not human animals. Palestinian people are not human animals.

We are outraged by the terrorist attacks by Hamas, and we are appalled by what we are seeing from the siege of Gaza by the Israeli government. We are seeing children, women and elderly people being attacked without discern—2,808 Gazans have been killed so far, including more than 1,030 children. More than 10,000 have been injured, and more than one million Gaza Palestinians displaced. Blockades and moves to stop or slow the flow of food, fuel, water, electricity and medical supplies into Gaza and the absence of a humanitarian corridor out of Gaza is causing massive suffering and casualties. Canada must urgently insist that Israel respect international law and protect the lives of innocent Palestinian civilians who bear no responsibility for Hamas's horrendous attacks.

1520

Just yesterday, the Israeli government bombed the Rafah border between Gaza and Egypt, further preventing humanitarian aid from reaching those who desperately need it. Hospitals in Gaza are in the midst of a catastrophic shortage of medical supplies, and blockades are not only preventing humanitarian aid from reaching the region but also further jeopardizing the very lives of innocent civilians.

To make matters worse, the State of Israel has also cut power in Gaza, leaving hospitals reliant on external generators that are running on borrowed time, as confirmed by the United Nations. This power crisis places thousands of patients in even more immediate danger, particularly those already on the brink of life and death, including kidney and cancer patients. And according to the United Nations Population Fund, the situation is further exacerbated by the alarming fact that nearly 50,000 pregnant women in Gaza cannot access health care due to the damaged hospitals. This power outage is also threatening the lives of newborns in incubators.

Just on the health care front, Speaker: 24 health facilities, including six hospitals, have been directly damaged by air strikes. Tragically, 15 health care workers have lost their lives, while another 27 have been injured. On top of this—just today, I believe—the Toronto Star reported a story of a direct air strike on a hospital that killed 500 Palestinians and had thousands of others that were in that hospital—this just happened.

On top of all of this, the UN relief agency has reported that almost 500,000 people have been left without access

to food. How can we, as a global community, stand idly by while health care facilities are not only targeted but decimated, leaving countless innocent lives in jeopardy?

Lastly, access to clean drinking water—something we talk about in this House, Speaker—in Gaza is becoming increasingly scarce, with families spending hours just searching for water. Those who do find water often rely on private vendors operating small desalination and water purification plants, primarily using solar energy. Others are left with no choice but to drink brackish water from agricultural wells, sparking concerns about the potential outbreak of water-borne diseases such as cholera.

From food, fuel, power, water—humanitarian aid has been blocked. The blockade which has been ruthlessly imposed by the Israeli forces has deprived Palestinian residents of freedom of movement and crippled Gaza's economy. These tactics by the Israeli government may very well amount to a war crime; in fact, they have all been well-documented by Human Rights Watch—not us here, but Human Rights Watch—Amnesty International and the Jewish organization B'Tselem as war crimes against Palestinians of all faiths. The United Nations Secretary-General has said that “we are on the verge of the abyss” as he urged Israel to consider the humanitarian rights of Palestinians.

So I ask this House: Do innocent Palestinian civilians not have the same rights to survive as everyone else in this world? I ask again: Do innocent Palestinian civilians not have the same rights to survive as everyone else in this world?

The UNRWA Commissioner General Philippe Lazzarini says this: “The siege in Gaza, the way it is imposed, is nothing else than”—and this is what they called it—“collective punishment,” demanding an immediate passage for essential supplies. When the UNRWA commissioner general calls it a collective punishment—and you can just look up on Wikipedia what a collective punishment identifies as. You are co-signing on something that gives a free pass for any state, for anybody, to go ahead and do whatever they want. Just think about what you're signing on to. Just think about what you're signing on to if you're giving carte blanche to do what they want to do and commit such crimes. Just think about it.

This morning, I talked about members who have their own stories. There were Parliaments that were sitting and there were debates in 1971, when the genocide happened in my nation, where I was born, and there were genocides that took place in other places.

The impact of this war has also been felt here in Canada—and I talked about this this morning, as well—as we are seeing an alarming rise of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian hate. In a concerning incident last week, the Toronto police arrested three individuals, and their hate crime unit is now actively investigating threats that were aimed at a Jewish high school in North York—a school, we're talking about. Such acts of blatant anti-Semitism are deeply, deeply troubling, and it is essential that they are thoroughly investigated and

addressed, to ensure the safety and security of all community members.

The Toronto police have also investigated two recent acts of vandalism at a local mosque, both believed to be hate-driven, one of which occurred on October 12 at the mosque at Danforth and Donlands Avenues, which was targeted with hate symbols and hateful writing.

In the United States—and I want to share this example because it was particularly horrifying—we have also heard about the heartbreaking story of a six-year-old Palestinian American boy being stabbed 27 times by their landlord, simply for being Palestinian. His mother, Hanaan Shahin, was attacked and severely injured by a man because she said she would pray for peace as the conflict in Israel and Palestine raged on.

In these times, the urgency for de-escalation and a ceasefire cannot be overstated. The loss of thousands of innocent lives, including women, children, the elderly and their entire families, is unjustifiable. We must join the international community in calling for an immediate end to the violence.

I join my Ontario NDP colleagues—and I think I can say this for everyone in this Legislature—to call on the federal government to do everything possible to reunite family members of Canadians who were horrified and impacted by these attacks. We cannot lose any more lives.

A colleague of mine, a staff member of our caucus, my friend Farah, has given me permission to share this, so I will share her story: Last week, Farah received a call with unimaginably devastating news, news that she had lost 18 members of her family in Khan Younis, Gaza, and 10 members of her family are still under rubble. That's 18 members of her family, the Samoor family, gone in minutes: grandparents, children, moms and dads gone, and 10 of them are still under rubble.

Speaker, her story is just one of many. It is with her family in mind, and the families of everyone affected by this horrific crisis, that we call for a ceasefire, a humanitarian aid corridor to save human lives. And we call for us to work towards a sustainable solution where Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace, security and mutual self-determination.

The solution can only be political. There is no possible military solution to this decades-long conflict. I'm calling on our federal government to do everything in its power to stand with the United Nations in calling for peace and justice, and to ensure the protection of civilians and respect for international law.

Canada must also support international justice efforts by the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court to investigate war crimes by all military actors in Israel and Palestine. All war crimes by all parties to this conflict must be prosecuted.

1530

I stand with all people in Israel and Palestine who yearn for peace, freedom and security.

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

Mrs. Robin Martin: I'm honoured to have the opportunity to stand in the Legislature today and to speak in support of Israel's absolute right to unequivocally defend itself and its citizens.

I was devastated by the unimaginably appalling news coming out of Israel on Saturday, October 7. Innocent civilians, men, women, children, even babies and elderly—some of who themselves were Holocaust survivors—were kidnapped, raped, murdered, burned and mutilated.

Hamas terrorists gleefully paraded their war crimes on social media, showing a total absence of respect for the value of human life. By treating these innocent victims as though they were less than human, by dehumanizing these innocent Israelis, these terrorists displayed their own inhumanity for all the world to see. And all the world saw it for what it was: pure evil, the purist display or manifestation of moral evil in recent history.

Every bit of news of the atrocities committed by Hamas hits us viscerally, delivering a punch in the gut, leaving us gutted, as the descriptions from survivors echo the history of pogroms and the Holocaust.

As of Monday, at least 1,400 Israelis had been killed, including the 260 who were massacred at the Supernova Sukkot gathering. This weekend-long outdoor event was scheduled to coincide with Simchat Torah, a joyous day in the Jewish calendar, and billed as a celebration of friends, love and infinite freedom. The symbolism of Hamas's decision to attack the event is unmistakable. These terrorists clearly stand against the values of freedom, tolerance and peace which Israel and our province will always defend.

Attendees at this event began fleeing in panic as Hamas terrorists arrived and began shooting indiscriminately. The few who managed to reach their vehicles were met with gunfire and blocked roads. Those that hid were hunted down, raped and then were taken hostage or murdered. This attack and all of the other acts perpetrated by Hamas deserve nothing less than our unequivocal condemnation.

This is why the government of Ontario, under the leadership of Premier Ford, has called for moral clarity. We must condemn this evil unequivocally. Israel has an absolute right to defend itself and its citizens against such heinous acts of violence.

Two days after the terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel, I joined Premier Ford and several members of our caucus at the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Emergency Rally for the People of Israel. I continue to receive emails daily from my constituents thanking the Premier, myself and our colleagues for recognizing Israel's right to defend itself.

Some constituents have noted that the ideology and aims of Hamas have been advanced through a culture of anti-Semitism and Jew hatred disseminated by the school system in Gaza. This system is supported and funded by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, UNRWA, which has a long and well-documented history of providing classrooms with materials teaching Palestinian students to hate Jews and Israel and encouraging students to commit violent acts, which are glorified by these

UNRWA-provided textbooks as acts of martyrdom and which advocate pursuing the elimination of Israel and any Jew who stands in the way. Under the strong moral leadership of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Canada cut off funding in 2010 to UNRWA in its entirety, citing it as an unchecked avenue for terror indoctrination. However, the federal Liberals reinstated the funding in 2016 and increased it just five months ago. This is despite numerous reports demonstrating that these textbooks promote hate and terrorism, including an extensive 2021 report funded by the EU which itself is now reviewing all of its aid to Palestine. The only way that conflict in the Middle East will end is when Palestinians are not indoctrinated from birth with hate and terrorist ideas because, as Golda Meir said, if Palestinians laid down their arms today, there would be two states in the Middle East. But if Israelis did, there would be no Israel.

Sadly, over the last several days, we have been reminded that even here in Ontario, we have much work to do to stamp out anti-Semitism and hate in all its forms. There have been reprehensible, disgusting hate rallies here and in other cities around the world, glorifying this indiscriminate violence and terrorism against innocents. These rallies demonstrate that the insidious hatred for Jews and terror taught in the UNRWA schools has infected and spread like a cancer.

My Jewish neighbours are living in fear, with children asking whether they will be attacked in their sleep and fathers sleeping by the front door, wearing their boots, here in Toronto. There cannot be any justification for what has happened to the victims of these atrocities, including the six known Canadians who were killed by Hamas: Netta Epstein, Shir Georgy, Adi Vital-Kaploun, Ben Mizrachi and Alexandre Look as well as Tiferet Lapidot. All of them were in their early twenties except for Alexandre and Adi who were 33. May their memories be a blessing.

Anyone who cares about humanity and human rights should condemn unequivocally the unspeakable atrocities committed by Hamas terrorists and join the call for them to face justice. As a concerned citizen, Dan Levy of Toronto wrote with great insight in a letter to the editor published in the Post a week after the attack: "Here are some truths for those Canadians, media members, academic institutions and members of government who constantly claim the moral high ground in the ever-present culture wars and yet now voice pro-Hamas sentiment and justification.

"You cannot truly claim that every child matters then stay silent when terrorists kidnap and murder children and decapitate babies.

"You do not care about the safety of women when you turn a blind eye to terrorists raping and torturing them.

"You do not truly fight for LGBTQ+ rights when you stand with fundamentally oppressive regimes.

"If the attacks by terrorists at the music festival in Israel did not horrify you, then neither did the Las Vegas and Orlando attacks.

"If you can't use proper terms like 'terrorists' or 'terrorism,' the news industry is not for you.

"You cannot be anti-racist and be complicit in anti-Semitism.

"It is time to call out the hypocrisy of those who mask their self interest as supporting human rights."

