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ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**Less Red Tape, More Common Sense Act, 2023, Bill 139, Mr. Gill / Loi de 2023 pour plus de bon sens et moins de formalités administratives, projet de loi 139, M. Gill**

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 26 October 2023

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 26 octobre 2023

The House met at 0900.

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

Prières / Prayers.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that there has been a revision to the Orders and Notices paper.

There is a deferred vote on private members' notice of motion number 69, standing in the name of Mr. Jones, Chatham-Kent–Leamington, prior to the deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 38.

The updated version is available at the table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

LESS RED TAPE, MORE
COMMON SENSE ACT, 2023

LOI DE 2023
POUR PLUS DE BON SENS ET MOINS
DE FORMALITÉS ADMINISTRATIVES

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 25, 2023, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 139, An Act to amend various Acts / Projet de loi 139, Loi modifiant diverses lois.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It's my pleasure this morning to say a few words about Bill 139, Less Red Tape, More Common Sense Act. Let me tell you what less red tape looks like in northern Ontario.

You all know that my riding has the most mines in all of Ontario; the riding with the most mines is Nickel Belt. We have a brand new gold mine across the road from Gogama, a little community of about 200 people, up on Highway 144, a highway that links Sudbury to Timmins. We had the pleasure of welcoming the Prime Minister and the Premier of this province, Mr. Ford, with many members of his cabinet, when they came to—the mine is Côté gold mine, run by Iamgold. They came to the ribbon-cutting ceremony. They saw the village of Gogama, just across the street from the mine, and I had a good talk with all of them—to say the mine is programmed to have about 2,000 workers on-site. A lot of those workers would like to stay close to where the mine is so they don't have to travel two hours, in good weather, from Sudbury or an hour and three quarters, in good weather, from Timmins.

There are lots of homes in Gogama that the government owns. The Premier, his cabinet ministers and everybody else understood that there is tremendous financial opportunity with this mine. Right now, they have 1,900 workers who sleep at the mine, in bunkers. They also have hundreds of contractors who come to do work for them at the mine site. All of those contractors have to find a place to stay; they have to find a place to sleep. But don't worry, Speaker; there are quite a few empty homes in Gogama. All of them are owned by the government.

Three years ago, I contacted the Minister of Infrastructure, I contacted the Premier, I contacted many, many ministers—I have all of the letters here in front of me—the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, and told them, “You need to sell those homes that you own in Gogama.” I got a letter telling me that it would take between 12 and 24 months to go through that process, to put those homes up for sale.

So, 12 months later, I wrote back to all of them and asked—it wasn't ready; and 24 months later, I wrote back to all of those ministers. Many of them had changed, so I re-sent the story. I sent them pictures of what the homes look like, how long the government had been fighting for them—because if you look at the Ministry of Natural Resources, they used to have many homes for their workers, but they also have many industrial buildings that they had there at the site. They have not used them since the 1980s—so 30, 40 years. All of us have been paying to maintain those buildings. There are people who cut the grass and maintain the trees during the summer. There are people who shovel the driveways. We pay to keep the place heated, to make sure that the structures are maintained. We've been paying for all of this for 30, 40 years.

The 24 months went by and nothing had happened, so I went back to the Premier, to the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, to the Minister of Finance, to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, to the Minister of Infrastructure—the list goes on—and said, “We have hundreds of contractors who are looking for a place to leave their trucks, to have their employees sleep. You own those homes. You're paying to maintain them. Put them up for sale. I guarantee you, before the weekend, they will be sold.”

Two months later—because they had told me to wait 12 to 24 months—24 months later, I went back and, believe it or not, I got the exact same letter telling me that the process would take between 12 and 24 months before you can sell an \$80,000 home in Gogama. If that is not red tape, I don't know what is. How could it be that it took

three weeks to put \$8.4 billion worth of the greenbelt up for sale to your friends, but three years and a month later, you have not been able to go through the process you have to go through to put an \$80,000 home up for sale in Gogama? I don't like this type of red tape; I don't like it at all.

It is not safe for those people to drive two hours from Sudbury, which is the closest place where they can house there, in order to get to Iamgold sites. This is not right. It is dangerous. You hear me read petitions all the time—"Make Highway 144 at Marina Road Safe." We've had six deaths at the same corner of Highway 144 since I started writing those letters. Highway 144 has already been closed once because of the winter—winter has not even started in northern Ontario, yet the highway has already been closed once.

The reasons to act upon this are multiple, and yet we are facing a backlog of red tape.

0910

Apparently, you have to go through a process that takes 24 months—and 24 months later, I'm told that you have to go through a process that will take another 12 to 24 months. I don't believe any of this, and neither do the good people who try really hard to make Ontario a leader in mining.

There was a big event yesterday, Meet the Miners. They were here in Toronto. They're all asking for the same thing. The people representing Iamgold were there. You heard the same thing I heard: that they want to be able to make sure that their contractors can stay on-site. There is a community across the street. You own houses. You own commercial buildings. Put them up for sale, get rid of the red tape that has already delayed this process by 37 months, and move on with this. This would be a red tape bill that I would jump up and down to support; I would clap as loud as you guys clap whenever you say anything; I would join you, if only this could be done—it will make sure that this mining project is able to have the contractors they need to deliver things on time. There is a tight schedule; things need to get done before Christmas. Some of this is done by their own employees, the 1,900 employees who sleep in bunkers on-site, but a lot of that work is done by specialized companies.

We are very fortunate, in Sudbury, to have a very large knowledge of how you mine safely and how you mine in a way that is respectful of the people, respectful of the environment, respectful of the First Nations. Those companies are there.

Most of them are Sudbury's own people who have worked in mining their entire life. They get those contracts to go, but then there is no place to stay, so they travel back and forth from Sudbury to the Iamgold site. They do the two-hour drive on Highway 144, and I guarantee you, every second week they won't be able to make it to the site—as opposed to buying. They would be quite happy to buy, they would be quite happy to rent; they would be quite happy to stay in Gogama. The community of Gogama is more than willing to welcome them. There are many families who have family ties to Gogama—their

parents live there; their sister lives there. They would like to move there with their family, with their kids. The kids would go to school—there's already a school in Gogama. There's already a nursing station in Gogama. There's a store. They want to make a living. What they haven't got are homes. The homes that the government owns are on paved roads with sewers, with water, with Internet, with telephone, with street lights. They are located all through the little village. Gogama is not a village; they are what is called a local services board, so they do not have a mayor, they do not have elected officials at the municipal level—none of that exists. They are a local services board, and they depend on the provincial government for all of those decisions. Believe me, if it had been in a community where there was a mayor and council, all of this would have been done 36 months ago, but because they depend on the provincial government to move things forward, absolutely nothing is happening, and this is not right. This is not right for the safety of the workers, this is not right for the company that has invested billions of dollars in developing this mine site, and it is not fair for the people of Gogama—who want to grow. There used to be over 600 who lived in Gogama; they're now down to about 200 people. They would be more than willing to welcome more.

So please work on this red tape—the sooner the better—and put up those homes that you have owned for the last five years that you've been in power. You have owned those homes in Gogama. Put them up for sale—there will be revenue coming, there will be people moving in. It's a win-win-win. Why do we have to face so much red tape before any of this gets done? I don't know.

Another thing I would like to talk about that has to do with red tape has to do with babies, actually.

If you haven't gone yet, the midwives of Ontario are at Queen's Park, in 228. There are two really cute babies in there, but there are also some very knowledgeable midwives who will teach you everything there is to know about good prenatal, postnatal and delivery care.

This put aside, there are some babies who need medication right after birth. We are fortunate that this kind of medication exists. For most newborns, if you are able to, you will put the medication in formula so that it is easy for them to absorb the medications that they need to be healthy, to grow—or if they're sick, to get healthy, all the rest of this. For reasons absolutely unknown, if the medication is delivered in pill form, it will be covered on the formulary for the province, but if the medication is provided in formula—as in milk for newborns—it is not covered. This is another example of red tape. Think about it: The formulary is not only for adults and seniors; it is also for newborns. They matter. Sometimes they get sick. Sometimes they need medication. The easiest way to provide medication to a sick newborn, to a sick baby is through feeding. I'm sure all of us know how babies feed: They drink. If you put it in the formula, you're able to control the dosage, you're able to know how much they have taken, if they're getting better, all of that. We have this red tape that says that if it's in pill form, we'll cover you, but if you need it in your baby formula, we don't

cover you. That makes no sense. This is the type of red tape that needs to change. Babies matter. We know how to give them medication in a way that is easy for them to accept, in a way that is easy for the parents to give to their baby. To ask them to crush pills and try to make it fit, and you don't know if they got it or didn't—no. Putting medication in baby formula is just the right thing to do. But if you choose to give your child their medication through baby formula, it won't be covered.

We have this program in Ontario that covers medication for children whose parents do not have access to a drug plan. I could go on about this, because this idea that you have to not have a drug plan in order to be covered by the government plan—in my neck of the woods, if you work for Tim Hortons—nothing against Tim Hortons; they provide lots of good jobs to a lot of people—you get \$300 a year if you're part-time, \$500 a year of drug plans if you are full-time. So they're trying to help their employees; they're giving them a bit of money. There's a good chance that if you have a sick child, you will be talking about thousands of dollars of medications to help that child, but because you work part-time at Tim Hortons and have \$300 a year in coverage for your drugs, you are not covered by the government; you cannot gain access; you have been excluded, because your employer gives you a little bit of a drug plan. That is red tape in my book. That makes no sense. If we are going to limit pharmacare to people over 65 and children, make it universal so that everybody over 65, everybody who is a child—right now, it's set at 18; no, sorry, 25—everybody who is under 25 has access and it will be easier. It certainly will be easier on parents who are facing children with sickness.

Now I just realized that I only have two minutes left.

0920

Ça me fait plaisir ce matin de vous parler d'un autre projet de loi qui enlève le « red tape »—c'est une expression que ce gouvernement aime utiliser.

J'aimerais vous donner l'histoire de Gogama. À Gogama, le gouvernement est propriétaire de plusieurs propriétés : des maisons, des propriétés commerciales. De l'autre bord de la rue de Gogama, de l'autre bord de la rue 144, nous avons une nouvelle mine, une mine qui s'appelle Iamgold, Côté Gold—et plusieurs travailleurs. En ce moment, ils ont 1 900 travailleurs qui travaillent sur le site. Ils ont également beaucoup de contracteurs. Les contracteurs cherchent des places pour que leurs employés puissent aller travailler à la mine.

Malheureusement, le gouvernement, depuis plus de trois ans, est en train de passer au travers d'un processus pour finalement mettre ces maisons-là en vente. Ça n'a aucun bon sens, monsieur le Président, que ça prendrait plus de trois ans. Il y a trois ans de ça, lorsqu'on a fait l'ouverture officielle, le premier ministre, M. Ford, était là avec plusieurs membres de son cabinet. Il a lui-même dit qu'il y a des opportunités économiques fantastiques pour les gens de Gogama avec la mine qui s'ouvre de l'autre bord de la 144, de l'autre bord de la rue de Gogama.

J'ai écrit au premier ministre et à tous les ministres qui étaient là pour leur demander : « Mettez ces maisons-là en

vente le plus vite possible. » On m'a dit que ça serait un processus de 12 à 24 mois. J'ai fait un suivi après 12 mois. J'ai fait un suivi après 24 mois. Il n'y avait rien qui s'était passé. J'ai réécrit à tout ce monde-là, et la ministre m'a répondu : « C'est un processus qu'on prend au sérieux et qui va prendre entre 12 et 24 mois. » Exactement la même lettre que j'avais reçue 24 mois plus tôt. Ça n'a aucun bon sens.

Quand on parle de « red tape », là, on parle de choses comme ça. Ça n'a pas de bon sens, pour une maison qui vaut à peu près 80 000 \$, que ça prenne 37 mois, à date, au gouvernement pour venir à bout de l'évaluer pour la mettre sur le marché. Cela a besoin de changer.

J'ai également parlé un peu de l'accès aux médicaments, surtout pour les bébés naissants. Pour les bébés naissants, souvent, on va leur donner leurs médicaments avec le lait maternisé. Malheureusement, si le médicament est donné sous forme de capsules ou de pilules, c'est couvert, et si le médicament est donné sous forme de lait maternisé, pour les nouveau-nés, ce n'est pas couvert. Ça n'a aucun bon sens. Ça doit changer; c'est le type de « red tape » que j'aimerais voir dans la législation.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Jamie West): It is now time for questions.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the member from Nickel Belt for her excellent presentation.

It's deeply concerning to think that the government is sitting on assets that could be used and could be leveraged to help the people of Nickel Belt and help people who are working—and yet chooses not to.

In my discussions with the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario as well as the Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce, they've indicated that many small businesses are having to actually bus workers into their areas for service jobs—such as Tim Hortons and others—because they simply can't afford housing within their areas.

I want to ask the member, how does the government's neglect of providing truly affordable housing impact local economies in Nickel Belt?

Mme France Gélinas: The housing crisis is not only something in southern Ontario; the housing crisis is throughout.

We are very fortunate, in Ontario, to be leaders in mining. In many little communities throughout my riding, you see mining explorations; you see new mines setting up shop. All of those mean that you need workers to do all of this work. That is so important to the GDP of our province, to the future of our province, and to the economies of the north. But in order to have a worker, you need them to have a place to live.

When the government owns homes that they do not put up for sale, it is not well received by the people of the north.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank the member for Nickel Belt for her comments. I'd love to visit her riding in the future. It sounds quite fascinating—to hear of the

industry and the different circumstances. So I look forward to visiting your area in the near future.

I know one thing you speak very eloquently about is health care. In 2023, the Red Tape Report Card from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business challenged every province across Canada to act on reducing the burden for physicians across the health care system. Part of this bill includes accepting that challenge and moving forward with efforts to address the physician burden of paperwork. That has involved working closely with the Ontario Medical Association. I want to ask the member opposite if she agrees with the CFIB that this should be a priority.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Everybody will remember that the Ontario Medical Association was at Queen's Park last week. Their number one request was to decrease the burden of paperwork on physicians. Their solution is something that we have been pushing for for a long time: to create more integrated, interdisciplinary health care teams. The fee-for-service physician who works by himself or herself in the office is a thing of the past. A physician needs to work with a team—with nurse practitioners, with nurses, with dietitians, with social workers, with physiotherapists, with psychotherapists, with midwives—so that they can better address primary care.

There are presently over \$1 billion worth of requests that have been made to the government for interdisciplinary teams and zero dollars that have come out of this government for interdisciplinary primary health care teams.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'd like to thank my colleague the member from Nickel Belt for her comments.

This bill, Bill 139, includes five schedules that deal specifically with post-secondary education, with five specific universities in Ontario. Those five schedules allow the chairs of the boards at those institutions to sit for a period of up to eight years, instead of six years. This member has very deep knowledge of the challenges that faced Laurentian University in her riding, and I wonder if she would like to comment on whether allowing the chair of the board to sit for up to eight years—what kind of impact and support will that provide to post-secondary institutions in this province?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I can tell you that for the situation that we had to suffer through in my community, with Laurentian University being allowed to go bankrupt, it would not have made one iota of difference. What would have made a difference is if the government would have respected their responsibility towards our university. When the university submitted deficit budget after deficit budget, when the Auditor General showed us that all of the metrics that were reported to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities were in the red, and it did not trigger any action whatsoever by the government—this is what allowed the awful, awful situation in my community; it had nothing to do with six years or eight years.

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

Mr. Stephen Crawford: When our government took office in 2018, we inherited the most regulations of any jurisdiction in the world—380,000 regulations. Regulations are a necessary part of our society, obviously, but we also don't want to overburden businesses and the health care sector.

We are currently proposing, in this bill, to streamline the submission requirements for generic drugs, to improve treatment options for Ontarians who rely on life-saving drugs. As it stands right now, when a company wants to get funding or have their product designated as interchangeable, they need to complete new clinical trials; even if these products have been approved in Canada by the federal government for decades, this could take years to do. People who need this life-saving medication don't have the time to wait.

My question to the member is, as health critic, do you support this initiative to speed up life-saving medications that are already approved and safe in Canada and have been used in Canada for decades? Does that make sense to you?

0930

M^{me} France Gélinas: There's lots in this. The first is, does Ontario need a rare disease strategy so that people who live with rare diseases gain access to new technology, new treatment faster? Absolutely, yes. Does the program in place, where CADTH, the federal government, decides if the medication is effective or not, then it gets negotiated—I can tell you that of all of the provinces in the system that we have now, Ontario is the slowest. It takes, on average, 10 months longer for Ontario to add a drug to their formulary than every other province, the three territories and the federal government. Could we do things better? Yes, absolutely. When every other province has added a drug in their formulary, don't take 10 months to add it to Ontario's formulary.

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm always glad to listen to and learn from the member from Nickel Belt. However, I will say that I've already heard the story about the—not town, but the—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Community.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: —community of Gogama and the houses that the government owns that are sitting there waiting to be filled; that you have Iamgold, which is also clamouring for the government to allow these houses to be lived in; that you have elected officials like yourself who have been calling for this; that you have a community calling for this, workers calling for this, and yet you get the same carbon copy letter that you got three years ago and you're still getting the same nonsense.

Today, you had the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, the Associate Minister of Housing and the Minister of Infrastructure here during your remarks. How optimistic are you that one of those three who have

received this letter multiple times in three years might stand up to their full height and change this?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I tend to be an optimist, and I can also tell you that I never give up. I will not give up until the government does the right thing, until the government goes through whatever process it is that they are going through and puts those homes up for sale. I will also not give up on making sure that the process that is used makes sense in the north. To sell a multi-million dollar piece of property in Toronto, it may take two years to go through all of the hoops, but to sell an \$80,000 home that hasn't been used in 40 years in Gogama should not take 37 months. That makes no sense. It has to change. You know that it has to change. Nobody in their right mind will say, "Oh, no, that makes sense." It makes no sense.

Yes, I have hope that, at some point, good sense will prevail.

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

Mr. John Jordan: Thank you to the member for Nickel Belt—it really expresses the need for this Ministry of Red Tape Reduction and all the work that it has to do and has done.

I'm pleased to rise and join the debate in support of the fall red tape reduction bill, the Less Red Tape, More Common Sense Act, 2023. This comprehensive package of regulatory and policy adjustments introduced by the Minister of Red Tape Reduction builds upon the achievements of previous efforts to alleviate the burdens placed on individuals and businesses by either ineffective or outdated regulatory burdens.

Most things in life come and go in cycles. The saying "out with the old, in with the new" exists for a reason. It's just a fact of life that at certain periods, what has been in place to manage or fill a need may have run its course, is no longer effective or is in need of alteration. The old saying, "Well, we've always done it that way," just doesn't cut it.

When systems are designed using the tools at hand to manage the efficient and productive flow of businesses and services, change is inevitable. It is incumbent upon policy-makers to monitor the impact of lifestyle, technology, geography and overarching societal changes to revise best practices and keep pace with our ever-evolving world.

While we all agree that regulations are a necessary part of the functioning of a civil society, there can be unintended consequences to the enforcement of outdated and cumbersome policies and procedures. The productive and efficient flow of business and service can and should go hand in hand with a mandate for high-quality standards and trustworthy results.

Unfortunately, regulations, much like old items in an attic, tend to accumulate over time. We heard yesterday that the minister will soon be launching a mandatory regulatory review. It's important to keep that attic cleaned out. With the exception of time-sensitive statutes, regulations have no expiration date. Once they are legislated, they become a valid part of our framework unless we

actively revisit specific examples to take them out—and that's what's happening with this bill.

Imagine a library that never updates its inventory. Over time, the shelves become cluttered, and finding relevant information becomes a challenge. Similarly, regulations without expiration dates can clutter our systems. Regular review and pruning are crucial for a streamlined and effective governance framework.

