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**Standing Committee
on the Interior**

Affordable Energy Act, 2024

1st Session
43rd Parliament

Thursday 21 November 2024

**Comité permanent
des affaires intérieures**

Loi de 2024 sur l'énergie
abordable

1^{re} session
43^e législature

Jeudi 21 novembre 2024

Chair: Aris Babikian
Clerk: Thushitha Kobikrishna

Président : Aris Babikian
Greffière : Thushitha Kobikrishna

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE
ON THE INTERIOR**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT
DES AFFAIRES INTÉRIEURES**

Thursday 21 November 2024

Jeudi 21 novembre 2024

The committee met at 0900 in room 151.

AFFORDABLE ENERGY ACT, 2024

LOI DE 2024 SUR L'ÉNERGIE ABORDABLE

Consideration of the following bill:

Bill 214, An Act to amend various energy statutes respecting long term energy planning, changes to the Distribution System Code and the Transmission System Code and electric vehicle charging / Projet de loi 214, Loi modifiant diverses lois sur l'énergie en ce qui a trait à la planification énergétique à long terme, aux modifications touchant les codes appelés Distribution System Code et Transmission System Code et à la recharge des véhicules électriques.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Guy Bourgouin): I call the meeting to order.

Ms. Donna Skelly: Jesus Murphy. Holy moly.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Guy Bourgouin): I haven't used one of those in close to six and a half years. I missed it.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'll get you guys some bigger hammers than that.

Laughter.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Guy Bourgouin): Good morning, everyone. The Standing Committee on the Interior will now come to order. We are here to conduct clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 214, An Act to amend various energy statutes respecting long term energy planning, changes to the Distribution System Code and the Transmission System Code and electric vehicle charging.

As always, please wait until I recognize you before starting to speak and, as always, all comments should go through the Chair.

Interjection.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Guy Bourgouin): He's here. Do you want him to continue?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Thushitha Kobikrishna): You can let him continue if you want.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): My apologies. I forgot my glasses and I had to go back to pick them up.

Are there any questions before we begin? Seeing none, are there any comments or questions to any section or schedule of the bill and, if so, to which section? Seeing none, we'll move on.

We'll now begin clause-by-clause consideration of the bill. Bill 214 is comprised of three sections which enact three schedules. To deal with the bill in an orderly fashion,

I suggest we postpone these three sections to dispose of the schedules first. Is there an agreement on this?

MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: Can you just clarify? I don't understand what you're proposing. Sorry.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): We're just postponing certain sections until after we deal with the schedules.

Mr. Ted Hsu: So we'll start with the schedules?

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Yes. We will deal with the three schedules first and after that we will deal with the other parts. Is there an agreement on the suggestion? Either yes or no, guys. Yes? Okay.

We will start with schedule 1, section 1. Is there any debate on schedule 1, section 1? I see none. Are the members ready to vote? All in favour, please raise your hand. Any opposition, please raise your hand. I see none. Schedule 1, section 1, is carried.

Schedule 1, section 2: There is an amendment from the independent members. Please go ahead.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: I move that section 2 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by striking out "reduce overall emissions in Ontario" at the end of clause 6(1)(p.1) of the Electricity Act, 1998 and substituting "reduce overall emissions in Ontario and protect people from climate change".

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Is there any debate? MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I just want to bring out the fact that the effect of this bill on the Electricity Act as it's currently written removes any reference to climate change or greenhouse gases. I plan to vote for this bill at third reading, and I think it would be good to actually acknowledge that it will affect what we do about climate change.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I agree with MPP Hsu. I think that it makes sense. One of the reasons that we're pushing so hard towards electrification is that we know that a lot of changes have to be made in terms of protecting the climate. That's why the push towards hybrid cars, electric cars, is happening, including in mining, which traditionally had heavy diesel vehicles as their main fleet.

I think that recognizing that the importance of protecting people from climate change should be addressed as part of this. I know some people would see that just as a bit of a nod, but I think that more and more people are aware of how the climate is changing. Yesterday, for example—it's November 21 today—I was at a Trans Day of Remem-

brance flag-raising and it was raining out. I don't know if that's normal in Toronto, but it's unusual that we don't have snow on the ground in Sudbury and it wasn't snowing in Sudbury either.

So I just want to voice my support for this, because I think that we need to recognize climate change, and I think that's one of the reasons the government is moving towards supporting nuclear in a stronger manner: so that we reduce our greenhouse emissions that would affect our targets towards making sure that we're not affected by climate change.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: As the honourable members would know, this falls outside of the mandate of the IESO, so we're not putting this into this bill. We all understand the realities of today and that's all fine and good, but we're not in favour of having this within the bill.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I'm supporting this amendment, because in my riding of Mushkegowuk–James Bay, we see climate change's effects. All the experts say that the further north you go, the more you will see the effects of climate change. In six and a half years of being the MPP, I've been through the communities up north. When I go to Fort Albany and Attawapiskat, you see this huge river; you can see now the bottom of the river. The First Nations can't even access now their traditional hunting grounds. They have to be helicoptered in because they can't use their boats to go. That is an effect directly. I've spoken to elders also, and they say, "We've never seen this."

We talk about the ice roads. Now the ice roads are dangerous. They freeze up, but they unthaw. They freeze up and unthaw. For First Nations that are isolated, this is critical. That's how they bring all their materials in for the year if they want to build homes, if they want to add infrastructure, everything—food, and the list goes on. We're seeing a direct impact; they're seeing a direct impact even broader, and because they're so up north sometimes we forget that. But the reality is that climate change is here and it's affecting them extremely.

So we are concerned when we see we want to remove words like "greenhouse" and "the effects on climate change" when it comes to energy, because there is a direct effect. I think we should consider that seriously when we vote on this motion because they live it on a day-to-day basis. They feel the effects three times or five times more than we do.

0910

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I appreciate the message that the opposition wants to get out, and that's fine. It's going to be in Hansard; that's wonderful. But let's be clear: This is not the mandate of the Independent Electricity System Operator. This is not an argument or a debate about climate change; this is about electricity supply, the Affordable Energy Act. It falls outside the mandate of the IESO, and therefore it should not—and if we have the vote, I expect it will not—proceed.

This is not an argument about climate change. That's not what this is about. So we can spend the day arguing

about climate change if they want, but that's not what this is about, and this is not within the mandate of the IESO.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Thank you very much, MPP Yakabuski, for the clarification.

MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: My honourable colleague has just said that climate change is outside the mandate of the IESO, but the whole point of schedule 1, the whole point of—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Protecting the people—

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Please direct your questions and clarifications through the Chair.

Mr. Ted Hsu: The whole point of schedule 1 is to set up these integrated energy plans. And the idea about that is to integrate what the IESO does when it looks at the electricity system with our transportation policy, with our housing policy, with our labour policy, with our agriculture policy. All of these things touch energy and interact with each other, and all of these affect what happens to our greenhouse gas emissions and what we do about climate change. So, you know what? The member is right when he says that climate change is outside the mandate of the IESO; he knows what he's talking about. However, the whole point of schedule 1 and the whole point of having an integrated energy resource plan is that climate change is outside the mandate of the IESO, and that's why we have to expand it, using what we're going to do in schedule 1—expand it beyond the IESO.