That's the end of Dan Levy's great letter. And I agree with Dan Levy: There is something wrong with us and our cultural institutions if we do not share his moral clarity on this. There is no room for hate in Canada and in Ontario. As Canadians and Ontarians, we are proud of the multiculturalism and inclusive society we have built together where all peoples of all faiths and all backgrounds are welcomed and respected. However, these ideals can never be confused with or justify anti-Semitism, racism or hatred towards any group.

1540

This isn't a matter of political ideology—it is a matter of our shared humanity. If you do not respect the fundamental dignity and right to life of every human being—because they are a human being—how can you claim that respect for yourself? We must call out hate directed at any group or individual every time we see it. We must enforce the laws on the books against hate, and if the laws on the books cannot be used to combat the hate we see, then we need to put better laws on the books and we need to enforce them. If we do not do so, then our cherished multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-faith society will be torn apart.

Hamas—these terrorists—neither represent the Islamic faith, nor the Palestinians in Gaza, nor elsewhere. Indeed, Hamas has demonstrated that it prioritizes genocide over the lives of its own Gazan people. Gazans are being prevented from leaving the danger zone and are being held hostage as Hamas uses them to protect their weapons rather than using weapons, as Israel does, to protect its people.

Let me quote my friend, former Canadian finance minister, the former member of Parliament for my riding, MP Joe Oliver, from an article published this week:

"It is long past the time to get rid of delusions, myths and ethical relativism harboured by some Westerners who are variously naive or wilfully blind to reality and indifferent or hostile to a homeland for the Jewish people....

"There can be no moral equivalence between a terrorist organization that commits crimes against humanity and a democratic country it wishes to destroy by violent means."

Hamas's "strategic goal is to delegitimize Israel.... That explains why it filmed its atrocities, in spite of the revulsion it generated around the world. The purpose was to outrage the Israeli population to make an invasion of Gaza inevitable, since return to the status quo is strategically intolerable....

"Israel is defending its sovereignty and population against depraved terrorists who massacred its citizens. That means eliminating Hamas as a military and governance menace, which cannot be achieved peacefully. Israel merits Canada's unwavering support during the very difficult time ahead."

Let me just close by saying words matter. A number of media organizations have editorial guidelines, for example,

directing them not to use the term “terrorist” in their reporting of the conflict between Israel and Hamas and these guidelines may be borne out of well-intentioned aspirations to appear accurate and impartial, but there is a point at which a failure to use the term “terrorist” is itself a failure of accuracy and impartiality. The depth of the terror that Hamas has inflicted upon innocent people across Israel in recent days is not in doubt. The murder of babies where they sleep is not an act of a freedom fighter. The performative desecration of dead bodies for the benefit of social media, the rape of women and the beheading of civilians in their homes are not acts of militants.

The true motives of Hamas could not be clearer: It seeks the murder of Jews and the annihilation of the Jewish state. Their charter says as much. Hamas is no different to ISIS—at least the Nazis were embarrassed by their crimes and tried to hide them, but these guys aren’t. It should be painfully obvious that there is no moral equivalence between those whose motive is to deliberately target innocent civilians in cold blood and those whose motive is to remove the threat of such murderers. The fact that this discussion is necessary at all is a clear sign that we are losing our moral compass and of the warped nature of the depths to which discourse on Israel has sunk.

I call upon everyone with me to reiterate the demand for the immediate release of the 200 people still being held hostage: mothers, daughters, sons, husbands, aunts, uncles, grandparents—from five months old to 95 years old. I join with all of those praying for their safe and swift return.

As we mourn the victims and stand with the citizens of Israel, we come together to remind the world that “never again” is now. As Sheryl Saperia in my riding wrote in an article in the *Toronto Sun*, if you have ever wondered what you would have done in the Holocaust, if you would have stood up against the inhumanity of terror, now is the time to show what you are made of, to stand like the righteous among the nations, to stand up for the victims of Hamas’s terror attacks and for Israel’s right to defend itself against further attacks.

Today and always, we stand with Israel and with the Jews here and around the world in the face of these acts of war.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Good afternoon. I want to begin by acknowledging the pain being felt by the thousands of Ontarians who have connections to Israel and Palestine. For Jewish people in our province and all around the world, the heinous attack on Israel was felt acutely, both by people with family and friends in Israel and by those who felt this as an attack on all Jews.

Six Canadians were killed in these terror attacks that we know of so far and two are missing. They are among the more than 1,400 people murdered in these acts by Hamas. We mourn them all. Some 3,400 others—that we know of so far—were injured; 199 Israelis remain hostages of Hamas, a terrifying reality that leaves their families in agony. I know some of their families, Speaker, are right

here in our communities, in our province, and they are feeling that pain.

We in the NDP official opposition unequivocally condemn these terrorist attacks by Hamas on Israeli civilians. There can be no justification.

We have seen the ripple effects of this violence across the globe, including right here in Ontario, where Jewish and Arab and Muslim communities have seen a rise of hatred, increased police presence near Jewish community spaces and places of worship, the vandalism of mosques.

People in Ontario are very worried. Now, as the war between Israel and Hamas continues, they are watching in absolute horror as Palestinian civilians, who bear no responsibility for the actions of Hamas, are caught in a devastating siege. Some 2,778 Palestinians have been killed at this moment. A significant number of them were children. That number is already out of date as I say this, because we have reports coming in that thousands of Palestinians were killed just this afternoon in an air strike on a hospital in Gaza.

Nearly 10,000 people are wounded in Gaza and hundreds of thousands more displaced by an evacuation order, going without food, without water, without electricity and unable to leave. Here in Ontario, people are desperately trying to reach their loved ones, family and friends in the area. Others have already received devastating news and are mourning their loss and experiencing real pain. Members of this assembly, our staff, our constituents are all deeply impacted by this, and my heart is with them during this impossibly difficult time.

1550

The region is spiraling, and Canada must act now to save lives. We are watching potential war crimes in real time, and the pain and the suffering we are witnessing is only going to get worse. As provincial legislators, it can feel sometimes like we are powerless to affect conflicts on a global scale, even as we see the reverberations here in our own communities. We can’t resolve this war in this chamber, but we can use the power we do have to bring people together, to acknowledge the hurt and work together in healing. This is a moment that this government could use our time here in this place to do just that.

I have to say, Speaker, unfortunately I don’t believe that this motion accomplishes that. That’s why we in the opposition worked in good faith. We put in a lot of time to put forward an amendment to this motion to recognize the scale of what’s happening and who is affected. It was an amendment that takes nothing, absolutely nothing, away from the motion that we are debating. I want to reference that addition because I think it will inform our debate on the main motion. It reads as follows:

“The House calls on the government of Canada to advocate for the immediate release of all hostages, the protection of all civilians in accordance with international law, an end to the siege and bombardment of Gaza, and for humanitarian aid to reach Palestinian civilians urgently and without restriction.”

That was added to the existing language. We didn’t try to change the language that exists there. We just wanted to

add this because we think that by omitting this aspect of the current conflict, this motion that's before us risks obscuring what's happening in the region right now as we speak. Without this, I fear we won't be meeting the moment we are in. Instead of bringing people together, we risk raising the temperature here in Ontario and, with it, the very real impacts on people in our communities. I urge the government to support our amendment or withdraw the motion and work with communities and all parties in this Legislature to bring forward a motion that truly unifies people. That would be true leadership.

Speaker, we cannot look away from what is happening in Israel and Gaza right now, and we need the federal government to be a voice for peace. Anything less would be a betrayal of our values as Canadians. Israel has suffered one of the most horrific tragedies in its history. They are still experiencing rocket attacks and evacuating parts of the country. People remain in a state of fear and vigilance. Palestinians are suffering on a scale we have never seen as a result of this siege of Gaza.

Canada must today insist on the respect of international law, of humanitarian principles and urge Israel to rescind the evacuation order as the United Nations has called for. Canada must continue to call for immediate release of all hostages and the protection of all civilians in accordance with international law. We must call for a ceasefire and an end to the siege and the bombardment of Gaza. With the rest of the international community, we must work to ensure humanitarian aid reaches civilians urgently and without restriction.

It's about humanity, like finding the humanity in all of us in this moment, in a really difficult time. It's a challenge for a lot of people who are hurting. I feel it. But all of us in this chamber, in our communities, we must condemn all acts of anti-Semitism and all anti-Palestinian racism. That includes any glorification or calls for the killing of innocent people, Israeli or Palestinian. These are difficult and perilous times. It's difficult for many of us to even imagine the pain and the devastation—you know, when I wrote that, I thought to myself, actually, there are many people in this chamber who themselves I'm sure have experienced war and oppression. And I will say I think it's inevitable that we bring those experiences with us and that they inform much of who we are. But things are not without humanity, because so many Israelis and Palestinians—medical workers, human rights advocates, humanitarians and just ordinary citizens—are doing what they can to preserve life in the face of such horror.

I want to challenge those of us in this chamber to look at what we can do to end the scourge of war and terror; to fight for peace; to bring people together, not tear them apart; and to never use this horrific conflict for domestic political gain.

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

Mr. John Fraser: I'll be sharing my time with the members from Orléans, Kingston and the Islands, and Don Valley West.

I want to begin by offering my condolences to the family of Adi Vital-Kaploun, with family ties to Ottawa.

In fact, I want to offer my condolences to all the families that are impacted by this senseless violence and attack on October 7. There are not many degrees of separation in families who are impacted by this. I can't imagine people's grief.

The attack by Hamas on innocent civilians—moms and dads, children, brothers and sisters, friends, grandparents—was deliberately brutal and barbaric, I find, in a way that is unspeakable. It's hard to find the words of truly how inhuman the attack was.

Israel has a right to defend itself against this terror. Since October 7, I have had those images of those families in my head and in the pit of my stomach. It's not going away. The intent of Hamas was to spread terror. That's why we call them terrorists. That's not disputable. It's hate—hate that doesn't care about innocent lives, no matter where they live, in Israel or in Gaza. The attacks were brutal to stoke anger, to provoke a response, to broaden the conflict.

Here's the thing: It's not just about broadening the conflict in the Middle East, and not just about broadening the conflict in our world. It's about broadening the conflict in our communities. They seek to divide us, to pit one against the other.

I've spoken to many in my community: people of faith, people not of faith, Jews, Muslims, Christians. I spoke to my kids. They're all worried about the rise of hate, the rise of anti-Semitism, the rise of Islamophobia. People are anxious in our communities. They're worried—all of us, no matter who we are; we can feel it. We're worried about the targeting of communities. Our job is to keep us together, is to bring us together, is to find the commonalities that we all have in our communities.

1600

The thing with conflict and war is, like they always say, truth is the first casualty. That's going to make this really hard, but we have to find a way to bring people together about the thing that I think we all agree on in here and outside of here, which is protecting innocent lives. That's important, no matter where they live. I think we can all agree on that.

I saw the amendment this morning—the number of amendments—and I had one that I wanted to suggest. As a province, in the past and right now, when there have been areas in conflict—in Ukraine, in Lebanon—when there have been calamities and casualties in this world, we've found a way to respond. As a government, we found a way to respond, to find some way to contribute to people's security and safety, to try to meet their needs. I would like to put an amendment forward like that. I would like the government to consider that. I think we need to send that sign, that we're about protecting innocent lives, wherever they live.

Now, I don't have too much time left, because I would like to share my time with my colleagues here. I wish I had some more time to talk about this. I think we need to think about how we are, in here, and how we work together so that we can keep our communities together. We have to be an example. I think we can do it; there have been a few

moments recently when I've been very worried about that, and I just want to leave you with that thought.