In the absence of a proactive approach to identify and rectify wasteful, outdated or burdensome regulations, the proliferation of such rules, along with the associated costs and time investments needed for compliance, will persistently grow over time. This accumulation not only hampers efficiency but also places an undue burden on individuals, businesses and the economy as a whole. Therefore, it is imperative that we engage in a consistent and vigilant effort to streamline and modernize our regulatory framework, ensuring that it remains relevant to the real-world conditions it is meant to reflect.

Continual enhancement of government services and the reduction of unnecessary burdens on individuals and businesses remains a steadfast goal for this government. This necessitates an ongoing commitment to streamlining processes and modernizing outdated practices across diverse sectors of government.

I understand that ministries don't initially aim to create laws or regulations that are costly or challenging to comply with. However, without regular evaluation, many existing rules and regulations hold precedence in official records long after their original purpose has been achieved.

We observed an excessively cumbersome regulatory landscape during the previous government. Back in 2017, under the preceding Liberal administration, Ontario bore the highest compliance costs in Canada, amounting to \$33,000 per business—\$4,000 higher than any other province. An environment of over-regulation emerged, which created undue hurdles for businesses and hindered job growth. This excessive regulatory framework pitted the government against the people of Ontario.

When our government took office in 2018, it was evident that change was imperative. We embarked on a determined mission to eliminate the unnecessary and outdated regulations that were impeding the great potential that this province holds.

To that end, our Minister of Red Tape Reduction has been hard at work, travelling the province and meeting with stakeholders at every level to get first-hand feedback on the challenges faced when interacting within the existing framework.

Recently, Minister Gill held a red tape reduction round table in my riding of Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston. There, we heard from a diverse and proactive representation of businesses and services who told us how, when and where the system was failing them in their attempts to react to the needs of a competitive market in a productive, timely, cost-efficient manner. Stakeholders from the agricultural community, chambers of commerce, health professionals and service providers all had valid, informative input to

give us a real-time picture of the inefficiencies of outdated regulations and their impact on the effective flow of business and service. We listened to their feedback and the feedback of like-minded, hard-working professionals across the province, and we're moving forward to revoke, revise and update the regulations that are causing backlogs, confusion and unnecessary lag time in an evolving, fast-paced market.

Since forming government in 2018, our government has reduced the number of regulatory compliance requirements affecting businesses and other regulated entities by 6%. To date, our government has implemented over 550 measures to cut through red-tape-related hurdles, all while steadfastly upholding public health and safety and environmental standards.

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Our government has been resolute in slashing Ontario's regulatory load by a significant 16,000 compliance requirements. I congratulate the Minister of Red Tape Reduction and his PA, the member for Niagara West, for their great work.

Furthermore, since 2018, these dedicated initiatives to reduce red tape have yielded substantial results, culminating in savings exceeding an impressive \$939 million in annual gross regulatory compliance costs. This achievement has brought tangible benefits to a wide array of entities, including businesses, non-profit organizations, municipalities, universities, colleges, school boards and hospitals.

However, our government must continue on this path. According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, small businesses in Canada incurred billions in dollars in costs due to red tape last year. This is simply unacceptable. That is precisely why it is incumbent upon our government to take a step back and critically evaluate the relevance and necessity of the regulations put forth by various ministries. We must ensure that they evolve in tandem with societal needs, adapt to technological progress, and remain attuned to shifting circumstances. Through this conscientious approach, we can maintain a regulatory framework that serves the best interests of our citizens and bolsters the vitality of our economy.

The Less Red Tape, More Common Sense Act, if put into effect, will mark a significant milestone in the continuous efforts of the Ontario government to alleviate regulatory burdens. This proposed act introduces practical adjustments that aim to create an environment conducive to the growth and prosperity of both individuals and businesses. These measures are specifically designed to enhance services for individuals and reduce operational expenses for businesses, while also streamlining engagements with the government. When it comes to eliminating unnecessary red tape, only our government will get it done. This encompasses a range of enhancements, from fine-tuning government forms to alleviating administrative pressures on physicians—by doing so, we afford them more invaluable time to dedicate to providing optimal care for their patients. Furthermore, it extends to the creation of more accessible pathways into skilled trades, actively

fostering an influx of apprenticeships in high-demand sectors.

Our steadfast commitment to alleviating burdens which have a tangible impact on both businesses and individuals remains resolute.

The proposed strategies encapsulated in this comprehensive package position us to forge ahead in establishing a regulatory framework that is both transparent and highly effective. Through these measures, we ensure the safety and well-being of Ontario's labour force and families. Concurrently, these actions fortify protections for our environment and the invaluable resources that sustain our province. It also encompasses a comprehensive array of 32 innovative measures. These measures are strategically designed to enhance services for individuals, while simultaneously relieving financial burdens for businesses.

Upon full implementation, the collective impact of these measures is projected to result in substantial time savings of up to 100,000 hours annually for both individuals and businesses, underscoring the remarkable potential of these initiatives—when you think a full-time employee works between 1,820 and 2,000 hours, that's over 50 full-time equivalents. It's significant. This demonstrates the significant strides that can be made toward a more efficient and prosperous regulatory framework.

On this side of the House, we recognize that the key to enhancing services for individuals, reducing expenses for business and fostering smoother interactions with the government lies in our sustained efforts to alleviate the everyday burdens faced by both citizens and enterprises.

When we aggregate these annual savings, the cumulative figure soars to nearly \$2.8 billion in removed compliance costs since the inception of our term in office, and demonstrates once again the importance of the minister's work. This stands as a testament to our government's unwavering commitment to lightening the load and seeking efficiencies, ultimately benefiting the economic landscape and the province as a whole.

If this bill receives approval, it will herald a significant stride towards efficiency and modernization in various government departments and key sectors of Ontario's economy.

The proposed adjustments range from refining government paperwork—a move aimed at alleviating administrative burdens on physicians, thereby affording them additional time to provide top-tier care for their patients. It's strengthening our commitment towards quality of health care delivery.

Our minister of trade has spoken many times about the importance of creating an environment where the economy can succeed. Eliminating red tape is helping to create that environment.

In summary, this bill entails the creation of more accessible pathways into the skilled trades, a strategic move to entice a greater number of apprentices into high-demand fields. This not only prepares Ontario's workforce for enduring, fulfilling careers but also bolsters the foundation of our industries.

Additionally, this bill emphasizes bolstering consumer protection. By ensuring consumers are armed with the knowledge they need, particularly when making significant transactions like buying or selling vehicles, we fortify their ability to make informed decisions.

These proposed changes collectively signal a proactive approach towards fostering efficiency, innovation and a thriving economy across Ontario. They reflect a concerted effort to adapt and progress in a rapidly evolving socio-economic landscape.

Speaker, one important aspect of this bill that is of great interest to me and the people of my riding of Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston is the creation of more pathways into the skilled trades, which will attract more apprentices to in-demand trades and help prepare Ontario's workforce for rewarding, lifelong careers. Encouraging individuals to pursue high-demand trades is not only crucial for alleviating labour shortages but also for fostering robust economic growth and securing a proficient workforce for the years ahead.

As an integral component of our comprehensive fall package, we are presently conducting a thorough review of joint health and safety committee certification training standards. This review is focused on identifying opportunities for streamlining certification prerequisites, eliminating redundancy with other mandatory training, and pinpointing areas where administrative barriers and associated costs can be reduced. This strategic overhaul is designed to uphold the relevance and practicality of the training, thereby elevating workplace safety standards and mitigating workforce shortages resulting from injuries. In tandem with this effort, we are also embarking on a substantial enhancement of our database, which houses nearly three million records of workers who have undergone mandatory safety training.

This initiative is a pivotal aspect of our broader strategy aimed at making Ontario one of the safest work environments. The database serves as a cornerstone tool utilized by the ministry to cultivate secure workplaces. The impending transition involves the development of a custom-built, cloud-based database using government platforms to bolster system and procedural efficiencies. This system will be used by an extensive network comprising over 700,000 workers, employers and ministry personnel. Its primary function will be to authenticate that workers have undergone requisite training for tasks such as working at heights or obtaining joint health and safety committee certification. Furthermore, this platform will provide training providers, workers and employers with an improved user experience, granting swift, accessible, all-in-one access to thousands of training records. This transformative enhancement underscores our steadfast commitment to fostering safer, more efficient work environments across the province. That is why I support this bill.

Every day, I speak with people in my riding of Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston who are engaged in business startups, running the family farm, or applying the tools of their skilled trade to a demanding marketplace. These hard-working professionals are pitted against cumbersome,

limiting and financially burdensome regulations. When people are trying to support our families and be productive members of their local communities, the government should be working with them.

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There are seven principles for this bill. The Less Red Tape, More Common Sense Act contains 32 burden-reduction initiatives to help improve services for people and reduce costs for businesses.

By fixing broken systems that were ignored, our government is helping businesses save \$939 million annually in gross regulatory compliance costs. To date, our government has removed over 16,000 different types of red tape, all without compromising health, safety or the environment.

This fall 2023 would build on the close to a billion dollars in gross annual compliance cost savings we've achieved to date, strengthening Ontario's position as a key player in the North American and global economy.

Since July 1, 2018, this government has reduced the number of regulatory compliance requirements affecting businesses and other regulated entities by 6%.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?
MPP Jamie West: I appreciate the debate.

This is, quite frankly, a dull bill. There are one, two, three, four, five schedules that basically say a university "provides that a member of the board may not serve for more than six consecutive years. The act is amended to permit an exception to that rule in certain circumstances for a member who is serving as chair of the board." I agree that we need to clean up regulations when appropriate—but the way that I'm hearing it debated, like this is the second coming of Christ, is not factual.

I feel like the Conservative government is out of touch with what's going on with people. We've talked several times here about the need for take-home cancer medication to be covered—you get a pill, you take it at the hospital, it's covered; you bring it home, you have to pay out of pocket, fill out forms, get reimbursed. That is regulation and red tape that we can get rid of.

This might be necessary, but why can't we get the common sense stuff done in this House? That's my question.

Mr. John Jordan: I think the extension of the chair's role is important to continuity. In the organization where I came from, we created a past chair role just to be able to maintain that historical knowledge. So I think there's a lot of common sense to that particular one.

So far, there have been 16,000 different types of red tape reductions. There's a lot of work to do, and we're going to continue to do it. I know the minister plans to bring another bill forward in the spring, so the work has just begun. We now have a Ministry of Red Tape Reduction. To your point—we'll continue to chip away at the thousands of red tapes that we have in this province.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Mr. Lorne Coe: I want to thank the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston for an excellent presentation on the proposed legislation in front of us.

He mentioned in his remarks that he hosted a round table on red tape removal with the minister. I'd like the member to speak about what he sees to be the effect of this proposed legislation within his riding. I know he's doing a lot of hard work for the local businesses in that area.

Mr. John Jordan: Certainly, the things in this bill and the accomplishments of the ministry to date don't just affect my riding.

In my previous career, I worked in a multi-sector, multi-funded organization. We're talking about the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services; the Public Health Agency of Canada—grants from time to time. It would even come to a point where you would have to decide not to accept a grant because the administration burden was higher than the value of the grant. There are so many examples of that that this ministry is directing its efforts to.

We had a round table. We had agriculture; we had our paramedics around the table—and multiple examples. The minister was there and has taken notes, and we'll see those coming forward in the future.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I would like to thank the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston for his comments this morning in the debate on Bill 139.

As the member for London West, I engage frequently with businesses in my riding, with people who are involved in economic development, and one of the things that I hear the most, when we talk about some of the barriers to growing our economy and supporting businesses in London—it is the need for housing; it is the need to make sure that people have access to a family doctor; it is the need to make sure that new employees who are coming to this city can bring their kids and there's going to be access to good schools that don't have as many portables on the property as they do in the school; it's access to child care; it's access to transit.

So my question is, why are we dealing with a bill that has such inconsequential, meaningless housekeeping amendments instead of dealing with these big challenges that businesses are facing?

Mr. John Jordan: There are so many pieces in that, but I'll pick out the health care one—and “inconsequential” is certainly not a word that describes it. When you reduce the amount—and I heard this throughout my career, because I had physicians who worked for me in the community health centre sector, on the amount of time they had to spend on paperwork and duplication of paperwork.

There are 12 key forms to streamline, through working with the OMA. It results in 95,000 hours back to physicians—that's not inconsequential, by the way—which is around 50 full-time equivalents. That means the nurse that the physician has—or sometimes the physician just has one staff, so they're using their nurse for both administration and—they could be doing other things, like preparing the patient to see the physician, doing the blood pressure, instead of doing unnecessary paperwork. It results in 285,000 additional patient visits—not inconsequential.

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

Mr. Deepak Anand: It is just common sense—simply put, if you have a business with \$10 of revenue and \$12 of expense, what choices do you have? You have to leave, you have to close down, or you have to find ways to make sure it becomes competitive. That's what this government is doing—making sure, by reducing the red tape, that we're reducing the cost to the business.

My question to the member is, what exactly has the government done since 2018 to support our businesses so that they become competitive and grow in the province of Ontario?

Mr. John Jordan: We've certainly seen all ministries working together, and the minister of trade has risen in this House many times and talked about the cost of doing business—that this government has taken out of the cost of doing business in this province, which has resulted in all the new industries coming in and all the new jobs, the 700,000 jobs that we've spoken to many times. This bill is just part of that piece—coming together to take \$935 million in gross annual compliance costs out of the system by reducing red tape. The minister will continue to do that and take out unnecessary red tape within our provincial system.

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm glad to ask the member a question on his comments on this red tape reduction bill, Bill 139. His remarks focused a fair bit on small business.

I had a recent conversation, as I know a number of us did, with the doctors from the OMA, and I heard from a young doctor, or a soon-to-be doctor. In her first six weeks of medical school, she told us that she had been nearly dissuaded from going into family practice because everyone was like, “Oh, wow, you're going into family? There's so much work to do. The administrative burden is so significant.” They raised the need for the community family health teams to be a priority for this government; they say it would reduce physician burnout—because you have a team that could do a lot of that administrative support. Right now, doctors are spending about 20 hours a week just doing paperwork.

Where there's an opportunity for a centralized intake that has been piloted and these referral systems—could the government focus on that in another red tape bill since it's missing from this one?

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Mr. John Jordan: I agree with you 100% that we have to keep our physicians—have all our health care providers working to full scope and minimize the amount of administration they have to do. Central intake is certainly one of those things. The government is working with the OMA on red tape issues, and that will continue as well. Our Minister of Health has provided funding for interdisciplinary care. There have been proposals received and waiting for approval.

In my riding of Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston, we've seen the expansion of the Ottawa Valley Family Health

Team from Almonte; it's now going to be in Carleton Place as well.

Those are great models of care, because they allow the physicians to really scope on doing doctor work and not running a business, not hiring staff, not worrying about whether the hydro bill got paid. The interdisciplinary model, the CHCs, the family health teams, are great models, and the minister has supported that initiative.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'd like to talk about something that I believe falls within the bill—but also, because of the words “common sense.”

I received a letter this morning from Unifor Local 4212, and I think it goes to all of us. The seaway, right now, is a very important part for transporting grain, our food—and everything along the St. Lawrence Seaway. They said, “We write to you, as a member of provincial Parliament from Ontario representing a constituency along the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp., operating the Welland Canal. We aim to express our deep solidarity and strongly urge the employer to engage in meaningful—with the workers’ last offer, which unfortunately resulted in a breakdown of negotiations.

“Our collective goal should focus on establishing fair wages and working conditions by negotiating in good faith with Unifor for your workforce along the seaway, both in Niagara and beyond. The Welland Canal and the entire St. Lawrence Seaway is a beacon of pride for Niagara. The nearly 400 Unifor workers and their families that go to work at the Welland Canal deserve nothing less than their full commitment to ensure their rights and livelihoods are met.

“These are more than workers. They are our neighbours, community volunteers, our local leaders, that make contributions to Niagara every day, and they deserve to be treated with fairness and respect.

“In these challenging times, we have seen inflation rise by double digits. It is critical to acknowledge the tenacity of the workers to stand up for fair wages, pushing back about the recent efforts towards contracting-out of skilled workers and good-paying jobs.

“We understand that negotiations are complex, and there are many factors at play. However, the importance of the strike on Niagara workers”—and, I'll add, right across the province of Ontario—“for our economy cannot be underestimated. It implores the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp. to approach these negotiations with the urgency and the sincerity that it requires.

“Together, we stand with the workers in Niagara fighting for a fair contract. Our combined teams are ready to assist in any way possible to facilitate a fair negotiation and support workers in Niagara and our communities through our difficult times.”

I'm suggesting that all parties write a letter to support getting back to the bargaining table. We have grain that is sitting out on our lake here, Lake Ontario, that's not getting to our customers to feed people. They've got to get back to the table and get a fair collective agreement. And

I will say very clearly that I stand with all the workers at Unifor Local 4212.

I know it might be a little off the red tape part, but I thought I'd read that letter because of the importance of the St. Lawrence Seaway and those workers to our food sources and other materials for small, medium-sized and large businesses. So I appreciate the time to read that letter. I know you're probably not happy with that, but I had to get it out. So I appreciate it, and I'll move on.

Madam Speaker, speaking to this bill is a great opportunity to discuss the details, but also to discuss the real lack of direction from this government. They seem to continue to fail to meet the moment. We have a bill here that does a number of technical amendments and changes, many non-concerning, but it's also one, again, that misses so many important opportunities.

Let's really think about what we've done in this session so far. Has this government come out and said they are truly going to tackle the major challenges people are facing in their lives today? No, they haven't. Affordability, health care, housing—they seem to ignore all of them.

The housing file is potentially one of the biggest areas of concern. The new minister spends more time complaining about the federal government than actually doing his job. The minister, who has recently been the poster boy of flip-flopping and backtracking on bad decisions, is not getting housing built and most definitely not getting affordable housing units built in all our ridings. How can the minister even do his job when he has to spend so much time filling in for the Premier in question period? It's a fair question.

Madam Speaker, government is all about priorities, and this government's priorities are all over the place. The member for London North Centre put forward thoughtful, pragmatic legislation to get affordable housing built. Guess what this government did? They said no. They voted it down, because we all know they don't want affordable housing built in this province. They aren't concerned with the couple in their mid-thirties making a decent living who can't move out of their parents' house and will never be able to afford a down payment on a home. Those aren't their donors, and they don't create policy to help them.

What this bill tells us right from the beginning—this government continues to fail to meet the moment in this province. I'm going to read that again, because it's important. This bill tells us, right from the beginning, that the government continues to fail to meet the moment in this province. It's more status quo, just like we saw with the previous Liberal government.

This government seems to follow in the same direction as the previous Liberals when it comes to underfunding health care, but this time it's even worse, because you're going into privatization of our health care—one of the biggest mistakes I think your government will ever make. This legislation and the bill brought forward before it this session have done nothing to address the growing health care crisis in our province.

I can talk to it because I'm from Niagara—as you know, Madam Speaker, from our years of knowing each other. You know I've lived in Niagara my entire life.

The story of Fort Erie—it's a community; it's a border town. They had a hospital there. There were decisions made to close that hospital, and then it became an urgent care centre. In Fort Erie, we're growing—in the next few years, we're going to have over 40,000 residents living in that community. We had an urgent care centre that was 24/7; just recently, they decided to only open it up 10 hours a day.

I'll give you a couple of examples of what happened in Fort Erie. There was an 11-year-old boy who had an appendix attack, and he went to the hospital in Fort Erie, when it was still 24/7. If he'd had to go to Niagara Falls or to St. Catharines—because they're the two hospitals that people have to go to after 8 o'clock at night now—he would have died. But, because it was open, those nurses and the doctors who were on shift saved his life. That's one example.

I have an example of a senior who had a heart attack and, again, because it was 24/7, he went to the Fort Erie hospital. They were able to stabilize him, and then they sent him off to Hamilton, where he had open-heart surgery. Again, do you know what happened, Madam Speaker? Those nurses and doctors in Fort Erie, because it was open 24/7, saved his life. And yet, the decision that's being made today is that it's going to be open 10 hours a day.