So I would say that the comments from my honourable colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke support this amendment. It supports the idea of saying that the whole point of this schedule 1, the integrated energy resource plan, is to reduce overall emissions in Ontario, which is already in the bill, and protect people from climate change. So I thank the Conservative member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for making an argument in support of this amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Any further comment? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I'm not going to drag it out much further, because I know that there's going to be a vote, and I know the government has more votes than the opposition does. I just want to argue that this is an opportunity to set the record straight for, especially, young people in Ontario who are very concerned about climate change.

The reputation of the Conservative government at this point from the public at large is that they don't believe that climate change is something to be concerned about. I'm not saying that's the right reputation, but that is the one that has been presented to the public, to the point where young people in Ontario are suing the government for not taking action on climate change, including Sophia Mathur, in Sudbury. The government has fought that charge. These young people have won the appeal on it. But it doesn't do well in public opinion to look like you're fighting against climate change.

This change to me seems pretty inconsequential, "protect people from climate change"—adding one, two, three, four, five words—and I think would help repair the reputation the government has right now when it comes to

addressing climate change. I think it could be seen as a good thing.

Again, I support the member's motion. I think it does make sense and reflects the reality of today.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? I see none. Are the members ready to vote?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Chair, could I ask for a recorded vote, please?

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Recorded vote requested.

Ayes

Bourgouin, McCrimmon.

Nays

Dowie, Gallagher Murphy, Jordan, Pinsonneault, Skelly, Yakabuski.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): The amendment is lost.

We move to schedule 1, section 2. The first time, we voted for the amendment. Because the amendment was lost, we're voting on schedule 1, section 2, as it is. So all in favour of schedule 1, section 2, please raise your hand. All in opposition, please raise your hand. Seeing none, schedule 1, section 2, carries.

We move to section 3. There is an amendment from the NDP. MPP West, go ahead.

MPP Jamie West: Thank you very much, Chair—
Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Oh. MPP West, you cannot move the motion because you are not a member. So if there is an amendment, MPP Bourgouin needs to.

MPP Bourgouin, go ahead.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by striking out "The minister may" at the beginning of subsection 25.29(1) of the Electricity Act, 1998 and substituting "The minister shall".

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): We heard the amendment. Any debate? MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I think this is a good idea, to replace the word "may" with "shall." It has been seven years since the last time the government of Ontario had put out its long-term energy plan which, in fact, anticipates a lot of the things that we're doing now. I think it is important to have long-term plans, and I think it's important to have an integrated plan where, as I said earlier, electricity policy takes into account needs for policy in agriculture, in transportation, in labour and skills, in natural gas policy. All of these things have to be coordinated, and so I don't see why there should be an option. I think we should be proceeding with this.

And let me support something that my colleague from Sudbury said. We are in an urgent situation. If the word "may" implies that it might be done this year or next year or the year after, I think that's wrong. I think that the minister should and shall, and that's why I approve changing "may" to "shall." The minister should be putting forward

a plan as soon as possible and starting to follow that plan. We have to get going.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I think this is important. Clearly, I'm not a lawyer, but any time you look at any sort of law studies, one of the things they talk about very importantly are things like the difference between "may," which is you can or cannot do it, or "shall," which means you must do it; or even how "or" or "and" makes a difference in law, where when "and" is there it has to meet all the requirements and when "or" is there it meets any requirement.

The original Electricity Act, the current one right now, says "the minister shall ... issue a ... plan." That's been the standard for a very long time. I don't know how far back that goes. But what it says is the minister must issue the plan. When you change it to "may," that means that the minister—currently, it's a Conservative government. In the future, though, governments change. They rise and fall on a regular basis.

So in the future, it could be a Green Party minister. It could be a New Democrat minister. It could be a Liberal minister. I see the government of the day not wanting to have stronger restrictions, but in the future, you're going to be in opposition, and you're going to want to be able to hold people to account. And when you change it to "may," it means, basically, that you don't have to.

I think that, as my colleague from Kingston and the Islands had said, it's very important that we spell out what the plan is, especially with the future of electricity right now. It is a hot-button issue. It's one of the reasons the Liberal government had fallen and was reduced down to the independent status that it has, the high price of hydro and electricity. And as was discussed earlier, we know that with climate change being a very important issue especially for young voters, they want to see how things are happening, they want to know what the plan is for the energy system.

0920

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I appreciate the thoughts on the other side. I know they're very, very hung up on this word, "shall" versus "may." The bill does have a requirement for the minister to begin consultations on an integrated energy plan within five years of the previous plan, and this word, "may," does give flexibility to the minister to have those consultations with Indigenous groups or any other groups that would have a significant interest in the development of that plan.

To MPP West's point, one government cannot bind future governments with legislation anyway. We all know that they have the opportunity and the ability to change that legislation at any time if they're willing to deal with the political consequences of those changes. We know that this is the right way to proceed. We've had these discussions with many groups that share that view and we know that from the feedback that we've received, so we're quite comfortable that this is the proper way to proceed. They can always vote against the bill if they think that's such an important thing.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Quand tu as négocié, pendant 21 ans, des conventions collectives—souvent, comment on s'est argumenté pour un mot comme « shall » ou un mot « may ». En français, c'est le « devrait », et l'autre, c'est « va » ou « va peut-être ».

C'est du langage qui est très faible quand on parle de « may ». Quand on use du mot « may » en anglais, c'est très faible. Ça veut dire que le ministre n'est pas obligé de nous faire un rapport. Puis on a vu, avec les gouvernements précédents, qu'est-ce que ça a créé. Là, on voit que c'est un gouvernement qui s'enlène dans la même direction, que le ministre n'aura pas moyen de faire un plan d'énergie, puis les consommateurs et les entreprises aussi veulent savoir ce qu'il en est, là.

J'écoutais l'argument de mon collègue du bord du gouvernement : ça ne les empêche pas de faire de la consultation. Il n'y a rien qui dit que ce qu'on propose—qu'il n'y ait pas de consultation. Il peut y avoir des consultations.

Mais ce qu'on demande, c'est que le ministre va devoir présenter un plan énergétique qui est nécessaire. Mais s'il décide de ne pas le faire, où est-ce qu'on s'en va? Où est-ce que les consommateurs et les entrepreneurs—ils s'enlignent comment? Parce qu'il y en a beaucoup qui font des plans d'affaires. Le monde veut savoir aussi, là, parce qu'on sait comment les coûts de la vie avancent.

Mais de mettre du langage comme ils proposent, de donner cette latitude-là à un ministre—puis on sait que, probablement, il n'y aura pas de rapport. On va être francs. C'est un gouvernement qui n'aime pas donner des redevances à personne. Ils disent qu'ils consultent, mais quand tu commences à consulter avec le monde, ils disent qu'ils n'ont jamais été consultés. Ils consultent avec ceux qui les supportent, mais le reste ne se font pas consulter.

Il doit y avoir un processus qui rend des comptes à la population. Ce n'est pas en mettant un mot comme « may », « peut-être », qu'on fait un plan énergétique, puis sans rendre de comptes. On est redevable à la population de l'Ontario. Ça ne s'arrête pas au ministre, ça, là. Ça va beaucoup plus loin que ça.

Le ministre est responsable et il devrait avoir un devoir de faire un plan puis de le présenter. S'il est gêné de son plan, ça, c'est une autre histoire. Mais d'être redevable à la population, ça, par exemple, on a été élu et tous nous autres, on est redevables, pas juste le gouvernement. Ça ne s'arrête pas au gouvernement. Ça vient à tout le monde qui siège à Queen's Park.