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

Mr. Stephen Blais: It was a few weeks ago now that I was sitting on my couch, enjoying my morning coffee and settling in for what I thought was going to be a quiet day of Formula One, football and family, and then my phone started to go berserk. At first, I didn't really know what to make of it; I think, Madam Speaker, many of us have become a little numb to the violence that takes place in the Middle East.

But quickly, I began to learn about the cowardly, heinous and brutal terror attack by Hamas against innocent civilians simply going about their daily lives, doing the same things that I was doing right then and there with my family in my home: parents killed in front of their children, children killed in front of their parents, women raped, kidnappings, and the cowardly use of hostages. As I heard one Israeli official discuss on television, these were not the overzealous acts of soldiers in war—as bad as that would be on its own. This was the plan. This murderous rampage, this terror, was the plan. Hamas wanted to provoke a confrontation.

And this has happened before. When peace was in their grasp in the 1990s, during the Oslo peace process, it was Hamas that launched the first suicide bombings, derailing all efforts to find a peaceful two-state solution, a solution that would undoubtedly have benefited millions of Palestinians over the last 25 years. Now that Israel and Saudi Arabia are on the verge of a new historic agreement and recognition, Hamas strikes again with barbarism and hate. Why? Because Hamas doesn't believe that Israel has the right to exist and does not want to see any progress or peace that would recognize Israel's right to exist—even if that agreement benefits the people of the Palestinian territories in Gaza and the West Bank.

Now, Madam Speaker, the loss of civilian life, whether it be Israeli, Palestinian, Jew, Muslim, Christian or any other religion or ethnicity, is a tragedy. On that we can all agree. But the blame of what is happening lies with the terrorists of Hamas.

While the men and women defending Israel stand in front of schools and hospitals, fighting for those who can't fight for themselves, to protect the democratic pluralistic society they have built, we see the terrorists of Hamas hiding behind and within schools and hospitals, placing innocent lives in front of them, into the danger, in an effort to give themselves more time and space to continue to kill and destroy.

It's time, Madam Speaker, for Hamas to be ended. Palestine, Israel, the Middle East and the world will be a better place when Hamas is eliminated and a legitimate Palestinian group can govern Gaza and bring about the peace and partnership with Israel we all dream and hope for.

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

Mr. Ted Hsu: The horrific terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas has evoked historical memories of anti-Semitic

hatred. There is immense sorrow and fear being felt around the world. Nothing justifies the organized, targeted slaughter of civilians, and it must always be condemned.

Hamas does not accept the existence of Israel and employs violence as a means to achieve their end.

Israel has a right under international law to defend itself and, in the coming days, it will try to rescue the hostages and neutralize Hamas.

In Gaza, there are innocent civilians who are in harm's way. The governments of Israel and other countries, including Canada, have a responsibility to uphold international law and to minimize innocent civilian casualties. Canada has called for unimpeded humanitarian access and a humanitarian corridor to civilians in Gaza, which would be a good step. For the good of the entire international community, the governments of Israel and other countries must keep in mind the need to retain prospects for peace in the long term.

Here at home, our social bonds and political sympathies may lie in different places, but we have an obligation to live together respectfully. Respect can begin with acknowledging the pain and anguish on all sides of this conflict. Perhaps it is in our own communities where many are grief-stricken, but relationships between different diaspora communities within the Canadian social fabric are not yet broken. Perhaps it is there that the seeds of future peace may find fertile ground. There is no place for hatred towards each other in Ontario.

Let's work against division at home. Salaam. Shalom. Peace.

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

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: As we prepared to celebrate Thanksgiving just a few short days ago, we heard the horrible attacks that by the terrorist organization Hamas against the citizens of Israel. I mourn the loss of the Israeli Canadians and all those killed in this conflict.

I share the pain of residents from the diverse communities in Don Valley West in expressing my horror at the reprehensible attacks carried out by Hamas against the citizens of Israel, including the slaughter, rape and kidnapping of Israeli civilians, including babies, children and seniors.

I want to thank the Solicitor General and the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for their moving remarks and for sharing their personal stories this morning.

I stand with the Prime Minister and the government in clearly stating that Israel has a right to defend itself in accordance with international law and I add my voice to those calling for the immediate release of all hostages and demand that they be treated in accordance with international law. Their families are waiting for them and want them back home.

I know that myself and residents of Don Valley West are also deeply saddened to see the humanitarian crisis unfolding now in Gaza, especially the deaths of innocent women and children. That loss in Israel and Gaza is extremely disturbing, and I, along with many Ontarians,

cry when thinking of the pain of the families and communities affected. The terrorist organization Hamas has the blood of innocent Israelis and Palestinians on their hands, and we cannot let their efforts to divide those in the Middle East divide good people around the world, including us here in our city and our province.

1610

I add my prayers to those of many in our city, our province, our country and our world for a return to peace talks and to peace. At other times in history, in different regions of the world, we have thought that peace was unattainable, but indeed a peace process was built by demonstrating an alternative to violence. I hope the peoples of Israel and Gaza will see this peace soon.

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

Ms. Laura Smith: It's my very great honour to speak on motion 18. Life is very challenging in the best of times. Our limits are pushed to comprehend the way people respond to things. But the last week and a half has made me question humanity itself.

We all went to bed the Friday before last. Earlier that day, I had picked out a medium-sized turkey for Thanksgiving, and we went into slumber not realizing what we would wake to, the reality of terror and nightmare of human slaughter in Israel, human slaughter that was tantamount to 9/11. It was unbearable to watch things unfold in Israel, surreal and very disturbing. When my husband woke me up, he said, "You need to turn on the TV set." I had no capacity to absorb what I was about to see or hear.

Saturday, October 7, or in the Jewish calendar the 22nd day of Tishrei, the Jewish holiday of Shemini Atzeret, with the evening of Simchat Torah, which marks the final day of the reading of the Torah, which is a very holy day, is supposed to be a joyous occasion, one of the happiest holidays in the Jewish calendar. But as I turned on the television and scanned social media, we discovered that hundreds of young people's lives were gone, brutally murdered at a music festival located in southern Israel near the Gaza Strip. These lives were savagely taken by Hamas, women and children slaughtered in their own homes.

The videos on social media, visuals of inhumane atrocities: children dying; teenage girls being dragged—raped, bruised and bloodied—out of trucks; elderly people, dementia patients who had no idea what was going on or where they were or what kind of pain they were feeling; Holocaust survivors, people who had started their lives in terror and now ended their lives in terror. Hamas's attack on Israel was the worst Jewish casualty since the Holocaust—full stop.

Currently, there are over 1,400 Israelis murdered, including six Canadians, over 3,000 injured and 199 still being held hostage. We do not know if we'll ever see them again. It was horrific. It was inhumane. It was despicable.

I have a very strong table, and to sit at my table, you need to say three things—I represent the largest Jewish contingency in Thornhill—first, "I support Israel's right to defend itself." Second, "I support Israel's right to exist." And lastly, "I stand with Israel—full stop."

Our Premier said all of these things right out of the gate, no hesitation. He was there for us. When I circle back to that day that we heard everything, I spent the rest of the day with my neighbours, members of my community, with my children. I sat in a living room and watched the news as Israeli reservists here in Thornhill tried to figure out a way to get across the globe to serve their community. These boys were only a few years older than my son. We were in that living room with them. I was physically in that living room with those boys, who were Israeli Canadians, and we listened to them, and we listened to them preparing to defend Israel. And I will say this, and there can be no question or confusion: Israel has an absolute right to defend itself and its people.

That night, I visited the congregation and families of the Russian Center of Thornhill Woods, where I was greeted by Rabbi Hildeshaim and his wife, Chanie, and we celebrated Simchat Torah—yes, we celebrated. Simchat Torah is the end of the reading of the Torah, which is known as the Bible, and at that time, many Orthodox Jews who do not use technology on holy days were not even aware of what had happened. They didn't know, but there were rumours and they had begun to circle. It was sickening for them to think about what their friends and family members were experiencing in Israel, and although they were deflated, their spirits were not broken.

The rabbi's wife, Chanie—we had a brief conversation—reminded me that we had to lift ourselves above everything that had happened, to celebrate regardless. Now, Chanie is a strong woman, and on any other gathering, we would be laughing or perhaps even baking. Chanie makes a pretty mean challah, which is like a beautiful, braided egg bread, and I thank her for her company and her guidance. But, just like everyone else in that room, part of her heart and many of her family members are in Israel—a place, for some, that seemed far away.

The next day, I travelled to the BAYT, which is the Beth Avraham Yosef of Toronto, which is the largest Orthodox synagogue in Canada. Rabbi Korobkin is their stoic leader and just about everyone in his purview has deep ties to Israel. Many of the congregants are dual citizens or global citizens, and "global citizens" is a term that my friend, businessman Larry Zeifman, would use.

Larry is a very interesting character. Like many of my friends in Thornhill or the GTA, he was in Israel at the time of the attack and he still is. Zeifman said he couldn't bring himself to leave, and to quote Larry: "I said to my wife on" Saturday "night, I can't leave ... these are our people, we have to stay to provide moral support. Our kids are here, they're not going anywhere, there's no way they would ever contemplate leaving." This is pretty positive light—light over darkness—and Larry is a pretty good example of what it's like to live in my community.

So how was this possible, and how did we live in a world that would perpetrate such evil? Israel is so far away, but is it really that far away? Israel is thousands of miles away on a map, but it's not when you live in Thornhill. Yesterday, I actually googled the distance on my smart phone, and my smart phone advised that the

distance between where we sit right now and Tel Aviv is 5,772 miles; this is the equivalent to 9,290 kilometres or 5,016 nautical miles—sounds like a fair distance away, doesn't it? Or does it?

So, like many members of my community, they still have hearts that live not only in Thornhill but also in Israel. This connection could also extend to another home in Israel, very close family ties—brothers, sisters, children. You see, Israel is not that far away. And like my son's friend in that living room, many of our Thornhill youth were, at that same moment, planning to go back to Israel, to protect Israel, to fight for democracy and protect its people, who include all spectrums of religions. See, Israel is not that far away.

I then went over to Chabad Flamingo—the flamingo, by the way, is another very large congregation with very similar ties to Israel. I attempted to console the people and spoke with their passionate leader, Rabbi Kaplan. Rabbi Kaplan leads the congregation in prayer and support, and he does this consistently, and he does this because Israel is not that far away.

Last weekend, I put the turkey in the freezer—there would be no celebration. We were not ready to take part in the usual style at Thanksgiving. I had no appetite. We were deflated. We were shocked.

I then decided to travel over to visit my friends at the Jewish Russian Community Centre, led by Rabbi Zaltzman. They, too, were in prayer mode.

1620

The rabbi's own daughter was in Israel, and I chatted with the congregants who so desperately wanted to help those people in Israel. They were making plans to bring supplies for the Israelis in need, including emergency food, essential supplies, trauma support and supplies to be shipped to Israel, because Israel is not that far away.

Last Thursday night, I visited Chabad Lubavitch at 770 Chabad Gate. This is a special place for our community. The address is significant because it represents 770, which is the street address of the world headquarters for the Chabad-Lubavitch Hasidic movement, which is located in Brooklyn, New York. This building in Thornhill is representative of that Chabad and the Chabad-Lubavitch world movement, and we consider it to be an iconic site in Judaism. It is also adjacent to a strip mall that has been riddled with hateful anti-Semitic incidents for so many years. One happened over the weekend.

I went in and joined their evening session, as beautiful children played around the adults as we prayed for the souls of those who had been murdered in Israel. Rabbi Spalter is another strong leader. He leads a flock with long care and love. He was there with Rabbi Itchy Grossbaum—Rabbi Itchy, as I call him. He's a very kind leader with a beautiful expanding family. I sat with the congregation as family member after family member talked about their life's blessings, and their family members that were either about to serve or serving in the Israeli army, protecting the democratic nation of Israel for their future and, more importantly, for the family members ahead of them. To them, Israel is not that far away.