You say to yourself, why are those decisions being made? We hear from the government all the time—and, Madam Speaker, you know this—that we're investing record numbers of dollars into health care, even though it's not completely accurate. But that's what they're saying.

So I'm saying to this government—you always say we never come with solutions. Well, I want to give you a solution around the red tape. Why do we continue to fight Bill 124 in the courts and attack our nurses and our health care workers? Why don't we get rid of Bill 124, reinvest those dollars that you're paying high-priced lawyers in Toronto, invest in workers and nurses and health care, and make sure that Fort Erie's hospital is open 24/7 for the residents?

The one thing I want to add to that is that over 25% of all residents who live in Fort Erie are seniors, and there aren't a lot of transportation options in Fort Erie.

I'll give you one more example of why it needs to be open. We're getting close to Christmas. I saw somebody in the elevator yesterday for the PCs who had Christmas cards—

Interjection.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Exactly. I thought the same thing: “Maybe it's a little early.” He had Christmas cards in his hands.

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Last Christmas—I think it was December 23; I might be out by a day—we had that terrible ice storm. Does anybody remember that ice storm we had that was down in Niagara—more in the Fort Erie area—where in Buffalo people froze to death in their cars? In Fort Erie, we lost a

couple of people who had had heart attacks and couldn't get out of their rooms. Guess what happened? They closed the highway. The highway was shut down for five days—five days. As a matter of fact—and I think you worked for CHCH at one time, Madam Speaker—the crews couldn't get to Fort Erie. They got stuck on the highway and ended up in the ditch.

Well, in Fort Erie, now that it's only open 10 hours a day—meaning it's closed from 8 at night until 8 in the morning—what do we do in that same situation if it happens this Christmas? Where do they go to get service? More residents are not going to have their health care.

It's important that we make sure that Fort Erie is taken care of. Our public—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I apologize to the member.

I recognize the member for Chatham-Kent—Leamington.

Mr. Trevor Jones: Point of order: We've indulged the member from Niagara Falls for some time now, but pursuant to standing order 25(b)(i), I ask, through you Speaker, that the member from Niagara Falls please return his remarks in this debate to the subject matter of the bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I would have said that earlier, but I think that the member has actually gone back to referring to the contents of the bill.

I'll let you continue.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Bill 139 does talk about less red tape and more common sense, so I'm talking about the common sense part of the bill. That's the name of the bill. You put it in the title, so in my thinking, these are common sense things that we can do that make life better for the residents of the province of Ontario.

I don't like the words “common sense,” by the way—I'll say this just because you raised it. The last time I saw it used in the province of Ontario—do you know who used that as a slogan to get elected? Does anybody remember? You must remember—long before you ran. It was Mike Harris. Remember? He talked about common sense.

Interjection.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm trying to answer your question, member.

That was at a time when he decided, under the Common Sense Revolution, to cut services. I can talk about Walkerton, where we had seven people die from tainted water. Again, “common sense”—they used it. And I can talk about how they closed 26 hospitals and laid off 6,000 nurses.

So when you ask me about common sense, I think these are common sense things that we can do—I'm begging you to put 24/7 back into my hospital in Fort Erie. I think that's fair. I think it's reasonable. I think that is common sense. I don't think any resident, because they live in Fort Erie, should die between 8 at night and 8 in the morning. I'm sorry; I think it is common sense.

I'm going to get on to another health care issue, if that's okay with you. The closure of health care facilities is another worrisome trend. The loss of essential services can have devastating consequences, especially for vulnerable

populations. I just talked about Fort Erie. Many residents rely on this facility for urgent medical attention, and the closure left them in a difficult situation. I've been working tirelessly to raise awareness about this issue and push it to reopen 24/7. I'm asking you guys to do that again.

I'm going to talk about another part of my riding, Niagara-on-the-Lake. I know the member, Madam Speaker, has been in Niagara-on-the-Lake a lot. I've seen her down there a few times. I'm going to turn your attention to Niagara-on-the-Lake. It's concerning that there is a lack of primary care service in our town. As you know—maybe you don't know, but you closed our hospital in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Every resident deserves access to a family doctor or a nurse practitioner, yet many are left without their basic health care needs. I am fully aware of the urgency of the situation and have been actively advocating for a solution. The arrival of a nurse practitioner in Niagara-on-the-Lake would be a positive step, common sense. Nurse practitioners play a critical role in our health care system, providing essential primary care services—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I apologize to the member from Niagara Falls, but it is now time for members' statements.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

DURHAM YOUTH SERVICES

Ms. Patrice Barnes: Today I stand before you representing the amazing people of Ajax. I rise to recognize Durham Youth Services, located in Ajax and led by Shannon Jackson and her dedicated team. They extend a helping hand to youth in Ajax and the Durham region, offering them a lifeline during a difficult time.

Under Premier Ford's leadership, our government recognizes the immeasurable value that organizations like Durham Youth Services offer to residents facing challenges in Ontario.

This year, Durham Youth Services was the recipient of over \$180,000 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation Resilient Communities Fund.

I've met with Shannon and her team and have seen the amazing work that they do.

DYS was also this year's charity of choice for the Home Depot Canada Foundation. The foundation selects one project in Canada for a community build each year. Over 70 Home Depot associates, partners and vendors from across Canada came to Ajax to work on this project. In just two days, two homes were transformed with new siding, landscaping, fencing, updated doors, kitchens and bathrooms, storage solutions and much more—all at no cost to the charity.

Thank you to Shannon and her team and the Home Depot Canada Foundation for the great work they do every day to support our youth in Ajax and the Durham region. We appreciate your passion and your dedication.

HALLOWEEN PUMPKIN PARTY

Miss Monique Taylor: Today I'm excited to share an invite to my annual pumpkin party happening this Saturday, October 28. The fun will be at T.B McQuesten Park from noon until 2:30. Many will know this amazing park is located at 1199 Upper Wentworth Street on Hamilton Mountain, which has tons of free parking, is fully accessible and is on many HSR bus routes.

This annual event is family friendly, free of charge and sure to get you in the Halloween spirit, so wear your costumes and come join in the fun. We have free pumpkins to carve and all of the pumpkin carving tools you will need to make your perfect jack-o'-lantern—and the best part is you can leave all the messy parts behind.

A big thank you to the volunteers who will be making sure you have hot chocolate, popcorn, treats and a goodie bag.

While you enjoy the afternoon with your family and friends, you can also head over to our photo booth and snap a picture of a day that is to be remembered.

New this year is the Hamilton Fire Department stopping by to say hello and to bring some very important information about fire safety and prevention.

Come out this Saturday, bring your costume, your carving skills and creativity. Let's spend the afternoon together as a community at T.B McQuesten Park and have a spooktacular time. As always, full details are available through my office and online. Give us a call, drop us an email if you have any questions. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone there.

Have a very happy Halloween.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Mr. John Jordan: The member from Hamilton Mountain mentioned volunteers, so it's a great segue.

Communities throughout Ontario are built on the backs of volunteers. We depend on them. These dedicated and passionate individuals donate their time, skills and knowledge in the communities they call home and beyond. They are instrumental in supporting families, patients, students, seniors and children. Without volunteers, many organizations, events and services would not exist.

On Thursday, September 21 and Tuesday, October 17, the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism held special Ontario Volunteer Service Award ceremonies in Brockville and Kingston, respectively. Many residents from my riding of Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston were recognized for their years of service, like:

—Vivian Buchanan, who has dedicated over 29 years to Perth Seniors Fellowship and 10 years with the Table Good Food Bank;

—Kathryn Mellon, who has given 35 years of her time and talent to the United Way Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington; and

—Edward Wilson, for his 20 years of dedication to the North Lanark Historical Society.

There are many benefits to volunteering. It offers vital help to people in need, worthwhile causes and the community. It also connects you, the volunteer, to new friends, reduces stress and provides a sense of purpose.

To all of the Ontario Volunteer Service Award recipients, a resounding thank you from everyone you have assisted over the years. And if you haven't done so already, consider volunteering. It's a great experience.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Speaker, it is time. It's time for symbolic gestures, the ones that come cheap, to be done. We stand at a crossroads, faced with an epidemic of intimate partner violence. Two weeks ago in Niagara, it took an innocent life, and just yesterday, in Sault Ste. Marie, five more. We have lost mothers, children, friends, community members, and it's time to say, "No more."

1020

Speaker, I lost a friend to femicide. I rarely speak about it in this House. However, I know almost every woman in this chamber carries a similar story, a shared grief.

Last year, alongside my colleagues, strong and fierce advocates from London West, Toronto Centre, Toronto—St. Paul's—all united, urging this government to respond to the Renfrew county inquest recommendations. When the response came, it was in half measures, refusing to declare intimate partner violence a crisis, refusing annualized funding to the sector.

Now it's time for a real commitment to accept all of the Renfrew county recommendations—not just the easy ones, not just the cheap ones, but all of them.

My advocacy and the advocacy of my colleagues is built on the shoulders of giants, the women in the sector doing the work. It is time we support them fully and unconditionally. It is time. It really is time.

YWCA CAMBRIDGE

Mr. Brian Riddell: The people of my riding of Cambridge are blessed to be served by countless non-profit organizations that provide life-changing support on a daily basis. Among them is YWCA Cambridge, which, this month, is celebrating its 75th year of serving women and girls in the Cambridge riding.

The YWCA is a trusted community leader that lends a voice to the needs of women and girls through innovative and responsive programs, services and advocacy.

Like all non-profit groups, the YWCA relies on the generosity of donors. Recently, on a cold, rainy Saturday morning, many supporters of the YWCA gathered outside city hall to participate in an annual event called Walk a Mile in Their Shoes. The walk raised just shy of \$10,000, and donations can still be made by contacting the Y.

Walk a Mile in Their Shoes supports the YWCA's free, community-based violence protection programming for youth across Waterloo region. It's important to note that this event is much more than a walk through the streets of

downtown Galt. Rather, it's a strong show of unity against gender-based violence.

Speaker, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations and gratitude to the YWCA staff and volunteers as they mark 75 years of providing support and services to our community.

On that note, I would just like to add, to the women in this chamber: How you walk around in high heels all the time—I find it amazing, because I can't do it.

LONDON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I was honoured to tour the new location of the London Children's Museum with the MPPs for London West and London—Fanshawe.

Founded by Carol Johnston in 1975, it is the oldest children's museum in Canada, and it is a one-of-a-kind destination for all of Ontario and the United States. Children have opportunities to watch, interact, move, problem-solve, collaborate and think critically, which instill in children lifelong skills, ones which are prized by employers today and well into the future. They offer fantastic curricular supports for school tours and also help children who come from low-income households. The children's museum inspires lifelong learners.

Everyone in London has fond memories of the children's museum and remembers what they learned in that space. It has launched careers because of its engaging nature. Speaker, it was actually my very first job, as a young volunteer.

Their new space at 100 Kellogg Lane reflects the London community through exhibits of the forest, community displays, agriculture, space, archeology, a maker space to support the trades, water, gears and pulleys, and much more. It's designed by children for children.

London MPPs were surprised to learn the provincial capital contributions to this project were minimal, while federal and municipal governments have stepped up with millions in support.

We look forward to hosting the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport at Canada's oldest children's museum, a world-class facility where kids learn, grow and thrive with a second-to-none educational experience.

I will even drive you there today.

All the best to the great people at the children's museum for their ongoing work to help children build confidence, foster relationships and ignite curiosity.

SCARBOROUGH HEALTH NETWORK

Mr. David Smith: I rise today to acknowledge Scarborough Health Network and its foundation for their efforts in serving one of Canada's most diverse communities, right here in my riding of Scarborough Centre, for the early detection, prevention and treatment of breast cancer through breast screening programs. Our government, through the Ministry of Health, worked very hard to support these programs, and I thank them.

As we celebrate October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month, I'd like to thank David Graham, president and CEO of Scarborough Health Network, and Alicia Vandermeer, president and CEO of Scarborough Health Network Foundation, for their efforts to encourage women from all walks of life to put their health and well-being first by booking mammograms, which have the potential to save lives.

All three hospitals under the network are equipped with state-of-the-art diagnostic imaging programs that are fully integrated with the hospital's comprehensive cancer care services to provide care every step of the way, from access to breast cancer screening for its early detection, to prevention, assessment, diagnosis and treatment for all breast abnormalities.

Again, I'd like to thank Scarborough Health Network for their services to the people of all of Scarborough and beyond.

ZAC VANIER BIA

M^{me} Lucille Collard: J'ai l'immense plaisir de reconnaître aujourd'hui la Zone d'amélioration commerciale de Vanier pour son travail remarquable lié au Hub Vanier.

La ZAC Vanier a transformé un ancien terrain de stationnement en un hub communautaire innovant et elle a remporté, plus tôt ce mois-ci, the international Downtown Achievement Award. Ce prix prestigieux reconnaît « une excellente réponse à un défi de gestion d'un lieu urbain » et les projets gagnants proviennent de villes de partout en Amérique du Nord.

Le Hub Vanier fournit un espace accessible où les membres de la communauté peuvent se réunir pour célébrer, apprendre, et tisser de nouveaux liens les uns avec les autres. Organisée en partenariat avec le Centre des services communautaires de Vanier, la programmation au Hub comprend des soirées feu de camp, des soirées cinéma, des soirées musicales, et d'autres événements qui nous permettent de célébrer la diversité et l'inclusivité de notre communauté.

Last year, I attended the popular Halloween party at the Hub. I had a lot of fun disguised as Scarlet Witch, distributing candies and exchanging with families. And I even won the friendly costume competition with the other elected officials.

Events like this help forge a strong, vibrant community.

On behalf of all the residents of Ottawa–Vanier, I want to congratulate the Vanier BIA for winning the international Downtown Achievement Award. Congratulations.

SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Mrs. Daisy Wai: I rise to recognize the importance of Small Business Week, celebrated from October 15 to 21. Even though that was last week, our small businesses should be remembered all the time, as they play a crucial role in driving our local economy.

I was once a small business entrepreneur.

In York region, more than 84% of our businesses are classified as small businesses, highlighting their contribution to the region's prosperity. They are the heart and soul of our community, fostering job growth. It is the backbone of businesses in Richmond Hill.

I'm delighted to share the success of the fourth annual Entrepreneurship Finance Conference, hosted by city of Richmond Hill economic development on October 19. This virtual conference provided entrepreneurs with insight into capital and financial resources through interactive sessions and professional advice. The Honourable Nina Tangri, Associate Minister of Small Business, attended the conference.

Our government supports them and continues to cut red tape to save businesses time and cost.

Let's continue to champion the over 400,000 small businesses in Ontario, ensuring they have the support and resources that they need to grow and thrive.

1030

DURHAM COLLEGE

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ONTARIO

Mr. Lorne Coe: Durham College in my riding is helping small businesses and start-ups take the next steps to bring their products and services to market as a result of a \$300,000 grant from Intellectual Property Ontario, expanding Durham College's capacity to foster innovation and entrepreneurial growth in Ontario. This new funding will further expand the intellectual property advisory services from Durham College's Office of Research Services, Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The dean of that office says that with the support of Intellectual Property Ontario, we "will continue to serve as a hub for innovation, fostering economic growth and creating opportunities for our clients, students and faculty to succeed."

Intellectual Property Ontario's \$2-million pilot project is part of the Commercialization Mandate Policy Framework, an initiative aimed at helping post-secondary institutions like Durham College advance their research and innovation efforts for the benefit of Ontario. More than 50 business clients are expected to take advantage of the tailored resources and mentorship to help them navigate the complexities of intellectual property and commercialization.

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have with us in the chamber a former member of the assembly who served the riding of Ottawa West in the 36th Parliament: Alex Cullen.

Welcome back to Queen's Park, Alex. It's good to see you.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: He's making his way to Queen's Park this morning, obviously running a little late, but I'd like to welcome my son, Jonathan Lindal, to his House. He's a first-class petty officer for the Royal Canadian Navy.

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I'd like to warmly welcome the ward 4 councillor from the city of Windsor, Mark McKenzie, who is in the east lobby today.

Mr. Chris Glover: I'd like to welcome the Association of Ontario Midwives, including Rebecca Farnum; Anna Ianovskaia; Leila Monib; Diane Simon, a Mi'kmaq midwife; Ashley Lickers, a midwife for the Six Nations; Manavi Handa, who is a dear friend of mine and a member of the second cohort of midwives when they were being re-established in Ontario; Thenusha Ratnasapapathy; Ifra Zahid; and Althea Jones, president-elect of the Association of Ontario Midwives. Welcome to your House.

Mr. Ric Bresee: It's my pleasure to introduce a friend of mine, my campaign manager, and a former staff member here in the House who many of you may recognize: Mr. Jeremy Wittet, who is also a school board trustee in the city of Ottawa.

Thank you for being here.

Ms. Chandra Pasma: It's my pleasure this morning to introduce some constituents and friends: Alex Cullen, the member for Ottawa West in the 36th Parliament, and Theresa Kavanagh, Ottawa city councillor for Bay ward. Welcome.

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: I'd like to recognize a family that is here today that has changed the world. Yes, that's right; the Padulo family has done just that. They created the Treat Accessibly campaign so that children with disabilities not only here in Ontario but around the world can have a safe, happy and accessible Halloween.

To Rich and his wife, Natasha, congratulations. But the idea for Treat Accessibly came from Siena, their amazing daughter, who wanted to help children enjoy Halloween as she does.

To Rich, Natasha and Siena: You are an inspiration to us all. You are the reason Treat Accessibly exists. On behalf of this Legislature and the people of Ontario, I want to thank you for answering the call to make society better for all of us.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It's my great pleasure to welcome John Brunet and Jo Brunet, the grandparents of today's legislative page captain Clara Brunet. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Joel Harden: I also want to quickly recognize our friends from Ottawa. Alex Cullen, Councillor Kavanagh, it's nice to see you.

A quick thanks as well to the midwives for that delicious breakfast.

Also, I want to acknowledge François Desmarais, who has been in the building—public affairs for Alstom.

Thank you for being here.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Good morning, Speaker. Meegwetch. I'd like to acknowledge and welcome, from my riding, Chief Russell Wesley of Cat Lake First Nation;

Caroline Lidstone-Jones, chief executive officer at the Indigenous Primary Health Care Council; Dr. Lloyd Douglas, public health physician for Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority; Reece Van Breda, council member for Sioux Lookout; Marie Drummond, Alliance for Healthier Communities; and finally, Allie Kinnaird from IPHCC. Meegwetch for coming.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have with us in the speaker's gallery today the mayor of the town of Halton Hills, Mayor Ann Lawlor, and members of the town council and staff at the town of Halton Hills.

Welcome to Queen's Park. I'm so delighted that you're here.

HOUSE SITTINGS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 9(h), the Clerk has received written notice from the government House leader indicating that a temporary change in the weekly meeting schedule of the House is required, and therefore, the House shall commence at 9 a.m. on Monday, October 30, 2023, for the proceeding of orders of the day.

WEARING OF SCARVES

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services has informed me that he has a point of order.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I seek unanimous consent for members to wear their purple scarves in recognition of Dress Purple Day, to show our support for children in care and the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The minister is seeking unanimous consent to allow members to wear purple scarves today in the House. Agreed? Agreed.

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I understand the member for Ottawa-Vanier has a point of order that she wishes to raise.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: I do. I seek unanimous consent that, notwithstanding standing order 40(e), five minutes be allotted to the independent members as a group to respond during statements by the ministry and responses today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member is seeking unanimous consent of the House that, notwithstanding standing order 40(e), five minutes be allotted to independent members as a group to respond during statements by the ministry and responses today. Agreed? Agreed.

QUESTION PERIOD

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Ms. Marit Stiles: People in Sault Ste. Marie and across this province are mourning the tragic, horrific loss of five

people, three of them children, as a result of intimate partner violence.

Tragically, gender-based violence and femicide is on the rise in our province, and it's long past time for change. A report from July of this year found that Ontario had 30 femicides in as many weeks—30 women killed in 30 weeks.

