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**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 20 October 2009**

**Mardi 20 octobre 2009**

Speaker  
Honourable Steve Peters

Président  
L'honorable Steve Peters

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 20 October 2009

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 20 octobre 2009

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

*Prayers.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH  
AND SAFETY AMENDMENT ACT  
(VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT  
IN THE WORKPLACE), 2009

LOI DE 2009 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR LA SANTÉ ET LA SÉCURITÉ  
AU TRAVAIL (VIOLENCE ET  
HARCÈLEMENT AU TRAVAIL)

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 5, 2009, on the motion for second reading of Bill 168, An Act to amend the Occupational Health and Safety Act with respect to violence and harassment in the workplace and other matters / Projet de loi 168, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail en ce qui concerne la violence et le harcèlement au travail et d'autres questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Further debate?

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** It gives me great pleasure to enter into the debate on Bill 168, an act that will introduce amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act to prevent workplace violence and to address workplace harassment. Certainly, I think everyone in this House must agree that everyone should be able to work without fear of violence in a safe and healthy workplace. I'd like to address this issue from the perspective of both the employer in the health care setting and also as a health care worker myself.

I think we need to acknowledge that there is, especially in the health care sector, the real possibility of physical violence occurring. As the commissioner of health services, I was ultimately responsible for both the safety of the residents and the workers in the region of York's long-term-care facilities. In that capacity, I remember very well looking through the incident reports of serious occurrences in the long-term-care facility and drilling down to see exactly what the situation had been. In most cases, the situation was where an elderly

Alzheimer's patient suffering from dementia had exhibited violent behaviour towards a health care worker and the health care worker had, in some fashion, retaliated. Of course, this was unacceptable from the point of view of hurting or physically damaging the patient in this case, but drilling down into those occurrences, it also became very clear that many actions could have been taken to prevent the incident from occurring in the first place.

We, as an example, instituted an educational program so that all workers in our long-term-care facilities would be extremely aware of the nature of the disease the patients they were caring for were suffering from so that they understood that in some cases, certainly not all, a small number of patients with Alzheimer's, out of frustration from their disease, may act out using behaviours that could be construed as violent and that the health care worker should take some actions instead of retaliating. But to understand the disease, we instituted anger management courses so that workers would also be able to analyze their own reactions to the perceived risk from these particular patients.

We also instituted the measure that immediately upon feeling that there was a potential for physical violence, the worker obtain the assistance of another worker so that two people would be able to deal with the situation. We were also very much into mitigation of the physical space within which our Alzheimer's patients were living, so that corridors did not end in blind dead ends, that there was always a circle that patients could walk in, thereby lessening their feelings of frustration.

What we noticed after we did institute these educational and mitigation preventive measures was we saw a rapid decline in the incidents, which obviously benefited both residents and the health care worker.

I remember many, many years ago, when I was a fourth-year medical student, looking at this particular issue of violence in the workplace from the perspective of a health care worker. I was a clinical clerk, a fourth-year medical student, doing my psychiatry rotation in a downtown teaching hospital, and I was asked to take a history from a patient with a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia. I had, of course, learned from the textbooks exactly what the signs and symptoms of this disease were, and certainly, in some cases, there is the potential for physical violence.

It never occurred to me, as someone dedicated to helping people, that I might potentially be the subject of a physical attack, so I went into the interview room, closed the door, sat at the desk, and within about five minutes, realized that the patient was not seeing me as someone

there to help him but probably, with the hallucinations he was experiencing, I looked exactly like the devil incarnate.

I rapidly left the room and I reported to my supervisor that I was fearful of physical violence. I was told, “Oh, didn’t anyone actually mention to you that you should always interview someone with paranoid schizophrenia with the door open and sit close to the door?” When I managed to suggest that perhaps there should be two people in such a situation, I was looked upon with derision. In those days, medicine was an ordeal by fire and putting yourself at risk was considered part of the culture.

I’d certainly like to say that we’ve come a very long way from those days. We have taken steps in this particular legislation to address the issue, first, of harassment, with specific programs to be put in place to lessen the risk of harassment, and then, of course, the provision now that someone fearing physical violence in the workplace has the right to refuse that work. Again, we do address many other issues in the bill—domestic violence, as well.

I would simply like to conclude in saying that I’m so pleased to see that the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario, Doris Grinspun, and also Dr. Ken Arnold, the president of the Ontario Medical Association, have commended our government on the introduction of this bill.

Just to quote Dr. Arnold, “Ontario’s doctors commend the provincial government for its introduction of Bill 168, which aims to better protect workers from violence in the workplace.

“We believe every health care provider has the right to a safe work environment and we hope these legislative amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act will help to ensure their safety.”

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Questions and comments?

0910

**Mr. John O’Toole:** I look forward to commenting on this bill myself this morning. I’m sure the member who just spoke—from Oak Ridges–Markham, I guess it is—as a medical officer of health for York region, saw some of the unfortunate circumstances.

The domestic violence issue is the one that I’m most concerned about. In the workplace, this bill is purporting that a person would have to make a disclosure to their superior in the workplace. I find that quite uncomfortable; in fact, I am not supportive of the bill for that reason.

Harassment in the workplace is another thing. I think overt harassment should be completely forbidden. As well, punitive actions could be taken—dismissal etc. But when you start to get into the personal lives of individuals, men or women—or, for that matter, a person’s lifestyle issues become something of a personal, confidential and private nature.

At the same time, I had a bill, the Lori Dupont Act, which I’ll be speaking about more definitely, but I’d like the member who spoke on this bill to respond to my concern about bringing forward in the workplace—in the

strictest of confidence, I guess—family relationship problems or emotional relationship problems that could be considered as interfering in the workplace and making a person vulnerable in the workplace—for sexual harassment, let’s be straight about it and see if the member would respond to me in that case.

All of us here certainly want the workplace to be safe and to feel safe, but at the same time, do we want to expose our personal problems?

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate? The member from—

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Debate or questions and comments?

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Sorry. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I’d like to commend the member from Oak Ridges–Markham for her statement. There’s nothing like a hands-on experience from being in the medical field like she was—and could be again. It was quite interesting to hear what she had to say about her personal experience in that situation.

Some of our health workers are constantly exposed to dangerous situations, as well as our teachers in the schools, where it can happen. My wife is a teacher, and she has had the odd incidents in schools over the years that require restraint and how to handle the kids—as well, in the medical area, adults.

I think that these types of protections in the workplace are necessary and should have been done a long time ago. We feel that anything that moves in the direction of protection of health workers as well as teachers or any other people that are in the—and you know, you have bullying in plants, too. You have people who use their physical presence to intimidate other workers and really terrorize people in the workplace. But this has got to end and we are in support of anything that would move in that direction to help people.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** I came in at the tail end, and hearing the speech made by my colleague from Oak Ridges–Markham, I can assure the people in Oak Ridges–Markham that she will have a very long and very distinguished career in this House, because she is a remarkable member.

But, interestingly enough, to be a former chief medical officer of health, which she was, that position is a very unique position in that you are dealing with hospitals, with municipalities and with school boards, and it really gives you a unique insight into harassment that may be occurring. Something that we all want to do is to eradicate that.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** The member from Durham is interjecting, and to be fair, he’s been a leader. He’s had a private member’s bill, and he has seen first-hand, with a situation in his particular riding, why this legislation is needed and the need to rally all the forces we can to get rid of violence in the workplace.

I heard the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. My wife is also a teacher, and you hear about those experiences that occur in the classroom and within the teaching profession. Again, we need to do everything we can to eradicate the violence and the potential of harassment and really glean some insight into individuals who potentially could have these problems, to be in a proactive position to get to that individual before something very tragic happens. We're all very aware of high-profile cases that have been reported upon in the media, and the kind of devastation that can happen when we don't have legislation in place to be proactive and get to the root of the problem as quickly as we can.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I listened with interest to my colleague from Oak Ridges–Markham, and it's hard to disagree with any of the sentiments that she expresses, because if you ask me or anybody else, "Do you agree that we should control violence, or sexual or any other kind of harassment, in the workplace?" the answer would be an obvious yes. But I find myself constantly at a loss for an ability to wrap my head around and agree with a bill like this, because I don't know where the dots are connected in terms of creating a law and having that law attached to the workplace in a meaningful way, where we actually can exercise the control that we're discussing.

The bill says that in the workplace, once this becomes law, you have to prepare a policy regarding workplace violence. So what's that policy going to be? The policy is going to be, in two short words, "No violence." But it's not a predictable thing. Just because you enact a law or because you say there won't be violence in a workplace doesn't guarantee anything, certainly not violence in the workplace, which is very typically spontaneous. That's what violence in a workplace is. It isn't, "I'm going to go to work this morning and be violent." It is, to use the vernacular of the day, somebody going postal.

As far as sexual harassment is concerned, that is more easily controlled, but again, this bill says, "You will prepare a policy on workplace harassment." It seems to me that in legislation at the federal and provincial levels there's much reference to harassment in the workplace and what you may and may not do and what may and may not be interpreted as harassment. So that begs the question, why do you need this law? Again, I am concerned, and I say this to the member from Oak Ridges, with being put in a position where if I don't vote for this, I'm obviously for violence and harassment in the workplace, when such is obviously not the case.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member from Oak Ridges–Markham has two minutes to respond.

**Ms. Helena Jaczek:** I'd very much like to thank my colleagues from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, Peterborough and Thornhill for their mostly very gracious remarks. I'm glad to hear that there is a consensus developing that Bill 168 is putting us very clearly in the right direction to ensure that our workplaces are safer.

I certainly, perhaps in contrast to the member from Thornhill, believe that employers will be fully capable of putting together policies to prevent harassment and violence in the workplace. It simply requires, obviously, the understanding of the goal. I don't think there is an employer out there who wouldn't want to avoid a situation in their workplace, whether it simply be in terms of protecting their workers, which is what we would expect, but also from the business perspective that no one would want a situation developing in their own organization that could lead to that particular institution or business being looked upon in a negative light. So I have every faith that where there is goodwill and knowledge of best practices, these will in fact be disseminated. We certainly put some teeth into the bill so that inspectors will be able to come in and examine such policies and ensure that they meet the goals that clearly we share with all Ontarians.

Just in closing, I would like to remind everyone that we do have endorsements from many other individuals, including the teachers' associations, the medical profession and also unions. Thank you so much.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** It's a pleasure to participate in second reading of Bill 168 this morning. I think my colleague from Thornhill summed it up quite succinctly when he said that the goals and objectives of Bill 168, to stop—create a non-violent, harassment-free workplace, are goals we all support. Let's be very clear on behalf of the opposition party and our leader, Tim Hudak: We espouse that virtue completely. In fact, if you look at the labour legislation that exists today, the right to refuse unsafe work exists today in the statutes.

**0920**

There are committees established in—I think all workplaces have a safety committee that reviews everything from hazardous materials to dangerous working conditions. All accidents in the workplace are reported. Repeated accidents in the workplace would certainly provoke labour ministry inspectors to come to the workplace. Whether it's a WSIB—that's the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board—claim or claim history, there's a lot of existing structure around the workplace.

I think what I have the biggest problem with is, when I think back to a couple of bills—and in Bill 168 there's a section that should trigger a bit of concern. This bill actually rescinds and repeals an existing act. It rescinds and repeals the Domestic Violence Protection Act, which is a bill that passed in 2000. The Domestic Violence Protection Act of 2000 was repealed in this bill. In that case here, I don't know why they didn't proclaim that bill.