Mais de vouloir mettre du langage encore plus dilué, que le ministre n'aura pas la responsabilité—qu'il n'est pas obligé de le faire. S'il veut, il va en faire un. S'il ne veut pas, il n'en fait pas. Je trouve que c'est un manque de respect et—comment pourrais-je le dire, le mot que je cherche—de redevance à la population de l'Ontario. Ils sont le gouvernement. Ils doivent donner des redevances. Ils doivent rendre des comptes à la population. Mais quand tu mets du langage de même, ça démontre que c'est un manque de transparence envers un gouvernement.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I just wanted to ask the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke if there are certain scenarios where the minister might not issue integrated energy resource planning. Maybe he has something in mind that justifies using the word “may” instead of “shall,” or replacing the word “shall” in the previous legislation with the word “may” here.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Any further comment? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: My apologies, Chair. I thought there was going to be a response.

I recall when I got elected, I believe the member from Nipissing had said during one of the early debates following the election that the Premier had given everyone in his caucus these little plaques for their desks that said, “For the People.” I don't know if that's true or not—I haven't seen them—but I believe it's true. I've known the member—I almost said his name—for a long time. I knew him back when he was the mayor.

I think this is a reflection of—are you for the people or are you not? Because “shall” means you have to be responsible to those people. “May” means you can choose, and if things aren't going so well, you can choose to hide things from the people if you want to. You don't have to be accountable, because “shall” forces you; “may” makes it optional.

I think that the people of Ontario—I think of my in-laws, for example, and how they wait until the evening to do their laundry, because even though they had a good career and they retired well, money is an issue, like it is for a lot of people. I can only imagine what it's like for people who are on fixed income, very strict budgets.

If we get in a situation where the price begins to skyrocket like it was in 2017, the fall of the Liberal government, people will want to see the accountability of what's happened as there. As well, I say “people,” but I include businesses as well. I think of going underground with Marit Stiles—sorry; with the leader of the NDP—at South Mine. When we stepped off the cage, I said, “Take a deep breath. That's electricity. The only reason you can breathe anywhere underground is because fans are pumping air down below. The cage that brought us down? That's electricity. The skip that's bringing the muck back to surface? That's electricity.”

Now, when I worked at the Copper Cliff Smelter, which is part of the larger mining complex at Vale, we would have P3 days in the summer, and basically the government of the day was saying, “We can't support the grid properly. If you are able to curtail your electricity, basically stop production, we'll reward you with a financial stipend.” Now, the financial stipend—I don't think it was as effective as if you had produced, but it created a situation. The government often likes to say they like to create the environment for business to be successful. P3 days are not environments to help businesses be successful. In the smelter, hot metal, when you are not making it move, turns back to rock. That creates injuries, because people are having to break up heavier substances. It doesn't flow properly.

All of this goes back to “For the People,” that placard that I was told so much about. If you’re looking at that placard, “may” doesn’t make you for the people. It makes it optional. “Shall” means that you serve the people and that, as we all are as public servants, we’re responsible to ensuring they have all the information that they need.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Seeing none, are the members ready to vote?

MPP Jamie West: Recorded vote.

Ayes

Bourgouin, McCrimmon, West.

Nays

Dowie, Gallagher Murphy, Jordan, Pinsonneault, Skelly, Yakabuski.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): The motion is lost.
0930

We move to amendment 3 from the government. Who is going to move the amendment? MPP Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by striking out “integrated energy resource plan” wherever it appears in sections 25.29 and 25.30 of the Electricity Act, 1998 and substituting in each case “integrated energy plan”.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I was wondering if the government side could explain the rationale for this change.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Does anyone want to comment or make a clarification?

Mr. John Yakabuski: It’s a clarification and simplification. We believe it reads better and reads more effectively and efficiently into the bill.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I understand that it makes the bill easier to read by removing the word. At a glance, it looks supportable. I just don’t understand why we’re removing the word “resource” and what implications that has.

It’s a government motion. If the government could expand on that, I’d love to hear.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate?

Mr. John Yakabuski: It’s a change in the energy act from “integrated resource energy plan” to “integrated energy plan.” It’s not complicated.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I guess in the previous thing we just voted on, there’s something called the “integrated energy resource plan.” So now we’ve got two things: One is called the “integrated energy resource plan,” and now the other thing is the “integrated energy plan.” I’m just wondering if I could be reassured there’s just one terminology throughout the Electricity Act once we’re finished, once this bill becomes law.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: The motion is the motion. That’s the change that we are proposing to the Electricity Act. It says that it changes it in each case—it uses the words “each case.”

If you want to go back and look at the energy act, that’s up to you. But this is what we are bringing forward to the table today, and you can choose to vote against the amendment or not.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: It’s a government motion and I fail to understand why we can’t get an explanation. When we’re talking about “resource,” of course it’s normal that we want an explanation because we’re trying to understand. We’re not saying we’re against it, but we’d like to find the explanation. We’d love to understand the thinking behind it and also why. It seems that they don’t have an explanation.

So then you wonder why sometimes we fall back and say, “Well, we were forced to vote against something that we may not have an issue with.” We’re trying to understand your amendment here.

On essaye, monsieur le Président, de comprendre l’amendement. On demande des clarifications du gouvernement sur leur propre motion. Le gouvernement semble être—si je peux utiliser le terme—cachottier, ou bien donc essaye de dire qu’il n’y a rien à voir ici, mais ils ne donnent pas l’explication. On veut une simple explication pour comprendre leur motion. Puis ça ne veut pas dire qu’on est contre, parce qu’on veut savoir. On veut essayer de comprendre la logique de la proposition du gouvernement. Et qu’est-ce qu’on entend? « Écoute, ça veut dire la même chose, puis si vous autres—votiez contre. »

Écoute, on essaye d’expliquer. Quand on amène une motion, on vous explique la logique derrière pour comprendre, pour essayer de vous convaincre. Le respect devrait être mutuel, qu’il vienne du gouvernement ou des députés du gouvernement, pour nous expliquer leur logique pour demander les ressources, parce qu’on sait qu’il y a beaucoup d’énergie qui vient des ressources. Ça veut dire quoi quand on enlève le mot « ressource » pour dire « energy plan »? Ils semblent dire que c’est tout interrelié—mais qu’ils l’expliquent d’une façon qu’on puisse comprendre, parce que nous autres, on demande s’il n’y a pas anguille sous roche. On dit ça en français quand peut-être il y a quelque à cacher. On dit « anguille sous roche » en français, mais je demande au gouvernement des explications.

Really, we’re trying to get an explanation. That doesn’t mean we’re against it; we’re just trying to understand it.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: Chair, I just want to make a suggestion. Unfortunately, I don’t have the Electricity Act in front of me, but is it possible that the current Electricity Act contains the phrase “integrated energy resource plan,” which might be confused with the integrated energy resource plan proposed by Bill 214? I’ll just put it in front of the government members. Is that the possible explanation? Does that maybe make sense?

Mr. John Yakubski: I'm going to give it to you and try to save some time here. The word "resource" would be removed from "integrated energy resource plan" to simplify the title of the plan. The integrated energy plan would take an integrated approach to planning for a range of energy system components, including, but not limited to, different electricity, natural gas and other energy resources.