1040

My question is to the Premier: What actions will the Premier take to prevent further tragedies like we saw in Sault Ste. Marie?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Michael Parsa: Thank you very much for the question.

Our thoughts go out to the victims, the loved ones and all those who were impacted by this unspeakable tragedy. No woman should ever be subjected to violence.

Through legislation and investments, our priority will always be to provide the supports to those impacted by violence, while also ensuring that perpetrators responsible for the horrible crime of intimate partner violence are held accountable through the justice system when possible.

When it comes to violence against women and children, we're focused on actions that deliver concrete and tangible results. That's why we have passed laws, some of which were the first of their kind in Canada, to make it harder to victimize women. That's why we've invested significantly both in violence prevention and supports for violence. When it comes to violence against women—our government will do whatever it takes to make sure that we prevent violence in all of its forms.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, we don't have time to waste. We should be doing everything we can to prevent even one more death from intimate partner violence.

Advocates have been sounding the alarm, calling for a clear and urgent strategy.

Last year, you'll recall that a coroner's inquest on the murders in Renfrew gave the province 86 recommendations, 68 of those under provincial jurisdiction. But this government rejected many of those recommendations, including choosing not to declare gender-based violence an epidemic.

To the Premier: Will the Premier stand with advocates and survivors and declare intimate partner violence an epidemic?

Interjections.

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

The Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity.

Hon. Charmaine A. Williams: Every act of intimate partner violence is heinous. It has an insidious impact that tears through multiple generations of family and can hurt communities deeply. We know that when you hurt a woman, you're not just hurting her; you're hurting her, her children, her family and communities.

That's why we have invested significantly in community supports and organizations so that women can access them to get the support and help they need. And we'll continue to fund these organizations, like the Investing in Women's Futures Program that provides wrap-around supports and housing, employment, counselling and safety planning for vulnerable women, and the Assaulted Women's Helpline, for example.

What happened in the Soo is devastating and triggering.

If you are vulnerable or experiencing violence, please call the Assaulted Women's Helpline at 1-866-863-0511. You do not need to suffer in silence.

Interjections.

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

The final supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, it might seem like a small thing to call this an epidemic, but trust me, it means everything. It means we'd give it the attention and the resources that it needs. Those groups that the minister—and I appreciate her response, but those groups, those organizations that are working on these issues in our communities are deeply underfunded. And organizations even in my own community—the South Asian Women's Centre, Abrigo Centre—if they would get the support and funding they needed to help prevent this horrifying violence from happening again, my goodness, that would mean everything.

And the rates, the demand—under the pandemic, it skyrocketed. It hasn't gone back down yet, and your government has not kept up.

Back to the Premier: Will his government commit today to call this an epidemic and adequately fund survivor services?

Interjections.

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

Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Michael Parsa: Again, I thank the honourable member for the question.

This is a serious issue, and a serious issue needs action and for to all work together to make sure we prevent violence against women in all its forms across the province, in every single community, which is why the associate minister referenced some of the supports that have been made available.

We have said from the beginning that we're working with the federal government. We welcome the support of our municipal partners. I welcome the support of the opposition. Every single person has a part to play when it comes to eliminating violence against women in this province. That's why we have made the investments. We will not back down. We will not stop until we stop violence against women in all of its forms across the province.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'll tell you, Speaker, those front-line organizations would be able to do a whole lot more if they didn't have to do fundraising full-time.

Anyway, my question is to the Premier: On September 25, the government House leader tabled a motion to accept the report of the Integrity Commissioner into the former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and to approve the recommendation to reprimand that former minister. The motion is still sitting there on the order paper.

To the Premier: When will this motion be debated?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: The Leader of the Opposition will know that we had brought the motion forward for unanimous consent and it was turned down by the opposition at that time. In subsequent conversations with members on all sides, I think there has been some agreement that the former minister has accepted responsibility, and that is why he has resigned, so I have no intention of moving forward beyond that.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: We both know that that unanimous consent was actually an attempt to bury the issue, bury the motion and prevent debate.

Speaker, this government is under criminal investigation by the RCMP. The RCMP has now even appointed a special prosecutor to investigate this case, including talking to witnesses this government muzzled by confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements.

But the Premier is just ignoring the commissioner's recommendations to officially reprimand that minister for his well-documented misconduct. They are doing whatever it takes to avoid having this conversation in the public realm and in this House.

To the Premier: Why has this government refused to hold the former minister accountable for his misconduct?

Hon. Paul Calandra: It's just the opposite, Mr. Speaker. The former minister accepted responsibility and resigned as a minister.

At the same time, there have been ample opportunities for the opposition to continue to debate on this—not only through the forum of question period, but through opposition day motions as well.

We are very committed to continuing to move forward, and not in any way, shape or form looking to avoid accountability; just the opposite. That is why the Premier asked me to ensure that we restore public trust in some of the decisions that we had made. That is why I moved to put the greenbelt back under protection and codify the boundaries under legislation, and that is why we made some reversals on 12 official plans.

We have accepted accountability for the mistakes that we made and for those decisions that did not meet the public's faith in them.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, the Integrity Commissioner found the former minister guilty of misconduct; not incompetence, not of being a poor delegator, but misconduct—two serious breaches of the Members' Integrity Act in relation to a massive breach of the public's trust that

is now under criminal investigation by the RCMP. But to hear the Premier or the minister talk about it, this was just a clumsy but well-intentioned mistake.

Back to the Premier: Will the Premier allow a full debate on that reprimand motion so he'll finally understand why giving his friends preferential treatment is wrong?

Interjections.

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

Government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: In fact, just the opposite, Mr. Speaker—we've accepted full responsibility. We've accepted the recommendations of the Auditor General. That is why we moved quickly to restore the lands that had been removed from the greenbelt back into the greenbelt. That is why we've gone further and codified the boundaries of the greenbelt in law.

At the same time, I was unhappy and the Premier was unhappy with the process that saw some of the changes in 12 official plans. That is why I reversed those plans.

It is about working better with our municipal partners, but it's also about ensuring that we move forward on building 1.5 million homes across the province of Ontario. We're not going to be distracted by that mission. We'll continue to get the job done on behalf of the people of the province of Ontario.

1050

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: My question is to the Premier.

Earlier this year, Scotiabank put out a report calling for a massive expansion of non-market housing to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income families who can't afford what the private sector is willing to build. Scotiabank said the existing stock of social housing needs to be at least doubled. The NDP just released a non-market housing strategy whose goal is to do exactly that. But two days ago, the Minister of Housing said that investing in non-market housing was "out of the playbook of Communist Russia."

Is the minister really so opposed to public investments and non-market housing that Scotiabank is too communist for him?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Actually, he wasn't listening, because what I said was, the program that he put forward was out of the playbook of Communist Russia. We've gone down this road before. Bob Rae did the exact same plan that the members are proposing, and that program cost us many, many billions of dollars more than they're promising to spend right now. They're promising to spend—I think it's \$60,000 a unit. That is what they think that they will pay to bring this type of housing on board.

Yet we are actually building social housing across the province of Ontario, working with our partners. The member opposite voted against our successful attempts to remove development charges from those types of homes.

In York region, that equates to removing \$180,000, on average, from the cost of social housing. At the same time, throughout Toronto, for instance, I've used MZO's to build social housing, and they are opposed to that.

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

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Back to the Premier: Canada's Federal Housing Advocate, Scotiabank and the National Housing Accord—a coalition of housing stakeholders from the non-profit and for-profit housing sectors—have all called for governments in Canada to double the existing stock of social housing at the least. There's a broad consensus that governments need to greatly increase investments in public, non-profit and co-op housing. But the Minister of Housing thinks this sort of public investing in housing is communism.

What hope do low- and moderate-income families have when this government is so ideologically opposed to public investment in housing?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, I don't think anybody is believing the member opposite. The people of the province of Ontario know that you cannot build a home for \$60,000, like the members opposite are suggesting. They know that is completely an unreasonable limit. In fact, when the Bob Rae government completed its proposals, they were building homes at \$170,000 per unit in 1993—so the program that they put forward does not work.

What are we doing? We're building affordable homes across the province of Ontario. We're doing it. We're building higher and more along our transit corridors. We've removed development charges from our social housing. We have updated the definition of affordable housing in the province of Ontario to include income and so that it can be reflected across all of the province of Ontario, because we know it's unique from Toronto; it's different in the northern parts of the province. We've done all that. I've used MZO's to ensure that we build social housing with our partners across the province. We are getting the job done in a way that actually makes sense and delivers that type of housing for the people of the province of Ontario.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is for the Minister of Energy.

Ontarians need access to affordable electricity. They never want to return to the days of out-of-control costs like they experienced under the previous Liberal government. Never again should the people of Ontario have to choose between eating and heating because of high electricity costs. People want our energy grid to be efficient, effective, clean and reliable. At the same time, they also want to know that our government is ensuring that their energy bills remain affordable.

Can the minister explain what actions our government is taking to ensure that Ontarians continue to have access

to electricity that is affordable, reliable and emissions-free?

Hon. Todd Smith: I'd like to thank the member from Ontario's clean energy capital, Durham region, for the question this morning.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario's electricity grid is one of the cleanest in the entire world, at over 90% clean. How we accomplish that is largely because of the nuclear fleet that we have in Ontario, providing anywhere from 50% to 60% of our electricity every day in a clean, emissions-free, reliable and affordable way. It employs 76,000 people across Canada, almost all of them here in Ontario. And it's those same people, those skilled trades, those nuclear operators, who are doing incredible work.

I was with my good friend from Huron—Bruce, the Minister of Agriculture, a couple of weeks ago at Bruce Power, where they brought back unit 6, one of the nuclear refurbishment projects, on time and on budget.

Our government is standing firmly with those skilled tradespeople in support of our energy sector, which is world-class.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: Back to the minister: I'm so proud of our government's work in advocating for Ontario's incredible nuclear industry and its highly skilled tradespeople.

The refurbishments described by the minister in his response are a massive undertaking. By completing these ahead of schedule and, yes, on budget, our government is demonstrating our commitment to building energy infrastructure projects for the future.

That's why it's so disappointing to see the opposition, once again, saying no, and once again, opposing Ontario's nuclear industry. The people of Ontario deserve far better from their elected representatives who, unfortunately, are more interested in playing politics instead of finding solutions for our energy system.

Can the minister share his views on what impact the NDP's and Liberals' opposition to our vital nuclear sector will mean to hard-working families, individuals and the skilled workforce who rely on this source of power?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton Mountain will come to order.

The Minister of Energy.

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks again to the member for the supplementary.

It is sad, actually, that the opposition is not working with us. They're working against us, and they're saying no to clean, reliable and affordable electricity in our province. They're saying no to new, good-paying jobs across our province. They're saying no to the economic growth that we're experiencing largely because we have a world-class nuclear fleet.

Perhaps most disappointing, though, is those same members from the NDP and the opposition are saying no to the skilled tradespeople, those boilermakers, those electricians, and those nuclear engineers who are working so hard every day to power our province to ensure that we

are an economic powerhouse here in Ontario, one that has created 700,000 jobs—not lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs, when we had an NDP-Liberal coalition in this province.

The Ontario PC Party and this government are going to stand up every day for those power workers across Ontario.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: My question is to the Premier.

The Ford government recently announced its intention to seek judicial review of the federal Impact Assessment Act in light of a recent opinion by the Supreme Court of Canada.

Interjections.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): You can't interrupt the member who's got the question.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Start the clock.

Member for Parkdale–High Park.

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Speaker, this government wants to build Highway 413 and pave over Ontario Place without going through the proper process. They clearly haven't learned anything from the greenbelt scandal and continue to rush through proper evaluations and environmental assessments.

Will the Attorney General stop wasting public money re-litigating a Supreme Court opinion that would deliver more transparency for Ontarians?

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

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Hon. Paul Calandra: Actually, the Supreme Court confirmed that the legislation brought forward by the Trudeau Liberal government was, in fact, beyond its jurisdiction to do so. The Attorney General, of course, is using that ruling to allow us to move forward on projects like the 413, like Ontario Place. We've made no secret of the fact that we have wanted to move on important public infrastructure across the province of Ontario, and we're going to continue to do that.

We've reflected, of course, on the Supreme Court's decision and are encouraged by that decision. We have always argued, as have other provinces, that the federal government had gone well beyond its jurisdiction. The Supreme Court validated that, and we are taking the next steps to ensure that we can move on with these very, very important public infrastructure programs.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question. The member for Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Further evidence on this government's assault on the environment: The government has

tabled four proposals to further weaken environmental oversight in the permit system for water-taking, waste management and stormwater management. These changes mean the public would lose the right to participate in decisions affecting their health and safety. Worse, public oversight would be off-loaded to the very same private companies seeking the permit.

Just like with the gutting of conservation authorities and the weakening of wetland protections, this government is once again enriching special interests, while putting soil and water at risk.

Will this government ever—ever—listen to the public instead of lobbyists and show that by cancelling these proposals?

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

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: Speaker, the very premise of the question doesn't actually line up with the facts. How can the proposed regulation be secret if it's publicly available and it has been publicly available for weeks? I don't know, but I'm sure the member would—I suggest you go on the listing, as it's very transparent, and it's why so many Ontarians can comment on these regulations right now if they want to provide their feedback.

And that's the point of the system, Speaker: We consult Ontarians with changes, always. Ontario will be regulating these activities, the licences that we speak about. But this is misinformation that's being spread. All activities will be safe—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the member to withdraw the unparliamentary comment.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: Withdraw.

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

The next question.

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Farmers, food processors and the agri-food industry provide high-quality food products for Ontario families and for our growing export market. Measures outlined in our Grow Ontario Strategy are innovative, and we are seeing positive results. Because of investments made by our government, we are witnessing an increase in more homegrown food, greater manufacturing opportunities, and improved technology for our farmers.

Unfortunately, our farmers are facing additional pressures and challenges that are making it more difficult for them to deliver a food supply chain that is safe, strong and stable.

Can the minister please explain how our government is supporting Ontario's agricultural industries to overcome barriers to their productivity?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased to share with the member opposite, who's a huge champion for our agri-food industry, that we are listening to stakeholders, we're listening to farmers, and we're bringing forward thoughtful policies that truly are making a difference.

For instance, I was so very proud to continue to support the Minister of Red Tape Reduction and his most recent piece of legislation he tabled that could translate into potential savings of \$4 million for agriculture and horticultural societies—and we're continuing to reduce burden.

But we need to be perfectly clear in this House: The biggest burden on Ontario farmers today is the carbon tax. I think every single MPP in this House should be standing up and doing the right thing for Ontario farmers and saying no to the carbon tax. I am totally disgusted with the events this past week, whereby C-234 has been completely gutted, especially during our harvest. I'm sure the agriculture minister—"minister"; I just promoted you—the agriculture critic for the NDP—

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

Mr. Will Bouma: I would love to have the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane on our side.

From the minister's response, it's clear that the carbon tax is placing a heavy burden on farmers and food producers. Ultimately, the carbon tax will negatively impact the people of Ontario. Individuals and families are already feeling the pressure of high food costs and are struggling to make ends meet. The people of Ontario are looking to our government for solutions that will reduce environmental impacts while also supporting Ontario's food processors and producers. That's why our government must act with urgency to address these serious matters.

Can the minister please explain what actions our government is taking to ensure that Ontario's agri-food sector remains stable and sustainable?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: First and foremost, I am absolutely making clear that I am absolutely disgusted with the impact of the carbon tax that the federal government has placed on Ontario farmers. Furthermore, we need to make sure that our Liberal and our NDP MPPs understand that by supporting a carbon tax, they're supporting a tax that is going to be debilitating when it comes to growing Ontario.

But it's our government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, that's listening. And because of that, we're introducing \$8 million worth of programs to support the mental health of farmers in Ontario. We're introducing, next week, \$16.5 million in our Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative. We're moving forward and trying to introduce and incent food and beverage manufacturers to save on energy and bring through innovations, and that program alone is a \$10-million investment. Ladies and gentlemen, we are also investing \$10 million in improving meat-processing capacity in this province. We're listening. We're bringing forward programs that are going to help—

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

INDIGENOUS HEALTH CARE

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Good morning, Speaker. *Remarks in Anishininiimowin.*

We have lots of people in Kiiwetinoong who are on dialysis. To get treated, they have to travel to Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout, Dryden or Kenora. They have to leave their homes. They have to leave their families. And when they go home, it isn't because they're getting better; they go home because they have to go to their own funeral.

When is this government going to ensure that there is dialysis care close to home for the people of Kiiwetinoong?

Interjections.

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

The Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you for the question—already on it. Our government is working with Indigenous partners, such as the ministry's investment in 21 Indigenous primary health care organizations across Ontario, with sites both on- and off-reservation and delivering a wide range of services. We've invested \$10.31 million in 2021-22 from the Ministry of Health to expand culturally safe and Indigenous-led mental health and addictions services for Indigenous people living on- and off-reserve.

In 2021, our government announced \$1.5 million in annual funding to expand access to specialized mental health and addictions services in northwestern Ontario.

We're getting it done.

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Speaker, \$1.5 million for Indigenous people in Ontario is peanuts.

I'll say this much: The health care system does not work for Indigenous people. I'll also say that the system is not broken; it is working exactly the way it's designed to, which is to take away the rights of the people to the lands and the resources. It's designed to harm Indigenous people. If you say or do nothing to improve that, you are part of the problem.

Speaker, I ask this government, will this government support my motion today to recognize colonialism and being Indigenous as a determinant of health? Yes or no?

Interjections.

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

Government House Leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: While I appreciate the member opposite's question, there is a tremendous amount of work that is being done across the province of Ontario with partners in Indigenous communities as well as in northern Ontario and, really, across the province.

But I can confirm for the member that we will not be supporting this motion today. We will continue to double down on our efforts to improve health care for all Ontarians, including Indigenous partners.

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We are also continuing our efforts with the federal government to address some of the very important issues that we're seeing on reserves, and we will continue that work.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Adil Shamji: Mr. Speaker, for the Premier: Just two months after the release of the Auditor General's and the Integrity Commissioner's damning greenbelt reports, the government is acting like all is forgiven. Well, the people of Ontario don't see it that way, and neither does the RCMP.

Our province was taken on a wild roller coaster ride while a handful of developers hit an \$8.3-billion jackpot. This isn't a casino in Las Vegas; this is the people's House. And as the government members are learning, the number one rule in gambling is that the House always wins.

Between the greenbelt debacle, the RCMP criminal investigation, the appointment of a special prosecutor, the urban boundary flip-flop and three ministers resigning, I've never seen a government try so hard to make their losses look like wins.

With so much money and time wasted, so much to undo and cover up, why should the people of Ontario believe this government can fix health care, housing and affordability?

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

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, Speaker, that's an odd question coming from a member who was running for the leadership of the Liberal Party but dropped out of the race so that he could support a candidate who was raising principally all of her money from developers, the same people that he was just criticizing—the same candidate who is the only candidate who actually wants to still build on the greenbelt. It is a very odd question coming from that particular gentleman. He had other people he could have supported in the Liberal leadership, but he chose to support the one person who is doing everything that he is critical of right here in the House—the pot calling the kettle black. Boy, I get it as it is over there.

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

Mr. Adil Shamji: When all the member across has Bonnie Crombie lines, that's how you know he's actually got nothing. The people of Ontario have a government that is more interested in distracting and dividing than actually righting any of its wrongs.

My constituents in Don Valley East know they aren't getting the full story on the destruction of the science centre. Where is that business case the Minister of Infrastructure promised us?

Amidst the greenbelt scandal and the urban boundary flip-flop, it's clear this government is using wedge politics to distract from the RCMP criminal investigation to divide and misdirect us.

Speaking of misdirection, yesterday the government tried to put forward a motion begging the federal government to help them clean up their own affordability mess. The Premier could focus on things like rent control, the Ontario child tax benefit or boosting social assistance instead.

Mr. Speaker, when will the Premier tell his government to start doing and stop distracting?