When I looked at that myself—and I'm talking about a specific case; it was called the Lori Dupont Act. After three or four events that I was aware of which were domestic violence that showed up in the workplace—and this was the case of Lori Dupont, who was a surgical nurse, I gather, in Hamilton, and her estranged husband. There was an attempt by Ms. Dupont to get a restraining

order, and she was not able to require that restraining order. Anyway, this estranged husband, who was a doctor, came in and killed Ms. Dupont; then he killed himself, actually. The workplace, of course, happened to be in a hospital, which was even more tragic—a place where people are trying to be cured.

I started with the Lori Dupont Act, and that bill was in memory of Lori Dupont to better protect victims of domestic violence. It, on its own, had a specific relationship to this bill, and it was Bill 10, my bill—but it actually reflected things that happened in my riding. This could be considered domestic violence as well: It was Jennifer Copithorn, who was a bank clerk. She was on her way to work—in fact, she was on the steps to the workplace, and the workplace happened to be across the road from my constituency office in Durham, specifically in Bowmanville—and her estranged boyfriend murdered her. That really drove it home. Let's put it that way: It put it home to me. So I'm still not happy that this bill deals with it in a significant way.

But what my bill did is empower the victims to be able to get a restraining order seven days a week, 24 hours a day—to be able to go to a JP and get a restraining order. Now, that's the same thing that Bill 133, the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, that I referred to—that bill itself was not proclaimed for the same reason. It was to get a restraining order seven days a week, 24 hours a day, so that you could get the protection when and where you needed it at any time—not just in the workplace, but any place. And you could get a court to review the restraining order and other guidance around that particular bill. So I'm quite concerned that the bill doesn't quite do what many that I've talked to think it should.

I want to go to some of the details here, as my friend from Thornhill—or my colleague, certainly. I consider him a friend as well, but he is certainly is a colleague. He's sitting beside me.

Anyway, this is the part of the bill that gets into the way this current government tends to go about everything. They circumvent the obvious solutions. I'll just read some of the sections. Madam Speaker, I know you have done a lot of work in various areas in this Legislature and you'll probably nod your head, I'm sure, at some of these comments and observations. It could be up and down or sideways; I just said you could move.

But in the first part it says, “Section 32.0.1 of the act requires an employer to prepare policies with respect to workplace violence and workplace harassment, and to review the policies at least annually.” It's easy for Minister Fonseca. Sometimes when he speaks, I think he is the fellow from Entertainment Tonight. But anyway, it's fine for them to say that. Are they giving them any resources to do it? How about the small employer? How big? How small?

It goes on: “Section 32.0.2 of the act requires an employer to develop a program”—not just a plan but a program—“to implement the workplace violence policy. The program must include measures to control risks of workplace violence identified in the risk assessment that

is required under section 32.0.3, to summon immediate assistance when workplace violence occurs, and for workers to report incidents or threats of workplace violence. The program must also set out how the employer will deal with incidents, complaints and threats of workplace violence.”

You can't argue, as my colleague from Thornhill said, with the intent here. It's the process. These poor employers today are worried about laying people off because of the economy. I don't blame all this economy turmoil on Premier McGuinty. This Thursday, we'll hear the Minister of Finance saying that—we could actually have a lottery on this. The Minister of Finance is going to do an economic update, and I put on the table today that my forecast is over \$20 billion.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Easily.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Easily over \$20 billion. You could move your head sideways or up and down, Madam Speaker. It's going to be humongous. We are spending \$2 million an hour more than we're taking in as revenue.

We're putting more red tape on the workplace in Bill 168. I think there are other ways to achieve this. If the Minister of Labour wants to cut a cheque to have this person—because I'm going to go on: “Section 32.0.3. of the act requires an employer to assess the risk of workplace violence and to report the results of the assessment to the joint health and safety committee or to a health and safety representative.” Is that a full-time job or a part-time job? Are they going to be on the tools, on the factory floor, or do they have an office? “If there is no committee or representative, the results must be reported to the workers”—everyone called together at the lunch hour in the cafeteria, I guess. “The risk must be reassessed as often as is necessary to protect workers from workplace violence.” There's a lot of red tape in that.

My friend from Thornhill said it briefly: The workplace policy on this should be that violence will not be tolerated—immediate dismissal. That's fairly simple. When you hire, you assess people, and if they've had—let's carry this forward. If due diligence and risk assessment—I think I should have a profile on every employee. If they've ever been involved as a perpetrator in violence, domestic or otherwise, they shouldn't be hired.

What are we doing about workplace violence in hockey? It's full of it. What is it saying to our children? Where does government stop and where does it start? The fundamental question and the broader philosophy of this discussion are, where is the place of government in our lives? Have clear, specific rules: “Thou shalt not do the following things, and here are the consequences if you do.”

Bullying in the schoolyards: I look at the new pages here. They are a lovely group of young, intelligent people who are here to witness the participation in the debate. There are not a lot of people here this morning, but nonetheless—I would say that there's not good evidence of people interested in this topic. But I'm just going on here:

“Under section 32.0.4 of the act, if an employer is aware, or”—this is a key word too; you've got to be

careful with some of these legal words—"ought to be aware"—what is that, "ought to be aware"? Were they closing their eyes?

0930

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** Shoulda, woulda, coulda.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Shoulda, woulda, coulda—"aware that domestic violence that is likely to expose a worker to physical injury may occur in the workplace, the employer must take every reasonable precaution to protect the worker." I agree with that.

Okay, let's review that. Let's say you're in a factory with 500 employees and you're the immediate supervisor. There's probably one supervisor for every 30 people or so. With 500 employees—let's keep it simple—you probably have 25 employees per group, per supervisor, so there are roughly 25 supervisors. You've got to train them, then you have another person and then you have to have a designated person who's going to be the workplace representative. And you have to be aware of all of their backgrounds. In fact, you should pretty well do a little profile on them, really. The medical officer of health, the member that spoke earlier from Oak Ridges–Markham, would know there's probably evidence of a person's character when you are interviewing them. Did they tell you the truth that they've never been involved in violence, that they've never been involved in domestic disputes or other things that wouldn't be helpful to the workplace? So all those 500 employees would be interviewed. You would have to have a profile case on them all. I don't think that's appropriate.

Now, does this mean that anyone who has ever been involved in violence, like an ex-convict, male or female, shouldn't be hired? This gets pretty serious, because if I'm hiring someone who's got a history of violence and they perpetrate violence in the workplace and they didn't tell me, I ought to have known that they would possibly act out in the workplace, so I'm culpable. I'm now in court. I'm being sued, when that person who felt threatened has the responsibility on their part to advise the supervisor, and the supervisor to the president of the company, I guess, because ultimately they're going to be guilty of something.

So if I know that I have a domestic problem and I tell my supervisor, what is going to be in the plan? It says in here that they should be able to have someone show up if something happens. It says, "to summon immediate assistance." Now, who would that be? It says in here, under section 32, that the person should be able to summon immediate assistance. I'm feeling threatened, and I'm going to call who? I guess we're going to have to call the police. Now, we have police in our schools today. Okay. How's that working out? I'm telling you, they aren't handling the bullying in our schools properly, let alone this bill.

Let's review where we are at this point in the discussion. First of all, we agree that workplace violence and harassment in the workplace, sexual or otherwise, should not be tolerated. How they're going about it is, they've got this can of red ink and they're drawing up all

these rules for some board to be put on, "Thou shalt doing the following things," and there's not one cent in here for the employers to transition into this. Yet we have proven here that there's a requirement. The person who feels threatened or victimized in a domestic situation, let's say that alone, under the Lori Dupont Act or Bill 133, the provincial domestic violence act, can get a restraining order seven days a week, 24 hours a day. In that order it should say, "In the workplace, the person should not allow Mr. or Mrs. X to come into the place," if they work there—it's possible they could be working in the place—and that could be the action taken: a reasonable, practical way of implementing from the victim's perspective. But if I came to the workplace, I've been there three months, new job, and I'm saying that I feel threatened by that big bully over there or whatever it is—some of this just doesn't make any sense from the point of implementation. In the emotional level of reasoning, it makes sense, but on the practical level this piece of work here is a work of fiction. If I go on to look at 32(5) of the act, it clarifies that the employer's duties in section 25, the supervisor's duties in section 27 and the worker's duties in section 28 apply as appropriate with respect to workplace violence. Subsection 32(5) also requires—here's another rule for the employer; get out the red tape to make the sign—to provide a worker with information and instruction on the contents of workplace violence policy and programs.

All of this is very nice. I've worked for 30 years, mostly in an industrial kind of environment. Probably about 10 of it was in a computer kind of environment. It's kind of industrial; it's quite noisy with all the computers humming and buzzing and whirring. But there were probably tensions in those workplaces, whichever, whether it was the computer room or the personnel department or in the workplace on the plant floor itself. People have good days and bad days, and the odd time in my 30-plus years I saw a couple of fights. I saw different things that weren't appropriate. I'm not sure this bill is going to fix it either, actually. What it does is shift any responsibility from the Ministry of Labour onto the employer. That's what this does. And he doesn't give them five cents to fix this problem; it gives them a bunch of red tape—they probably have to hire a lawyer to draft up this risk assessment. They'll have to hire a statistician to do the statistical risk assessment and they'll have to hire a consultant, hopefully one of the Liberal consultants because they're all discharged from eHealth now, so a lot of them would be available. They are very expensive, though. Some of them are \$2,800 a day. They may be out of work for a while because of the auditor's report.

Bringing this back, there's a lot of red tape in here that doesn't achieve the goal that we want to achieve, which is to ensure the protection, especially from domestic violence in the workplace. We had a bill, Bill 10; this bill could have passed and could have solved this problem. What have they done? They've flung it out. In fact, the parent bill, Bill 133, it's rescinded. That bill was passed by all the parties in this Legislature in 2000 but it was never proclaimed. Why wasn't it proclaimed?

If you probe into why it wasn't proclaimed and why they're getting rid of the Lori Dupont Act, which would have allowed the justice of the peace to issue a restraining order, seven days a week, 24 hours a day—I'm wondering if the judicial council has meddled with this. Maybe they don't want to give up certain powers and authorities. I don't know. I'm putting this on the table. Perhaps the minister—I won't comment whether or not he or she is here, but perhaps we'll follow up on this. The parliamentary assistant, I think, is—who is the parliamentary assistant on this, anyway? Well, pardon me. We can't say whether they're here or not because attendance is down a bit. We could probably call if there is a quorum. But I wouldn't want to do that with me speaking. There would be no one here then.

Anyway, I'm going to wrap it up in a very brief time. I should be given an hour on this because this bill—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John O'Toole:** Here's the real deal. The bill amends section 43 of the act—but this is important—which deals with the worker's right to refuse work in various circumstances. This exists already. We have the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek. He's an expert in labour rights and does an excellent job in this Legislature. He, in his two-minute response—I'm encouraging someone to participate in this debate—could address it, because there is a right to refuse work today that is considered unsafe. There is a right to refuse based on this as well. If I felt unsafe because of some big bully or some big machine that was hanging over my head, I have a duty—not just a right; a duty—to report it. The employer has duties and responsibilities in this relationship as well. In the case of a worker with limited rights of refusal to work under situations—it is incumbent on the employer to make the place, if there isn't a union. So I think we have difficulty with this bill, as I've expressed this morning.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate? The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Questions and comments.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Oh, sorry. Questions and comments?