I have spoken to countless constituents, each with a connection to terror. Last week, I called one of our not-for-profit constituents, only to hear a very sad individual on the other side. She was crying. A family member was one of those held hostage by Hamas, yet to be released. She also has countless family members in Israel that have been under siege. For her, Israel is not that far away.

I grew up locally. Many of my friends and I went to York University. It was close and safe and offered a variety of courses. I loved campus life. In many years, we were delighted when my oldest chose York. It was close by, but at what cost? When you're a Jewish student on campus at York, you learn very quickly that there are forces around you that will make you feel uncomfortable about your Jewish identity. I've heard this on countless occasions from constituents and students. Everyone I know has a story. Specific student unions don't make the Jewish students feel very welcomed. It's a very sad thing in a community of learning and vibrancy.

I remember a few years ago when a Jewish student group was holding a small Israeli event at York University. There were protesters outside that room. The protests turned a little upsetting for a parent. I was that parent, because my daughter was on campus. A group of student union protesters had gathered in an area outside that room, and that room became locked. My child was on campus that night, and that was a very scary night. My child was there; she wasn't picking up the phone. What I went through until I could get through to her pales in comparison to what parents in Israel are now feeling—not knowing that their daughters and their sons are held hostage by terrorists; not knowing if they'll come home.

Over the weekend, the family of a Canadian Israeli woman who was missing since the Hamas terrorists ambushed a music festival in southern Israel learned that she had died. Her name was Shir Georgy. She was only 22 years old. Canadian Ben Mizrahi was one of the 260 people gunned down by Hamas at the music festival in southern Israel—also 22 years old.

Canadian Israeli Adi Vital-Kaploun, 33, was killed by Hamas terrorists in her kibbutz near the Israeli border. Vital-Kaploun's family said she died a hero after convincing her killers to spare her two young children and warning her father and her husband to stay hidden during the attack.

Then there's Alexandre Look, who recently celebrated his 33rd birthday. He was amongst those who were killed while attending the music festival. Alexandre Look, who lived in Montreal, died a hero, his dad posted on Facebook on Monday. My understanding was that he found refuge with 30 other people in a bomb shelter. That bomb shelter did not have a door, and he barricaded it with his body.

The pain and the loss of not just Israeli blood but also Canadians is insurmountable, because Israel is not that far away. We look to our local communities over the course of the last week, and I reflect as I received the countless calls from scared York University students harassed by organizations that uphold values that are not inclusive and a joint statement from three student unions that support a

recognized terrorist organization, promoting and glorifying violence against innocent Israeli citizens. This statement failed to acknowledge the death toll of those who had been savagely taken. This is unacceptable and must not be tolerated.

The glorification of a murderous terrorist group that has butchered innocent lives is vile. And I will take this one step further: We don't expect any member of this House, regardless of the side they sit on, to justify terrorist attacks on thousands of innocent Israeli lives. An apology was eventually provided, but how does that saying go? When somebody shows you who they are, believe them when they show it to you the first time.

In the last several days, I've seen hate rallies celebrating the kidnapping and slaughtering of innocent Israeli people. That, too, is difficult was to watch. To quote our Premier, "These hate rallies are" just another painful reality and "painful reminder of the work left to do to stamp out anti-Semitism once and for all." These rallies have no place in Ontario or Canada. You see, Israel is not that far away.

As a parent, I'm grateful to the Minister of Education for implementing mandatory Holocaust education in schools. As Winston Churchill used to say, "Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

Right now, I'm thankful for many things in my community. I'm grateful for the extraordinary leadership in Thornhill and that of our Premier, who denounced this act of terrorism right out of the gate, no hesitation, no wait-and-see, no tactics, because, quite simply, it was the right thing to do. I'm thankful for my colleagues, who periodically check in with me and my riding to provide support and compassion for a bleeding community. And I'm thankful for York Regional Police for keeping us safer, and all GTA police forces, including Durham and Toronto and the OPP, and also including safety partners Hatzoloh and Shomrim, who are working around the clock for our community.

I want to thank the Premier for his powerful speech in support of Israel at Mel Lastman Square. There were 15,000 people in Mel Lastman Square, members of every community, not just those of the Jewish faith. I was proud to stand beside so many of my caucus colleagues, shoulder to shoulder.

Throughout its 75 years history, Israel has demonstrated endless strength and resilience, and although we're not in Israel, when we stood at Mel Lastman Square, Israel was not that far away. I want to thank the United Jewish Appeal for moving quickly to bring this massive and extraordinary event into fruition, and thank the Premier, again, for his unwavering support when I requested that Niagara Falls be lit in blue and white to honour the lives of those lost to the hands of the Hamas—light over darkness.

There's an anonymous man who's sitting in the airport right now, and he's paying for the tickets of any reservists that are flying back to Israel. These reservists leave behind their families and their homes and their comfort. Let's not forget, Thornhill is donating its most precious gifts: our sons and our daughters. This man bought 250 tickets.

People coming together, caring for one another, protecting one another, supporting one another: I'm seeing it all right now. It doesn't matter whether you're a neighbour or a stranger, anyone, everyone is doing what they can to contribute and show support, fostering a sense of unity, and I think this is quite a piece of light that we can take with us.

I wholeheartedly support this motion. The reprehensible actions of the Hamas, the slaughter, the rape and the kidnapping of innocent lives in Israel, including Canadians, must be condemned. And I stand in support of Israel's right to defend itself—full stop—because, in the words of my friend Chanie, "They can't take our light away." And as we gathered to symbolically light the candles marking Simchat Torah, one by one we lit them up. We prayed for those who had been taken away from us and for those suffering because Israel is not that far away.

1630

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

MPP Jamie West: Speaker, I just want to take a moment to acknowledge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for the words that they've said today. This is a difficult conversation to have and I am respectful of what you're saying and I feel the emotion in the room and I'm concerned that I'll be clumsy with what I say. And so, if I say something that doesn't make sense, my default when I'm stressed is to make a joke, and there's nothing to joke about here. But if I say something, it's ignorance, not arrogance—it's unfortunate.

For context of someone who is watching, we're talking about a motion, "That this House condemn the ongoing and reprehensible attacks being carried out by the terrorist organization Hamas, including the slaughter, rape and kidnapping of innocent Israeli civilians, including babies, children and seniors, and recognize the inalienable right of the State of Israel to defend itself and its people against this horrific violence." Quite frankly, Speaker, I can't comprehend this level of violence.

Earlier today, there was a father with his two sons—I think sons; I just saw their eyes over the top of the balcony watching me—and I remembered going to a funeral of a co-worker about 15 years ago. What I remember is two children patting the door of the hearse and I remembered this rabbit one of his children had and realizing and just seeing that memory burned into my head that they have no idea what they've lost. They won't figure this out for a long time and the hurt will come—the hurt we were all feeling at that funeral—is going to come and hit them hard later on when their father doesn't come home and will continue for years to come. And that's one family. I can't wrap my head around what's happening here.

Jack Layton said—and I'm not saying this because I'm a New Democrat, but I think it's a good quote—"Love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear. Optimism is better than despair." We're at a time right now where it is very easy to be angry. Sometimes, as political parties, it's very easy to be angry at the other party. We have a team

and you have a team and they have a team. And I'm not hearing that today—I'm not suggesting that here today, but I'm just saying that anger makes it easy to have enemies. Anger makes it easy to see everyone the same and to get hate-fuelled and to fight. But things are complex.

I don't know why this popped into my head, but before I got married, I had to drive to Ottawa with my father-in-law, and I'm a talker and he's not a talker. My father-in-law Phil learned on that drive that I can talk for five hours uninterrupted. But today, I have a hard time finding the words. Today, I realize that I'm standing in a field of rakes, that wherever I step, I could say the wrong thing or do the wrong thing because there's so much pain, there's so much anger, there's so much despair and fear that people are looking for an enemy and a reason to be mad and we want to attack Hamas. I know my colleague just recently said that Israel is not far away. It's too far for us. And what happens a lot is we fight with each other.

There's a lot of pain in this room and there's a lot of pain in our caucus, with our staff members and our co-workers. It's all of it and I'm feeling it. I feel a lot of things. I'm not just left politically; I feel everything. This is a tough thing to do, but I'm reminded that I'm surrounded by friends and colleagues. I'm not talking about my party; I'm talking about around this room. There are people in this room who I trust.

When I think of war, I've had family members who have served, and I think of the member from Whitby and how important his Legion is to him and how passionately he talks about that. I know we're not aligned on everything politically, but I know—when it comes to the importance of service and recognizing the people who serve—that we share a lot of the same values.

I trust, for example, the member from Eglinton–Lawrence who spoke elegantly just earlier today. I could feel the passion. I could hear the timbre in her voice when certain parts got to her and the courage it took to just keep going. But I remember—it's a small example, Speaker—when I had said a word that I thought just meant “foolish.” And after we had left the chamber, in the hallway, she pulled me aside and told me it was a little more insulting than that and probably not parliamentary. There was no intent for me to say something hurtful, but the courage it took for her to say that—we're on different teams; she doesn't have to do that—but it was a caring thing to do.

Across from me, I see the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. I haven't talked about this in the chamber, but my sister died two years ago. It was one of the days that my mom was in the gallery, I happened to run into the minister in the hallway, and he asked how things were going. He was one of the few people who knew that. He just knew me well enough. We have a decent relationship. He asked me what was wrong and I told him, and he asked if it was okay if he could comfort my mom.

So I trust my colleagues in this room. I know we're in different parties, but I trust my colleagues to care for each other and take care of each other, to be courageous and

show leadership. I do. And I feel for my colleagues who are carrying this heavier.

I'm privileged; the people I represent is a much smaller population of people who are from Palestine or Israel. Life is easier when you're a straight, white male. It just is. I'm not trying to be political, but it is easier sometimes. This is complex, and there's lots of anger. So as I started, I wanted to apologize if I'm clumsy with my words. I'm trying to be honest, I'm trying to be helpful. And I'm going to remind everyone that love is going to be better than anger, and hope is better than fear, optimism better than despair. I tried to craft my words so that I wouldn't offend anybody, so I'm mainly going to read, Speaker.

As New Democrats, we are rightly concerned about the violence in Israel and Palestine, and the impact of violence and war on civilians. We condemn in the strongest possible terms the horrifying terrorist attacks by Hamas on innocent Israeli civilians and the escalation of violence that has taken the lives of so many people. Attacks on civilians are abhorrent and must never be justified.

The atrocities being committed are heartbreaking, and we grieve with the Ontarians and Canadians who are affected—those with connections to the region and those with loved ones in the region. We share in the concerns of Jewish Canadians and Palestinian Canadians who are terrified, who are devastated and who are worried for family and friends. We share that despair and the fear about what the days ahead may bring.

The grief in this House—by MPPs and staff alike, by our constituents, by those across the province—is palpable as we all come to terms with and witness the brutality, the kidnappings, the loss of young and innocent lives and the ongoing suffering. I'm sure I'm not the only one hearing from voices in my community just how distressed and shocked they are. In our deeply interconnected world, events abroad permeate our lives, and this horrific violence is taking its toll on so many of us in many different ways.

Innocent civilians in Israel and Gaza are experiencing intense violence. Hundreds of people who bear no responsibility have been killed. Thousands more have been injured or are living in fear, and the region is spiralling. Hamas has called for a day of rage. This continued call to arms can only lead to the inevitability of more violence. The attacks perpetrated have already caused unimaginable pain and suffering for the Jewish community, and they must end immediately.