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

Hon. Kinga Surma: I always look forward to an opportunity to speak about how we're actually saving the science centre. The science centre, although a safe facility that continues to operate, is an old facility. What we're trying to achieve here is build a new facility with more exhibition space that will be around for young people and Ontarians for the next 50 years. We're very pleased that we're bringing the science centre to Ontario Place, keeping it alive, and bringing Ontario Place alive as well.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Natalie Pierre: My question is for the Solicitor General.

All Ontarians deserve to feel safe in their communities. That's why it's concerning to hear from individuals and families in my riding that they're worried about reports of increasing crime and violence throughout Ontario. The public safety of all Ontarians must be our government's highest priority. The people in my community and all Ontarians are counting on our government for support and solutions. While there has been progress in taking down gangs and cracking down on firearms, our government must do more to prevent and reduce criminal activity.

Can the Solicitor General please explain what actions our government is taking to increase safety in communities across Ontario?

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: I appreciate the question from my colleague. She's right: Public safety matters to everyone in Ontario and our government takes it very seriously. We're taking action to protect the people of Ontario, and that's why the government created the Guns, Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy. We're reducing illegal gun and gang violence by providing the resources to local police, prosecutors and community partners across the province, and I'm really proud of this. The strategy funds several initiatives that deliver strong enforcement and prosecution, proactive gang disruption and tailored youth and adult violence prevention. The amount that we have supported in this fund together with our federal partners is over \$256 million.

And most importantly, Mr. Speaker, we are a government that has the backs of everyone that keeps Ontario safe.

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

Ms. Natalie Pierre: The Solicitor General's response will be appreciated by the many constituents who have contacted me with their concerns. It's reassuring that initiatives through the Guns, Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy are providing communities with the resources they need.

Since 2018, under the leadership of our Premier, our government has made it clear that gun and gang violence will not be allowed to thrive in Ontario. Our province continues to see positive results from investments made by our government that support our front-line police and the

justice sector. However, we must continue to provide more resources that will help dismantle criminal activity.

Speaker, can the Solicitor General please explain how our government is supporting our front-line police officers in responding to and preventing crime and violence in Ontario?

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: I appreciate the question. The member is correct: Public safety matters, and that's exactly why, last month, our government announced an investment of more than \$2.8 million in new equipment and technology to help police services across the province better protect communities against gun and gang violence. I'm talking about closed-circuit television, more commonly known as CCTV. The funding is being delivered through a special CCTV grant program that is part of Ontario's Guns, Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy. We know that 24-hour monitoring by so many police solves services across our province is allowing them to keep our communities safe.

At the end of the day, we have a right to live safely in our own homes and communities. That's why our government will always have the backs of everyone that keeps Ontario safe.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. From the greenbelt grab to MZOs to private evangelical colleges, this government has shown that if you are a friend of the Premier, you will get their special attention.

A phone transcript has revealed that the previous Minister of Colleges and Universities, who is the current chief government whip, had assured the Premier's friend Charles McVety that McVety's private evangelical college would get university status regardless of the independent application review process. At the same time, that minister was telling this House that they "don't meddle with procedural fairness" and that there was "no way to stand in the way of an independent process."

Speaker, did the Premier know what his minister was promising to Charles McVety?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Jill Dunlop: Let's look at the timeline of events here: The former minister received PEQAB's recommendation and accepted the recommendations years ago. Then, the Court of Appeal dismissed Canada Christian College's appeal. The ministry is accepting the court's decision and thanks the courts for their work on this matter.

But maybe instead we should focus—the opposition should focus their time on matters that courts have already ruled on. They focus on, what are we doing now? Every year, this ministry spends millions of dollars on research to support the latest medical advancements, EV and other critical fields. Our government is getting shovels in the ground to build housing, highways, new student housing opportunities in this province. But, again, the opposition says no to every single initiative.

As Minister of Colleges and Universities, I'm ensuring that our government is getting it done through investing in health human resources to ensure that we have more doctors, more nurses and a new medical school in this province.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question? The member for Toronto Centre.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: When asked about the approval process for Charles McVety's private college in 2020, the former Minister of Colleges and Universities stood in this House—and I read from Hansard: "There is no other process that exists that is more fair and accountable than the process we are following," and that there was "no ministerial involvement whatsoever."

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Now we learn that, on the phone, he was actually attempting to rig the process, giving advice on submissions and promising McVety that he would get them where they needed to go, even if the independent board did not approve the request. Once again, it's only after this government has been caught that they reverse course.

Question to the Premier: Yes or no? Has this government been entirely truthful about this process?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to caution the member on the use of her language.

The Minister of Colleges and Universities can respond.

Hon. Jill Dunlop: I think I've been extremely clear: The former minister received PEQAB's recommendation and accepted those recommendations years ago. The Court of Appeal then dismissed Canada Christian College's appeal. We're moving forward.

What this ministry is doing is looking at making investments, ensuring that we have more nurses across this province. We're increasing the number of medical seats. We have new medical schools being built in Brampton as well as Scarborough, the first medical schools we've seen in the GTA in over 100 years. This is the focus of what this ministry is doing: ensuring that we have trained professionals in all fields across this province.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Vincent Ke: My question is for the Solicitor General. The issue of cars being stolen in the GTA has worsened. The CBC has cited an increase of 48.3% year over year in Ontario alone. This also happened to my close personal friends Allan, Neio and Alex etc. The same article also stated that 80% of stolen vehicles are leaving the country and much of the profits are used by organized crime rings to fund illegal activities like drug and gun trafficking.

Speaker, I have heard the growing safety concerns from the constituents in my riding of Don Valley North, and some of these crimes have escalated into more violent robberies, even break-ins to houses to obtain car keys. My question is: What is this government doing to ensure Ontarians feel safe again?

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: I want to acknowledge the question from my friend opposite. Our government finds

it unacceptable that every 40 minutes somewhere in Ontario a car is stolen. That's why we made a record investment of over \$51 million to provide the technology and grants for the municipal services and the OPP to combat this.

Mr. Speaker, just two weeks ago, the Attorney General and I were in Bromont, Quebec, for the federal, provincial and territorial meeting, and I asked my federal colleagues to step it up at the border and step it up at the port of Montreal. It's completely unacceptable that our cars are going out through the port of Montreal.

I want to acknowledge the announcement made yesterday by the Toronto Police Service, with a record bust: Over a thousand cars were identified and recovered. Thank you to Chief Demkiw and thank you to everyone at the Toronto Police Service who is working to keep our communities safe.

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

Mr. Vincent Ke: Thank you to the Solicitor General for his response. Speaker, many constituents have raised questions to me on how so many of these stolen vehicles end up in Africa and the Middle East, as this has apparently become very lucrative to criminals.

Canada needs updated vehicle theft prevention regulations, as well as strong enforcement at our borders. My follow-up question to the Solicitor General is, how can the multi-levels of government coordinate with each other to resolve this public safety issue?

Hon. Michael S. Krzner: I want to thank the member for the question. An example of this is how we worked together with all—and, thanks to Premier Ford coalescing all the Premiers and territorial leaders in such a short time to write to the federal government and to urge them to enact meaningful bail reform, C-48 is now in the Senate. And it's as a result of the leadership of this Premier.

It's important to note that we want to keep these violent and repeat offenders off our streets, and that's exactly what we're going to do. At the end of the day, our government cares deeply about our public safety. We will do everything we can to keep Ontario safe.

HOUSING

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Associate Minister of Housing. Ontario's housing crisis is having a profound impact on people all across our province. Parents are worried that their children may never be able to afford to live near them. Young families are struggling to save enough for a down payment. Seniors on fixed incomes worry about being displaced. Everyone in Ontario deserves to have a place to live that fits their needs and their budget. Individuals and families are looking for real solutions in finding affordable housing, and they need answers now. That is why our government must continue to focus on addressing the housing crisis.

Speaker, can the associate minister please explain what actions our government is taking to increase the supply of housing across the province of Ontario?

Hon. Rob Flack: Thank you to the member for Brantford–Brant. I know he has children who live in this province who want to stay in this province. We cannot let the dream of home ownership be extinguished.

Speaker, our plan is working: 11% of our 1.5-million-home target has already been achieved, 165,000 homes—up, I might add, 20,000 per year than what the previous government achieved. Our plan is working: 14,000 new rental starts year over year, up an impressive 43.5% over last year. Our plan is working, but we know that much more needs to be done. For example, working with the Minister of Infrastructure, we are looking at surplus government lands where we can build affordable and attainable homes for all our people: seniors, students, newcomers and, yes, first-time homebuyers.

Speaker, we will not let the dream of home ownership be extinguished.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Will Bouma: It is so positive to hear about the steps our government is taking to increase housing supply that will ensure better affordability for buyers and renters. Our government was elected with a mandate to change lives by making housing affordable once again. People who work hard and save diligently deserve to know that they won't find themselves forever shut out from owning a home. For those who rent, they deserve security, not the fear of rising rents. That is why our government must implement a clear plan to bring about positive results.

Speaker, can the associate minister please explain what actions our government is taking to open opportunities for Ontarians to find homes that fit their needs and their budgets?

Hon. Rob Flack: Again, thank you to the member from Brantford–Brant. We have a mission, and that's to get keys into people's hands who need housing, whether it's housing stability or the dream of home ownership. That is why we're cutting red tape. The minister below here is right on track with his bills. We're reducing costs. We are expanding the opportunity, whether it's laneway suites, whether it's duplexes, whether it's modular housing.

We also know that government cannot solve this crisis on its own. That is why we are convening a comprehensive housing summit in late November, a call to action by all stakeholders. Bold, innovative and deliverable results will be achieved. We're looking at all partners, whether municipal, not-for-profit, modular home builders, community home builders and, yes, the private sector, because we believe the private sector is a key component to getting these houses built in the next 10 years.

Speaker, we have a bias for action. We have a sense of urgency. Under this Premier and this government, we will not let the dream of home ownership be extinguished.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Wayne Gates: My question is to the Premier. In my community, in Niagara-on-the-Lake, people are facing challenges accessing front-line health care services. More than one in every three residents, many of whom are

seniors, don't have a family doctor. Getting a nurse practitioner back in the town would help fill this gap in services. The town has reached out to the Minister of Health, who confirmed they would be getting the nurse practitioner services they need. But the town hasn't heard back in a year.

Why is the government refusing to help the Lord Mayor, the town council and the people of Niagara-on-the-Lake get the health care they need and deserve?

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The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Well, I'm not sure where the member opposite has been when we announced a \$30-million expansion to primary care in the province of Ontario, and we are assessing those interests right now. I believe the member opposite and his NDP party voted against that investment—\$30 million, an increase in primary care multidisciplinary approach, one that I may add is the first time that we have had an expansion in the primary care multidisciplinary area since we formed these projects in the beginning.

We absolutely understand that we need to expand, but that is why we are doing so much, whether it is working with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario and directing them to review, expedite and ultimately license internationally educated physicians who are waiting to practise in the province of Ontario.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: Back to the Premier: Minister, you made a promise to the Lord Mayor and the council. Please deliver on that promise.

Niagara-on-the-Lake isn't the only community suffering due to this government's mishandling of health care. In Fort Erie, residents are dealing with a reduction in the hours at the Douglas Memorial urgent care. Residents who show up late at night in need of help are being turned away.

We know that this government's actions like Bill 124 and underfunding hospitals by billions have worsened the staffing crisis in our hospitals. When is this government going to address the staffing crisis, stop fighting nurses in court and ensure Fort Erie gets back 24/7 urgent care services today?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Where was the member when we were announcing, and at the groundbreaking for the South Niagara Hospital? Oh, that's right, he was actually there.

So you understand that we are making investments in Niagara region with a new hospital, with expanded primary care clinics that are going to make a real difference in his community and communities across Ontario. We will continue to make these investments whether or not the member opposite and the NDP vote against them.

But I must say, when we make investments and expansions in residency positions, the NDP vote against it. When we make investments in primary care expansion—\$30 million—they vote against it. When we make investments in over 50 capital builds, whether they are new

builds like the South Niagara Hospital or expansions and renovations, the NDP vote against it.

We'll get the job done. The NDP continue to oppose all of these health care investments.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Matthew Rae: It's time for a real question. A couple of weeks ago, I had the honour of representing our great Minister of Long-Term Care at the grand opening of the West Perth Village, an upgraded long-term-care home of 128 new beds in my riding of Perth–Wellington. It was a great day, Speaker. I want to give a shout-out to the West Perth community and all the volunteers that came together to make this project a reality.

The board began this project many, many years ago. It's unfortunate, under the previous Liberal government, supported by the NDP, there was no movement—none, Speaker—on getting these 128 beds built.

Can the Minister of Long-Term Care please inform this House on what our government is doing to get long-term care homes built across my riding of Perth–Wellington and Ontario?

Hon. Stan Cho: Speaker, what a question from the member from Perth–Wellington this morning. He brings up some important facts, doesn't he? It's under the leadership of this Premier that this government, in five years, has 18,000 homes built or shovels in the ground today.

Now, let's not get lost in the numbers. We need to build more, and we know that. The member mentions West Perth, which is fantastic, but those aren't the only beds that have been announced since this government came to power. Let's talk about Ritz Lutheran Villa, 128 redeveloped beds; Knollcrest Lodge, three new spaces; Saugeen Valley Nursing Home, 87 redeveloped spaces; and Strathcona Long Term Care, nine new spaces. Speaker, we're going to keep going, because it's not just about capacity. It's about health human resources, investing nearly \$5 billion to have the best quality of care and focusing on outcomes as well.

I want to thank the member from Perth–Wellington for a fantastic question this morning.

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

Mr. Matthew Rae: The Minister of Long-Term Care will be glad to know I've got another great question for him. I'm glad our government is taking immediate action to support our seniors and the ones who literally built our great province.

The minister alluded to some of the other great projects in my riding. I'm pleased to say, under this Premier and this Minister of Long-Term Care, we are going to build, and are in the process of building, 943 new long-term-care beds in my riding alone. Speaker, as we know, under the previous Liberal government they built 611 beds in the entire province.

As many people in this place will know, interest rates are higher, there's a rising cost to construction, but that's not stopping us, Speaker. We're going to continue to get long-term-care beds built across Ontario.

Can the minister please share with this House what our government is doing to continue to support our long-term-care sector to get it done?

Hon. Stan Cho: That member is not only tall, he's hard-working, and it really shows this morning, Speaker.

You know what this last Minister of Long-Term Care did, recognizing that construction was challenged with increased costs and supply chain challenges? He introduced the construction funding subsidy, which led to the building of over 11,000 spaces for our wonderful seniors in the province of Ontario. I want to thank the minister for that work.

But that's not all he did. He introduced something called the Local Priorities Fund, which actually targets the outcomes within our health care system. That includes, of course, long-term-care homes.

Do you know what this member got in his riding? Let's talk about it, Speaker: \$8,700 to Spruce Lodge for the purchase of diagnostic equipment; \$52,000 to Kingsway Lodge for the purchase of specialized geriatric equipment, as well as better outcomes for the dementia seniors who live there; \$19,000 to Kingsway Lodge for the purchase of diagnostic equipment, and the list goes on, Speaker. Because why? If we can keep our seniors out of the hospitals for minor ailments, fractures, that's a better outcome for the hard-working people of this province.

Let's say it again: Seniors built this country. They took care of us. That member and this government is taking care of them.

MISSING PERSONS

Miss Monique Taylor: My question is for the Premier: 212 days ago, my private member's bill, Bill 74, Missing Persons Amendment Act, 2023, was ordered to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. That was seven months ago.

Since then, there have been numerous vulnerable missing persons reported across Ontario. Some have died. Some have been found and reunited with their loved ones. Others have yet to come home. These cases have shaken neighbourhoods, and the search continues to this day.

Bill 74 is a solution that, since read into this Legislature on March 6, has come up time and time again as a viable option and resource for our communities. It addresses the safety and well-being of lost vulnerable persons.

So I ask the Premier, when will you join the over 100,000 Ontarians who have signed petitions, bring Bill 74 to committee and pass this important legislation?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Solicitor General.

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: Mr. Speaker, everyone has a right to live safely in their own homes and communities. I want to give a shout-out today, because it's important, to thank the 911 call operators, the telecommunicators. They keep Ontario safe each and every day. Just this past Saturday night, I toured late in the evening the comm centre in Peel.

But, Mr. Speaker, whether you are a senior, whether you are a person with an exceptionality, whether you are a

young person, everyone has an equal right to be safe in our province. We take our public safety concerns extremely seriously, and I want to reassure everyone in Ontario that we will always have the backs of everyone who keeps this province safe.

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

Miss Monique Taylor: Back to the Premier: The weather is changing in Ontario. Winter is around the corner. Soon we will have snow and cold temperatures to compete with. Water will be more dangerous, sunset earlier in the day, all of which will make finding a missing person even more challenging. Our most vulnerable will be left to brave these elements and so will those looking for them.

Bill 74 fills a gap and adds another tool to the tool box during the most critical time when a loved one goes missing: the time when they may still be close to home, confused, scared and trying to find a familiar face; a time when neighbours can help the search, increase their awareness and check their familiar areas like their backyards, the bus routes and the parks.

So I ask again, for all Ontarians, including our most vulnerable populations, when are you going to pass Bill 74 and support the expanded alert for vulnerable missing people?

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: Again, everyone in our province has a right to live safely, but what we're doing—and I want to tell the member opposite—is we're putting more boots on the ground. We're making an investment at the Ontario Police College so that we can have more people to keep our communities safe, whether you are a senior, whether you are a young person, whether you are a person with exceptionalities.

Everyone has a right to be safe in our province and that's why our government has made unprecedented investments to put more boots on the ground: to keep our communities safe, to fight auto theft and to keep the violent and repeat offenders off our streets. To this government, our public safety matters.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. That concludes our question period for this morning.

DEFERRED VOTES

TAXATION

IMPOSITION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have a deferred vote on private member's notice of motion number 69 on the elimination of carbon tax on grocery items.

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

The division bells rang from 1141 to 1146.

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

On October 25, 2022, Mr. Jones, Chatham-Kent–Leamington, moved private member's notice of motion number 69.

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

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Sandhu, Amarjot
Andrew, Jill	Hardeman, Ernie	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harris, Mike	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Babikian, Aris	Hogarth, Christine	Sattler, Peggy
Barnes, Patrice	Jones, Sylvia	Scott, Laurie
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Jones, Trevor	Shaw, Sandy
Blais, Stephen	Jordan, John	Skelly, Donna
Bouma, Will	Kanapathi, Logan	Smith, Dave
Bourgouin, Guy	Karpoche, Bhutila	Smith, David
Bresee, Ric	Ke, Vincent	Smith, Graydon
Burch, Jeff	Kernaghan, Terence	Smith, Laura
Byers, Rick	Kerzner, Michael S.	Smith, Todd
Calandra, Paul	Khanjin, Andrea	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Stiles, Marit
Cho, Stan	Lecce, Stephen	Surma, Kinga
Coe, Lorne	Lumsden, Neil	Tangri, Nina
Crawford, Stephen	Mamakwa, Sol	Taylor, Monique
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Martin, Robin	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dowie, Andrew	McCarthy, Todd J.	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Jill	McGregor, Graham	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fedeli, Victor	Mulroney, Caroline	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fife, Catherine	Pang, Billy	Vanthof, John
Flack, Rob	Parsa, Michael	Vaugeois, Lise
Ford, Doug	Pasma, Chandra	Wai, Daisy
Ford, Michael D.	Piccini, David	West, Jamie
French, Jennifer K.	Pierre, Natalie	Williams, Charmaine A.
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Quinn, Nolan	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
Gates, Wayne	Rae, Matthew	Yakabuski, John
Gill, Parm	Riddell, Brian	
Glover, Chris	Sabawy, Sheref	

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

Nays

Collard, Lucille	McMahon, Mary-Margaret
McCrimmon, Karen	Schreiner, Mike

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 88; the nays are 4.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

PROTECTING VULNERABLE
PERSONS IN SUPPORTIVE LIVING
ACCOMMODATION ACT, 2023
LOI DE 2023 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES PERSONNES VULNÉRABLES
DANS LES LOGEMENTS SUPERVISÉS

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

Bill 38, An Act to establish a framework for the licensing of supportive living accommodation / Projet de loi

loi 38, Loi établissant un cadre pour la délivrance de permis d'exploitation de logements supervisés.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Call in the members. This is another five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1151 to 1152.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On October 25, 2023, Mr. Burch moved second reading of Bill 38, An Act to establish a framework for the licensing of supportive living accommodation.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Andrew, Jill	Glover, Chris	Shaw, Sandy
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Karpoche, Bhutila	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Blais, Stephen	Kernaghan, Terence	Stiles, Marit
Bourgouin, Guy	Mamakwa, Sol	Taylor, Monique
Burch, Jeff	McCrimmon, Karen	Vanthof, John
Collard, Lucille	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Vaugeois, Lise
Fife, Catherine	Pasma, Chandra	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Sattler, Peggy	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
French, Jennifer K.	Schreiner, Mike	
Gates, Wayne	Shamji, Adil	

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until counted by the Clerk.