0940

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I was going to question some of the logic Mr. O'Toole was using, but because of the compliment, it's difficult to.

Basically, we feel that this bill is a start, but it falls far short of what we'd like to see. It seems to be a pattern that it doesn't come up to snuff, so to speak. We don't feel that it cuts what we require.

The only thing I would argue with the member from Durham is that safety and health is different than workplace violence. Safety and health applies to unsafe job practices. It also gives the worker the right to refusal, as he mentioned, and the worker can have the ministry come in to determine whether it's safe or not to proceed with the job. But when you're talking about workplace violence, you're talking about a different ball game.

Over the years, working in the environment that I worked in, I saw a lot of harassment and a lot of violence from people and individuals. It ended up being that both people would be sent home—the victim and the bully would be sent home until they straightened it out, and they'd both lose wages—because they did not have legislation in place to cover this type of situation and the employer really didn't have a section of the bill or anything to enforce their position. It can be a very difficult thing unless you spell it out. If the rules are spelled out directly and appropriately, then you will know what route to take as an employer.

As far as the expense to an employer goes, they spend millions of dollars a year in Ontario on safety and health. I think that could be included in there and I don't think it would be any additional cost. If it required any litigation, they could go outside and hire a lawyer if the victim wants to charge.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments and questions?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Just a bit of a rebuttal to my colleague from Durham: If he looks closely at the bill, he'll see that there is a provision in Bill 168 that addresses domestic violence when it occurs in connection with the workplace. Also, the proposed bill would require an employer to act as if they are told about a domestic violence situation or they see physical evidence of such. So there is that kind of alert process in the bill that would require an employer to be cognizant of any domestic violence situation.

The bill would not require an employer to question each individual employee about their personal relationship on a regular basis and intrude on them. There is no intrusion allowed into a person's personal life.

I know some employer groups are concerned about employer obligations, and that's acknowledged. But there is a provision in the bill, which the Ministry of Labour and the health and safety associations are working on, that would deal with this concern. In conjunction with the Ontario Women's Directorate, the Ministry of Labour has been working on resources to help employers understand this issue.

This bill is not going to end the scourge of domestic violence, nor does it seek to do that, or the scourge of violence in the workplace. But it does bring awareness; it does bring in concrete steps. I know one of the areas that is of great concern to me is the abuse and harassment that takes place of newcomers who are in the workplace, who work in factories—18 hours a day, some of them—who work Saturdays and Sundays, who can't speak English and have nowhere to go to get any kind of defence. That's why we need this kind of awareness and we need something to be done.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I listened with interest to my colleague and my friend from Durham, who I've gotten to know fairly well over the past couple of years. If anybody stands with a degree of legitimacy in this Legis-

lature to talk to a bill like this, it would be somebody like my friend from Durham, because before coming to the Legislature, it's worth noting, he spent a considerable amount of time in worthy endeavours around human resources and does understand the scope of what is and isn't feasible within a workplace.

I think every member from every party who stood up to either speak or comment on this bill has talked about the fact that it's a worthy goal. But bills should not be simply a good start or a worthy goal or something designed to raise awareness. They constitute, ultimately, law that involves the necessity to implement at some cost, both financial and moral and on every other level in the workplace, things that are not necessarily doable.

My friend from Durham, as he pointed out, has been involved on an earnest basis in bills that were worthy of passage—bills that were either passed and not proclaimed or weren't passed at all. The Lori Dupont bill, his own bill, comes to mind. It would have enforced 24/7 bans on any kind of—restraining orders, basically, that would be enforced 24/7 against people who would necessarily perpetrate violence against someone. That's a worthy kind of bill to prevent violence, not create a position within a workplace that seeks to look into 10 or 20 or 100 or 200 people's lives when we all know that you can't see into someone else's house, their kitchen, their bedroom. You don't know what's going on and you never will, and a bill will not regulate that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'd like to thank the members from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, Eglinton–Lawrence, as well as Thornhill. In all cases they made compliments as well as observations that could be correct. The member from Hamilton was correct. Again, I say that he has a lot of experience in what he speaks about because of his time in the real world of work. He did, at the end, suggest that they could hire a lawyer when all else fails, and there is the right to refuse. This could be easily handled by simplifying the bill and saying, "There's a duty on the employee to disclose," but words like "ought to have known" become a vague kind of suggestion, and the employer is liable.

The member from Eglinton–Lawrence referred roughly to the same section. I'm going to read that. It says in section 32.0.4 that if an employer becomes aware or ought to be reasonably "aware that domestic violence that is likely to expose a worker to physical injury may occur in the workplace," the employer shall take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances. This whole "ought to have known" shifts the liability. How can the employer know all of the things without having an extensive amount of unnecessary information about males or females or members of whatever orientation in their workplace? It's completely inappropriate. People aren't likely going to be telling these personal things or personal stories. However, the employee who feels they could be threatened has a duty to report to the employer the circumstances and the individual that they suspect

could perpetrate violence in the workplace. That's a reasonable solution. We're going to propose those kinds of amendments this morning. But the reality is, this is more red tape on the employers, and ultimately, the victims have no better protection than they have today. They could get on with this and pass the Lori Dupont Act and/or fix this bill before we go forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'd like to start off by saying that this bill is a start, but it falls short of a lot of things that we would like to see in it. I'm hoping that at the committee level, the government will have an open mind to listen to the people who deal with this. I hope some of the presentations are from people who deal with this every day of their lives and are in this environment, and that they'll take note of the good advice they get from the labour movement.

Labour has a violence-in-the-workplace campaign which sets out general principles for this legislation and regulation. Workplace violence coverage should cover workplace violence from all sources: third party, someone who works at the workplace, a client or person who receives service from the organization, and include impacts of domestic violence. It should also cover all forms of violence in a comprehensive definition, including verbal, harassment and bullying, all the way to physical incidents of violence; define "harassment" to include a single event; and cover all workplaces in all provincial sectors.

#### 0950

Changes are needed to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, which must include violence regulation. The proposed definition for "workplace violence" in Bill 168 limits violence to situations where the physical violence is being committed or attempted against a worker. This excludes situations where a person may be violent with another person in the workplace who is not a worker, but where the workers are expected to intervene to stop the violence—i.e., student-to-student, patient-on-patient, and client-on-client.

There are a couple of options acceptable to labour to address this. In paragraphs (a) and (b) of the definition, where they use the phrase "against a worker," change the word "worker" to "person" or—

#### *Interjections.*

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Madam Speaker, it's getting tough to speak here. There's too much distraction here, sidebars going on.

Delete the phrase "against a worker" altogether.

The current definition also does not cover threats or conduct that would lead to physical injury.

There are two possible ways to address this concern. Option one: Add a new provision, "(c) engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that provides reasonable grounds to believe it causes or could cause physical injury to the worker." Option two: Combine paragraphs (a) and (b),

then add a reference to threats which give workers reasonable cause to believe that they are at risk of injury.

One section of Bill 168 will limit domestic violence to physical force or attempted physical force. It does not include stalking or harassment that gives a worker reason to believe their health or safety is at risk. Revising the definition will resolve the concern. Use of the word “likely” in this section sets too high a standard. Labour proposes changing it to “reason to believe,” as found in the current section of the act dealing with the right to refuse.

Some of the amendments needed to the act: They should have specific recognition in the Occupational Health and Safety Act that violence is an occupational hazard, and amendments to clarify the right-to-refuse section of the act to allow refusals for violence, i.e., because of a person, and by referencing the working environment. Third, reprisal protection should be strengthened. We can have the best regulations in the world, but unless it stops employers from intimidating workers to not report violent incidents, we will not have protected Ontario workers.

So what they’re saying is that you have to have the support of all the parties, not only the legal system. You have to have support from the employer and the employees to work to rectify a situation. If one of them doesn’t feel like taking part in it or is reluctant, that surely weakens the system.

Joint health and safety committees: Revise section 52(2) of the current act dealing with notifying the union and/or representative if an occupational disease claim has been filed as a result of a workplace harassment. Spell out reporting requirements. If someone is injured because the person who injured them or threatened them was not doing something safe, then there should be an additional penalty on the individual who caused the accident by not following the proper procedures or even by sabotaging the procedures of safe work to possibly injure another employee.

It should include a mention of meaningful consultation and participation with the joint health and safety committees and safety representatives of that organization. Now, this government is constantly bragging about WSIB and how they want to improve work and safety, but I’ll tell you that about a third of the businesses in this province don’t have health and safety committees. I guess what I’m saying is, practise what you preach. This could also fall under those committees to look at.

Health and safety: Employers must conduct hazard assessments in consultation with health and safety committees to identify whether workplace violence is a potential hazard. Could two workers who don’t get along, it’s known by other employees, and who are working in a situation by themselves in a dark corner of the plant or wherever they’re working—could that one person have the ability to cause a person’s injury and say, “Oh, it was just an accident,” because there were only two of them working in that situation? The employer has to take responsibility when he knows there is a morale problem

or there’s a problem between two workers. To put them in a situation where they are by themselves and they have a beef with each other I don’t think is a wise move. That’s another thing that’s overlooked in the bill.

The bill requires employers to conduct a risk assessment but only requires that the joint health and safety committee representative be advised of the results and be given a copy. This falls far short of what we’d like to see. That representative should take part in any discussions between the company, the employee and the other employee if there are harassment problems, not just given a copy of the results of the discussions. There could be something that those employees don’t realize they are entitled to or they are misrepresented in those meetings, and this person who is trained would be able to help them in a situation which could have negative results for them.

The designated substance regulation, DSR, requires employers to carry out assessments in consultation with the joint health and safety committees and empower the joint health and safety committees to make recommendations with respect to the assessment. The bill provides very little detail on what employers should be looking at in this assessment. A definition of risk assessment is needed and should be specified. It isn’t in this bill.

Labour has a long-time standing opposition against any assessment that emphasizes a management of risk over controlling hazards to protect workers. Labour is prepared to accept the phrase “risk assessment” only if it’s defined as a hazard assessment and the reference to risk 32.0.3 made plural.

Information must be provided to workers about the potential for violence and incidents of violence and maintaining respect for the privacy of individuals. Information and reporting to joint health and safety committees and health and safety reps: Plans need to be specific to the workplace, not just general; strong language for worker training, PowerPoint presentations and regular monthly safety meetings.

When I worked in the large plant where I worked, there’d be a big push for safety and health for a few months and then it would die off for whatever reason—they wanted more production or didn’t have enough salaried personnel to conduct the meetings. We might go three or four months without a safety meeting at times. And that’s a lot of time for things to fall off the railway and a lot of time for things to go back to bad practices which cause accidents. Regular monthly meetings are a must.

The bill requires employers to provide workers with information and instruction, but training is not mentioned. No training. I mean, how does a person deal with risk assessment, a hazard or workplace violence if that person isn’t trained? So these joint health and safety committees should have a person—at least one person—on the committee who has some kind of courses to deal with workplace violence, and safety and health situations caused by workplace violence. I don’t see that here.