1640

Destabilization of the region also continues as Israel ordered the displacement of 1.1 million Gazans, who remain innocent. The siege of Gaza is propelling a humanitarian crisis, as people are indiscriminately attacked, forced to flee and remain in truly horrific conditions with nowhere to turn. The scale of Palestinians' suffering is immense, and for its part, Canada must insist on the respect of international law and of humanitarian principles.

Here at home, Jewish members of our communities mourn and continue to be affronted with anti-Semitism

and gaslighting. Equally, amongst this grief, they've had to see the celebrations of attacks against innocent Israeli people, including people who are their dearest family and their dearest friends. This is truly horrifying.

Disturbingly, we've also seen racist anti-Palestinian messages equating all Palestinians to Hamas and encouraging genocide, including shocking calls by members of Israeli Parliament for a new Nakba. This is also unacceptable.

In these incredibly dark and difficult times, we must recognize our common humanity and allow ourselves to grieve and mourn and find our way to compassion. This doesn't mean we have to forgive; it doesn't matter we have to agree. But I think we can recognize that innocent people are being thrust in a decades-long cycle of violence that's having devastating consequences and is brutally impacting the entire region.

We New Democrats join our federal party in calling on Canada to do everything in its power to ensure the protection of civilians and respect for international law, an immediate ceasefire and de-escalation, and towards building the conditions for a just peace in the region. Speaker, countries around the world, including Canada, have a responsibility to work toward a credible peace process that will finally bring peace and security to everyone in the region and respects the humanity, the freedom and the rights of all civilians.

We must each do our own small part as we work towards sustainable solutions where Israelis and Palestinians can live in security, peace and mutual self-determination.

The Ontario NDP will continue to echo our federal counterparts in condemning terrorist attacks by Hamas, calling for the immediate release of all hostages, the protection of all civilians, an end to the siege and bombardment of Gaza, and for humanitarian aid to reach civilians urgently and without restriction.

The NDP will continue to stand with all people in Israel and Palestine who yearn for peace, for freedom and security.

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

Hon. Jill Dunlop: I'm honoured to speak to this motion this afternoon. Speaker, over the last few days, many of our institutions have failed us, but more importantly, they have failed our students. Their inability to condemn anti-Semitism and, quite frankly, their silence is disappointing and equally disturbing as the hateful statements that we've seen. I have been shocked and appalled by social messages and the statements coming from organizations and members from our post-secondary community supporting the atrocities that have been committed against innocent civilians.

I want to be clear: I am very concerned about Palestinian students that have family and friends trapped in Gaza during the military operations against Hamas. But I will not tolerate the harmful and dangerous actions coming from those within my sector.

This government has been abundantly clear on our position regarding celebratory statements on the killings

of Israeli civilians by Hamas terrorists. The celebration, justification and/or denial of the atrocities committed by Hamas or other affiliated terrorist groups have no place in Ontario and certainly not in our post-secondary institutions, and therefore should be grounds for misconduct.

Speaker, on October 11, I sent out a memo to all post-secondary institutions to remind them of one of their priority obligations: to ensure that each and every campus is healthy, safe and a respectful learning environment. I want to inform the Legislature that I followed up regarding this memo by meeting with college and university presidents last Friday. At the meeting, I informed institutions that they need to work with one another to adopt appropriate measures to address any incidents of hate, racism and discrimination at their institutions. That includes ensuring students are not faced with discrimination, harassment or hate on campuses.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the world saw the atrocities of the Holocaust and said "never again." Ontario and the rest of Canada have made it their mission to ensure the justification of difference and otherness within our institutions becomes a thing of the past.

I want to thank the leadership of our colleges and universities for coming together under such short notice to work together. I specifically want to thank the leadership of McMaster University, York University and the University of Toronto, which have responded quickly to matters developing on their campuses and have developed plans to continue their work to ensure the safety of students on campus.

However, over the past several days, it has become apparent that some post-secondary sector members, student organizations and a member of this chamber have failed. Campuses are supposed to encourage debate and free speech. They should never be a place that incite and justify violence and hate speech. There is a line that has been repeatedly crossed, without any response from their members.

After seeing the statement by the York University students' union and the University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union that praises Hamas terrorist actions as necessary—it's absolutely appalling. The student union defended the actions of Hamas and other affiliated terrorist groups. They defended rape, torture and mass murder. They knew the crimes they were justifying and supporting. While Ontario watched in horror at what was unfolding in Israel, individuals in our post-secondary institutions were laughing, celebrating and justifying these horrific acts. I was speechless, as were all Ontarians.

We've asked institutions to respond and ask student unions to take down their posts justifying violence and hate. To those who have removed their posts, either through self-reflection or at the direction of others, thank you. But actions still have consequences.

Today, Speaker, I call upon York University and the University of Toronto Mississauga to investigate and, if necessary, bring non-academic misconduct reviews regarding the actions of the executives of both respective unions for their statements.

The students on the executive who signed the letters are—and I'm going to name the students. I'm sorry if I mispronounce their names, but I think it's important that their names are in Hansard, because these students put their names on letters in public, supporting Hamas:

—the York Federation of Students executive team: Ashley D'Souza, Rehaan Lachporia, Gemner Sandoval Fuentes, Olivia Ferguson and Shiniyah Mark;

—the York University graduate executive team: Alireza Gorgani, Arefeh Shamskhany, Nathi Zamisa, Faezeh Esmaeili, Ali Gholami and Marjan Abdolahi;

—the University of Toronto Mississauga executive team: Gulfy Bekbolatova, Ruth Alemayehu, Kiki Ayoola, John Liang, Jasnoor Sandhu and Layana Alnabhan; and

—the Glendon College Student Union.

Speaker, let me be abundantly clear: Students who support terrorism must be held accountable for their public statements. But they were not alone. We also saw professors and teaching faculty join them in these statements. The executive at CUPE 3906 at McMaster University, who represent the teaching assistants, sessional professors and post-doctorate staff, glorified—yes, glorified—the violence as it was occurring and doubled down on their celebrations afterwards.

1650

A social work professor, Dr. Jessica Hutchison at Laurier, justified—yes, actually justified—the sexual violence and mass murder. This is a social work professor. I have no words. But I do, however, want to acknowledge Laurier's president, Dr. MacLatchy, for unequivocally condemning the attacks and addressing this matter with the professor. This is the leadership we need to see more of in this sector.

An Osgoode Hall law professor, Heidi Matthews, attempted to justify and diminish the murder of Israeli children by Hamas. She had in 2019 also stated: "The intent to kill ... a Jew even because you hate them does not equal the intent to destroy Jews 'as a group.'"

A University of Toronto law professor, Mohammad Fadel, re-posted, celebrating "Hamas fighters" and nothing to apologize for or feel guilty about regarding the massacres on Israeli civilians.

As I've said and we've heard here today, it's difficult to find words. These comments are despicable. These individuals thought they could hide behind the ivory tower. Well, it's time for them to touch grass. These are the individuals who teach our students. They hold significant authority over the students they teach. How are our students supposed to feel safe when they have anti-Semites teaching them? How are our students supposed to prepare for the world when they feel obligated to conform their answers to the twisted world views of their professors or teaching assistants?

I'd also like to take a moment to mention that they were not alone, even in this House. MPP Jama has tried to justify the atrocities that unfolded. She apologized for the post, but she was documented attending rallies which glorified the crimes committed by Hamas terrorists. According to Documenting Antisemitism, the rallies she had

attended were organized by those known for promoting Holocaust denial.

Some may criticize me for naming them in this forum, but there's no doubt there are more who share their views but do not post them online.

I'll ask you one last question: How can leaders in the public sector allow them to continue to openly spout anti-Semitism? In this forum, we have the privilege to hold people accountable, without fear of retribution, and to stand up for those who cannot do it themselves.

I know Jewish students who are afraid to go to class, and I don't blame them. A grandmother confided in me that she's afraid for her grandchildren's safety on campus.

Let me read to you a family group text that was sent to me by a good friend the other day. This is from Bubi:

"Hi everyone—I am very concerned by the fact that CHAT was threatened with violence today—thankfully it was contained & didn't develop into anything more serious but just should make us aware of what could happen!

"Terrible atrocities happen to Jewish people but there are so many who will not see or care about that—they will just see & care how Israel retaliates!

"I just want to send a message to our students—be careful & try to keep a low profile on campus for the next while—please be aware!

"I don't want to scare anyone—just ask you to be smart & stay safe!" Love "your Bubi who loves you."

I received many calls, emails, DMs from students, from parents but even from faculty members, who are afraid for their safety on campus. We have consistently heard from students at York University. They are fearful for their classmates who watched on social media as the people they study beside espouse vitriol.

In our meeting on Friday, post-secondary institutions gave us their word that students will feel safe on campus. Be assured, the government and I, as the minister, will hold them accountable. To those who celebrate terror, to those planning to bring this hate to our campuses, let it be known that you will be held to account.

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

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I will be splitting my time with my colleagues MPP Hazell, MPP McCrimmon and MPP Shamji.

Madam Speaker, there is no question that what we are seeing unfold and the escalation at which it is happening is horrific and almost unfathomable. I share the painful feelings and have the utmost sympathy for every single person, child and community who is affected by the violence. Israeli and Palestinian civilians both deserve our concern.

I condemn the despicable acts and actions carried out by the terrorist organization Hamas and the further violence and fear they have evoked. This is not the world we want to live in.

I would like to acknowledge the work that has been done to bring about change. Heart to Heart is a youth leadership program here in Ontario for Palestinian and

Jewish citizens of Israel. They are dedicated to empowering youth with the tools and skills they need to create a more inclusive and peaceful society, for that is our goal, a goal we can hang on to as we face the reality of divisiveness and its violent outcomes. Heart to Heart was created to counter the culture of division and fear—the fear that exists between these communities, the reality of structural racism and inequality in Israeli society—and to create an empowered generation ready to fight this system and demand better.

Although it may not be fair that young people inherit problems from previous generations, with the right tools, they can find the creative solutions needed to chart a new path. We believe that youth have a valuable role to play in creating change, not only as future leaders but as meaningful actors right now. Heart to Heart participants are a ray of hope and a reminder of what is possible when people are given the opportunity to come together, to learn and to listen. Programs like Heart to Heart and countless others that serve to achieve this goal need to be brought into the spotlight, for it is never too late.

We need to all have hope and work together in this chamber, compassionately and collegially, for peace.

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

MPP Andrea Hazell: Madam Speaker, I stand here with a very heavy heart. Every single one of us in this chamber is reeling in shock and dismay at what is transpiring at this moment in the Holy Land, which began early Saturday morning last week when the vicious terrorist group Hamas broke through the border fence from Gaza to Israel and massacred hundreds of civilians. They killed men, women and children, young and old, Jew and Bedouin Arab alike.

This was terrorism. This was cruelty, not only to strike civilians, but to strike Jewish civilians on Shabbat—an echo of countless violent moments throughout the history of the Jewish people.

1700

Israel has a right to defend itself within the confines of international law, much like any other sovereign state. In the comfort of this House and the stability of Ontario, we can say that with ease. We are safe here, far away from marauding gunmen and exploding of rockets. Over there, it is war, and all war means is that thousands of people—Israelis, Palestinians, Canadians, Americans, United Nations personnel, Doctors Without Borders volunteers—will die.

What are we doing to stop the bloodshed? It was an Ontarian—a Torontonian—who came up with the UN's peacekeeping initiative: the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson. That is who we should aspire to be, but all we can offer today is words. We could be debating sending funds to assist, medical personnel, material support to civilians and to the federal government as they try to get Canadians home.