Nays

Anand, Deepak	Hardeman, Ernie	Rae, Matthew
Babikian, Aris	Harris, Mike	Riddell, Brian
Barnes, Patrice	Hogarth, Christine	Sabawy, Sheref
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Jones, Sylvia	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bouma, Will	Jones, Trevor	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Bresee, Ric	Jordan, John	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Byers, Rick	Kanapathi, Logan	Scott, Laurie
Calandra, Paul	Ke, Vincent	Skelly, Donna
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kerzner, Michael S.	Smith, Dave
Cho, Stan	Khanjin, Andrea	Smith, David
Coe, Lorne	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Smith, Graydon
Crawford, Stephen	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, Laura
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Todd
Dowie, Andrew	Martin, Robin	Surma, Kinga
Dunlop, Jill	McCarthy, Todd J.	Tangri, Nina
Fedeli, Victor	McGregor, Graham	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Flack, Rob	Mulroney, Caroline	Thompson, Lisa M.
Ford, Doug	Pang, Billy	Tibollo, Michael A.
Ford, Michael D.	Parsa, Michael	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Piccini, David	Wai, Daisy
Gill, Parm	Pierre, Natalie	Williams, Charmaine A.
Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Quinn, Nolan	Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 28; the nays are 66.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negated.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you, Speaker. Her Honour awaits.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario entered the chamber of the Legislative Assembly and took her seat upon the throne.

ROYAL ASSENT
SANCTION ROYALE

Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell (Lieutenant Governor): Pray be seated.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly of the province has, at its present meetings thereof, passed certain bills to which, in the name of and on behalf of the said Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

The Deputy Clerk (Ms. Valerie Quioc Lim): The following are the titles of the bills to which Your Honour's assent is prayed:

An Act to amend the Remembrance Week Act, 2016 /
Loi modifiant la Loi de 2016 sur la semaine du Souvenir.
1200

An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters /
Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'emploi, le travail et d'autres questions.

An Act to revive 1105954 Ontario Limited.

An Act to revive League Technique Inc.

An Act to revive Ice Hockey Resources Ltd.

An Act to revive Parrington's Food Market Limited.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): In His Majesty's name, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor assents to these bills.

Au nom de Sa Majesté, Son Honneur la lieutenant-gouverneure sanctionne ces projets de loi.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Your Honour, when we gathered in May to mark the coronation of King Charles III, I remarked that you have the very same commitment to public service as the late Queen you served. It is tireless, it is genuine, and it is total. And the parallels don't end there. Like the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, yours has been the longest tenure of service by a Lieutenant Governor in the history of Ontario.

Over the years, you have focused on building resilience and sustainability through inclusive prosperity, environmental stewardship and social cohesion, as well as safeguarding democracy. But the promotion of these values is not only the focus of your mandate as Lieutenant Governor; these are themes you have advanced throughout your life.

In the introduction to the Speaking of Democracy exhibit, you wrote that "an enduring and healthy democracy means getting involved," and, Your Honour, your involvement has been a shining example for all of us. Since your installation in 2014, you have attended literally thousands of events in all 124 provincial ridings, making over 100 official visits to municipalities and over 25 visits to First Nations communities.

One such community event that you attended took place in Wellington-Halton Hills on a Sunday afternoon last September. As you may recall, you had been invited to Wellington Place by the Fergus Legion to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. But, sadly, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had passed away just a few days earlier. Notwithstanding your own feelings of loss, you kept your

commitment, and your gracious presence and comforting manner turned the event into a celebration of Her late Majesty's life.

Ma'am, your message was uplifting and inspiring, exactly what we needed to hear that day and, when you finished speaking, sadness had been turned to joy. You made the effort to visit every table and to chat with every person there. This was just one day in your life as vice regal, but you have done this everywhere you have gone for more than eight years.

You engage with Ontarians at community events, round tables, award ceremonies—and even online, since COVID changed the way we work, meet and share—continually encouraging people to listen to each other and to engage in meaningful dialogue. Our Parliament and our province are better because of Your Honour's dedicated, selfless and passionate service.

Thank you, God bless you, and God save the King.

Applause.

Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell (Lieutenant Governor): Thank you all, and thank you, Mr. Speaker, for those overly generous words.

I've told you before that whenever I walk into this special place, I'm absolutely in awe and very humbled by what it is that we get to do together in the interests of the people of this province. This has been a remarkable journey. It has been the position of a lifetime, and for that I'm grateful. In fact, the word I was thinking about as I walked in this morning was actually one of gratitude.

This is an amazing province. It's a province with such a proud history. It's a province that is so full of promise and possibility. The future is so very bright. And I can say that because I've been so well received in hundreds and thousands of places around this province. I've had conversations, as you suggest, Mr. Speaker, with people who have told me their ambitions, their aspirations for themselves and their families, and they've also shared their stories of pain and agony and grief that we've all gone through together in the last few years.

But I can also point confidently to the promise of this province because I see the work that all of you do every day. It is a career. It's a calling that is a daily event in your lives, and the effort you make is noticed. I see at times your creativity, your courage, your compassion and your overall desire to shape this place, this province we live in—to shape it in a way that is going to be better for your constituents and their families.

For me, it has been the privilege of a lifetime. It has been such a great opportunity to represent Their Majesties; to try to provide tradition, continuity, stability under trying times—but, for me, to be able to be a small part in encouraging Ontario to be the very best that it can be, to be a society that is caring and resilient, to be a society that is committed more than ever to the safeguarding of democracy, reconciliation and also sustainability.

Mr. Premier and all members of this House, thank you so much for the respect that you've always shown me and the office which I hold. I know that you will continue that with my successor.

So one last time, Mr. Speaker, may I wish each and every one of you continued good health and so much happiness and fulfillment. Be kind to one another. Thank you. Merci. Meegwetch.

Applause.

Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell (Lieutenant Governor):

And if may have one last word, as I look up in the gallery, may I say thank you, Mr. Speaker, for inviting my small but mighty team to join me this morning.

Applause.

Her Honour was then pleased to retire.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): This House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1210 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Deepak Anand: It is an absolute pleasure to introduce Soha Sarfraz, a youth from Mississauga who is here for the first time and is exploring a career in politics.

Soha, welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I wasn't here on the day when the pages were being introduced, so I want to welcome and thank Isolde from the riding of Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill—and, of course, all the pages—for the great work that she does. But since she's from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill, I wanted to thank her and welcome her to Queen's Park.

Thank you so much for everything you're doing. See you back in the riding, okay?

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated October 26, 2023, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 110(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

ALLIED CONTRACTORS (KITCHENER) LIMITED ACT, 2023

Madame Collard moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr32, An Act to revive Allied Contractors (Kitchener) Limited.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

DRESS PURPLE DAY

Hon. Michael Parsa: Speaker, I rise today to recognize October 27 as Dress Purple Day in Ontario. I would like to thank the members of the House who have joined me in supporting this important cause by wearing purple today—all my colleagues.

Dress Purple Day reminds all of us that we all have an important role in promoting the safety and well-being of children, youth, families and their communities. Every year, children's aid societies and Indigenous child and family well-being agencies, along with local and provincial partners, wear purple to remind people across Ontario that support is available. Children's aid societies are key partners in child welfare delivery—not only on Dress Purple Day but every single day.

Our government has been collaborating with our partners to redesign Ontario's child welfare system. We're transforming child and family services to make sure that all children, youth and their families receive the help they need to be safe and stay together. Our children and youth in care deserve a level playing field where they are all set up for success in adulthood. That's why, earlier this year, our government announced an investment of \$170 million over three years in the Ready, Set, Go Program. This program provides youth transitioning out of care with earlier and more substantive supports to develop the life skills and mentorship experiences they need to pursue post-secondary education, skilled trades training and employment opportunities. This will help youth build stability in their lives and thrive after care.

Speaker, we have heard for many years that the approach to supporting Indigenous children, youth and families needs to evolve to reflect the central role that First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities have in the well-being of their children and families. In March 2022, Wabaseemoong Independent Nations, Ontario and Canada signed a trilateral coordination agreement in respect of child and family services. The agreement supports the implementation of the Wabaseemoong Independent Nations customary care code. This was the first coordination agreement signed in Ontario. It's the second agreement in Canada since the federal legislation, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families, came into force in 2020.

On March 31, 2023, a second coordination agreement, between Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, or KI, Ontario and Canada, was executed to support the implementation of KI's child and family services law, which was the first in Treaty 9 territory. I was so proud to attend this historic event in person. Alongside my colleague the Minister of Indigenous Affairs, we witnessed the hard work and dedication of the KI community first-hand. The signing of

coordination agreements such as these helps to support Indigenous governments to exercise jurisdiction over child and family services, and foster reconciliation overall.

In addition to this work, we launched a legislative review of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, the CYFSA, which came into force in April 2018. This act is an important one. It governs a range of youth services such as adoption, child welfare and protection services, Indigenous child and family services, out-of-home care services and youth justice services. We need to make sure it continues to promote the best interests, protection and well-being of children, youth and families. We met with sector and community partners, First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, and children, youth and families with lived experience, and I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the individuals and families from across the province who took the time to provide their feedback. The insight and perspectives they shared will be compiled into a report that we will make available to the public. This will guide our next steps as we continue to improve the child welfare system.

Our government's vision is for an Ontario where all children, youth and families, including those receiving child welfare services, have the supports they need to succeed and thrive. Together with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, the Association of Native Child and Family Services Agencies of Ontario, individual children's aid societies and local and provincial partners, we are strengthening families and communities across the province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you once again, and I want to thank all my colleagues in the House, for helping raise awareness about this important day. And let's remember that we all have an important role in supporting children, youth and families on not only Dress Purple Day but every single day.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Responses?

Miss Monique Taylor: Tomorrow is Friday, October 27, and as the official opposition critic for children, community and social services, I'm proud to talk about the significance of tomorrow, Dress Purple Day.

On Dress Purple Day, children's aid societies and Indigenous child and family well-being agencies across Ontario will highlight the role that individuals and communities play in supporting the safety and well-being of children, youth and their families.

1310

We must all join this call to action and awareness. Our support means we acknowledge, recognize and want to be an active part of the solution for children, youth and their families in all of our communities across the province.

We know the kinds of challenges families are facing, which are affecting them more than ever and more often, from food and housing insecurity to mental health and addictions to intimate partner violence. These are the very challenges our communities are struggling to overcome. These are the calls, emails and interactions that we are having daily with our families, friends, neighbours, constituents, stakeholders, community partners and leaders.

When a cry for help comes to our offices, we look for a solution. We share the resources and the tools. We make connections to services and supports that are usually overwhelmed, underfunded or simply pushed to the brink of capacity or, worse yet, closure. All too often, the cries overwhelm the solutions and the referral wheel once again is entered. Asks become survival. Children and youth take on too much weight to bear. Healthy relationships are tough and far between, and tough decisions are made, including housing options, education and health care. Vulnerable situations are escalated, the daily flood of our daily actions and thoughts which take over the day-to-day of so many, especially our children and youth.

Children and youth should be growing up in a world which is supporting them. They should be making lasting memories, learning free from violence in a safe and supportive classroom; building their sense of belonging, their place in the community, their social strength built on love, hope and ambition. They should have the confidence that we are all working together for their futures, their health and their safety, including their mental and physical well-being.

The Dress Purple campaign emphasizes key messaging that is important to share. Here are a few quotes: "We want anyone facing challenges to know that they are part of a community that cares." "There is help and support." "You are not alone."

Here is a quote from Solomon Owoo, interim CEO of the OACAS. He says, "We encourage all Ontarians to come together and send a powerful message to children, youth and families on October 27. We want them to know that there are resources available if they need help, and that they are not alone."

The campaign also emphasizes the community's responsibility to speak up for every child and youth's right to safety and well-being in all spaces, not just their physical safety and well-being, but also their right to have intersectional identity—such as their culture, race, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression—protected and supported. This right extends to the home, the group home, at school and in the community.

We have a collective responsibility to promote the safety and well-being of children and young people in our communities. It is critical we help young people build strong networks of support. Helping children and youth develop strong connections can lessen their vulnerability to harm and can help them recognize where they can turn when they need support.

Solomon went on to say, "Promoting the safety, health, and well-being of children, youth, and families requires system-level thinking. It requires critical self-reflection on the part of child and family service system partners at all levels, from community-based organizations and children's aid societies to the Ontario government. Dress Purple Day is an opportunity to reflect on the work ahead towards a child and family service system that consistently delivers high-quality, culturally relevant, trauma-informed, community-based care."

While the focus of the campaign has shifted away from child abuse prevention education, we still want to remind

adults of Katelynn's Principle, that they have a responsibility to call on their local child welfare agency if they have a concern about a child or youth. On Dress Purple Day and every day, let's all show children, youth and families across this province that they are part of a community that cares and that they matter.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Response?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's an honour today to rise with my colleagues to reaffirm our support for children and youth, especially our most vulnerable children and youth, on Dress Purple Day and to reaffirm my commitment to working across party lines to support children and youth in our communities.

For years, children's aid societies, Indigenous and child and family well-being associations in Ontario have used the month of October to remind the public about their role in keeping children and youth in our communities across this province safe. Dress Purple Day is about protecting and supporting children and youth and strengthening families through enhanced community-based prevention and early intervention. It's also an opportunity to address systemic discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, ability, poverty and sexual orientation that can lead to overrepresentation in surveillance of families in certain communities.

Every child and youth in Ontario has the right to feel safe. Every child and youth in Ontario has a right to be well cared for—their physical and mental health and their community connections. On Dress Purple Day, we have a role to play to help vulnerable families and children and youth to feel supported.

With the focus on prevention, I want to talk about the important work of addressing adverse childhood experiences. I want to give a shout-out to Family and Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington and their partners who have a coalition addressing adverse childhood experiences. We know that by addressing adverse childhood experiences, we strengthen youth resiliency, we prevent challenges happening later in life and we improve the quality of life of children, youth and their families.

I also want to just highlight the importance of addressing the mental health challenges that so many young people are facing and the importance of investing in things like youth wellness hubs and other supports for young people to make them more resilient and to make sure we address adverse childhood experiences and that we ensure youth have the supports they need.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I'm honoured to rise today to speak about Dress Purple Day and highlight the important role that we all play in supporting vulnerable children, youth and families year-round. The children in our lives deserve our love, encouragement and safe-keeping. I am firm in my stance that any child at any time has a trusting and supportive voice in me, in this chamber, in Beaches–East York and in confidence.

Dress Purple Day is hosted every October to raise awareness of the critical work that children's aid societies

do. They are integral community organizations that are part of the circle of care that promotes the well-being of children, youth and families. Dress Purple Day brings attention to the early help and supportive services available to families facing challenges and to the prevention and early intervention work children's aid societies do to guide families and keep children and youth at home. They are strongly committed to assisting everyone with informed, anti-racist, equitable policies that protect the needs of Indigenous and Black and African Canadian communities. We have an obligation to keep the children in our communities safe. Beyond being kind role models for children, they should be able to come to us to find resources and to share concerns.

In my riding of beautiful Beaches–East York, we are lucky to have a plethora of organizations and spaces making the world a brighter place for children. Thorncliffe Park Youth Wellness Hub is a welcoming space for youth health and wellness offering free services and fun. Michael Garron Hospital's Child and Youth Anxiety Clinic provides clinical care and mental health services for children and teenagers. We have active Girl Guides and Scouts Canada programs.

1320

As representatives, we have the opportunity to provide children and families with the resources they need to live happily and free from harm. We can work together with children's aid societies in our areas and advocate for fulsome funding for their services. Children need and deserve safe communities that include trusted adults. Dress Purple Day is a reminder for us all to create a world that fosters this.

Keep children safe, happy and flourishing so they are ready to be the change-makers of the future. Dress purple on October 27 to show your support.

PETITIONS

ONTARIO PLACE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: This petition is titled "Save Ontario Place" and it reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario Place has been a cherished public space for over 50 years, providing joy, recreation and cultural experiences for Ontarians and tourists alike and holds cultural and historical significance as a landmark that symbolizes Ontario's commitment to innovation, sustainability and public engagement;

"Whereas redevelopment that includes a private, profit-driven venture by an Austrian spa company prioritizes commercial interests over the needs and desires of the people of Ontario, and it is estimated that the cost to prepare the grounds for redevelopment and build a 2,000-car underground garage will cost approximately \$650 million;...

"Whereas meaningful public consultations with diverse stakeholders have not been adequately conducted and the

Ontario NDP has sent a letter of support for a public request to begin an investigation into a value-for-money and compliance audit with respect to proposed redevelopment of Ontario Place;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to halt any further development plans for Ontario Place, engage in meaningful and transparent public consultations to gather input and ideas for the future of Ontario Place, develop a comprehensive and sustainable plan for the revitalization of Ontario Place that prioritizes environmental sustainability, accessibility and inclusivity, and ensure that any future development of Ontario Place is carried out in a transparent and accountable manner, with proper oversight, public input and adherence to democratic processes.”

I couldn't agree more. I will affix my signature and pass it on to the page.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

M^{me} Lucille Collard: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario's social assistance rates are well below Canada's official Market Basket Measure poverty line and far from adequate to cover the rising costs of food and rent: \$733 for individuals on OW and \$1,308 for ODSP;

“Whereas an open letter to the Premier and two cabinet ministers, signed by over 230 organizations, recommends that social assistance rates be doubled for both Ontario Works ... and the Ontario Disability Support Program...;

“Whereas small increases to ODSP have still left these citizens below the poverty line. Both they and those receiving the frozen OW rates are struggling to survive at this time of alarming inflation;

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

“We, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly to double social assistance rates for OW and ODSP.”

I agree with this petition, will affix my signature and give it to page Danté to bring to the table.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I'm proud to read this petition for the first time in the House. The petition is entitled “Stop Billing Recipients of OW and ODSP for Ambulance Transportation.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas ambulance fees for OW, ODSP and GAINS recipients are waived under the Ontario Works Act, the Ontario Disability Support Program Act and Family Benefits Act;

“Whereas these recipients are still initially billed every time they are transported to the hospital and must have the fee waived after they receive care;

“Whereas this mechanism causes anxiety for those who are entitled to have their bill covered and additional work for caseworkers and health care workers;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to:

“—immediately eliminate billing recipients of OW, ODSP and GAINS for their essential use of ambulance transportation to the hospital;

“—implement a program, like the easy-to-use Fair Pass Transit Discount Program, where OW, ODSP and GAINS recipients may upload proof of income and make it subject to renewal annually;

“—to not include hidden fees or mechanisms that take from initiatives or programs that are specifically designed for recipients of OW, ODSP and GAINS who have high health care needs.”

I will proudly affix my signature to this petition, send it to the centre table and also give my gratitude in extension to the hard work of Katias Yee, who is in the House today, for collecting these signatures.