Training is specifically mentioned under the act as a requirement for workers exposed to hazardous substances

and physical agents. Well, that's already there. We have our WHMIS, we have those programs in the plants, but we have no one on a committee to deal with these harassment situations. We need that.

Training must be developed, delivered and reviewed regularly in consultation with the joint health and safety committees. And here we are, we're back to those monthly meetings which are critical to all employees to refresh their memories on the policies of the company.

No consultation around information and instruction required in the bill: This requirement currently exists under the act for hazardous substances and physical agents—and there we go again, the same thing again.

Recognition that violence prevention includes measures and procedures, not just a policy, such as work practices, design and organization of work, procedure for chain of command reporting, and investigation and response—language from sections 8 and 9 of the regulation for health care and residential facilities would be a useful amendment.

The bill will require employers to develop a program to deal with workplace violence. This includes preparing measures and procedures to control the risks identified in the assessment, summoning assistance, reporting incidents or threats and investigations of incidents and complaints of threats. There is no consultation requirement nor is the employer required to provide a copy to the joint health and safety committee.

If you are going to have legislation in place, you also have to make the joint health and safety committee a big part of that because they are not only going to rectify the situation, they're going to help in the decision-making, and they should be involved. I don't see a lot of that in here. If you haven't got the people on the floor, the safety and health reps, who are in there day in and day out, where the management might not be, or it may be a hands-on or hands-off situation—they have to be aware of what is going on in their plant.

#### 1000

Therefore employers must develop and annually review a comprehensive violence policy and program that should include:

- a commitment statement;
- a definition of workplace violence;
- sources of violence;
- recognition of workplace violence as an occupational hazard;
- hazard assessment as a mandatory step;
- how and what information is reported to workers and to the joint health and safety committees and health and safety reps;
- responsibilities and roles of employers, supervisors, joint health and safety committees, health and safety reps, and workers;
- mechanisms and processes to report, respond to and investigate violence incidents and hazards, and—a critical component—to provide follow-up to workers, and consultation and follow-up to joint health and safety committees, and meetings;

- provisions for how information and reporting goes up the chain of command, so that everyone is aware of the situation. Some of these plants employ thousands of employees. The guy at the top sometimes doesn't hear about it till months later. It should be immediate so he has a handle on what's going on in his company;

- recognition that violence prevention includes measures and procedures as well as policies, such as design and organization of the work;

- that joint health and safety committees and health and safety reps and workers be consulted in the development and review, and that the joint health and safety committee representatives' recommendations be given meaningful consideration;

- support mechanisms for workers;

- a process for follow-up that includes recommendations from the joint health and safety committee representatives, and reporting to all parties;

- reporting to the WSIB;

- sections 51 and 52 reporting obligations;

- section 9(31) entitlements to investigate critical injuries and fatalities;

- record-keeping and tracking and analysis of incidents, accidents, injuries and illnesses.

This bill does not even approach this level of detail of what the policy and program must include. Many provisions in this bill have a paragraph which allows for more detail in regulation, but the government has no plans to prepare violence-in-the-workplace regulation.

There is no provision for notifying the joint health and safety committees of the plants and the union of harassment incidents which result in WSIB claims. Labour wants to see either a revision to 52(2) or a new 52(4) added to address this. This will be brought out in committee, and I hope the government is listening.

There is a provision in the bill which enables the government to pass regulations to make specific requirements for any policy required under the act. This goes beyond the violence issue.

With some revisions, the new federal regulation could be used as a basis for new regulations. For instance, the definition would need rewriting. Sections 20.4 and 20.5 would be acceptable if they included a provision requiring the consideration of the isolation of the place of employment and the need to work alone. Section 20.6, dealing with controls, needs work and will need to include provisions addressing working alone or in isolation. All of paragraph 6 of section 20.9 would need to be deleted.

Labour likes the points covered in sections 20.7, 20.8 and 20.10 dealing with the measures review, procedures and training.

Labour does not want best practices in lieu of legislation, i.e., amendments to the act and a new regulation. Labour does not want participation in a tripartite agreement or process.

This bill really falls short of what the workplace needs. The members of the official opposition are correct: They don't feel that it covers certain areas. I

don't know if they are willing to go as far as we would like to see it go, but it definitely should.

I don't think that this type of legislation—it can be governed and overseen by the WSIB. They don't have to pass it on to the employer. The employer should not be saddled with any additional costs, but the employer should also have the ability to strengthen his health and safety committees and his union stewards and his front-line foremen so they can deal with this so that it doesn't become a cumbersome and ongoing problem for the employer. It should be rectified and done at the time of the incident or within a couple of days, straightened out and made quite clear to any employees that if they continue in this manner, it will mean that they will be fired. I think that that spells it out quite clearly. If people realize that it's going to cost them their income and their life's work, then I think they're going to think twice about some of the things they've been doing in the past.

In closing, the bill is a small start. We want to see a lot of changes to it before it goes to third reading. I hope, once again, that the government doesn't ignore the third party or the official opposition's amendments to bills, because some of them are excellent, and they should definitely take them into consideration.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Comments and questions?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** As you know, we are now in second reading debate. Hopefully, many of the good points that the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek mentioned will be discussed in detail in committee, because this bill will go to committee, where there will be presentations made by a lot of the interested parties. These committees will be, I'm sure, quite helpful in getting the final draft of this bill. That's the critical stage. I think he has some very good recommendations that I hope they'll consider seriously.

I know the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour, the member from Brampton West, is here today and listening very attentively—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Mike Colle:** —not like the member from Durham, who's always talking and never listening. The member from Brampton West is listening. He's the parliamentary assistant and he is going to take a lot of this into consideration, bring it forward to the minister and also participate in the committee hearings because the committee hearings will hopefully make this a strong bill.

The bill doesn't pretend to answer all the critical issues that are sometimes found in workplaces, but it tries to put some pretty tough standards in place to prevent this type of systemic violence and harassment that takes place.

In fact, Ken Coran, the president of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, says it best. He says, "The amendments introduced to the act clearly demonstrate that workplace violence and harassment will not be tolerated. Employers will now have to identify harassment and violence as hazards and implement policies and programs that are both preventative and

responsive." That is, I think, wrapping up the bill in a nutshell: preventive, making sure things don't happen, hopefully; and then responding if things do happen.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments and questions?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** In this debate this morning, I found the remarks not only by the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek but also remarks by the member from Durham to be—I guess I would use the word "enlightening." They know of what they speak. The member from Durham has spent a number of years in personnel, human resources, with a very large organization in the auto sector.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** What's wrong with General Motors? I drive a GMC Sierra that was built in Oshawa. Regrettably, they're now being built in Indiana. That's a problem for the steel industry, where the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek has spent a number of years. He knows labour issues very well. I've been at a number of meetings with the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

The point I want to make: Having two people like this involved in this legislation is doing the government a favour, in a sense, because these guys have a wealth of experience. The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek made a number of references to joint health and safety committees; that would be a joint union-management committee, in my understanding of the term.

I wish to make reference to work that I did for a number of years with both the auto industry and with the steel industry in setting up joint union-management committees with respect to employee assistance programming. Many of these committees remain in place. I feel that, rather than a sole focus in this legislation of having the employer required to prepare policy and implement the policy, let's draw in everybody; let's draw in the union and unionized shops and let's put emphasis on joint committees.

1010

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments and questions?

**Mr. John O'Toole:** The member from Hamilton East, I appreciate his taking the time to try to comment and to make the bill better, and I think everyone here is really of the same view that that is the goal. I know the parliamentary assistant is here, and I would hope that he would take a couple of minutes and maybe respond to the remarks being made today.

I do see a fair amount of red tape in this bill. I would like assurances, and hopefully there would be hearings on the bill. As the member from Haldimand–Norfolk has suggested, a tri-party solution would not be a bad thing, where you'd have the union and the employers and the employees involved directly. I think it would build a better solution.

But what is the problem here in, specifically, the domestic violence portion? The problem is this: First of all, when you say someone ought to know that there's a

threat of danger of domestic violence in the workplace, it implies that the employee was to tell the employer that there have been domestic problems. Being a married person myself, an MPP and in the public service for 27 years roughly, it's not uncommon. I don't think that all violence is physical; I think some of it is other types of intimidation. My point is this: Some people are uncomfortable telling the employer about these personal problems.

Now, what if they don't tell the employer and there was evidence, police calls or whatever. Who is responsible? What they're doing here is shifting this responsibility of domestic violence to the employer. My bill, the Lori Dupont Act, proposed that victims could get a restraining order seven days a week, 24 hours a day. That order could address the workplace or it could address other places where the perpetrator could be, but that's what's missing from this bill—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. Further comments or questions?

The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I'd just like to acknowledge the member from Eglinton–Lawrence. I appreciate the fact that he has been listening intently and that he was, I hope, sincere about listening to some of our suggestions in committee; that maybe the majority of members on the committee, being Liberal members, would consider some of these good suggestions.

I would also like to commend the member from Haldimand–Norfolk and the member from Durham, because these two gentlemen have a lot of experience in the labour movement, and I respect them both for their knowledge and their involvement. They do bring a different perspective to the table. Not necessarily are our ideologies the same, but it's definitely constructive to have other ideas and to be able to come to a happy medium when you're dealing with these types of bills, because we have to deal with all factions of our society and have to be reasonable when we bring forth the legislation that's beneficial to all Ontarians.

So basically, in closing, I'd just like to say that this bill is an important bill, and I'm sure that when it gets to committee the process will be open and fair and everyone will take into deep consideration some of the suggestions that have been brought forward here today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate? Seeing none, Mr. Fonseca has moved second reading of Bill 168. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All in favour, say “aye.”

All opposed, say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it. The bill is carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I would ask that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** So ordered.

This House stands recessed until 10:30 of the clock.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Eric Hoskins:** I would like to ask the members of the House to join me in welcoming the family of page Madeline Lewis. Madeline attends Winona Drive Senior Public School in St. Paul's. Here with us today are Madeleine's father, Mark Lewis; her grandfather Ray Barton; her grandmother Ginny Booth; her second grandmother Ann Lewis; and her aunt Clair Zangari. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Mr. Kim Craitor:** I'm extremely pleased to introduce two special people from Niagara Falls, Doug James and Elisabeth Teunis. Both are very active in our community and have been involved with the Terry Fox run.

I also want to share something from Elisabeth, who particularly wanted to express her appreciation to the entire House. In 2006, Elisabeth was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a cancer of the blood plasma that can be treated but not cured. Elisabeth just wants to say—and this is why she has come here today—thank you to the Ontario Legislature for approving Revlimid, a new cancer drug that will extend the life of many myeloma patients and that she herself may need at one time in the future. Again, thanks to the House for approving that.

**Hon. Donna H. Cansfield:** They haven't come in yet, but it's my pleasure today to introduce Ms. Kinney's class from Kipling Collegiate. Her grade 10 civics class has come to observe the decorum of the House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I trust everyone will co-operate with the minister and the students.

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** I would like to welcome to the Ontario Legislature a celebrated author, playwright, poet, professor and journalist from Portugal who won international acclaim when he was bestowed in 2008 with the PEN award in Europe. He joins us today at the invitation of community members and local universities to share his extensive work.

Please welcome Jaime Rocha, also known as Rui Ferreira Sousa. He is joined by his brother Jose Carlos Sousa, who is a long-time community activist, academic and businessman in Ontario.