Integration could also involve planning across local and regional jurisdictions, government priorities and across sectors such as transportation and housing. Simplifying the name of the plan would make the intent of the plan clearer for everyday Ontarians and sector stakeholders.

We're ready to vote, sir.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: Thank you very much for the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for reading out that statement. I think I understand now that you want to bring out the word "integrated," which is the most important word that's being introduced. And by removing the word "resource," the word "integrated" is more emphasized and will be more in front of the public, so I kind of get that now.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Seeing none, are the members ready to vote? All in favour of government motion 3, please raise your hand. Any opposition? Seeing none, the motion is carried.

We move to motion 4, which is from the NDP. Who's going to move the motion? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: Thank you, Chair. We got our slip in.

I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by adding the following clause to subsection 25.29(2) of the Electricity Act, 1998:

"(d.1) air emissions from the energy sector, taking into account any projections respecting the emission of greenhouse gases developed with the assistance of the IESO;"

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: This is an amendment that we had based on work with the Society of United Professionals, which represents a lot of people in the nuclear industry. We believe that it makes sense to include this in the bill. These people are the experts.

It's one of those things where—you know, you talk about rocket scientists. These are people who run our nuclear power plants. From the tours that I've been on, the training that they have to do this work is extensive. They know the electricity system inside and out. They're an amazing resource for us to reach out to to learn more about nuclear, but as well to know about electricity in general.

I think that an amendment that they have suggested and brought forward makes 100% sense, because I believe in listening to the experts in the field. I'm not an expert in nuclear or energy in general, and I think that the Society of United Professionals—I trust their expertise and the amount of work they've been doing over the years to make proper amendments, so we can make our bill even stronger.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Go ahead, MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I apologize. I was giving an opportunity for my colleagues to say something.

Basically, the amendment adds air emissions from the energy sector to the matters the energy plan may address, and then that will take into account the projections provided by non-partisan professionals at IESO. I think that air emissions are one of the reasons why the Minister of Energy and Electrification—I think that's the new title. I think that is why he is talking about nuclear in such a way: that this is an opportunity to cut back on our air emissions from the past. We've come a long way from the old coal plants just belching smoke into the air.

0940

As I said earlier, the society had brought this amendment forward, and I think it's pretty supportable when you're listening to experts like that in that field who do that job every single day to provide electricity for Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I want to support the comments made by my colleague from Sudbury. In previous long-term energy plans for the government of Ontario, it has been long recognized that nuclear energy is a way of reducing air emissions and greenhouse gasses, and it would be a shame to no longer mention that. If I'm not mistaken, it is mentioned in that way in the current Electricity Act.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Seeing none, are the members ready to vote?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Recorded vote.

Ayes

Bourgouin, McCrimmon, West.

Nays

Dowie, Gallagher Murphy, Jordan, Pinsonneault, Skelly.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): The motion is lost.

We move to motion 5. This is from the NDP. MPP Bourgouin, please go ahead and move the motion.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by adding "and the requirement of free, prior and informed consent of impacted Indigenous communities" at the end of clause 25.29(2)(h) of the Electricity Act, 1998.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I think this is an important amendment that should be supported. We've seen this government say they consult with free, prior and informed consent with First Nations, yet I represent seven First Nations communities, and I can tell you a lot of these First Nations are saying they're not being informed or asked for consent prior to. We've seen this government—we've seen that there are so many claims happening on traditional territories of First Nations and that they have no consultation. In fact, they're suing the government. We've seen now, what, seven or eight communities suing this government, especially because of this issue right here we're talking about, this amendment we're talking about: free, prior, informed consent. First

Nations communities have been—we signed treaties, which the province is privy to. There should be free, prior, informed consent, and yet it's not happening.

C'est un gouvernement qui dit qu'il parle avec les Premières Nations mais, comme j'ai dit en anglais, il y a sept ou huit Premières Nations qui actionnent, justement, le gouvernement, qui amènent le gouvernement en cour pour, justement, le manque de consultation avec les Premières Nations.

J'ai donné comme exemple en anglais que quand on pense aux Premières Nations, juste pour les—comment est-ce que je dirais ça en français? Les « claims » qui se font, comme c'est là—je ne sais pas c'est quoi le terme en français, ça m'échappe. Mais il y a des milliers de « claims » qui se font en Ontario et les Premières Nations ne sont même pas consultées. Il y a du monde qui sont sur leurs territoires, qui sont après faire du développement ou qui font de l'exploration, puis ils ne sont pas au courant.

Le gouvernement dit : « Bien, non, on fait des consultations avec les Premières Nations. » Je ne sais pas avec qui ils consultent. Consultent-ils avec ceux qui sont prêts à travailler avec le gouvernement ou ceux qui supportent le gouvernement? Il reste que les autres, à l'amont de la rivière—si tu as une communauté à l'amont qui veut savoir ce qui va se passer sur leur territoire, parce que leur territoire, il faut comprendre, ce n'est pas juste une communauté. Leur territoire est beaucoup plus grand, beaucoup plus vaste que ça, monsieur le Président. Ils ont des territoires qui sont très vastes, et très souvent, les territoires se croisent.

Là, on a un amendement où on dit que ça doit être entré, parce que—veut, veut pas—il va y avoir un impact sur leur communauté. Il va y avoir un impact sur leur territoire. Puis ce que les Premières Nations nous demandent, c'est que ça soit mis dans cet amendement-là, dans ce projet de loi-là, pour faire sûr que le gouvernement respecte les Premières Nations et le « free, prior and informed consent ».

Très souvent, on parle aux Premières Nations, mais ça ne veut pas dire qu'elles ont donné leur consentement. Souvent, ils disent : « Oui, on parle avec les Premières Nations », mais il ne faut pas oublier que, des fois, on va parler avec des conseils, mais les conseils, ça ne veut pas dire que ce sont les communautés. C'est une structure qui est très différente de ce à quoi on est habitué, mais les Premières Nations disent : « Si c'est dans nos régions et ça peut nous affecter, on veut être consultées », avec raison.

S'il y a des déversements ou s'il y a des solutions, des dangers qui pourraient les affecter, que ça descende la rivière—puis on l'a vu avec Grassy Narrows. On a vu comment cela a affecté des communautés. Ils ne veulent plus que ça se répète. Attawapiskat, ils ne le veulent pas non plus, puis les Premières Nations ne veulent pas qu'il y ait une autre situation comme Attawapiskat.

Fait que, c'est normal qu'on doit rentrer—je pense que c'est un amendement qui est nécessaire parce que, trop souvent, on a vu que les Premières Nations sont affectées. Je pense que c'est un amendement qui doit rentrer dans ce projet de loi-là.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I think it's really important to move forward expeditiously in this integrated energy plan. And it is integrated, so, as I say, there are many different moving parts—everything from electricity to housing to mining to skills—and it's got to move ahead with the full, enthusiastic participation and partnership with Indigenous communities. I think it's very important, for that to happen, for the government to have in its culture this idea of always thinking about free, prior and informed consent of affected Indigenous communities. It's like—you could do all the land acknowledgements you want, but actual actions to back up the idea that the government of Ontario and the whole culture of the government of Ontario believes in free, prior and informed consent as a way of promising that there will be an active participation and partnership with Indigenous communities—I think that's crucial to making sure that this integrated plan moves forward and moves forward at the rate at which we need, given the challenges that we have right now.