HEALTH CARE

MPP Lise Vaugeois: This petition is entitled “Stop Ford's Health Care Privatization Plan.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontarians should get health care based on need—not the size of your wallet;

“Whereas Premier Doug Ford and Health Minister Sylvia Jones say they're planning to privatize parts of health care;

“Whereas privatization will bleed nurses, doctors and PSWs out of our public hospitals, making the health care crisis worse;

“Whereas privatization always ends with patients getting a bill;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately stop all plans to further privatize Ontario's health care system, and fix the crisis in health care by:

“—repealing Bill 124 and recruiting, retaining and respecting doctors, nurses and PSWs with better pay and better working conditions;

“—licensing tens of thousands of internationally educated nurses and other health care professionals already in Ontario, who wait years and pay thousands to have their credentials certified;

“—making education and training free or low-cost for nurses, doctors and other health care professionals;

“—incentivizing doctors and nurses to choose to live and work in northern Ontario;

“—funding hospitals to have enough nurses on every shift, on every ward.”

I fully support this petition, and will sign it and give it to Margo.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: This petition is titled “Stop Billing Recipients of OW and ODSP for Ambulance Transportation,” and it reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas ambulance fees for OW, ODSP and GAINS recipients are waived under the Ontario Works Act, Ontario Disability Support Program Act and Family Benefits Act;

“Whereas these recipients are still initially billed every time they are transported to the hospital and must have the fee waived after they receive care;

“Whereas this mechanism causes anxiety for those who are entitled to have their bill covered and additional work for caseworkers and health care workers;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government of Ontario to:

—immediately eliminate billing recipients of OW, ODSP and GAINS for their essential use of ambulance transportation to the hospital;

—implement a program, like the easy-to-use Fair Pass Transit Discount Program, where OW, ODSP and GAINS recipients may upload proof of income and make it subject to renewal annually;

—to not include hidden fees or mechanisms that take from initiatives or programs that are specifically designed for recipients of OW, ODSP and GAINS who have high health care needs.”

I, too, want to thank Katias for the signatures on this petition and I’m happy to affix my signature to it.

ONTARIO PLACE

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: This petition is entitled “Save Ontario Place.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario Place has been a cherished public space for over 50 years, providing joy, recreation and cultural experiences for Ontarians and tourists alike and holds cultural and historical significance as a landmark that symbolizes Ontario’s commitment to innovation, sustainability and public engagement;

“Whereas redevelopment that includes a private, profit-driven venture by an Austrian spa company prioritizes commercial interests over the needs and desires of the people of Ontario, and it is estimated that the cost to prepare the grounds for redevelopment and build a 2,000-car underground garage will cost approximately \$650 million;

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“Whereas there are concerns of cronyism by Mark Lawson, Therme Group Canada’s vice-president of comms and external relations, who” previously held a position of deputy chief of staff in the Premier’s office;

“Whereas meaningful public consultations with diverse stakeholders have not been adequately conducted and the Ontario NDP has sent a letter of support for a public request to begin an investigation into a value-for-money

and compliance audit with respect to proposed redevelopment of Ontario Place;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to halt any further development plans for Ontario Place, engage in meaningful and transparent public consultations to gather input and ideas for the future of Ontario Place, develop a comprehensive and sustainable plan for the revitalization of Ontario Place that prioritizes environmental sustainability, accessibility and inclusivity, and ensure that any future development of Ontario Place is carried out in a transparent and accountable manner, with proper oversight, public input and adherence to democratic processes.”

I proudly sign this petition and will send it to the centre table with page Michael.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: I’d like to thank Dr. Sally Palmer for her tireless efforts in bringing these petitions to the House. This is titled “to Raise Social Assistance Rates” and it reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s social assistance rates are well below Canada’s official Market Basket Measure poverty line and far from adequate to cover the rising costs of food and rent: \$733 for individuals on OW and \$1,227 for ODSP;

“Whereas an open letter to the Premier and two cabinet ministers, signed by over 230 organizations, recommends that social assistance rates be doubled for both Ontario Works (OW) and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP);

“Whereas the recent small increase of 5% for ODSP still leaves these citizens below the poverty line, both they and those receiving the frozen OW rates are struggling to survive at this time of alarming inflation;

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

“We, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly to double social assistance rates for OW and ODSP.”

I could not agree more and will affix my signature to it.

CHRONIC PAIN TREATMENT

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: The petition is entitled “National Chronic Pain Society petition.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas one in four Ontarians over the age of 15 suffer from chronic pain, with 73% reporting that the pain interferes with their daily lives and more than half reporting issues with depression and suicidal thoughts; and

“Whereas pain is the most common reason to seek health care, with chronic pain making up approximately 16% of emergency room visits and 38% of frequent visits, adding to the already lengthy wait times and delaying treatment; and

“Whereas the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) is proposing to limit the number of nerve block injections a pain sufferer can receive to 16 per year, regardless of the severity of the patient’s condition or the number of injections needed, and seemingly without any consultations with patients or health care workers; and

“Whereas the most common treatment for pain provided by family doctors and hospitals is opioids, despite the current national crisis leading to an estimated 20 opioid-related deaths in Canada every day during the COVID-19 pandemic;

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

“Prevent OHIP from applying a one-size-fits-all solution to the issue of chronic pain, and allow for consultations with health care workers and pain sufferers to determine the best way to treat chronic pain without resorting to opioids.”

I will sign this petition and return it to the table with page Danté.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: This petition is titled “Make Registered Psychotherapy Services Tax-Free” and it reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas mental health care is health care;

“Whereas the mental health crisis facing Ontarians has gotten worse with the pandemic;

“Whereas BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+ folks, women and people with disabilities have historically faced significant barriers to accessing equitable health care services due to systemic discrimination;

“Whereas registered psychotherapists provide vital mental health services, especially as an early intervention;

“Whereas a 13% tax added to the cost of receiving psychotherapy services is another barrier for Ontarians seeking this vital care;

“Whereas registered psychotherapists are still required to collect HST from clients, while most other mental health professionals have been exempted;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Making Psychotherapy Services Tax-Free Act, 2023.”

I support this petition, will affix my signature to it and give it to page Paxten.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Unfortunately, that’s all the time we have for petitions.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

LESS RED TAPE, MORE
COMMON SENSE ACT, 2023

LOI DE 2023
POUR PLUS DE BON SENS ET MOINS
DE FORMALITÉS ADMINISTRATIVES

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 26, 2023, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 139, An Act to amend various Acts / Projet de loi 139, Loi modifiant diverses lois.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I believe we left off with the member from Niagara Falls to continue debate.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I’m just trying to see—what have I got, 16 minutes left? Is that what that says?

Interjection: Six.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Oh, six, I’m sorry.

I just wanted to give the members an update from this morning about the St. Lawrence Seaway. I listened to the news at 12 o’clock, and if that dispute doesn’t get settled in the next two days there’s going to be a number of communities in the province of Ontario that have no gas. So do whatever you can do to talk to your leadership, to get a hold of the federal government as well to put some pressure to get that resolved. It’s really going to start to hit home in the next couple of days.

I want to start where I left off. I was talking about access to local health services, essential for the well-being of our communities. I’m going to turn my attention to Niagara-on-the-Lake. It’s concerning that there’s a lack of primary care services in my town. We know—or we should know, people who have been to Niagara-on-the-Lake—you closed the hospital there in Niagara-on-the-Lake, so we don’t have a hospital in Niagara-on-the-Lake anymore, unfortunately. I believe, as I said in my question this morning to the health minister, every resident deserves access to a family doctor or a nurse practitioner, yet many are left without this basic health care need. I am fully aware of the urgency of the situation and I have been actively advocating for a solution.

The arrival of a nurse practitioner in Niagara-on-the-Lake would be a positive step, not only for the residents but also for this government. Nurse practitioners play a critical role in our health care system, providing essential primary care services. They could bridge the gap and ensure that residents have access to timely and reliable health care. We cannot afford essential health care facilities like Fort Erie urgent care to close. We must work to prevent the privatization of our health care system.

Again, I’m going to talk just a little bit about Fort Erie: 25% of the residents in Fort Erie are seniors. You guys stand up and talk about how much you care about seniors. We have to do better for them. The residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake deserve access to primary care services, and the introduction of a nurse practitioner could be a great step moving forward. Unlike the government, I remain

committed to advocating for the health care needs of our community and will continue to fight for better health care services for all—including in your ridings, by the way.

Madam Speaker, let's take a look at the name of this bill. It includes two very common Conservative catchphrases: "cut red tape"—we've heard that before, many times, even in this House—but the one that they've added, which is why I'm arguing I can continue to speak on this, is "common sense." I think everything I'm bringing forward today is common sense. We heard it for eight years under the Mike Harris government. What happened when they brought forward common sense was they closed hospitals, they laid off nurses—again, all in the name of cutting red tape. I'm trying to figure out why we go down this path of saying "common sense."

The rationale is always about supporting businesses—"We need to cut red tape to allow business to thrive in this province." However, they very rarely mean small or medium-sized businesses. Look how they are currently treating Ontario's wine industry, a very, very important industry not only to Niagara but I believe right across the province of Ontario.

1340

We have, without a doubt, some of the best small and medium-size wineries in the world. They are fighting to ensure this government listens to them and provides the necessary support for them to flourish. We have the potential to really grow that industry in Niagara. I know there's been lots of proposals being talked about with the government, but if they want to cut red tape—and this is certainly one that can fall under "it's not in the bill but it should be"—they could start with the 6.1% basic tax here on wineries here in Ontario.

Ontario's wine industry has come a long way, and it now stands as one of the jewels in the crown of our province's agricultural sector. This industry has seen remarkable growth, and the Niagara region has played a pivotal role in this success story. With its unique microclimate and fertile soil, Niagara has become the best of Ontario's grape production. The region boasts some of the best wineries, numerous vineyards, and is home to an impressive number of wineries, making it a world-renowned wine-producing region.

This is really interesting; you should listen to this. Niagara has a very distinct climate. It's responsible for a significant portion of grapes that are used in the production of high-quality Ontario wines. You may or may not know—the members who are listening—that 90% of the grapes are grown in Niagara—90%. It shows how valuable the grape industry is and the wine industry is to Niagara. These grapes give our wines that unique and delightful character, and I'm sure everybody in the House who has tried Niagara wines will say they taste great. The Niagara region is a beacon for wine enthusiasts and tourists from around the globe and it plays an essential role in promoting Ontario's rich heritage.

Here's how we can fix it and we can cut red tape: Promoting local wines through the LCBO is crucial for the success of our homegrown wineries. By enhancing the

presence of local wines on LCBO shelves, we not only support our local winemakers; we also give the consumer more opportunity to experience the unique flavours our province has to offer.

What's happening in Niagara—and I'm meeting with them tomorrow—is we have grapes that are going to sit on the vines and they're probably just going to end up on the ground because we continue to allow, on some of our wines that aren't VQA 100% Ontario wines, blended wineries. We end up importing grapes, importing wine into our communities. It makes no sense. So I'm really asking the government to really listen to the grape industry to make sure that our grapes are 100% grown in Ontario and are not going to rot on the vine. I don't have the number, but I believe it's something like \$40 million. It's something that I really want to—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): You have run out of time.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I apologize to the member. Just on a point of order, standing order 59, I'll outline business for next week.

In the morning we will have Bill 136, which is the Greenbelt Statute Law Amendment Act; in the afternoon, Bill 142, Better for Consumers, Better for Businesses Act.

On Tuesday, October 31, in the morning, Bill 142, Better for Consumers, Better for Businesses Act; in the afternoon, Bill 136, Greenbelt Statute Law Amendment Act; and in the evening, the private member's business standing in the name of the member for Richmond Hill, Bill 137, Planning for Your Silver Years Awareness Week Act.

On Wednesday, November 1, in the morning, Bill 136, which is the Greenbelt Statute Law Amendment Act; in the afternoon, Bill 142, Better for Consumers, Better for Businesses Act; and in the evening, Bill 67.

On Thursday, November 2, in the morning, again back to Bill 142; in the afternoon routine, the Minister of Finance will deliver the fall economic statement; and in the afternoon, we will return to Bill 136.

LESS RED TAPE, MORE COMMON SENSE ACT, 2023

LOI DE 2023 POUR PLUS DE BON SENS ET MOINS DE FORMALITÉS ADMINISTRATIVES

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Back to questions and answers.

Miss Monique Taylor: I would like to thank the member from Niagara Falls for completing his debate this afternoon, which I know he began probably yesterday.

Mr. Wayne Gates: This morning.

Miss Monique Taylor: This morning—I unfortunately missed that part, and I’m quite sure it was riveting, knowing the member from Niagara Falls. So maybe he would just like to take a few moments to recap on what I missed from this morning portion of his debate.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I talked about, as you heard, the wine industry. But I talked about the seaway. I think I’ll use that time. We have a strike at the St. Lawrence Seaway that’s going to affect shipping right across the province of Ontario. I’m asking the government, through their MPPs who are here, to talk to their leadership and see what we can do to get a just result for the workers of Unifor but, more importantly, to make sure that our economy will not be hurt. Like I said, I just heard in the news at lunch we’re going to be shutting down some communities without any gas. The grain is sitting out on Lake Ontario; that can’t get through the locks. This is a very, very important time to make sure that we get back to the bargaining table.

I can tell you, like we always find out during these things, we all know about—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I’m going to remind the member—I didn’t caution the member earlier this morning, but I will caution the member now. Please deal with the contents of this bill.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate that, but I thought I was because she missed that great speech this morning. But I guess all I’ll say—whatever the MPPs on that side can do, please help us get the seaway operating again. It is so important to our economy.

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

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I want to thank the member from Niagara Falls for certainly his comments on the bill and just having the great familiarity with the Niagara region that you’ve got. I know I asked this question yesterday, but I’d love to hear from you too about the Niagara Escarpment Program and the permitting process involved. Given that it has been in place for such a long time, almost 50 years, it seems to be overburdened and outdated. It asks for newspaper ads instead of online tools. I’m wondering if you agree with the changes that are proposed in this bill that are recommended by the Auditor General that will modernize some of the notification measures that are related to the Niagara Escarpment Program.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate the question. I believe that anything that we can do to highlight the importance of the Niagara Escarpment is certainly something that we should be doing. If it needs to be modernized and looked at, let’s take a look at it. It is one of the jewels. I talk about Niagara, but the Niagara Escarpment is one that we’re certainly proud of in Niagara, very similar to Niagara Parks. We’re extremely proud of Niagara Parks

What I would really want to make sure is that who gets appointed to the Niagara Escarpment board is not always just either defeated PC candidates or donors. I would like to see that citizens actually who aren’t in that ring—we get other people to sit on that board who may have some experience in Niagara Parks. I think that would be really good.

So to answer your question, anything that’s going to help the Niagara Escarpment I think is good. I think it’s good for the province of Ontario. I think it’s good for Niagara. Modernizing is always a good thing, so I appreciate the question.

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

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: I’d like to thank the member from Niagara Falls for his presentation. We all know in this House that he’s a strong advocate for his constituents in Niagara Falls and, frankly, all of Niagara. He has also been a very strong voice on labour unions and health care.

Today, I was quite concerned to learn that in his riding, they had requested an RNP which the government promised a year ago, and the community has not seen that happen yet. I was wondering if the member could explain to me why this Conservative government is not delivering for the people of Niagara.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I certainly do appreciate the question. I had a question on it today. When you don’t have a family doctor, one of the ways that we can at least get help for our residents in Niagara-on-the-Lake and into Fort Erie is a nurse practitioner. But the issue was that it was a promise made to the mayor, not to Wayne Gates. The promise wasn’t made to me; it was made to the Lord Mayor. That’s one thing about Niagara-on-the-Lake: They call their mayor the Lord Mayor, which is kind of part of our heritage and our culture down in Niagara-on-the-Lake. It was promised to the council, and it was promised to the residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The reason why I raised it today is I’m trying to say to the MPPs on that side of the House, when you make a promise to a community, my suggestion is you keep that promise. Because we are having residents from 60 to 90 who don’t have a family doctor, who have to drive to St. Catharines—or find some kind of transportation—or to Niagara Falls. So that’s why it’s important to raise those issues here in the House so my colleagues can hear some of the things—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions? I recognize the member for Richmond Hill.

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Mrs. Daisy Wai: Thank you to the member from Niagara Falls. I understand and hear that you advocate for the winery business in Niagara Falls. Our government always supports all the businesses and that’s why we have this less-red-tape bill. This is the second bill that we are proceeding on and we know that this is a process and we know what you are asking for is getting there, as well.

But my question for you is, we’ve now achieved over \$939 million in savings a year and we’re going to continue moving forward with the important work, and part of that is what you’ve just asked for. Would the member support these continued efforts to make it easier for people and businesses to work with the government?

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate that because it gives me an opportunity again to talk about the wine industry, which is the small- and-medium-sized wineries. They are being hit with a 6.1% tax on the wine that they sell in their

stores, which is an unfair tax. The reason why it's unfair is because Australia, California and all those other wine producers don't pay the tax, so it's an unfair advantage. If you're looking at cutting red tape, why would you not cut this 6.1% of an unfair tax to our wine industry so that we'd be able to use our grapes that are being grown by our grape growers and put that into our bottles of wine?

If you're going to come into our market, I firmly believe that it should be a level playing field. I believe the Conservatives should feel that, so supporting getting rid of the 6.1% tax I think should be easy for your government, quite frankly. I've had people say to me, "I can't believe that the NDP is actually trying to call for cutting taxes." But I had that kind of thing when I talked to the farmers in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

I appreciate your question because it's important. Again, to my colleagues who are here: Support local, support Ontario and support the wine industry because 18,000 jobs are tied to that wine industry—

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

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Yes, I have a question. There are certain areas where there is an enormous amount of red tape. For example, ODSP: 800 regulations. But there are other areas where there needs to be enforcement where perhaps there isn't enough regulation or inspection taking place. I wonder if you could speak to the situation in seniors' housing and long-term care and actually the lack of necessary following of the rules and follow-up with inspections.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, there is a party here that talks about retirement homes. Our retirement home in Niagara Falls that was on Lundy's Lane, Greycliff Manor, allowed a patient to come out of the hospital with alternate level of care and sent him to a retirement home, and unfortunately that retirement home didn't have the tools to take care of him. He should never have went to a retirement home. He should have went to a long-term-care home, where they at least have a nurse on shift. They had no nurses, and what happened is he ended up living in this retirement home, and not only did they not take care of him, he had to lay in feces; his bed had bedbugs; urination on the beds; he had cockroaches in his room and, when he passed away, his 11-year-old daughter was laying in bed with him and that was the last thing that he saw—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions? We have time for one more question.

Mr. Deepak Anand: The bill which we are introducing is going to save money for the businesses in Ontario—\$939 million in savings each year. My question to the member from the honeymoon capital of Canada is that this government is also proposing changes that will make horticultural organizations eligible for a grant to commemorate their 100th anniversary. Are you going to support this?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, I really appreciate that you mention Niagara Falls as the honeymoon capital of the world, because people go to Niagara Falls to make babies. But because of the cuts, we can't deliver them.

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

Mr. Gill has moved second reading of Bill 139, An Act to amend various Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House the motion carry? In my opinion, the motion is carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? I recognize the deputy government House leader.

Mr. Trevor Jones: Please assign to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): The bill has been assigned to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. Agreed?

Orders of the day? I recognize the deputy government House leader.

Mr. Trevor Jones: Point of order, Speaker: If you seek it, you'll find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): The deputy House leader is seeing the clock at 6. Agreed? Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

INDIGENOUS HEALTH CARE

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should adopt the recommendations of the official opposition report on the Indigenous determinants of health so that Ontario recognizes "Indigeneity" and "colonialism" as overarching and intersectional determinants of health across government ministries.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to standing order 100, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Speaker. Thank you. This motion I'm talking about is to adopt the recommendations of the official opposition report on the Indigenous determinants of health. Again, the motion says, "That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should adopt the recommendations of the official opposition report on the Indigenous determinants of health so that Ontario recognizes 'Indigeneity' and 'colonialism' as overarching and intersectional determinants of health across government ministries."