As their surnames imply, they are related to this humble servant from Mississauga South; they're my cousins. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It's my pleasure to introduce the members of the delegation from the Ontario Long Term Care Association. They're here today for the association's first-ever Long-Term Care Day at Queen's Park in celebration of their inaugural Long-Term Care Week.

The Ontario Long Term Care Association is celebrating 50 years as the only association representing the full spectrum of Ontario's charitable not-for-profit muni-

cipal and private operators of over two thirds of the province's long-term-care homes.

With us in the gallery are: Grace Sweatman, CEO of Christie Gardens and the president of the OLTCA; David Cutler, CEO of Leisureworld Caregiving Centres and OLTCA's vice-president, government relations; Donna Kingelin, COO of Revera Living and OLTCA's vice-president, resident care and services; Robert Zober, treasurer of Collingwood Nursing Home and vice-president at large; and Christina Bisanz, CEO of the Ontario Long Term Care Association. Please welcome them.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to introduce Eoin Callan and Christine Miller, both representatives from SEIU; as well as Juan Vasquez. Juan is a hospital worker here in Toronto.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** On behalf of the member from Etobicoke North and page James Profiti, we'd like to welcome his mother, Cathy Profiti, and his father, Pat Profiti, to the Legislature today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

#### LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** As we have a new group of pages, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce them. I ask the pages to assemble for introduction, please.

I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming this group of legislative pages serving in the first session of the 39th Parliament:

Vladislav Bardalez, Don Valley East; Rebecca Bartlett, Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock; Elliott Brand, Mississauga-Erindale; Rebecca Briell, Ajax-Pickering; Timothy Choi, Bramalea-Gore-Malton; Kira Foreman-Tran, Oakville; Matthew Grossi, Vaughan; Shaan Ali Jessa, Richmond Hill; Emma Johnson, Kitchener Centre; Katelyn Johnstone, Mississauga-Brampton South; Henry Lenz, York-Simcoe; Madeline Lewis, St. Paul's; Nithya Nithiaraj, Scarborough-Rouge River; Jeremy Pagé, Nepean-Carleton; James Profiti, Etobicoke North; Bethany Ricker, Haldimand-Norfolk; Rushabh Shah, York West; Hannah Walters-Vida, Toronto-Danforth; and Jessica Webster, Whitby-Oshawa.

Welcome to Queen's Park. Enjoy your visit.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** A question for the Premier: When federal Liberals wasted \$100 million on the sponsorship scandal, they called the Gomery inquiry. The McGuinty Liberals wasted a billion dollars on the eHealth boondoggle. Premier, given that, why aren't you calling a public inquiry?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** With every day, the leader of the official opposition expresses his continuing disappointment with the auditor's work. I don't share that opinion. I have every confidence in the auditor. I thought that my friends supported our invitation to the auditor to accelerate the work he was already doing at eHealth. As I said many times before, we fully accept the findings of the auditor's report. We thought he was nothing less than thorough, as is fully in keeping with his practice, and we adopt every one of the recommendations and we accept every single one of his findings as well.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** In fact, we have full confidence in the auditor because he, quite frankly, had the guts to ask the questions that this Premier was afraid to ask of his own cabinet ministers.

Just like Sheila Fraser found with the federal Liberals, Ontario's auditor found that two thirds of the deals handed out by the McGuinty Liberals were sole-sourced, that Management Board meddled with the rules so it could award untendered contracts, that the McGuinty government obstructed the Auditor General's investigation for six months, and that favouritism showed by the McGuinty government influenced who received millions of dollars in untendered contracts.

As we know, the Deputy Premier, Minister Smitherman, is linked to at least three of the four findings. Is the Premier refusing to call an inquiry because he's trying to protect George Smitherman?

1040

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Again, I just think that what we owe Ontarians on this side of the House is a heavy responsibility to draw what lessons we might from the events that unfolded at eHealth, to accept the auditor's findings and to stay away from political gamesmanship, because there's one particular finding and conclusion reached in the auditor's report that my honourable colleague refuses to accept, notwithstanding how many times I bring it to his attention, as I'll do once again right now.

What the auditor said on page 11 of his report is, "We were aware of the allegations that 'party politics' may have entered into the awarding of contracts and that those awarding the contracts may have obtained a personal benefit from the firms getting the work—but we saw no evidence of this during our work." I think "no evidence" is pretty conclusive.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I recommend that the Premier read the Auditor General's report. The findings of the provincial auditor are more damning of Minister Smitherman and the McGuinty government than what Sheila Fraser had to say about Alfonso Gagliano and the federal Liberals. Prime Minister Chrétien was not mentioned a single time in the federal auditor's report; Premier McGuinty's name appears seven times in the provincial auditor's report. The auditor found that Sarah Kramer was the Premier's hand-picked appointment and that the

Premier set the wheels in motion that resulted in the massive untendered-contract spending spree at eHealth.

I ask, is the Premier refusing to call an inquiry because he is just out to protect himself?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Obviously, I'm in my honourable colleague's hands when it comes to pursuing this particular debate and public conversation, but I don't really see it leading anywhere. I think our shared responsibility now is to find a way to move forward to ensure that we put into practice all the recommendations put forward by the auditor, and we undertake to do that.

Beyond that, before we received the auditor's report—it's important that I draw to my colleague's attention once again, as well as to the attention of Ontarians, that we have a new rule in place. If you are a consultant and you want to get a contract with the province of Ontario, you must be part of a competitive bidding process. We think that goes a long way to ensuring that the kinds of practices that were in place admittedly on our watch and also on the watch of the previous two governments are no longer going to be allowed in Ontario.

#### ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Back to the Premier: All this, sadly, seems to be leading to more stonewalling by Premier McGuinty, who seems more interested in protecting himself or his Deputy Premier than getting answers for taxpayers, who saw \$1 billion go down the drain in this eHealth boondoggle. Of that money, \$837 million happened under Minister Smitherman's watch. That's 78% of what the McGuinty government wasted on this boondoggle under your Deputy Premier, with nothing to show for it for Ontario families across our province.

Why isn't the Premier calling an inquiry into Minister Smitherman's role in this billion-dollar boondoggle?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Again, I understand where my colleague is coming from on this score. For him, it's all about politics and it's all about games. I accept that that's the particular perspective on that, but I think we have something greater by way of a duty that we owe to the people of Ontario.

One of the things that we need to keep in mind is what in fact eHealth has succeeded in accomplishing to this point in time. So far, more than four million Ontarians are already participating in the electronic medical records program. More than one million children have an electronic health record and more than 80,000 Ontarians are in a pilot project for ePrescribing, which will help save lives. We've laid an important foundation.

There is more work to be done. We accept that, and we look forward to getting on with that work rather than engaging continuously in these political games.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** The Premier may see \$1 billion down the drain as some kind of political game; I see it as an extraordinary betrayal of hard-working taxpayers who put money in and trusted in you to spend it the right way.

Premier, I'm sure you know by now that the man sitting to your right, the Deputy Premier of the province, saw \$837 million wasted during his tenure at the Ministry of Health. That is, to put it in perspective, over eight times more than what Alfonso Gagliano spent on the Liberal-friendly advertising firms in the sponsorship scandal. Minister Smitherman himself referred to the agency before eHealth as a "cesspool," but Minister Smitherman ran that program for five of six years, and he is the one who built that cesspool. Premier, will you call a public inquiry and get to the bottom of this growing scandal?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** What I find scandalous is the leader of the official opposition continually asserting that activities that took place at eHealth were connected with some kind of party politics, and his refusal to accept the very specific and explicit finding of the auditor. I want to draw to his attention once again his finding: "We were aware of the allegation," undoubtedly coming from the official opposition and others, "that 'party politics' may have entered into the awarding of contracts ... but we saw no evidence of this during our work." Again, I think it's pretty clear, I think it's pretty explicit, and I think we all share responsibility to accept that finding.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Premier, as you know, Minister Smitherman remained involved in eHealth even after you shuffled him to the Ministry of Infrastructure. He has kept his fingers in procurements, the diabetes registry and the drug information system. Contracts were handed out to Karli Farrow, his former chief of staff and adviser to you, yourself, Premier. Management Board, upon which Minister Smitherman sits, handed out an untendered contract that by itself alone is one third of what the federal Liberals wasted in the sponsorship scandal.

Premier, there are 837 million reasons to question Minister Smitherman's role in the eHealth scandal. Will you call a public inquiry today?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** No, I won't. I've said that several times over and I'm not sure I can be any more direct than that.

As in all of these matters, I not only trust the auditor but have a great deal of confidence in the people of Ontario, who ultimately will stand in judgment of all these things. I believe that the people of Ontario have confidence in the auditor's findings; I believe that they accept our commitment to putting in place every single one of his recommendations. I believe that Ontarians want to find a way together to move forward with the foundation on which we've built the beginnings of our structure for eHealth. I think Ontarians want us to move forward. That's what we accept on this side of the House, and that's what we are going to do.

#### HEALTH CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour le premier ministre également. The scandal surrounding eHealth just

keeps going: \$1 billion spent and very little to show for it. We've witnessed top bureaucrats being paid out of hospital budgets, exorbitant expense accounts, and untendered consulting contracts at Cancer Care Ontario. Yet last week my leader, Andrea Horwath, asked the Premier to call in the Auditor General to do spot checks on the Ministry of Health consultant contracts. Tomorrow I will bring a motion forward in the public accounts committee asking the auditor to do just that.

My question to the Premier is simple: Will the Premier assure us that the Liberal members on public accounts will be allowed to support this motion?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** What I will assure the honourable member and the auditor, of course, is that he has every right, at the time and in the subject matter of his own choosing, to intervene and to conduct an investigation, however thoroughly he might wish to pursue that. That includes, of course, the spot checks being recommended by my colleague. Obviously, we would support any effort on the part of the auditor to conduct any such spot checks wherever he deems it to be appropriate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary.

**M<sup>me</sup> France G  linas:** I take it that means they will vote in favour of my motion. I'm looking forward to that vote tomorrow.

While \$1 billion was wasted, front-line workers have been calling for reinforcements to protect hospital patients from infections. Today in the gallery is Juan Vasquez. Juan is a front-line health care worker in a Toronto hospital just down the street from here.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Please make sure it ties into your original question.

1050

**M<sup>me</sup> France G  linas:** Yes.

He is worried that the hospitals are failing in the fight against infection and that we are not prepared for H1N1.

How can this government find money for multi-million-dollar consulting contracts but leave our hospitals ill-prepared to protect their patients from the spread of infectious diseases within their own walls? The tie-in is money, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** As I had the opportunity to say earlier today, and I think in this House yesterday as well, when it comes to hospital budgets, we have in fact increased those by some 42% during the course of the last six years. If we compare that to what has happened with the cost of living, it has gone up by about 11%. We've made some dramatic new investments in our hospital budgets.