I came to Queen's Park to make the world a better place, so let's all work to accomplish that. I stand against hate which divides, which only ever leads to suffering. I

stand for peace. We must all stand for peace for the innocent civilians of Israel and Palestine, because as we give our speeches here, thousands of innocent men, women and children are dying, and that is a tragedy for all.

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

MPP Karen McCrimmon: Last week, the terrorist group Hamas planned and conducted a terrorist attack of unspeakable brutality. They killed innocent civilians in cold blood with premeditated barbarism and hatred. These attacks must be condemned with absolute moral clarity. Their blatant disregard for the laws of armed conflict and international law and humanitarianism cannot be tolerated by civilized democracies. There can never be justification for killing innocent civilians.

The loss that the families and loved ones of these victims are enduring is nearly impossible to imagine. We can't possibly understand your pain. Our sympathies are indeed insufficient.

Madam Speaker, we all need to stand with the people of Israel and defend their right to exist. There is no question that that is the obligation of any government, to protect its citizens, and that is what Israel must do. I can't possibly imagine the anguish, the anger and the suffering brought about as a result of these Hamas terrorist attacks. We must do everything we can to denounce this terror and work together to protect all innocent civilians.

We all have a responsibility to contribute to the containment of these evils. We must resist those who wish to fan the flames of war and terror. There are those who wish to turn up the division, fear, anger, and to escalate it into revenge and retribution. This would be a mistake.

Innocent civilians need to be protected, both Israelis and Palestinians. Terrorist efforts cannot be permitted to destabilize the region, to escalate and broaden the conflict or spread fear or incite more hatred and division. Beware of those looking for an opportunity to do just that.

Madam Speaker, we stand together with our allies. We condemn these abhorrent attacks. We commit to protect all innocent civilians. We call for humanitarian relief wherever it is needed. We demand an immediate release of all hostages and commit to bring about an end to the violence and the bloodshed.

Madam Speaker, the British Prime Minister recently said, "Humanity, law, decency, respect for human life—that is what sets us apart from the mindless violence of the terrorist." I couldn't agree more.

Madam Speaker, it's the responsibility of all of us to condemn in the strongest terms the barbaric attacks committed by the Hamas terrorists, and we must also do everything we can to protect innocent civilians and to challenge those who would fan the flames of fear, hatred and division, both here and abroad.

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

Mr. Adil Shamji: It is without hesitation that I condemn Hamas and its massacre of Israeli civilians. There is never a justification for this kind of violence.

The Hamas attack on October 7 was defined to inflict maximum suffering on Israeli civilians. It was the realiza-

tion of the worst violent fantasies Hamas could imagine. The goal was to administer as much pain as possible to the victims, to the victims' family and friends and to Israel forever after. Thirteen hundred lives were lost; 150 people were taken hostage. Families were fractured. Children will grow up without their parents; parents will now grow old without their children. Some families were wiped out entirely.

But the suffering reverberates beyond those lives. In Canada and around the world there is growing unrest. People of all faiths and backgrounds are unsettled and feeling unsafe amidst rising anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. My heart is with all those who are suffering, all those who have been lost and all those who continue to suffer in the wake of the carnage Hamas wrought.

But we must remember: Hamas is an illegal terrorist group who rules Gaza with an iron fist. They do not represent all Palestinians. The truth is that Palestinian people deserve better. They deserve leadership that does not plunge them into war with atrocities they knew would trigger a political response.

In the days since the Hamas massacre, Israel has asserted its right to defend itself, and we join them in calling for hostages to be released, civilian life to be preserved and peace for all mankind.

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

Mr. Joel Harden: Speaker, with great thought to what other members in this House have said, I rise to speak to this motion today from a particular point of departure.

For years, I was a university professor. I taught and studied human rights both in Canada and around the world. I had the privilege to study with students from Israel and Palestinian communities, from places all over the world, and that life experience has led me to say the following to contribute to this debate.

I think we need, right now, a very serious response among political leaders to the ongoing horrors in Israel and in Gaza. My contribution to this debate is that I believe it's time to raise our voices for peace with justice, and I'll describe this afternoon what I mean by that.

Back home, like I heard from the member for Thornhill and many others, I have been talking to Jewish and Palestinian neighbours who are grieving in a deep state of trauma for having lost loved ones, and many more who are living their lives, right now, terrified. They have been quite clear to me that there is one important thing I immediately have to do for them, and that is to offer them support, to offer them comfort for what they've lived through, the atrocities of October 7, and what they continue to live through in what is truly one of the most horrifying weeks I've seen in my lifetime.

The war crimes committed by Hamas against Israeli civilians last Saturday have shocked us; they have shaken the community I serve. Hundreds of civilians maimed, executed or kidnapped have had direct impacts on my city and they must be condemned unreservedly.

The same is true for Israeli military attacks that have hurt Palestinian civilians. Speaker, apartment buildings—

entire buildings—have been levelled. Entire families have been killed. Food, water, fuel and power have been cut off. Border crossings have been bombed and blockaded as people have tried to escape. The use of deadly white phosphorus, a chemical weapon, has been verified by journalists. These are not actions against Hamas. This is terrifying ordinary Palestinians, and it has to stop.

1710

If this was a serious debate, we would be insisting on what the United Nations has demanded: an immediate ceasefire, the release of all hostages and a humanitarian aid corridor into Gaza. We would demand justice for all victims of war crimes and their families. We would be insisting that every Canadian seeking to flee this violence can get home safely. But sadly, Speaker, that is not what this motion does. It's not about trying to comfort those who are grieving—all of those—ending an escalating rise of violence or seeking justice for war crimes against civilians. This motion, sadly, as it currently reads, inflames a dangerous moment, and I think that's a terrible choice. That's not the leadership the world needs right now.

This morning, I heard government members—I listened to them closely—say that we must support whatever Israel believes is necessary to “eliminate Hamas from Gaza.” We heard that Israel has always shown restraint, balance and upheld the rule of law. But, Speaker, that is not what I have seen with hourly and daily updates. That is not what I have seen following human rights in this region for decades. Israel is now being led by a government that includes members who openly speak of hatred and violence. That is one of the reasons they, in Israel, have been faced with mass protests by Israelis for months. But the truly horrible, heinous events of October 7 have created a new era of hatred.

I've seen the Israeli Minister of Defence, as the member from Scarborough Southwest said already, refer to Palestinians as “animals.” I've heard the Prime Minister of Israel promise to turn Gaza into “a deserted island.” I've been stunned as Itamar Ben-Gvir, Israel's interior minister, often invokes the need for a new Nakba, Arabic for “catastrophe,” referencing the last mass expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians so long ago.

Speaker, these are examples of dehumanization. This is how a public is prepared for war. They are meant to justify atrocities that we must do everything in this House to avoid. They will not bring back loved ones who are dead or hostages who are currently held, but they will put Palestinian body bags in ice cream trucks, stored there because the morgues and hospitals in Gaza are currently at capacity. That was the image on my television two nights ago. That cannot be the solution.

Here is what history teaches me, Speaker, and it's a hard lesson: You can bomb the world to pieces, but you cannot bomb it into peace. We can, and we must, do better. We should listen to Yonatan Silver, son of Vivian Silver, a peace activist from Winnipeg who was taken hostage from her kibbutz in Saturday's horrific attacks by Hamas on Israel. Yonatan just told CNN, “I didn't want war

before, and I don't want war now." He is demanding that his mom be released by negotiation, not by descending Gaza into a humanitarian nightmare.

We should listen to Farah El-Hajj, our staff colleague at the Ontario NDP, who has lost 18 family members in Gaza this week—18. Apparently, 10 more are still buried under a massive rubble of concrete. Farah's family are not Hamas members; they're not soldiers; they're not terrorists. They're Palestinians and their lives have to matter.

Like many people, as I have heard in this debate, my heart has been shattered, broken, as I've spoken to people who have lost loved ones in Israel and in Gaza. To be honest, I've often felt powerless to do anything about it, because from where I sit, things seem to be only getting worse. But you know what? As I got ready for my remarks today, I've remembered something that history has also taught me: We can do something. We can join with voices around the world who are calling for an end to the bloodshed, for pursuing a road of peace with justice. We need a mass movement around the world for a ceasefire, and we need it now.

Now, I understand some of my colleagues may think that's impossible in Israel and in Gaza. I've heard in debate today that Palestinian children are raised only to hate. But in my own lifetime, Speaker—I'm 51 years old—I've studied military conflicts from around the world, and I have seen in my own research and talking to people in Ireland and in Colombia that it is possible to work for peace with justice. These were countries torn apart by violence and war. Peace was possible there because people put in the effort, and it is still possible in Israel and Gaza, but it must come with justice.

The perpetrators of the horrific tragedies on October 7, the terrorist attacks and the crimes against Israeli civilians must be held accountable, and those responsible for the deaths of Palestinian civilians, like the bombing this afternoon of a hospital and a school, must also be held accountable, and a much longer commitment to peace in this region is so long overdue. Our province and our country, we have to choose to be part of that conversation.

That isn't possible if Hamas believes it can terrorize Jewish communities, committing heinous acts of cruelty. That isn't possible with an Israeli government intent on punishing innocent civilians for actions that are no fault of their own. And I am not making an argument of moral equivalence here; I am making a case for moral consistency. We must consistently support the human rights of every single person without exception. That is the only way I believe our hearts and souls can stay intact at moments like this.

It's how we build peace, but building peace isn't a slogan. It's what happens every day, all over the world. It's what happened when Vivian Silver, who has been taken hostage by Hamas terrorists, drove sick Palestinians to Israeli hospitals. That was her activism for her kibbutz. She built peace. She also organized against the Netanyahu government's attacks on civil liberties, working with neighbours, building peace.

It's what happened when Farah El-Hajj had the courage to tell us her story at a time of profound, overwhelming

grief, and it is what happens when we listen to each other in debate, instead of screaming over each other, as is too often the case in this House.

Speaker, I call on Canadians across this country to demand this road of peace with justice. It's a road with dignity. It's a road that may be hard to see right now, but our ancestors have walked it, and we can choose to walk it.

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

Mr. Will Bouma: I rise to support this motion and the House's condemnation of the ongoing and reprehensible attacks being carried out against the people of Israel by the terrorist organization Hamas.

To my friends in the Palestinian community, I stand with you and your concern for those loved ones who are back in Gaza who are being used as human shields by these terrorists.

As of today, over 1,400 Israelis lie dead at the hands of Hamas. An additional 3,400 have been injured. Hamas' terrorist attack on October 7 resulted in the highest number of Jews killed in a single day since the Holocaust. Among those killed are six Canadians: 22-year-old Shir Georgy, who was killed while enjoying a music festival; 33-year-old Adi Vital-Kaploun, who has been described by her family as a beautiful woman who brought love and lightness to the people around her; 22-year-old Ben Mizrachi, described by his teachers as being a kind, wonderful and community-minded young man who had a positive influence on everyone around him; 33-year-old Alexandre Look, who was described as a hero wanting to protect the people he was with, by his father; 21-year-old Netta Epstein, who jumped on a grenade to save the life of his fiancée; and Tiferet Lapidot, a brilliant young woman who had just celebrated her 23rd birthday.

1720

We will keep them in our prayers, and we will not let their names or their stories be forgotten.

Speaker, in 2019, I supported the passage of an Act to combat antisemitism, and I thank my colleague from Eglinton–Lawrence for putting forward that legislation with me. This act utilizes the working definition of anti-Semitism and the list of illustrated examples adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance plenary on May 26, 2016. Jewish Ontarians have been protected from discrimination and hate amounting to anti-Semitism under this act.