Speaker, I spoke to the leadership of Muskrat Dam after I announced this motion, and they told me that they need to declare a mental health state of emergency. There is an ongoing public health emergency and social crisis related to mental health and addictions in the 33 First Nations served by the Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority, also known as SLFNHA.

On September 5 and 6, 2023, an annual general meeting for SLFNHA chiefs was held. The chiefs in the assembly heard staggering statistics from the preliminary mental health and addictions report. According to data analyses completed by the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences,

or ICES, mental health and substance abuse health care utilization rates for Sioux Lookout-area First Nations band members residing on-reserve in any First Nation community in Ontario and off-reserve in Ontario are as follows:

In 2021, Sioux Lookout-area First Nations band members visited the emergency department services for mental health and addictions at a rate 14 times the provincial rate.

1400

In 2021, Sioux Lookout-area First Nations band members visited the emergency department for intentional self-harm or risks of suicide at a rate of 16 times the provincial rate.

In 2021, Sioux Lookout-area First Nations band members were hospitalized for mental health and addictions at a rate six times greater than the provincial rate.

According to data from the Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario, unnatural death rates in the Sioux Lookout-area First Nations are as follows:

The rate of unnatural death in the Sioux Lookout-area First Nations was 1.6 in 2021, 3.4 times the provincial rate and 2.4 times the national rate.

The rate of death by asphyxia-related suicide in the Sioux Lookout-area First Nations members is 15 times greater than the Canadian rate.

Asphyxia by hanging is a primary cause of unnatural death in the Sioux Lookout-area First Nations. It is determined to be the cause of 38% of all unnatural deaths between 2011-21 and the cause of over 70% of unnatural deaths among children 10 to 19 years of age during the same time period.

I'm just sharing these stats to quantify, you know, the desperate situation that First Nations leadership has to deal with on a daily basis. This crisis is devastating. It takes an enormous toll on their already limited human and financial resources.

The mental health crisis and addictions crisis stems from systematic racism and intergenerational trauma, and the continuing colonial violence embedded in the current federal and provincial health care systems.

The position of the chief states that the Sioux Lookout-area First Nations "will no longer accept processes that are founded on a program-by-program basis, whereby the governments off-load their responsibility while maintaining power and control over our people and organizations" and that those processes must be replaced with a whole-system approach that brings authority back to the First Nations people.

In addition to requiring immediate resources to address the current crisis, the communities served by SLFNHA deserve an equitable and comprehensive public health system to respond to the mental health crisis and other health and public health emergencies. This will allow for control over solutions to ensure that they are delivered in a coordinated, holistic and culturally safe manner to address the social determinants of health and mental health.

We know the health system does not work for Indigenous people. Some people say it's broken, but it's not broken. It is working exactly the way it's designed to,

which is to take away the rights of the people through their lands and resources. It is working exactly the way it's designed to, which is to harm our people.

What I have shared about the public health emergency and social crisis related to mental health and addictions among the Sioux Lookout-area First Nations cannot be denied. It cannot be argued with.

I want to thank some of the advocates working on the front lines of health who see the realities in their work. One of them is Caroline Lidstone-Jones, the chief executive officer of the Indigenous Primary Health Care Council. The IPHCC has dedicated significant time and resources towards engagements focused on development of the more truthful and accurate Indigenous social determinants of health, which include impacts of colonization, impacts of racism, as well as protectant factors such as traditional healing and connection to the land, water, culture and other determinants.

We must ensure that patient-centered services, grounded in equity, are accessible to patients across the province. This motion presents an important and critical step towards recognizing and addressing factors that impact the health and the well-being of Indigenous people in Ontario. If we fail to recognize these determinants, we will fail to address them and ultimately implement solutions that can improve health outcomes and save lives. This government has an opportunity to ensure that this does not happen.

The IPHCC and its network of Indigenous primary health care organization members have developed a provincial Indigenous integrated health hub to ensure that Indigenous peoples are directly involved in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of health services for Indigenous peoples in Ontario. This work involves collectively advancing Indigenous-led health care solutions across its network of members. This hub also involves working across the broader health system, including the public health units, the mainstream providers to understand and implement more meaningful Indigenous social determinants of health and to introduce accountability measures into the system to ensure Indigenous peoples have equitable access to safe and appropriate health services across the province.

I know that we must look at other provinces such as BC and their First Nations Health Authority, as well as examples within our own backyard such as health system transformation efforts led by the provincial-territorial organizations, Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority and the work of Indigenous primary health care organizations, to understand that factors impacting the health and the well-being of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people go beyond the determinants that have been developed through a predominantly Western lens without our input.

Sometimes it's very difficult to hear stories. We talk about long-term care; our people, our elders have to leave their First Nations, their communities. They're gone for good, and the only time they come back is when they come back in a box. That's how colonialism works. And it is my hope that this government—and I trust that this motion

will be adopted for further discussion and deliberation, and ultimately implemented across government ministries in Ontario, because the biggest room in the world is the room for improvement. Meegwetch.

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

1410

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I am pleased to speak today on the private member's motion 66. Since our government was elected in 2018 and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our government has shown an unwavering commitment to the health and well-being of the Indigenous people in Ontario. Our government's goal is to improve the economic, social, health and well-being of First Nations across the province of Ontario. As the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, I would like to emphasize that the ministry supports a wide range of Indigenous-led programs and services across Ontario which provide a high quality of care to First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous peoples, families and communities.

However, our government recognizes that health outcomes for Indigenous people are lower than those of other Ontarians. We acknowledge the pressing need to bridge existing disparities in health care outcomes, and we are dedicated to fostering a future where every individual, regardless of their cultural identity, receives equal access to high-quality health care.

The Ministry of Health continues to work with First Nations communities and the federal government through dedicated trilateral processes and relationship agreements to explore options to transform First Nations health. In 2022-23, the ministry approved over \$2 million for five First Nations partners to support this initiative: Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Anishnabek Nation Union of Ontario Indians, Grand Council Treaty 3, Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians, and Six Nations of the Grand River. The ministry also partners with First Nations, Indigenous service partners and organizations across Ontario to engage their communities on important issues in the health care sector such as improving primary care, mental health and more. We have taken concrete steps to address these challenges, investing significant resources into Indigenous-led programs and services across the province.

Our government is working with Indigenous partners to improve Indigenous health outcomes through several key initiatives. We support Indigenous cultural safety training and Indigenous relationship and cultural awareness courses for the mainstream health care sector through the Indigenous Primary Health Care Council and Ontario Health, respectively. We are also working in partnership with Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Anishnabek Nation Union of Ontario Indians, Grand Council Treaty 3, Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians, Six Nations of the Grand River and the federal government to advance First Nations transformation and improve access to safe and effective health care services closer to where people live. Investments in Indigenous-led services are under way across all sectors, including primary care.

The ministry funds 21 Indigenous primary health care organizations across the province, with sites both on- and off-reserve that deliver a wide range of services. On June 20, I had the honour of joining my colleague the MPP for Cambridge for the opening of the SOAHAC, Southern Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre, in Cambridge, and we announced new base funding of more than \$1.566 million to the SOAHAC for primary care access. During the tour, I had the honour of having a great conversation with an Indigenous nurse, and she spoke to me about how, as an Indigenous nurse, she approaches care for Indigenous patients. She's also a teacher, to teach other nurses specifically Indigenous health care.

Also, the investments in Indigenous-led services include public health, seniors' care, long-term care and mental health and wellness. Initiatives aimed at improving health outcomes for Indigenous communities have been infused with substantial financial support.

Firstly, our government is investing over \$40 million in Indigenous-specific mental health and addictions programming through the Roadmap to Wellness initiative. This was a direct ask from Indigenous partners who see the need for these types of services to enhance the overall well-being of their communities.

Also, the Ontario government announced on October 10 that we are now offering more mental health services in every region of the province, through the expanded Ontario Structured Psychotherapy Program, the OSP. This program is to help adults across the province with mental health concerns connect to free cognitive behavioural therapy and other related services. The OSP Program and each regional network works with local Indigenous partners in all parts of Ontario to develop an approach to service delivery that best serves Indigenous communities. This program ensures that all Ontarians can now have more convenient access to mental health care closer to home. We know that this funding is essential to the development of culturally safe and Indigenous-led mental health and addiction services, both on- and off-reserve.

Additionally, we are allocating \$90 million over three years, which started in 2021-22, through the Addictions Recovery Fund. These funds are being utilized for critical initiatives such as providing \$4.2 million to the Sioux Lookout Friendship Accord group for addictions services and allocating over \$3.8 million for new addiction treatment beds in Thunder Bay's St. Joseph's Care Group and Dilico Anishnabek Family Care. And we are investing in all corners of the province.

The government is also investing in the development of an Indigenous-led youth wellness hub, located in Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation. This new youth wellness hub will provide culturally appropriate and safe supports to Indigenous youth between the ages of 12 and 24.

Furthermore, the emergency medical assistance team's mental health response team maintains capacity to respond to mental health emergencies in First Nations and remote communities and continues to improve its self-sufficiency when deploying to remote communities—for example, for accommodations, meals, water etc.—to avoid utilizing

resources from host communities. The emergency medical assistance team is staffed by paid volunteers who work in the professional health system.

The ministry continues to work with regional and local health partners to support First Nations who have declared social emergencies and who have requested provincial assistance. The ministry collaborates with Ontario Health, local health partners and the federal government to support communities.

In the realm of primary care, we are working closely with Indigenous partners to transform health care services. The ministry provides funding to the Indigenous Primary Health Care Council, the IPHCC, to develop strategies, tools and resources, including educational and training materials, to support Ontario health teams with meaningful Indigenous engagement, as well as encourage Indigenous providers and communities to participate in the Ontario health team process and the delivery of integrated care. Collaborative efforts have been supported by a substantial investment of over \$2 million in 2022-23 for five First Nation partners.

Additionally, we are investing significantly in infrastructure and resources to address long-standing challenges. For instance, we have pledged \$90 million for the construction and operational costs of the Mercury Care Home in Grassy Narrows First Nation. The ministry provides \$1 million in annual funding to the Indigenous Primary Health Care Council for the delivery of an Indigenous cultural safety training program created specifically for individuals working in the health care sector. This facility will provide essential health services, programs and assisted daily living support, enabling community members to remain in their community for as long as possible.

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In the critical area of safe drinking water, we are collaborating with First Nations communities and the federal government. While the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act has been repealed, we are actively working on a new draft proposal, focusing on the long-term sustainability of each community's water infrastructure. The province is providing technical support and recommendations, reinforcing our government's dedication to resolving long-term drinking water advisories.

To support these initiatives and investments, we have implemented robust legislative provisions, including the creation of Indigenous health councils. These councils are instrumental in advising the ministry about health and service delivery issues related to Indigenous people.

In conclusion, our government is taking action each and every day to create a future where Indigenous peoples in Ontario enjoy improved health outcomes and equitable access to health care. There is still much to be done, and we look forward to working with Indigenous and federal partners to improve health outcomes for Indigenous peoples in Ontario. Together with Indigenous leaders and partners, we are building a healthier, more equitable future for all.

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

MPP Jill Andrew: It is my honour to stand in support of the member for Kiiwetinoong's motion to adopt the recommendations of the official opposition's report on the Indigenous determinants of health. Racism is a structural and social determinant of health. This will unequivocally improve the lives of indigenous peoples and their communities across the province.

As the critic for women's social and economic opportunity, I want to pay special focus to what this motion means for Indigenous women. In Indigenous cultures, women are held in a special regard in many Indigenous teachings and traditions. For instance, "To the Ojibway, the earth is woman, the mother of the people, and her hair, the sweetgrass, is braided and used in ceremonies. The ... Sioux people of Manitoba and the Dakotas tell how a woman—White Buffalo Calf Woman—brought the pipe to their people. It is through the pipe that prayer is carried by its smoke upwards to the creator in their most sacred ceremonies."

It was through colonialism that this was gravely disrupted, as we continue to witness today in Ontario, in our communities, and across our nation.

To quote Indigenous author Paula Gunn Allen, "Since the coming of the Anglo-Europeans beginning in the 15th century, the fragile web of identity that long held tribal people secure has gradually been weakened and torn."

Gender and gender identity have now been listed as social determinants of health in this country, because to identify as a woman is to have barriers placed in front of you from birth because of a sexist world. These are not inevitable, but rather socially constructed. They are also not felt equally, and few are also impacted by the joint forces of colonialism and patriarchy as Indigenous communities are.

We have called on Ontario to recognize gender-based violence as an epidemic. We've called on this Conservative government to do so. Our calls are often unheard.

Indigenous women know all too much about gender-based violence, sadly. Indigenous women are at least three times more likely to experience violence, and at least six times more likely to be murdered. While just 4% of the Canadian population identifies as Indigenous and as women, they represent 24% of homicide victims. Many of them are never found, never even looked for, leaving their families shattered and without closure. No day of significance, no database, no event in our communities will bring their sisters, mothers, friends, partners and loved ones home.

We need action, and we demand that action today: action like committing to enacting every one of the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls report's 231 individual calls; action like saying yes to my colleague's motion, a systemic approach to doing better by placing Indigenous self-determination at the centre and by recognizing Indigeneity and colonialism as overarching—I want to say it again—overarching and intersectional determinants of health across government ministries and across every political group. These need to be recognized as the facts that they are.

Thank you, Sol. Thank you for this motion. I support it wholeheartedly.

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

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: First of all, I want to commend my colleague from Kiiwetinoong on this acute, efficient and powerful motion. Speaker, there is no other answer to this motion than to support it loudly. There is no way to live in this day and age and not agree that Indigeneity and colonialism are overarching and intersectional determinants of health. Let me tell you how it translates in Mushkegowuk—James Bay.

Ce n'est pas pour rien que je répète très souvent au premier ministre et à son cabinet des ministres de mettre les pieds dans le Nord. Quand on parle du Nord, je vous défie de venir voir les communautés des Premières Nations du Traité 9 sur le bord de la baie James. Vous vous rendriez bien vite compte que de reconnaître le colonialisme et l'indigénéité se fait dans un coup d'oeil.

Speaker, let me give you a few examples of these two factors that can considerably change the quality of health care you receive. We all know about the world-infamous boil water advisories in 23 First Nations territories, with some dating back decades:

—Nibinamik First Nation has had water advisories since 2013: 10 years and still waiting;

—Gull Bay has had their water advisories since 2009: almost 15 years now;

—Sandy Lake First Nation has had their boil-water advisories since 2002: 20 years;

—Neskantaga First Nation has had their water advisories since 1995: 30 years.

It is clear: All the longest-standing water advisories in all of Ontario are on First Nations territories.

Mais je veux vous parler aussi de la dialyse. Quand on parle de la dialyse, nos commettants sont obligés de se déplacer de leurs communautés, soit dans Moose Factory—s'il n'y a pas de place à Moose Factory, ils sont obligés de se déplacer à Kingston. Ils vivent dans des motels pendant des mois. Des motels pendant des mois, c'est inacceptable. On se tanne, nous, dans une semaine ou quelques jours—on est tanné de rester dans des motels. Mais eux, ils sont obligés d'y rester pendant des mois.

We could talk about community isolation, lack of social services and non-recognition of traditional ways of life and cultural health care providers, trauma, industry development in communities that have polluted their environment, and so much more. And there is one thing I also want to talk about: dialysis. A machine costs \$84,000. Think about it: \$84,000 put in a community and they can stay with their loved ones. And that's what's not happening.

We all can think of at least one way to say, "Yes, colonialism is a determinant of health in this province." I'm truly hoping that this government and all MPPs in this House will rise to support this motion that is in line with the World Health Organization and will finally put in the

right tools to address a very important health crisis in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further debate? I recognize the member for Toronto Centre.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: It's always an honour to rise in this House to speak on behalf of the great people of Toronto Centre. It is an honour specifically to speak to this important motion. I want to give my thanks and heartfelt gratitude to my colleague, our deputy leader, Sol Mamakwa.

This motion was crafted after consultation with the Indigenous community. Their voices were centred at the table as they shared with him and everyone who would listen, and as they recorded the results, what the community needed in order for them to be healthy and well. There is no doubt in my mind that, as they shared those stories, they oftentimes had to peel back the layers of pain and reveal their vulnerabilities of what they didn't have access to. And we know for sure that this is probably one of the most important issues gripping our province today: the lack of high-quality access to health care for the Indigenous communities, communities living in the north and fly-in and remote areas. Indigenous people suffer and experience disproportionately high levels of maternal and infant mortality, malnutrition, cardiovascular illness, HIV/AIDS and other diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis.

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My own riding of Toronto Centre has one of the largest urban Indigenous populations in Ontario, and that means that it is home to vibrant Indigenous communities and service providers who are doing incredible work with very little resources. These communities deeply understand what this motion spells out, Speaker: that Indigeneity and colonialism are critical social determinants of health that need to be properly and formally recognized in this House.

The needs of urban Indigenous communities are oftentimes different from northern and on-reserve communities. Toronto also has a significant population of community members who are Indigenous who actually commute—they have dual connections. These are folks who come to work in Toronto and they come to study, but maintain a deep connection to their rural and on-reserve communities.

Unlike northern and on-reserve communities, urban Indigenous people in Toronto do not struggle, generally, with long travel times for medical access or access to clean water. But many do struggle—all do struggle, I should say—with the lack of culturally appropriate health care access and services, and the medical racism that meets them everywhere they go, especially as they interface with the larger hospitals. And they all suffer from a lack of connection to spiritual support and community elders.

That's why I'm so proud of the organizations in my community that are bridging those gaps. They bring together vital health, social and cultural services under one roof, oftentimes an amalgamation of so many different services, because they're doing so much to support our community. I particularly want to highlight Anishnawbe Health, Thunder Woman Healing Lodge, Native Women's Resource Centre, the Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy, Two-Spirited People of the First Nations, Native

Child and Family Services of Toronto and Toronto Council Fire—just a handful of the hard-working and underfunded organizations in my riding.

Many urban Indigenous people in my community have deep connections to their culture, language and land, but some do not. The effects of residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, the Millennium Scoop and ongoing trauma and racism really impact how they interface and interact with our publicly funded services—their publicly funded services. They are always looking for culturally competent health care. Indigenous-led health care providers like Anishnawbe Health are all trying to do what they can with what I said are limited resources, but none of those organizations I named actually provide service at hospital-level care.

Given the current health care crisis, Ontarians of every cultural background are struggling to access timely and appropriate care. This means that many Indigenous people access mainstream health care and supports every single day, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, but every single day there are barriers and obstacles. They experienced racism and they were oftentimes turned away.

It is deeply troubling, Speaker, that this government has not recognized, so far, the importance of this motion—not in the remarks from the member across. It's so important for all of us to remember that if we are to do better for the—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It's now time for the two-minute rebuttal.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch to the members of my caucus who provided some words of debate. Meegwetch for supporting this motion.

I would like to say that the status quo that is construed as normal and acceptable in First Nations would not be acceptable anywhere else in Canada. But we have to ask

ourselves, why do we have to debate this? Why is it that I have to stand up here and ask for support on an idea that should be just done?

I've said this many times in this room, in this place: We all have a right to health care close to home. There is nothing from the government from supporting this motion. It just needs political will. We cannot let people's health continue to suffer.

Speaker, no one in this House can know what it's like to live in a First Nation under a boil-water advisory, in overcrowded housing, and the impact it has on your health. No one in this House can know the toll that these determinants of health have on your mental health, on your physical health, on your spiritual health. Generations of our people have lived under these conditions.

I hope the government supports this motion, because without truth, there is no reconciliation. Enough talk; time for action. Meegwetch.

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

Mr. Mamakwa has moved private member's notice of motion number 66. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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

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

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until the next instance of deferred votes.

Vote deferred.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, this House stands adjourned until Monday, October 30, 2023, at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1437.

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French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
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Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
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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	
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Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	
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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
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Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
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McGregor, Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York	
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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
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Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)	Timmins	Minister of Mines / Ministre des Mines
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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	
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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	
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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	