We look forward to continuing to find ways to work with the hospital sector and all those good people who serve the public in the delivery of health care services, whether inside the hospital sector or outside. We will find ways, working together, notwithstanding our financial challenges, to continue to inspire confidence in our health care system.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Final supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France G  linas:** Money, like a billion dollars that goes out the door at eHealth with no improvement in patient care, is not what we want. Fifty hospitals are facing deficits. We all know that the first area a hospital looks at for cuts is housekeeping. The Auditor General's special report has proven that these cuts put patients at risk. Juan is here today because he wants a commitment from the Premier. Will the Premier commit to ensuring our precious health care dollars are spent on improving patient care?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** We will do everything in our power to ensure that we get good value for taxpayer dollars when it comes to the money we invest in every public program, but especially in health care. I think we have gone a long way to demonstrating the value that we've got in return for those significant new investments in the health care system, whether you're taking a look at the number of new hospitals that are being built; whether it's the older hospitals which are undergoing reconstruction and renovation; whether you're looking at the number of new doctors and nurses who are out there practising and serving Ontario families; whether it's the number of new MRIs and other kinds of technology, treatments and drugs which we've been funding anew. I think we're demonstrating that we are in fact getting good value for the new investments that we continue to make in health care for all our families.

#### GOVERNMENT CONSULTANTS

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Premier. There's a new lottery in Ontario. It's called Consultant Max and it pays out more than \$1 million a day but you've got to be a consultant to play. I've got right here a freedom of information on some of the things that have been going on which shows that the McGuinty Liberals spent nearly \$400 million on high-priced consultants last year alone. That doesn't include consultant spending at agencies, boards and commissions. Given the eHealth consultant debacle, how does the Premier explain this million-dollar give-away whopper?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I don't think it's particularly news that governments and the Ontario government have been availing themselves of the special expertise and services offered by consultants. Governments of all political stripes have been doing that for some time. What I can confirm is that we have reduced the use of consultants by 34% since 2003 when it comes to the amount of money we're investing in consultants.

What we want to do, in keeping with the advice that we received from the auditor's most recent report, is enhance the skill set of people working inside the public service so that we can continue to rely less and less on outside expertise and have that expertise more and more in-house because we have confidence in our public service to be able to do that for us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Each and every day across Ontario we're hearing about cuts to vulnerable kids, to unemployed workers, to community hospitals, all the while

this government blows more than a million bucks a day on consultants. It's simply outrageous. The Ministry of Consumer Services burned through \$100 million on consultants in 2008. The Ministry of Health spent \$89 million.

I ask the Premier again: During these difficult economic times, how can he possibly justify this kind of spending on consultants?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Just to restate it, again, we have made some progress. There's more work to be done, but I think the progress we've made is significant. Since 2003, we've reduced the use of consultants by some 34%.

Now, my honourable colleague made reference to cuts—it's become fashionable these days to talk in those terms—but the fact of the matter is, in virtually every single program, we have continued to invest, year over year, more, especially in our most important public services like health care and education. So I would caution my colleague as he talks about cuts to revisit the budget and to see in fact that we continue to invest more money, especially in those public services that our families absolutely have to be able to count on.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Clearly, the government has lost its way. Vulnerable kids, unemployed workers and seniors are all told to make due with less, while well-connected consultants feast at the McGuinty government trough. When is this Premier going to say enough is enough? When is he finally going to end this government's million-dollar-a-day addiction to consultants and their bloated fees?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** Again, I think that a 34% reduction in the use of consultants since 2003 is significant progress. Again, I accept the auditor's recommendation, particularly insofar as it related to eHealth, where he said that what you should do is further reduce the use of consultants and see if you can adopt that expertise in-house, and that's something we look forward to doing.

My colleague continues to make reference to the fact of cuts when it comes to vulnerable kids or the unemployed, and in fact that's simply not true. We continue to invest new dollars year over year in enhancing the investments that we make and in the program funding levels for those kinds of programs. We look forward to working with all of our partners now, notwithstanding the fact that we all stare into some pretty challenging financial times.

#### ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** My question is to the Premier of Ontario. An auditor's report into the waste of taxpayer dollars by Liberals said, "We are disturbed not only by the widespread circumvention of the competitive ... process ... but also by the fact that this was permitted to occur at all."

This Premier says he accepts the Provincial Auditor's report in its totality, so he should be able to tell us, did this criticism come from Sheila Fraser's report on the sponsorship scandal or did it come from the Provincial Auditor's report on the McGuinty Liberals eHealth scandal?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I'm not sure what the point of this question is, and I have not memorized the report word for word, but I can say, as I've said before, that we accept every finding. We will adopt every single recommendation put forward by the auditor. We think it was thorough. We think his response was perfectly appropriate in the circumstances, and that's why we're going to move ahead with all of his recommendations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** The Premier remembers one quote in a 48-page document, but the previous quote is from the federal auditor's report on the sponsorship scandal. But the Provincial Auditor said, "Sound and reasonable policies were in place to ensure that all suppliers could compete fairly ... but all too often the rules were not followed."

Which level of government this auditor was criticizing doesn't really matter, and it hasn't really changed. How can one auditor's findings lead to the Gomery inquiry while the other's leads to Premier McGuinty hiding what Minister Smitherman and his McGuinty Liberals have done to hide and waste one billion in taxpayer dollars?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** It's not too hard to figure out what the opposition is doing—Gomery, the sponsorship scandal, and let's see what we can do to link eHealth into that.

We have an objective third party who's intervened in this matter: the Provincial Auditor. I would encourage my colleague to review that report again and again and again to come to fully understand the advice to be found therein, and to accept, as we do, the recommendations put forward by the auditor, which is why we'll be moving forward on each and every one of those.

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#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Michael Prue:** My question is to the Premier. Premier, thanks to the Financial Services Commission of Ontario, many Toronto-area drivers are about to be slammed with double-digit auto insurance hikes. In fact, by the end of this year the average GTA driver is likely to pay nearly 14% more for auto insurance.

When will this government finally stop caving in to every demand of the private auto insurance industry? When will this government draw the line on rate increases and fundamentally rethink a system that every driver and every consumer knows simply does not work?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I think it's important to keep in mind exactly what has happened to auto insurance rates in Ontario during the course of the past six years. During the course of the past six years, auto insurance premiums have come down by 2%. Again, if you com-

pare that with what has happened with the cost of living, I think it's rather extraordinary that auto insurance premiums today, on average, are less than they were some six years ago. I think that speaks to the good policies that we've had in place.

Perhaps understandably, cost pressures have been mounting. Insurance companies have gone to FSCO, the Financial Services Commission of Ontario, and applied for rate increases. They've been granted that. Minister Duncan will be moving forward shortly with a new proposal. I'm not sure it's the kind that my honourable colleague has in mind. It is not public auto insurance. It is a new proposal that will deal with, we think, a still better way to ensure that we strike the right balance between affordability and coverage for our drivers.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Prue:** The Premier may not like them, but here are the facts. Ten large insurers are being allowed to raise their rates for a second or third time in the last 12 months. Their policyholders will be hit with increases averaging between 11% and 19%. For some Toronto-area drivers, the rate increases could total 30% or more, depending on the age of the driver or the neighbourhood in which they live.

Clearly, the auto insurance system makes no sense and is not working for consumers. Will this government use this crisis to launch a full-scale review of Ontario's badly broken auto insurance system?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I want to remind my honourable colleague that when we first earned the privilege of serving Ontarians as their government back in 2003, we immediately froze rates. Their party did not support that. We then put in place new rules that have achieved, after six years, a 2% net reduction in auto insurance premiums. Their party did not support that.

We understand that cost pressures have been mounting. That's why Minister Duncan has, in fact, been consulting. That's why shortly he'll be introducing a new proposal to make sure that we continue to maintain the right balance. We understand that auto insurance premiums are an important pocketbook issue for our families and for our drivers in particular. I want to assure families that we will be introducing a proposal. It's not magic, but we think what we will do is make sure we can find a way to continue to strike the right balance between affordability and protection and accessibility to insurance for all of our families.

#### GRAPE AND WINE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Bruce Crozier:** My question is for the Minister of Consumer Services. Like many of my colleagues in this House, I enjoy a glass of wine from time to time, and like many of my colleagues in this Legislature, I enjoy a glass of Ontario wine in particular. But there is some confusion existing around the labelling and the content of wines in Ontario, and in Canada for that matter. That's around the words "cellared in Canada." What that really

means is that that wine can contain up to 70% of foreign-produced grapes.

What I would like to ask the minister is, what are we doing to increase consumer understanding and to encourage the purchase of local—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Minister?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** My thanks to the honourable member from Essex.

Just last week, my ministry announced key structural changes to the Ontario wine industry in order to lay the groundwork for long-term sustainable growth and increase clarity for Ontario consumers.

I invite you to listen to the words of Mr. Seaton McLean, the proprietor of Closson Chase vineyards and chair of the Price Edward County Winegrowers Association, responding to this announcement in a column in the Hamilton Spec: "The McGuinty government looked at the fork in the road and thankfully chose a better path for Ontario's wine industry." He continues, "The province will now ensure VQA wines (by definition made with 100% Ontario grapes) are prioritized by the LCBO, will increase the levy on blended wines to fund its ... support" of—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Bruce Crozier:** I'm going to continue because I'm pleased to hear what we're doing for Vintners Quality Alliance wines in Ontario. Minister, I know that the residents of my riding are very proud of the high-quality VQA wines that are produced in the Erie North Shore region as well as the other regions of Ontario. I know that those 13 wineries in particular in my riding are pleased and ready to produce more and better VQA wines.

Minister, how will your ministry support the continued growth of VQA wines?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** There is a common Latin saying, "in vino veritas," or "in wine there is truth." The Ministry of Consumer Services is committed to ensuring that Ontarians know the truth about the wine they're buying and committed to supporting the continued growth of high-quality Ontario VQA wines.

I want to continue with quoting Mr. McLean, who says, "Under the package of reforms announced last week it's now possible to imagine what the industry can become ... we can now envision a scenario that would allow growers and vintners to plant new varietals, deepen our specializations and experiment with new possibilities...."

"With this announcement, a significant number of greenbelt farmers and their municipal leaders can now focus more of their energy on how to tap into that massive market and grow jobs as well as" good-quality "grapes."

#### ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** My question is for the Minister of Health. Now that you've been briefed on

your portfolio, Minister, who do you say is more responsible for sole-sourced and untendered contracts to Minister Smitherman's former chief of staff: David Caplan or Minister Smitherman himself?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Thank you for the question. The Auditor General gave us a very important report. We are, as has been said over and over again in this House, completely committed to implementing every single recommendation he has made.

I'm more interested in moving forward than looking backward. I think that what's important is that we learn from the past but that we continue—moving forward on eHealth is a very high priority for us. The future of our health care system depends on us moving forward when it comes to eHealth.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Christine Elliott:** The Minister of Health must be concerned about the billion dollars the McGuinty government wasted when it should have been going to health care. Minister Matthews must also be concerned about carrying the Deputy Premier's dirty laundry from all the bid-rigging and favouritism Minister Smitherman showered on his former chief of staff. The Premier has made it clear that he'll toss the sitting minister under the bus while giving Minister Smitherman a free ride.

My question is: Will Minister Matthews table her mandate letter today so the Ontario taxpayers can judge the government's plans for getting out of this mess, or will she support our call for a public inquiry?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** My mandate is very clear. My mandate is to continue with the very excellent work that has been done by the two ministers of health that preceded me. I don't think any Minister of Health has accomplished more than Mr. Smitherman and Mr. Caplan.