I remember, Speaker, the first time I got to go to a Righteous Among the Nations ceremony at the Jewish consulate here in Toronto. They were honouring a Dutch family, teachers who hid Jewish people in the Second World War. Their daughter was there to accept the award on behalf of her parents, who had passed away. I remember people asking me, "Why did you bring forward this anti-Semitism act? You don't have a large Jewish community in your riding. You are not Jewish yourself," and I can't help but think of the words of the daughter of these brave Dutch people who hid Jews. She said, "You know, it's interesting. We never talked with my parents

about why they did what they did. They never talked about it with their friends, why they did what they did. They just did it because it was the right thing to do.” And we stand here today with this motion in front of us because it is the right thing to do.

Here today, I pledge once again to stand with Jewish Ontarians, many of whom are grieving the losses of friends and family in Israel, and condemn the heinous crimes Hamas has carried out against Israel and the anti-Semitic rhetoric of those who support Hamas’s frenzied evil.

I spoke to a Jewish friend last week. She told me, though tears, that they had come to her cousin’s school with knives. That happens here. We cannot allow that to happen under our watch. I just listened to the Minister of Colleges and Universities call out names, and have them recorded in this House, of people who stand for this kind of terror in this province. That is unacceptable. We cannot allow that to happen in our nation and in this province.

Canada is home to the third-largest Jewish population outside of Israel, and the majority of these Canadian Jews live in Ontario. Over the course of the last week, Jewish Ontarians have shown remarkable resilience in the face of various anti-Semitic threats directed towards Jewish schools, including hate-fuelled threats made to Jewish high school students at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto. There have also been blatant displays of support for terrorists in our province, as some demonstrators flew both Hamas and Taliban flags at a protest in Mississauga this past week.

By condemning Hamas, our government will make it clear to Ontarians, especially Jewish Ontarians, that we unequivocally support Israel, rebuke the actions of terrorists and stand against anti-Semitism. To that end, there are those who have branded Hamas as freedom fighters or revolutionaries. Freedom fighters do not enter kibbutz after kibbutz, opening fire indiscriminately on civilians. Freedom fighters do not intentionally target civilians at music festivals. Revolutionaries do not rape innocent mothers and daughters, and revolutionaries do not kill innocent babies and children too young to even comprehend the fervid hatred that is being exacted upon them. These are the actions of terrorists, and we must not allow moral equivalences to be made between terrorists who descend on music festivals full of innocent young people with the intent to rape and kill as many Jews as possible, as Hamas has done, and the IDF soldiers who have retaliated against Hamas combatants who used civilian lives as shields and whose terrorist base of operations was once located underneath a hospital.

To compound their misery, those in Gaza are facing a water crisis in addition to the violence of war. Yet, in shocking video released by Hamas themselves, Hamas soldiers can be seen digging up water pipes in Gaza, which were then re-lathed and machined into missiles to fire at Israel.

If there was even a shred of doubt left in the mind of those still defending the barbaric actions of Hamas, recent photos have shown Hamas soldiers blocking the evacua-

tion of Gaza residents from the conflict zone. The only people twisted enough to trap the people they claim to represent in what is becoming an inhospitable stretch of rubble can be described only as terrorists, and their actions hurt both Israelis and Palestinians alike.

We cannot negotiate or come to a peaceful resolution with terrorists. War is ugly and must be avoided at all costs. However, when a sovereign state is faced with an existential terrorist threat, defensive measures must be taken.

If Hamas stopped fighting today and released the Israeli hostages they still hold, peace could return immediately. In contrast, if Israel stopped fighting, Hamas would continue to rape, murder and torture every Israeli until the state of Israel and every Jew within it was totally and violently destroyed. Every drop of blood spilled needlessly in Gaza, both Israeli and Palestinian, is on the hands of Hamas. It is Israel’s inalienable right as a legitimate and sovereign state to protect its people and its border.

Israel and Canada have long stood as partners on the world stage. Our friendship with the Israeli people is rooted in our shared values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It is the duty of our government to condemn Hamas’ attempts to erode these values and support Israel’s right to defend itself in accordance with international law and in Gaza.

While the situation in Gaza remains chaotic and shrouded by the fog of war, three things are clear:

—Hamas is a terrorist organization and must be condemned;

—anti-Semitism has no place in Ontario or anywhere; and

—I and we stand with the sovereign state of Israel and recognize its inalienable right to defend itself and its people against this horrific violence.

Madam Speaker, I will continue to pray for peace.

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

M. Guy Bourgouin: Je voudrais commencer par donner mes sympathies aux familles. Je pense que tous ici en Chambre ne peuvent pas réaliser l’horreur que ces familles vivent, comme c’est là—qu’ils soient palestiniens ou israéliens. Je pense que tout le monde souffre de la guerre. C’est inacceptable que le Hamas ait attaqué. Ce sont des terroristes, et il faut le reconnaître.

Nous, les Ontariens et les Ontariennes, avons l’ultime privilège de nous réveiller chaque jour dans le confort de nos maisons, avec nos familles en sécurité, sans jamais nous demander si nous allons revoir notre famille à la fin de la journée. Nous ne pouvons réellement pas comprendre ce qu’on prend pour acquis.

Le cycle de violence en Israël et en Palestine brise le cœur des communautés partout dans le monde, y compris dans les foyers des Ontariens et des Ontariennes. Toutes nos pensées sont avec nos voisins, nos amis et nos collègues qui ont de la famille ou des connexions dans la région. Toutes nos pensées vont aussi avec les victimes de l’attaque du Hamas le 7 octobre dernier contre des civils israéliens. Nous condamnons et avons toujours condamné

les attaques terroristes qui sèment la détresse et font des victimes civiles, qui pensaient retrouver leurs familles à la fin de leur journée. Ces attaques ont brisé les coeurs de tous les Ontariens et les Canadiens.

1730

La violence dont la communauté internationale est témoin depuis est inquiétante et se déroule à une vitesse alarmante. Des milliers de civils innocents, qui n'ont aucune responsabilité des décisions de la tranche politique, paient avec leur vie. La mort violente de milliers de civils, le règne de la peur et les milliers de blessés ne portent aucune gloire et doivent toujours être condamnés.

Les Canadiens juifs et les Canadiens palestiniens vivent une détresse psychologique inexplicable. Les événements qu'ils voient défiler chaque jour dans les nouvelles peuvent enclencher la peur, des inquiétudes profondes et un sentiment d'impuissance que nous partageons avec eux. Soyez certains que nous répondrons présents pour que ces citoyens canadiens reçoivent toute l'aide en santé psychologique qu'ils peuvent avoir pour qu'ils ne se sentent pas seuls dans ces moments d'une difficulté inexplicable.

Il est important que chacun d'entre nous se pose la question à savoir si nos actions sont alignées avec la paix et la cohésion sociale. Dans cette pensée, il est inconcevable de célébrer les attaques du Hamas. Chaque personne qui a célébré cette attaque est fautive d'avoir intensifié la violence. C'est franchement condamnable. Ces actions ont gravement blessé la communauté juive et ne sont pas justifiables. Nous devons être solidaires envers la communauté juive et condamner ces célébrations.

Nous avons aussi été témoins de messages racistes qui mettent tous les Palestiniens dans le même bateau que le Hamas pour justifier la violence sur les civils innocents, qui ne sont pas représentatifs de cette violence. Cela a aussi gravement blessé la communauté palestinienne et n'est pas justifiable. Nous condamnons aussi les messages de certains membres du Parlement israélien qui demandent une deuxième Nakba.

Je répète : il est important que chacun d'entre nous se pose la question à savoir comment nous alignons nos actions et nos paroles à appeler à la paix et à la cohésion sociale. Lorsqu'on célèbre les douleurs des autres, ce n'est pas ce qu'on fait. Il faut absolument mettre l'effort nécessaire, parfois un effort demandant, de parler par la paix. C'est de reconnaître l'humanité qui nous unit plutôt que nos différences, de reconnaître la souffrance que porte chaque communauté, pour crier pour la paix et non la haine.

Notre rôle comme députés dans une province où nous vivons dans la sécurité et le confort est parfois difficile à placer et à concevoir dans une telle situation. S'il y a une chose que je sais, c'est que nous avons la responsabilité de diffuser la paix.

La paix, c'est rapatrier les Israéliens-Canadiens pour leur sécurité.

C'est aussi faciliter un corridor humanitaire pour la bande de Gaza, demander la fin du siège total sur Gaza et demander au gouvernement fédéral de pousser pour cela dans ses compétences en matière de relations internationales.

C'est aussi rejoindre notre parti au fédéral lorsqu'il demande une solution diplomatique plutôt que militaire au conflit qui dure depuis des décennies. Je le joins aussi lorsqu'il demande que le Canada fasse tout en son pouvoir pour respecter nos valeurs canadiennes, qui sont la protection des civils, le respect du droit international, la mise en place d'un cessez-le-feu et la désescalade du conflit.

Notre rôle, encore une fois, comme député dans un pays qui représente la paix et la suprématie du droit : nous avons cette responsabilité de faciliter un processus de paix. Nous devons agir et utiliser notre voix pour la sécurité de tous dans la région, pour le respect des droits et libertés des Israéliens et des Palestiniens de façon égale, sans différenciation dans leurs droits.

Je suis un député du nord de l'Ontario, une région qui selon toute apparence est loin du conflit, mais une région qui représente très bien ce que c'est d'être Ontarien. Nous sommes une population de paix. Si vous allez dans le Nord, vous allez voir que le racisme et la haine n'ont pas leur place en Ontario. Les crimes de haine sur les synagogues et les mosquées n'ont pas leur place. Les rapports qui montrent une augmentation de ces crimes suite au conflit sont horribles.

Encore une fois, j'appelle tous à prendre un pas en arrière et de se demander si nos propres actions amènent à la paix. Clairement, des actes de racismes flagrants n'ont absolument pas leur place, ni en Ontario, ni au Canada, mais clairement nulle part ailleurs.

Nous sommes aussi une population de compassion. Dans ce cas, nous sommes tous ébranlés que les Ontariens juifs et les Ontariens musulmans se voient devoir augmenter la sécurité dans leurs lieux de culte et culture.

Lorsque nous voyons des nouvelles sur ces centres hébreux ou des synagogues rapportant des événements de vandalisme et de harcèlement dans leurs lieux de rassemblement, je suis choqué. Cela n'a pas sa place et n'aura jamais sa place dans notre province.

Lorsque nous voyons des nouvelles sur des mosquées et des centres culturels islamiques qui rapportent des événements de vandalisme et de harcèlement dans leurs lieux de rassemblement, je suis aussi choqué. Cela ne représente pas et ne représentera jamais les Ontariens et les Ontariennes. Ces actions naissent de mauvaises conceptions qui assimilent tous les individus à des actions condamnables. Encore une fois, tous les Israéliens ne sont pas leur gouvernement, tous les Palestiniens ne sont pas le Hamas, et tous les musulmans ne sont pas pro-terrorisme. Rappelons que tous les Palestiniens ne sont pas musulmans.

Ce conflit va au-delà de la religion. C'est un cycle de violence auquel il faut mettre fin. Ce conflit n'est pas une question de partisanerie. Ce n'est pas une question de langue ou d'identité.