As I said before, I think the government knows that there are lots of different parts to any energy plan that interact with each other strongly. So if any one piece doesn't work—and, in particular, if we ignore Indigenous communities and don't try to partner with Indigenous communities and back the idea of free, prior and informed consent—that part is not going to move forward, and the rest of the energy plan is not going to move forward. I think the government understands that, because of this word, “integrated,” that they've put into the energy plan.

So I think it would be good if the government supported this amendment and supported a culture in the whole of the Ontario government to require free, prior and informed consent for Indigenous communities that are impacted by government of Ontario policies.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: This is an amendment that our party brought forward, so obviously I support it. But to provide some context—and I'm going to make some comments about our shared history. So this is not a reflection of the government of the day; this is something that is a reflection of all of us as Canadians, that our shared history with Indigenous, First Nations people has not been great. We have made a lot of mistakes along the way that have led up to the 94 calls to action from the TRC commission. We're in the shadow of the death of Murray Sinclair that should bring that up front to us.

In fact, when the member from Kingston and the Islands started off, I thought he was going to say at one point, “to move forward in the good way,” which is a common expression First Nations will say about making good decisions and working together. In fact, this is the history, kind of, of colonialism around the world, not just unique to Canada. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples isn't just about what happened in Canada; it affects countries across the planet.

0950

I want to be clear: In the bill, there is some good language about reconciliation. So I don't want to paint this as an all-negative thing. But this is about making it stronger.

I came out of the mining industry during a time when we transitioned, at least at my company, from—consultation meant that the company would go to First Nations communities and tell them what we were doing, and then we would check off a box. I wasn't part of that group. I was just a front-line worker at the time. We'd check off a box saying we had consulted because we told them what we were doing, and then we would sort of bulldoze over it and do what we wanted. It's not an effective way of doing business. It creates a lot of resentment and hurt. It also slows down the process. And I don't think it's reflective, especially now, of what the people of Ontario want to see us—like the member from Kingston and the Islands said, you can only go so far with land recognitions. There comes a point when someone says, "What else are you doing?" And if you're pulling your pockets open and there's nothing there, you're not really doing the work that we should all be working together on.

At the front of Queen's Park, there's a boarded statue of John A. Macdonald, because of the frustration that people are seeing, but in front of it are a bunch of children's shoes that precinct properties takes very patient care of—to remove them, trim the grass around them, remove the snow—to make sure that monument stays up, because of the original 213 children who were found in residential schools. And that's a reflection not just of Indigenous people or Métis people or First Nations people; that's a reflection of the public at large, who have become frustrated, who have learned more about our shared history and recognize we can't change the history but we want to change the future.

So when you talk about having a specific reference or a requirement of free, prior and informed consent, it becomes very valuable to demonstrating to the people—First Nations, and as well to newcomers and to settlers in our country—that we are taking this seriously and we're building a positive future in that good way, as was referenced earlier. This is an important thing. It feels like just a line, but this is a way that we can really move forward and demonstrate that we are walking that talk, that we're not just saying a quick land recognition and moving along as if no other work has to be done.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: The goals and objectives already in the bill reflect Ontario's commitment to the advancement of reconciliation with Indigenous communities, including early engagement in project planning, consultation and support for Indigenous leadership and participation in the energy sector.

Chair, we are absolutely committed to full consultations with Indigenous peoples. We have been doing this for over six years now, and we continue to commit to make sure that's exactly what we're doing.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I was in the House during question period when Chief Moonias was yelling at the Premier about not having meetings about a road that was going to go through his community towards the Ring of Fire. When he

was escorted out of the gallery by protective services—I don't remember his exact words, but basically it was, "Over my dead body." To me, that is not a reflection of good work that has happened over the last six years when it comes to consultation with First Nations communities. I'm not trying to throw salt in the wound. I'm just saying it's not being done properly, or else Chief Moonias wouldn't have made this travel—it's a long way from Sudbury to here, and Sudbury is maybe not even a quarter of that distance. It is a long way, to come down to Queen's Park to yell at the Premier of Ontario about the need for consultation, and I don't believe that Chief Moonias would have done that unless he felt that this was an important thing—to make a point about the importance and the requirement and the recommendations under TRC and UNDRIP to have free, prior and informed consent. I appreciate the members opposite thinking they're getting it right, but the evidence before us doesn't demonstrate that that's happening.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I'll echo what my colleague from Sudbury was saying: They're not getting it right. I have communities that have been asking this government to have meetings. We had First Nations sit there and ask the Premier to come to a meeting. They were here; they were requesting meetings.

I have a community that is landlocked on their reserve. They want an expansion. It's called an ATR, an expansion of the reserve, which the federal is willing to pay, yet still the province is dragging their feet to give them the extension. The province agrees in principle, but their chief has to go through another hoop. Now it's in front of the—I've got a brain fart—Madame Mulroney's ministry—

Interjections: Treasury Board.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Treasury Board, merci. Sorry.

So now it's in front—they're asking for a meeting with the Treasury Board—30 years that they have been asking, because they're landlocked, there's a lack of housing, there's a lack of proper water—30 years they have been asking. "We need to expand. We need to have more housing." That's just an example, and now they're saying they're doing a great job for six years with free and informed consent? There's a reason why the First Nations are asking that, because you've been failing miserably.

I represent a lot of First Nations and so does my colleague Sol Mamakwa, and he has spoken how many times in the House about the issues of First Nations and without there being consultation? I spoke earlier just on the exploration and the claims—no consulting whatsoever. Thousands of claims—hundreds of thousands of claims have been done in Ontario, going on their traditional territories, yet they have no idea who's on their traditional territories, no consultation there. First Nations are suing the government on this. Councils are suing this government on this. Never seen that before, but yet they're doing a great job?

There's a reason why we're asking for this amendment. It came from First Nations because you've been failing miserably.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I'll be brief, because I did speak earlier about this, but I want to say that in the mining industry, we didn't get this in the past. Inco had the claim for Voisey's Bay, a really lucrative mining site. They thought that consultation meant, "We're going to tell you what we're going to do." It created—I was trying to look up the delay; I think it was years of delay from not doing this effectively. This was a long time ago, but the reality is that First Nations people in Canada are not accepting this anymore and that we're going to see things in the future where the projects that potentially would benefit First Nations communities, because they're not being consulted, they're going to say no to.

And when you talk about the requirement of free, prior and informed consent—a lot of conversation recently about small modular nuclear reactors. They're working on the Hitachi model right now. I know the technology isn't ready to roll yet, but it's going to come soon, and in my head I thought this is a great solution for these far northern communities that right now are using diesel and are dealing with spills of diesel. If they can get the safety systems around it, maybe this is a potential way to provide energy that's continuous. They don't have to worry about ice roads thawing too early, that sort of thing. But in conversations with Indigenous communities, they said, "No, we don't want that." Well, are we going to force them to? Are we going to say, "Well, we did consent—we told you you're getting it, so you're getting it," or are we going to talk to them and come to an agreement? Are we going to listen to what their concerns are? Are we going to try to figure out where we can meet at the table to find out the pros and cons and what the pushback is, or do we keep doing what we've done the last hundreds of years and just say, "Take it or leave it"?