When it comes to eHealth, I just think it's really important that we look at the truth rather than look at the fiction across the way. We have made big progress on eHealth. As the Premier said, we've now got 80,000 Ontarians on ePrescribing, a very important pilot program. More than four million out of 13 million already have electronic medical records. We've got a million kids now in Ontario with electronic health records. All of our hospitals are now filmless. That is a very big step forward. We're not going to have those old X-ray films that we used to have. We don't have them anymore; everything is digital. That's real progress.

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The drug profile viewer provides—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### SKILLS TRAINING

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** My question is for the Minister of Training. Minister, it's very nice that your ministry is accepting applications for the Second Career program, but surely the minister would never want to leave the impression that any of these unemployed

workers are actually going to be placed any time soon. You rejected qualified applicants for September and October, and now you and the assistant deputy are talking about January intake.

Minister, when is your ministry going to get its act together, and when can unemployed workers expect to have complete access to Second Career?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I would like to think the fact that our ministry accepted 10,000 applicants in the month of September demonstrates that we've got our act together.

We brought forward the Second Career program 16 months ago with the target of welcoming 20,000 applicants over the course of three years. In the course of 16 months, we have welcomed 21,000 individuals into the program. They are in the process of studying at our community colleges and our private career colleges.

As I've indicated in the House before, we are in the process of reviewing the program and hope to come forward with new guidelines toward the end of November, with an eye on the January target. In the interim, we are still approving applications on a limited basis.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Rosario Marchese:** As an example, this would be like a hospital announcing that once they had treated 20,000 patients, they weren't going to treat any more, regardless of the need.

The government claims that the popularity of the Second Career program is "unprecedented," yet you are cutting the program—so popular it is, and so effective, that you are cutting the program.

When your ministry talks about sustainability and realistic expectations, it means that unemployed workers in places like Windsor and Waterloo are not going to have access to the program. These people need help, and they need it now. If we can get another 20,000 who are on EI or are facing welfare into good jobs, paying taxes, why wouldn't we do that as soon as possible?

**Hon. John Milloy:** I have trouble with the honourable member's logic. The idea that we had a program designed for 20,000 over three years, we accepted 21,000 over 16 months, we continue to accept individuals into the program and are in the process of redesigning it with a commitment to moving forward—I do not see how that equals cuts.

The fact of the matter is, we are continuing Second Career despite the fact that that honourable member and his colleagues stood up in the House week after week, criticized it, mocked it and said it was no good. We did not listen to them. We are proceeding with Second Career, and we have many dozens, hundreds of stories throughout the province of individuals who are receiving training and are in the process of changing their lives.

#### SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** My question is to the Minister of Education. As we all know, these are challenging economic times. The constituents in my riding of Northumberland—Quinte West want to see value for their

tax dollars. They also want to be sure that student transportation is safe. It is important that we ensure the funds the provincial government provides for student transportation are spent in a way that gives taxpayers value for their money while at the same time offering quality and efficient services.

Minister, I have been reading stories in our local papers and I have heard from local representatives of the Ontario School Bus Association in my community on the issue of student transportation. Our local operators are concerned about planned changes in the procurement of student transportation to move to a request-for-proposal system.

Would the minister tell the House how her plans regarding competition in student transportation will evolve?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** It's a very good question. I appreciate the member for Northumberland-Quinte West, and I especially appreciate his advocacy on behalf of his community and small school bus operators—very important.

When we came into office, we found that procurement for student transportation wasn't what it should have been. There were too many contracts that were being renewed without competition or without any review. So we brought in efficiency reviews; we started a committee on procurement practices that included operators, board officials and ministry officials; last year we ran a request-for-proposals pilot in three boards—we got information from that; and beyond education, the Ministry of Finance introduced broader public service supply chain guidelines which establish that all entities will have to have fair, open and transparent procurement processes.

We're committed to a fair process; we're also committed to working with school bus operators so that small, medium and large operators can have a role to play in the provision of student transportation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Minister, no one wants to experience disruption or reduced quality of student transportation during the transition to the competition basis. Student transportation is an important service on which many Ontario families rely, particularly in rural communities like mine. Parents count on their school bus to pick up the children on time to go to school and bring them home safely at the end of the day.

The local operators I've met with are concerned about too fast a transition to a new model. In my community, these are valuable jobs, especially in this economic climate, and local school bus operators are worried for the future of their businesses and the effect it will have on our communities. They are also concerned about the state of student transportation.

Minister, will you work with the industry to ensure this plan is the best it can be?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I want to reassure the member and all of the members that I've met with representatives from the Ontario School Bus Association—I've been to their AGMs—and I've met with the

independent operators as well. I appreciate their willingness to work with us to come up with solutions to what are really difficult problems. What I've told them is that we're committed to providing the support and the time that the industry needs to achieve a smooth transition to ensure a continuation of the high level of service and also to introduce competition into the process. The ultimate decisions on which the competitive models will rest will rest with the board. Those decisions will rest with the board, but I have said that we have a complete willingness to support a variety of models. I think that's what the industry has been asking for. I've indicated a willingness to work with any proposals that are competitive in price and fall within the supply chain guidelines. I think that the public appreciates and would support that. We want to see a mix of small, medium and—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. New question.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Norm Miller:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, small business owners and families are working harder than ever with less to show for it. Now it looks like you're hitting them again because Minister Duncan has been sitting on the auto insurance report for over six months. Insurance companies are preparing to increase rates by up to 30%, which will cost an average family \$200 more. Premier, are you holding your breath and waiting for the scandals to end before taking action?

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I had the opportunity to speak to this a few moments ago. I think my honourable colleague recognizes that—maybe he's not aware that about 100 submissions have been received from various interested parties; 12 meetings have been held with partners to discuss their submissions. The minister has been meeting with key partners on a number of proposals, and he does intend to introduce a new proposal which we think will help ensure that we continue to strike the right balance between affordability of rates, availability of insurers and the appropriate levels of protection for our drivers.

We're proud of the record that we have in place after six years. The insurance rates are 2% below where they were some six years ago, but obviously there's more work to be done, and Minister Duncan will be speaking to that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** Proud of your record? We have the most expensive auto insurance in North America, and you're proud of your record? Give me a break.

Canada's worst government has been so distracted by scandals at OLG, eHealth, WSIB and elsewhere, they are failing to do their basic job. Small businesses and Ontario families are the ones left paying the price. They're facing auto insurance increases of up to 30%. Ontario deserves better. Businesses and families simply do not have the luxury of waiting for the scandals to end for you to get

around to fixing the problem. Premier, when will you act?

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**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I want to take the opportunity to remind my honourable colleague of his government's record. It may have been out of mind. Rates went up 43%—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Dalton McGuinty:** I know my honourable colleague is going to want to hear this. Rates went up 43% in their last three years of office; in our first six years of office, rates have gone down 2%—up 43%, down 2%. When we introduced a proposal here in this House to freeze rates, they voted against that. When we put in place our new law to better manage rates, they voted against that.

We know that there are more difficult times coming. That's why we're going to be moving ahead with a new proposal, and I ask my friend to remain patient until Minister Duncan shortly introduces a new proposal. We look forward to receiving their support at that time.

#### CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Minister, you will know that child and family services agencies were notified in the spring of a reduction in budget as a result of the exercise that you've engaged in to reduce their budgets. Le centre Jeanne Sauvé, which is the child protection agency in the Kapuskasing, Hearst and Smooth Rock Falls area, is seeing an 18% reduction in their budget this year if your plan goes forward. That 18% means they may have to lay off as much as a third of their staff, and, quite frankly, will put them in a position not to be able to deliver the services that they're mandated to deliver under the act.

My question to you is simply this: In light of that 18% reduction that you're handing them, how do you expect them to provide essential services that they have been mandated to do under the act, such as protecting children from harm, abuse and neglect?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to speak about this really important issue. Children's aid societies across the province do some of the most important work and that's why our government has been a government that has invested significantly in children's aid societies. Over 385 million additional dollars have been put forward to children's aid societies since 2003-04, and in this year alone, an additional \$30 million more than their budget last year.

What is different this year is that in light of the economic circumstances across the province, in June of this year, children's aid societies were told that we would not be able to top up their budget at year-end, but that we would be working with them, both on a local basis and an across-the-province basis, to find a sustainable pathway to ensure that children's aid societies can put kids' interests first. That's our first priority. We need to focus

on the outcomes for Ontario's kids, and we're absolutely committed to doing that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I think the people in the Kapuskasing area and I want to know what class of mathematics you attended, because when they look at their budget, it is not an increase, it is a decrease in budget. They're looking at over \$700,000 that will be eliminated from their budget. They have to deliver these services. This Legislature has passed legislation that says that they are mandated to protect children in this province, and you are, by reducing their budget, putting them in a position that they can't do that.

So I ask you again: Stop with the gobbledegook about your math class that you took 50 years ago and talk about what you're going to do to provide the dollars so that they can match the services that they're required to give.

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** Let me put some real numbers on the table for the member opposite, and let me tell him what is happening across Ontario with the transformation that we have brought forward with respect to children's aid societies. For the children's aid society mentioned, they have received a 35% funding increase, and at the same time, kids in their care are down by 25%.

We need to work at a regional level with children's aid societies, and we are. Regional offices are meeting regularly with them to look at whether they can establish partnerships and how we can better serve Ontario's kids. It's incumbent upon all of us to look for solutions where children's aid societies can prosper in the long term. That's what I'm committed to doing. That's what our commission will be undertaking. We need to look at a modern approach, and all of the kids in Ontario are counting on us to work collectively to do just that.

#### IMMIGRANTS

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** My question is to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. My riding of Mississauga South is very diverse. We depend on and celebrate the economic and cultural contributions that newcomers make in our community. In fact, every summer, Mississaugans celebrate our diversity with our renowned annual Carassauga Festival of Cultures, which marks its 25th anniversary next year.

Successful businesses now know that hiring newcomers is critical to their operations. Governments and employers share responsibility to ensure that there are policies in place to promote diversity in the workplace. However, labour shortages are anticipated, and within five years, immigration will likely account for most or all of Ontario's net labour force growth. Newcomers are an essential part of our labour force growth, and we need and deserve to have opportunities to put their skills to use and help Ontario and Canada compete globally. We can't wait. Ontario needs to be prepared—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you, Minister?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I want to thank the member from Mississauga South for the question. Just this Friday,

I had the distinct pleasure of attending the changing workforce diversity forum hosted by the Working Skills Centre, the Toronto Training Board and the Working Women Community Centre. The forum explored ways of overcoming barriers in Canada's workplaces. Discussions were centred on supporting groups such as immigrants, minority groups and persons with disabilities. These discussions put forward ideas and visions that include more inclusive communities and workplaces.

Our government is committed to the same vision: a place where all Ontarians are able to put forth their best. Ontario's future economic and social prosperity relies on our ability to develop a more inclusive society for all Ontarians.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Charles Sousa:** As you know, our economy transcends the borders of Ontario. It's truly a global province in nature. Skilled newcomers bring significant expertise to the workplace and make us globally competitive, so this is in all of our interests. We must tap into our highly skilled pool of newcomer talent who are currently underemployed or unemployed. Providing newcomers an inclusive environment in which to succeed is the right thing to do and will lead to an increase in Ontario's productivity. We need to build workplaces that are more diverse and more inclusive. We need to provide supports to new Canadians so that they are able and ready to take on new opportunities.