Encore une fois, je reviens à ma pensée qui a initié mon intervention. Nous sommes l'une des populations les plus sécuritaires sur la planète. Nous avons la chance de ne pas remettre en question si nous allons rentrer à la maison. J'ai le privilège de ne pas pouvoir imaginer une journée où je ne peux pas parler à ma femme ou mes enfants. Alors j'exprime ma profonde compassion pour les Ontariens ici

qui, même en habitant notre pays aussi sécuritaire, ne savent pas si des crimes haineux seront dirigés envers eux dans un endroit où ils exercent leur liberté religieuse. Ça me désole.

Il faut condamner les actes de violence. Chaque personne dans cette assemblée parlementaire doit réellement se demander si elle augmente la violence dans ses propos. Nous n'avons pas de place à l'erreur lorsqu'on parle de questions de vie ou de mort.

Comment peut-on s'assurer de ne pas augmenter la violence? C'est très difficile de faire ces choix. Il faut déjà éviter de rentrer dans les stéréotypes pour ne pas généraliser. Mais aussi, c'est en demandant le corridor humanitaire, en demandant la fin du siège de Gaza, où l'électricité, la nourriture et l'eau sont bloquées. C'est aussi demander une solution diplomatique et la fin de solutions militaires violentes. Nous demandons au gouvernement fédéral de faire son travail en ce sens dans son champ de compétences.

1740

C'est aussi condamner tous les actes de violence et les actes terroristes du Hamas comme les attaques violentes envers les civils palestiniens.

C'est ce que nous allons continuer à faire et c'est ce que je demande à mes collègues de faire aussi.

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

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Madam Speaker:

Human beings are members of a whole,
In creation of one essence and soul.
If one member is afflicted with pain,
Other members uneasy will remain.
If you've no sympathy for human pain,
The name of human you cannot retain.

This poem, written eight centuries ago by Iranian poet Sa'adi, decorates the gate of the United Nations building entrance. His poem Bani Adam, which means "the children of humanity" in English, calls for the breaking of all barriers in humanity.

"Never again" is a phrase that's been constantly repeated since the end of the Holocaust. However, on October 7, the world looked on in shock and horror as "never again" unfolded right before their eyes. Over 1,400 and counting innocent Israelis, including men, women and children, as well as numerous foreign nationals, were brutally raped, executed, burned alive, beheaded and taken hostage by Hamas terrorists. Six Canadians have lost their lives so far; two are still missing. These terrorists shot dogs. They executed Holocaust survivors. They laughed. They tied up adults and children and burned them alive. As more footage comes out and more stories are shared, our collective horror as humanity rises.

There's one story, Madam Speaker, one story in particular, one picture I see every time I close my eyes, and I can't get it out of my head. It's a picture of a young girl in a wheelchair wearing a purple shirt, her smiling father standing beside her at the Supernova music festival. Ruth Peretz is a 16-year-old Israeli with cerebral palsy

who loves music. She and her father were last seen at the desert music festival that was attacked by the vile terrorists. In released footage, Arik, her father, was seen carrying Ruth with Hamas terrorists chasing them down. Both are now being held hostage in Gaza. Ruth has cerebral palsy. She has urgent medical needs.

What Hamas did is absolutely an act of monstrous barbarity. It was the single-largest targeted massacre of Jews in one single day since the Holocaust.

Speaker, now is the time for moral clarity, not moral relativism. Hamas is an evil, genocidal, terrorist organization. Hamas is a listed terror group in Canada and has one main goal: the eradication of Jews and the annihilation of the state of Israel—in other words, genocide. That vile goal is enshrined in its charter of terrorism. Hamas builds military bases in hospitals, schools and apartments. Hamas digs up water pipes and uses them to make missiles. Hamas holds innocent Gazans hostage, using them as human shields. They spread misinformation. They kill Palestinians for their own political gain and share it through their terrorist news networks.

Thousands of innocent lives have been lost since Hamas's brutal and monstrous attack, both in Gaza and Israel. My heart breaks for every single innocent life lost: Palestinian, Israeli, Canadian and all others. But let me be very clear: Be they Palestinian, Israeli, Canadian or foreign nationals, Hamas is responsible, absolutely responsible for every single innocent life lost in this war, full stop. Hamas terrorists must release and return all hostages and lay down their arms. I support Israel's inalienable right to defend itself, I support Israel's right to exist, and I support Israel.

As reports of the gruesome and horrific massacre came out, the response here in Canada was just as vile. Canadians looked on in shock and disgust as people took to the streets, dancing, celebrating and passing out sweets in response to Hamas's terrorist attack. On Monday, hundreds attended pro-Hamas rallies in Canada, including Toronto, calling for the eradication of Israel and celebrating Hamas's terrorist massacre of civilians as an act of resistance.

When a Toronto news reporter questioned attendees, they were not able to explain why the rally was not in response to Hamas's terrorist attack or deflected with whataboutism. Since then, one of the organizers posted a picture, praising a Hamas terrorist on his Instagram, and the main organizer of the account made a post, questioning the Holocaust itself.

Footage from hate rallies in Canada and around the world show people chanting "gas the Jews," tense moments with police and saying "Khaybar" to pro-Israel supporters, which is a reference to the seventh century slaughter of 100 Jews by Muslims. Terrorist flags of ISIS, Hamas, Taliban and more have been seen in rallies right here in Ontario. This is not something I ever thought I would see in 2023 here in Canada, and it is horrifying.

This anti-Semitic behaviour glorifying Hamas's terrorist massacre is nothing short of radical extremism propagated

by the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world, the Islamic regime in Iran. For those who are unaware, Hamas is trained, funded and armed by the terrorist Islamic regime in Iran. This is the same radical extremism that Iranian Canadians have been sounding the alarm on at demonstrations calling for the end of the terrorist Islamic regime in Iran, the same demonstrations that made “Woman, Life, Freedom” a rallying cry for peace and democracy around the world, the same demonstrations that helped the world finally understand that the Islamic regime in Iran does not represent Iranians, and Iranians have been fighting against the Islamic regime for decades.

Friday, October 13, was declared by an ex-Hamas leader as a Global Day of Jihad, a call to Muslims around the world to rise up and exterminate Jews around the world. Canadians took it seriously: Police forces across the country increased security in Jewish community centres, schools, synagogues and more.

Those who attended the pro-Hamas rallies this week claim it was about freedom and human rights, but where were they when Iranians were calling for the end of the Islamic regime and calling for freedom and human rights in Iran? They were nowhere to be seen.

While Canadian politicians of all stripes were quick to condemn these pro-Hamas hate rallies, some did not and that silence is deafening.

One horrifying and spine-tingling sentiment that I’ve seen on social media time and time again from people in the Jewish community is the following: “This week, I’ve learned which friends would hide me during the next Holocaust, which friends would not and which friends would hand me over. I’ve got ‘friends’ in all three categories. I see you.” Chilling.

The Jewish people are living their darkest days right now, living their worst nightmares since the Holocaust. I cannot even fathom what it must feel like to live in fear, to walk down the street and look at someone and think, “Will this person hate me just because I exist, just because I’m Jewish?” But Madam Speaker, even in these darkest days of loneliness, fear and isolation, in the face of the worst anti-Semitism seen since the Holocaust, there is a beacon of hope. The sun is slowly rising, and I’m referring to the lion-and-sun flag.

Since the horrific terrorist attack by Hamas, Iranians in Iran and around the world have been standing in solidarity with the people of Israel. #IraniansStandWithIsrael was a hashtag that was trending on X for days. Every single peace rally organized by Israel and the Jewish community has been flooded with Iran’s lion-and-sun flag and attended by hundreds of Iranians in a show of solidarity. Iranians inside Iran have been chanting slogans and secretly raising the flag of Israel in defiance of the terrorist Islamic regime’s anti-Semitic, Holocaust-denying and pro-Hamas policies. Jewish Iranian soldiers have been sending messages of support to Iranians through the Israel Defense Forces’ Farsi channel on X, saying that they are in this together against the terrorist Islamic regime.

1750

Madam Speaker, one of my fondest memories of this past week—it’s been a very, very dark week, so I don’t say this lightly—is when I was attending the rally supporting peace for Israel on Monday night in Toronto. After the rally, I noticed a standoff. On one side, there were a lot of Israeli flags, and on the other side, pro-Hamas counter protesters had shown up. It was very tense. I walked to the front of the lines to get a better look, and as soon as I got there, amidst the sea of blue and white, I saw two Iranian lion-and-sun flags standing right in front of everyone else—raising them high and waving them. I’ve never been more proud to be Iranian Canadian.

The reason that Iranians are speaking out on behalf of Jews in Toronto, Ontario, Canada and around the world is because of our shared history and friendship between Iranians and Jews. The history of Jews in Iran dates back to late biblical times. After establishing the Persian Empire, King Cyrus the Great allowed all subjects to participate in governance. He borrowed the good deeds of other cultures in the first sign of his commitment to diversity through culture. He set the Jews free from their Babylonian captivity that had taken place decades before. Cyrus the Great facilitated their return to the promised land, Israel, and he became a notable figure in the Jewish scripture as a saviour who helped them build the Second Temple in Jerusalem. This great event in Jewish and Persian history took place in the late sixth century BC, by which time there was a well-established and influential Jewish community in Persia.

For 44 years, the terrorist and illegitimate Islamic regime in Iran has tried to erase our shared history, has tried to say that Jews and Iranians are enemies, but they cannot erase our history. These radical extremists who have been funding terrorism in the Middle East, these radical extremists who have helped Hamas attack Israel, who support this cause, who call for the eradication of Jews in Israel cannot erase our shared history spanning almost 3,000 years.

Again, Madam Speaker, in these darkest times, I’ve never been more proud of the brave Iranian people who have been spearheading the fight to call out pure evil. The lion and sun of the Iranian people will always stand not behind but beside the blue star of Israel, because that is what friends do. That is what humanity does. That is what it means to stand up and speak out in the face of pure, unmitigated evil.

Madam Speaker, I am so proud to be part of a government that has unequivocally spoken out against the heinous terrorist attack by Hamas. There is no other way to describe what happened. It is the darkest form of terrorism we have ever seen. It is pure evil. There is no “yes, but.” There is no moral equivalency when you are burning babies, when you are killing people and then raping their friends next to them and then executing them. There is no justification whatsoever. Anyone who thinks so needs to take a good, hard look at themselves in the mirror and question whether or not they are human.

Madam Speaker, I'm going to end with what I said at the beginning:

Human beings are members of a whole,
In creation of one essence and soul.
If one member is afflicted with pain,
Other members uneasy will remain.
If you've no sympathy for human pain,

The name of human you cannot retain.

I stand with Israel. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Seeing it is almost 6 o'clock, we are going to move to private members' public business.

Debate deemed adjourned.

Report continues in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott

Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Deputy Clerk / Sous-Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Julia Douglas, Meghan Stenson,

Christopher Tyrell, Wai Lam (William) Wong

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Tim McGough

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 Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement Minister of Legislative Affairs / Ministre des Affaires législatives
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	Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds— Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	
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, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Associate Minister of Housing / Ministre associé du Logement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario Premier / Premier ministre Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Michael D. (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud—Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques 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	
Hazell, Andrea (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Holland, Kevin (PC)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Jama, Sarah (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre
Jones, Trevor (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
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 législative
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, Hon. / L'hon Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs 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
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, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)	Durham	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises
McCrimmon, Karen (LIB)	Kanata—Carleton	
McGregor, Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones
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 Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
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, Kaleed (IND)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Northern Development / Ministre du Développement du Nord Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
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	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
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	Deputy Speaker / Vice-Présidente Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	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 Small Business / Ministre associée déléguée aux Petites Entreprises
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Transportation / Ministre associé des Transports
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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Vaugois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
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	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Vacant	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	