And that, really, we're going to see reflected in this vote, because on this side I think we're going to vote in favour of this amendment, and on the government side they're going to vote against the amendment, and I'm going to tell you that, we're going to have to take it, but the protests that you're going to see from Indigenous communities, First Nation communities, Métis communities are going to be a lot louder than a hand up or a hand down.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Seeing none, are the members ready to vote?

1000

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Recorded vote.

Ayes

Bourgouin, McCrimmon, West.

Nays

Dowie, Gallagher Murphy, Jordan, Pinsonneault, Skelly, Yakabuski.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): The motion is lost.

We move to the next motion, motion number 6, presented by the NDP. Who is going to move amendment 6? MPP West, are you ready?

MPP Jamie West: Yes.

I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by adding the following clause to subsection 25.29(2) of the Electricity Act, 1998:

"(h.1) the reduction of energy poverty and the equitable allocation of the total costs of the electricity system, having particular regard to low-density areas in rural and northern Ontario;"

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: This is basically the language we want to introduce to ensure that the government will consider economic justice and regional equity when developing the energy plan. Sudbury—for a northern community—I often describe it as the Toronto of the north, except we just have one of everything. We have a lot of different energy resources available to us as a compact city in one area. But you travel to Nickel Belt, which is literally a 50-minute drive outside of the city, and they don't have that equitable access.

In southern Ontario, in the farming communities, we'll hear often about wanting access to natural gas or wanting access to cheaper electricity rates, or wanting access to—I know it's not electricity specifically, but high-speed Internet. So I think we need to recognize that all things aren't the same. I'm glad we have members from all different large cities and rural communities here to recognize that first-hand.

Previously, in the previous Liberal government, rural and northern consumers were really impacted by the overprocurement of overpriced, privatized hydro contracts. That creates a system where it doesn't feel fair to live where you were born and where you grew up, or it doesn't feel fair to live where the work is, for the work that you do, because you're paying a higher cost.

Basically, we want to make sure that this clause would ensure that we would remove energy poverty, which sounds like a weird word, but we don't want people to be—a lot of us, I'm sure, were knocking on doors, my colleagues here, in 2018. You shouldn't have to choose between heating and eating when it comes to hydro.

That's still a reality for a lot of people, for the cost of electricity, and we want to make sure that we don't exacerbate the problem. I have good faith that the government of the day or future governments won't intentionally do it, but it has happened in the past. We want to make sure that this is enshrined in the legislation.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Hsu.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I think I would come at thinking about this particular amendment, again, from the word "integrated" in the integrated energy plan. Because when it comes to the reduction of energy poverty and trying to figure out how to balance the cost of transmission versus the benefits of having grid electricity in a low-density area, it is important to have a whole-of-government approach, as opposed to just an electricity-system approach.

When we look at conservation measures, we look at, again, the cost-versus-benefits of building out transmission

and figuring out where the balance is—whether or not we support off-grid energy systems, which may be more cost-effective—all of these should be integrated with the government's overall policy when it comes to poverty.

From this point of view, I think it makes a lot of sense, given that one of the objectives of this particular schedule of the bill is to have an integrated energy plan. And it's one of the reasons why we can't just plan inside IESO. It should be a whole-of-government plan, like it was in the 2017 long-term energy plan. It was put out by the government, not by the IESO.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Like probably all of you, we have constituents that are really struggling. When we go up north—like for me, Highway 11, the James Bay coast, Moosonee, and Moose Factory—our winters are long. We've seen snow already; here in Toronto, you still have leaves on the trees. We've seen the summer weather that you still have in Toronto, but there's a different reality as you go up north. I heard my friend from Sudbury—for us, Sudbury is south. It's six hours away. It's the reality; it's six hours away from Kapuskasing, and the further north you go, the more it is. Our winters are long and there are a lot of people living in poverty.

When my colleague said we have constituents who are not using the heat when it's minus 20s, minus 30s—we see minus 40s—because they need to feed themselves or feed their families, there's something wrong with this, especially in a province like Ontario where we're the richest. There has got to be a better system that we can allow for help more than once for people who live in poverty, especially when it comes to heating.

My colleague said not everywhere has got natural gas. I'll just give an example. My brother-in-law lives in Nakina, and he uses propane—John, I think you use propane also—and it's costly. He gets a bill and all of a sudden he sees the cost of his—but my brother-in-law used to work for a company. He used to buy the fuel and he used to buy the diesel and the natural gas and propane, so he called the company because he knew he could negotiate the price down. He negotiated the price down. It was not based on the carbon tax because the carbon tax was still there. He negotiated the prices down not only for him but for his daughter also, because he had the bill for his daughter. But he knew the system. He understood it because he worked in the system. Knowing that there was something wrong with his bill, he called the company and negotiated the price down, but not everybody knows the system.

So some of these companies are gouging, are taking advantage of clients, and they just pay because they don't know, they think that's the way it goes, yet they don't have the funding to do it. That's why now for propane we see people saying, "I can't pay my bill because it's way too high." There are a lot of communities, because like any rural—for the people who don't live on Highway 11, natural gas goes, but anywhere between that, there's no natural gas. It's either propane, wood stove or pellet stove. That's the

reality that we see in rural—so this is why we're proposing this.

For an example like I've told you about the propane, we need to protect these constituents, these clients, because these companies are taking advantage of a situation that should not happen. Because if a person knows the system, they can negotiate it down, but the rest don't. They think that's the price that they have to pay, and I can tell you, it is steep. It was quite impressive.

That's why we're bringing this proposal. I think it's an amendment that should protect the people who are a lot less fortunate than us, that we should have a better system so that they can have—what's the word in English? "Répit."

MPP Jamie West: "Relief"?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: "Relief." Thank you.

I just want to say a few words in French because comme j'expliquais en anglais, c'est que j'ai mon beau-frère qui vit à Nakina, qui a vu le système. Il connaît le système parce qu'il était un acheteur pour une compagnie. Il savait qu'il était capable de négocier, mais il a eu sa facture et sa facture démontrait—c'était pour du propane. C'était une facture assez salée. Il a appelé, mais il a appelé aussi pour sa fille, puisque sa fille a deux « tanks » à propane.

C'était drôle parce que sa fille, elle, ma nièce, elle avait deux « tanks ». Il y avait un prix pour une « tank »; l'autre « tank » à côté, il y avait un prix moins cher, puis l'autre à côté était plus cher. Pourtant, c'est le même propane qui a été délivré à la même place par la même compagnie.

Imaginez-vous quelqu'un qui est démuné, qui a déjà de la misère à arriver, qui n'a pas les systèmes, qui n'a pas l'Internet, puis qui fait face à une facture—parce que, veut, veut pas, dans le Nord, on a pas tous le gaz naturel. On a l'électricité. On a le propane. On a du chauffage au bois. Tu peux chauffer aux « pellets ». Mais pas tout le monde peut payer, puisque c'est assez cher. Même si on chauffe au bois, ça ne vient pas gratis, ça.

C'est pour ça qu'on propose une proposition pour les personnes les plus démunies de notre province, pour qu'on puisse les sortir de cette misère-là. Mais on devrait faire beaucoup plus, parce que, comme l'exemple du propane que mon beau-frère—il savait le système, il a pu négocier pour sa fille et pour lui-même un meilleur prix—puis je peux vous dire, ça a réduit.

Et la « carbon tax » était comprise, là, fait que ce n'est pas une question de « carbon tax ». Je veux être très clair là-dessus. Il a dit : « Guy, la "carbon tax" était là. Ce n'est pas le problème. » C'est parce que c'est une compagnie qui a voulu prendre avantage d'une situation. Comme gouvernement, vous devez protéger ce monde-là. On devrait mettre un prix qui est fixe pour tout le monde, pas donner carte blanche à ces compagnies-là. On doit protéger les plus vulnérables.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I will be brief because I think it would be good if we could vote before we rise.

I want to talk about delivery services. Delivery services in the north tend to be higher; sometimes it makes sense and sometimes it doesn't. The price of gas, for example: If

you go to North Bay, which is about an hour and 20 minutes from Sudbury, gas is always 10 cents less, and I've been told it's because of delivery. But in Sudbury, we have milk, which is also a liquid that's delivered, and it's the exact same price as it is in North Bay.

So the sense in northern Ontario is that you're gouged because you can be. The opinion basically is, we have a lot of good blue-collar jobs, good middle-class jobs. We have to get to the mines to go to work. We have to pay for it, so we will. This basically would ensure that companies aren't allowed to gouge people in the north, and of course in rural areas in the north and in the south.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Seeing none, are the members ready to vote?

MPP Jamie West: Recorded vote, please.

Ayes

Bourgouin, McCrimmon, West.

Nays

Dowie, Gallagher Murphy, Jordan, Pinsonneault, Skelly.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): The motion is lost. Colleagues, we have to take a recess. We will reconvene at—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): So we will take the recess, and we will reconvene at 1:20, not 1 o'clock, in the same room.

Interjection: And the room is secure?

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Yes, the room is secure.

Ms. Donna Skelly: And why 1:20?

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Because I have to table an estimate in the House at 1 o'clock.

Ms. Donna Skelly: Well, can we have somebody fill in?

Interjections.

Ms. Donna Skelly: Can we have somebody else substitute for you at 1 o'clock? We can't do that?

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): No.

Ms. Donna Skelly: Okay. Why not?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Thushitha Kobikrishna): Because it's an order of the House. Because the decision was made in the House and not the committee, we can't make any changes.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Okay? Thank you.

The committee recessed from 1014 to 1320.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Welcome back, everyone.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Glad to have you back, Chair. Did you get your business done?

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Yes.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Wonderful.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): So we stopped at motion 7. Motion 7 is tabled by the NDP. Who is going to move it? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by adding the following clause to subsection 25.29(2) of the Electricity Act, 1998:

“(h.2) the orderly decarbonization of energy use in Ontario in a manner that protects the interests of consumers and impacted workers;”

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I know that my colleagues don't want a long debate on it, but just to explain the reason for the motion: The current bill has some good language about promoting electrification. This amendment would ensure that the interests of consumers, as well as the impact of workers, are considered in the government's decarbonization plan. It's one of those things that I think, around North America—probably around the world—people will talk about the good green jobs of the future, and there isn't a lot for workers.

I have friends who work in Virginia coal mines. They want to make sure they can pay their mortgage. What does that look like for them as part of the conversation? I'll shorten the debate to that.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Further debate? I see none. Is the committee ready to vote? Okay. All in favour of amendment 7? All those in favour?

MPP Jamie West: A recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): A recorded vote—

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Thushitha Kobikrishna): We're already in the middle of the vote now.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Oh, okay. Sorry, you missed this vote. Next one, before I move the vote, you have to let me know if you want a recorded vote or not.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Excuse me, Chair. They can indicate that they'd like every vote to be recorded in advance, correct?

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Yes, they can do that.

Mr. John Yakabuski: So why don't we do—because I think that's what you want. Let's have every vote recorded.

Ms. Donna Skelly: And I think we'll allow this one. If we're all in agreement, can we allow—

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): No, we cannot have debate on the recorded vote now. We are going to go through this vote.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Can we ask for this vote to be recorded? Too late? I tried to help you out, Jamie.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): All in favour of motion 7, please raise your hand. All in opposition, please raise your hand. The vote is lost.

Before we move to the next motion, would you like to have all the voting recorded? All in agreement?

MPP Jamie West: Just our amendments.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Okay.

We move to amendment 8. Again, MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by adding the following clause to subsection 25.29(2) of the Electricity Act, 1998:

“(h.3) the resilience of energy infrastructure and the management of risks related to the impacts of climate change;”

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I mentioned a couple of scenarios that we see up north and the effect of climate change. This is why we feel it's important that we mention it.

I'll give you another example: Between Moosonee and Moose Factory, of course, there's a river, and by the time it freezes—and we've seen now it has taken a lot more time to freeze. But during that process, people have to be helicoptered out from the island to the mainland, which is Moosonee. We're seeing now—last winter was, again, very problematic for ice freezing of the river that crosses from Moosonee to Moose Factory. This is why we're trying to make sure we mention the impact of climate change: to reflect what First Nations and Far North communities are living through.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: Just briefly, the current legislation has no reference to climate change, and we debated that earlier. We know that there are flooding events that are happening and climate-related hazards that are becoming more frequent and becoming very costly, especially at the municipal level. We're encouraging this adaptation so the government can plan for the future events.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Seeing none, I'm going to put the question. Recorded vote.

Ayes

Bourgouin, West.

Nays

Dowie, Gallagher Murphy, Jordan, Pinsonneault, Skelly, Yakabuski.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): The motion is lost.

We move to motion 9. I have an administrative change, and I'm going to read it. There is an administrative change to the ordering of the amendment package to ensure that motions are being considered in the right place in the bill. We will be considering amendments 10 and 11 before considering amendment 9.

So we're moving to amendment 10 for now first. This is from the NDP. Please move the amendment.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection to section 25.29 of the Electricity Act, 1998:

“Consistent with greenhouse gas emission targets

“(2.1) The minister shall ensure an integrated energy resource plan issued under subsection (1) is consistent with the government of Ontario's targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.”

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): I'm going to have a ruling on this amendment. I'm ruling that this amendment is out of order as it is inconsistent with the previous decision the committee made on this section of the bill.

MPP Jamie West: I don't understand. Just for clarification—I just don't understand the ruling.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Thushitha Kobikrishna): It's an issue of consistency.

MPP Jamie West: With a previous amendment or with a section of the bill?

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Thushitha Kobikrishna): With a previous amendment that has already

happened. It would be government amendment number 3: the renaming of “integrated energy resource plan” to “integrated energy plan.”

MPP Jamie West: Oh, because they changed the name.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Thushitha Kobikrishna): Yes, correct.

MPP Jamie West: Well, that doesn't work well.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): We will move to amendment 11. It is the same ruling—can you table it, please?

Interjections.

MPP Jamie West: Chair, I'll move it and put it on the record. It's unfortunate that an early amendment changed some of the wording so that the amendments don't qualify anymore. I think that's not really the intent of this.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Please move it.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection to section 25.29 of the Electricity Act, 1998:

“Technical reports by IESO

“(2.2) Before issuing an integrated energy resource plan under subsection (1), the minister shall require the IESO to submit a technical report on the adequacy and reliability of electricity resources with respect to anticipated electricity supply, capacity, storage, reliability and demand and on any other related matters the minister may specify, and the minister shall,

“(a) consider the report in developing the integrated energy resource plan; and

“(b) publish the report on a website of the government of Ontario or in another public manner before undertaking any consultations under subsection (3).”

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The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Thank you very much, MPP West. Again, this amendment is out of order for the same reason as previously stated on amendment 10.

MPP Jamie West: Clerk, is there an opportunity to make an amendment to address the name, the wording change? There isn't, eh? Okay.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Okay. We go back to amendment 9.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 3 of schedule 1 to the bill be amended by striking out subsection 25.29(9) of the Electricity Act, 1998 and substituting the following:

“Publication

“(9) On issuing an integrated energy resource plan under subsection (1), the minister shall post it on a government of Ontario website and shall also post or publish,

“(a) key data and cost projections used in the development of the integrated energy resource plan; and

“(b) any other information used in the development of the integrated energy resource plan that the minister determines should be made publicly available.”

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Thank you. I'm ruling that this amendment is out of order as it is inconsistent with the previous decision the committee made on this section of the bill.

Now we move to—

MPP Jamie West: Chair, is this the ruling for all of the amendments now?

Mr. John Yakabuski: If it's got "energy resource plan" in it, it is.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): No, it is only these three amendments.

MPP Jamie West: Just as a point of—I don't have a point of order, but we have heard our colleagues' request to have shorter debate and be efficient, and I've done my best to do that since we've returned, but I feel like this is just curtailing debate completely. Stakeholders came to us and asked for this. This comes out of our committee meetings of what they wanted to hear in the bill, and now we're wiping it away because of a word change.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): MPP West, unfortunately, we cannot have a debate on the Chair's ruling.

Shall schedule 1, section 3, as amended, carry? Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour of schedule 1, section 3, as amended carrying, please raise your hand. All in opposition, please raise your hand. Seeing none, it's carried.

There are no amendments to sections 4 to 8 of schedule 1. Does the committee agree to bundle them together? Yes? Okay. Sections 4 to 8: Any debate? Seeing none, I'm going to put the question: Shall sections 4 to 8 of schedule 1 carry? All in favour, please raise your hand. Any opposition? Seeing none, carried.

Shall schedule 1, as amended, carry? Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour, please raise your hand. Any opposition? Schedule 1, as amended, is carried.

There are no amendments to sections 1 to 4 of schedule 2. Does the committee agree to bundle them together? Thank you.

Any debate? Seeing none, shall sections 1 to 4 of schedule 2 carry? All in favour? Any opposition? Seeing none, carried.

Shall schedule 2 carry? Any debate? I see none. All in favour, raise your hand. Any opposition? Seeing none, schedule 2 is carried.

Now we move to schedule 3, section 1. We have amendment 12 from the government. MPP Yakabuski, can you move it?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move that section 1 of schedule 3 to the bill be amended by striking out section 47.2 of the Electricity Act, 1998 and substituting the following:

"Application of act

"47.2(1) This act, other than part VIII, does not apply with respect to the distribution or retail of electricity for electric vehicle charging, except as may be provided by the regulations.

"Interpretation

"(2) For greater certainty, except as may be provided by the regulations, a reference in a provision to the distribution or retail of electricity shall not be read as including the distribution or retail described in subsection (1), other than in part VIII.

"No past application

"(3) This act, other than part VIII, is deemed not to have applied with respect to the distribution or retail of electricity for electric vehicle charging before the day the Affordable Energy Act, 2024 received royal assent."

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any debate? MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I'm just making my colleagues worried.

It seems to me that this is just about ensuring the electricity for the EV charging remains subject to the oversights of the ESA and the various electrical safety standards, and I think that's fine.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any further debate? Seeing none, I'm going to call the vote on amendment 12. All in favour, please raise your hand. All in opposition, please raise your hand. Seeing none, motion 12 is carried.

We move to motion 13, from the government side. MPP Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move that section 1 of schedule 3 to the bill be amended by striking out clause 47.3(1)(b) of the Electricity Act, 1998 and substituting the following:

"(b) providing for and governing the application of this act, other than part VIII, to the distribution or retail of electricity for electric vehicle charging, subject to such modifications in application as the regulations may specify."

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any debate? Seeing none, I am going to call the vote. All in favour of motion 13, please raise your hand. All in opposition, please raise your hand. Seeing none, motion 13 is carried.

Shall schedule 3, section 1, as amended, carry? Any debate? I see none. All in favour, please raise your hand. Any opposition? I see none. Schedule 3, section 1, as amended, is carried.

There are no amendments to sections 2 and 3 of schedule 3. Does the committee agree to bundle them together? Thank you.

Any debate? No? Okay. All in favour of section 2 and 3 of schedule 3, please raise your hand. Thank you. Any opposition? Seeing none, it's carried.

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Schedule 3, section 4: There is an amendment, number 14, from the NDP. MPP West.

MPP Jamie West: I move that section 4 of schedule 3 to the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Commencement

"4. This schedule comes into force on a day to be named by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor."

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour of amendment 14, please—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Yes. It is a recorded vote.

Ayes

Bourgouin, West.

Nays

Dowie, Gallagher Murphy, Jordan, Pinsonneault, Skelly, Yakabuski.

The Chair (Mr. Aris Babikian): Amendment 14 is lost.

Schedule 3, section 4: Any debate? No. All in favour, please raise your hand. Any opposition? Seeing none, schedule 3, section 4, is carried.

Schedule 3, as amended: Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour, please raise your hands. Any opposition? Seeing none, carried.

We're going to vote on sections.

Section 1: Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour of section 1, please raise your hands. All in opposition? Seeing none, section 1 is carried.

Now we'll move to section 2. Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour of section 2, please raise your hands. Any opposition? Seeing none, section 2 is carried.

Section 3: Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour of section 3, please raise your hands. All in opposition, please raise your hands. Seeing none, section 3 is carried.

Shall the preamble of the bill carry? Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour, please raise your hands. Any opposition? Seeing none, the preamble of the bill is carried.

Shall the title of the bill carry? Any debate? No. All in favour, please raise your hand. Any opposition? Seeing none, the title of the bill carries.

Shall Bill 214, as amended, carry? Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour, please raise your hand. Any opposition? Seeing none, Bill 214, as amended, carries.

Shall I report the bill to the House? Any debate? Seeing none, all in favour, please raise your hand. Any opposition? Seeing none, it's carried.

There being no further business, this committee now stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1346.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE INTERIOR

Chair / Président

Mr. Aris Babikian (Scarborough–Agincourt PC)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

Mr. Guy Bourgoïn (Mushkegowuk–James Bay / Mushkegowuk–Baie James ND)

Mr. Aris Babikian (Scarborough–Agincourt PC)

Mr. Guy Bourgoïn (Mushkegowuk–James Bay / Mushkegowuk–Baie James ND)

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto (Mississauga–Lakeshore PC)

Mr. Andrew Dowie (Windsor–Tecumseh PC)

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy (Newmarket–Aurora PC)

Mr. John Jordan (Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston PC)

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon (Kanata–Carleton L)

Mr. Steve Pinsonneault (Lambton–Kent–Middlesex PC)

Ms. Sandy Shaw (Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest–Ancaster–Dundas ND)

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke PC)

Substitutions / Membres remplaçants

Ms. Donna Skelly (Flamborough–Glanbrook PC)

MPP Jamie West (Sudbury ND)

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles L)

Clerk / Greffière

Ms. Thushitha Kobikrishna

Staff / Personnel

Ms. Tamara Kuzyk, legislative counsel