All of us recognize that better utilizing Ontario's diversity will further our economic goals. Minister, how then is the government supporting and utilizing diversity in the workplace?

**Hon. Michael Chan:** Diversity is ingrained in the economic, cultural and social fabric of Ontario. Diversity is not about being able to tolerate; it's about being able to embrace and cultivate. Yes, in Ontario we embrace and cultivate, and in return we are fortunate to benefit from the riches that diversity brings to Ontario.

That's exactly what we did in Mississauga. The skills of newcomers were cultivated by AyA Kitchens and Baths in partnership with the Halton District School Board to provide on-site language training specific to their areas of employment.

We are proud to have supported these successful programs for the benefit of newcomers. We are committed to unlocking the riches of diversity by investing in our diverse communities.

#### CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

**Mr. Frank Klees:** To the minister responsible for children: 36 out of 51 children's aid societies in the province are facing a funding crisis. The York Region CAS is one of those, but it's even more critical because that agency is already receiving the lowest per-unit funding in the GTA. To make matters worse, it has now been advised that it is facing a \$5.5-million cut to its existing budget. The minister has a letter from the agency

advising her that vulnerable children will be at risk if, in fact, this cut is imposed.

So I ask the minister: How, in good conscience, can she say, as she did yesterday, that the most important resource in this province is our children, and yet defend these cuts? Will she agree to personally intervene to review her ministry's flawed funding formula, and specifically its effect on York region?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** I do think it is imperative that we look at what has transpired with children's aid societies over the past decade. I'll acknowledge in this place that we have seen an unsustainable level of increases to children's aid societies, from \$500 million 10 years ago to \$1.4 billion now. We need to work with children's aid societies such as the York CAS to ensure that children are put first and that their outcomes are a priority.

**1130**

That's why one of the early telephone calls that I made in this role in which I'm privileged to serve was directly to the chair of the board at York CAS. I invited her to continue working with our regional office. Our regional office is currently working with the York CAS to develop a financial plan to address the challenges. They understand, and we understand, that that plan might be one that is multi-year. We all need to work collectively to ensure that we're meeting the goals. There's another meeting—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** When the minister considers that her government wasted more than \$1 billion on scandalous contracts to consultants, one would think that if she does in fact believe, as she said she does, that our children are our most valuable asset, she would challenge her colleagues to prioritize funding for the most vulnerable children in our society.

On the one hand, the minister legislates what services must be provided yet, on the other hand, refuses to fund the delivery of those services. The minister should either ensure that the funding matches the mandate or direct the agency as to which child protection laws they should be breaking and provide the appropriate liability support and protection for the agencies because they cannot deliver the mandated protection services that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Minister?

**Hon. Laurel C. Broten:** The current funding formula was developed in consultation with children's aid societies, and it reflects historical costs with respect to the CASs.

In the York circumstance in particular, I can tell you that the York CAS has received a funding increase in the amount of 34.4% since 2003-04, and 188% since—

**Mr. Frank Klees:** That is not true.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd just ask the honourable member from Newmarket to withdraw the comment, please.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** That is not true.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'd ask the honourable member to withdraw the comment, please.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I withdraw, but it's not true.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I would ask that the honourable member withdraw the comment, please.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I reluctantly withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I would just ask that you withdraw the comment.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** This is tough—very, very difficult. I withdraw but, Speaker, we have a problem here.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I need the honourable member to please stand and say, "I withdraw the comment."

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I withdraw.

### GO TRANSIT

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Since January, GO-Metrolinx's West Toronto Diamond pile-driving project has been subjecting residents near the tracks to deafening noise and vibration. Last week, in condemnation of the pile-driving project, the Canadian Transportation Agency ruled "that the prolonged exposure to the local citizens to the noise and vibration ... is unreasonable given the nature of the area in which the construction is taking place."

Given this condemnation by a federal agency, will the minister now admit that the West Toronto Diamond pile-driving is causing egregious harm to the residents?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I know that Gerard Kennedy, the federal member for the area, raised this matter with that particular body to which you make reference, the Canadian Transportation Agency. Mr. Kennedy has been vociferous in representing his constituents in this particular matter, something I appreciate so very much.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Deal with provincial issues, not federal members, please.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Well, she asked a federal question. What you asked is a federal question.

The member for Parkdale-High Park, the member for Davenport and many people have raised this issue. GO Transit has taken many actions which I will deal with in my supplementary to alleviate some of the concerns of the people. There's no question that when you undertake projects of this kind there is disruption to the people in the area, and they have a legitimate beef when they hear all of that noise. They're doing—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It was actually the work of the coalition of the West Toronto Diamond pile-driving residents' association that brought this whole issue forward to the Canadian Transportation Agency, so thank you for that—and it is a provincial issue; GO-Metrolinx is a provincial agency. Among other things, the CTA stated that Metrolinx should use significantly quieter vibratory technology, expand on the shrouds already in place and also limit the hours of pile-driving. The CTA also echoed an ongoing complaint that Metrolinx needs

to open the lines of communication between its organization and the residents.

When will you concede that this project has been an unmitigated disaster that has weakened the public image of GO-Metrolinx?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** That party gets up time and again and asks for public transit projects. When those projects are built, they aren't built without some disruption. I understand that—the same as when the TTC undertakes its projects. Perhaps you'll want to talk to the TTC.

What they have done already is restricted hours for the piling work; noise shrouds on the pile drivers; alternative types of pile drivers; temporary noise reducing walls; a telephone line; and an e-mail address for residents to contact GO. GO is in the process of reviewing and assessing the CTA's proposed measures and will respond by the October 22 deadline.

I understand that GO has already put in place a number of measures proposed by the CTA, and GO will continue to work with neighbouring communities to minimize the disturbances and complete this important project.

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** On a point of order—

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I will recognize the honourable member with his point of order following question period.

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** It's important during question period.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I would just ask that he raise it—we have one minute left in question period.

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** Mr. Speaker, I want to raise the point of order now because it's relevant to question period.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I'm not going to recognize—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** As the enforcer of those standing orders, over a long period of time and through numerous Speakers within this chamber, we have had an agreement and an understanding that we allow question period to flow and deal with points of order following question period. I'm going to continue with that practice. If there are challenges that want to be made to that, I certainly would invite that that matter be taken up at the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, but I will continue to follow that practice of not recognizing points of order during question period.

The time for question period has ended.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** On a point of order, Speaker: I realize that I cannot correct the minister's record, but I would ask this: that once the minister of children's services has an opportunity to review the facts regarding the York Region Children's Aid Society funding, she would clarify and correct the record for the House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The honourable member is quite correct that he cannot correct another member's record. I would encourage any honourable member in the House at any time—they have the ability to correct their own record.

## USE OF QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. Norman W. Sterling:** My point of order is this, Mr. Speaker: You brought the member for Newmarket–Aurora to his feet to withdraw a statement where he said it was not true. Earlier in question period, the Premier said in a response that what one of our members alleged in their question was not true. Why was he not required to withdraw, as the member for Newmarket–Aurora was?

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I thank the honourable member for the comment. It was not the Premier's answer, but there was another member who answered a question, and I heard some comments from the opposition side. The way that I heard that answer—it was in the context of the use of that word. We've had discussions in this House, but I will undertake, to the honourable member, to review Hansard. But often, words used in a certain context at times are either parliamentary or not parliamentary. In the context I heard, I allowed the debate to continue.

The Minister of Transport on a point of order.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Mr. Speaker, what you have in essence done by allowing my good friend Norm Sterling, whose riding is Carleton–Mississippi Mills, I believe, to rise during question period is in effect cut off a question for the next party in line. That is something that you have been trying to avoid, or that all members of the House have been trying to avoid: People getting up and—I know it wasn't his particular concern in this case; I know he wasn't trying to do that. But what that does is it allows for people to get up in the House to prevent further questions from being asked simply by asking to consider points of order during question period. I think that in those terms the next party to ask a question should be permitted to do so.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Again, I'll remind all honourable members—and I would welcome the opportunity for this discussion to take place at the House leaders' meeting—it has been the practice within this chamber, and not just within this chamber but certainly within the House of Commons as well, that points of order are not accepted by the Speaker during question period. They are always accepted afterward. It is a sheer coincidence of the timing when the honourable member rose, and I chose, because—had it been the government that had risen, I would have stopped the clock, but because it was the opposition I do allow the clock to continue to run in that circumstance. I hear the honourable member, but the time for question period has ended.

This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1141 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's my pleasure to introduce Councillor Maria Augimeri from the city of Toronto.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Welcome, Maria, and regards to your husband, a former member, too.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

## ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Last week, Tim Hudak, the leader of the Ontario PC Party, and I had the privilege of meeting with Brenda Lammens, chair of the fruit and vegetable growers', and Len Troup, chair of the tender fruit producers' marketing board. I know that Tim Hudak has been a advocate for the farmers of his area, including the tender fruit sector, for many years, and I appreciated the opportunity to join him in Niagara for the meeting.

What we heard from both the tender fruit marketing board and the fruit and vegetable growers was disturbing. Horticulture farmers are facing big increases in input costs and they are struggling. Some of the costs are directly related to this government, but when they try to talk about solutions, it seems that no one on the government side is listening. The minister who should be fighting for the farmers is more focused on keeping the Premier and her cabinet friends happy than helping the farmers succeed.

The industries have brought forward a proposal for a risk management program for horticulture farmers similar to the one that is in place for the grain and oilseed farmers. This program would be funded, in part, by insurance premiums from the farmers and would ensure that when they are in trouble, there's support available. It is a proposal that this government should be considering. Current programs aren't working for horticulture farmers and the current government refuses to listen.

I thank them for meeting with us and assure them that Tim Hudak and I are listening, even if Dalton McGuinty is not.

## BAMCO CUSTOM WOODWORKING

**Mrs. Liz Sandals:** Last week, Minister Pupatello visited Guelph to announce that our government will be investing in a local manufacturer: Bamco Custom Woodworking. Under the advanced manufacturing investment strategy, Bamco will receive an interest-free loan of \$2.77 million which will support Bamco's investment of \$9.25 million over the next five years. This investment will be used to invest in robotic finishing equipment which will reduce production times by 75%.

Bamco will become the first manufacturer in North America to offer an environmentally friendly finishing process using water-based stains and lacquers. The new process will eliminate the use of oil-based stains and lacquers, which contain volatile organic compounds that can damage the environment. Not only will this project help the environment, it will also create 72 new jobs at the company in Guelph and protect 13 existing positions. One of the strengths of this project is Bamco's commitment to using Ontario-based suppliers to purchase all their wood, doors and a variety of hardware.

As we all know, the manufacturing sector has been one of the hardest hit in our economy, and we've experi-

enced our share of job losses in Guelph. That is why I am proud to be part of a government that is investing in a Guelph company and creating jobs.

#### R. PETER HEFFERING

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I am pleased to rise and pay tribute to R. Peter Heffering, who has been named to the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame. Peter Heffering's success as a breeder of Holsteins and standardbred horses has earned him the admiration and respect of farmers around the world. His Hanover Hill Farm, near Port Perry, bred Hanoverhill Starbuck, the world's most famous Holstein bull.

At the time of Hanoverhill Starbuck's death in 1998, it was estimated he had sired 200,000 offspring over five continents.

Established in 1973, Hanover Hill Holsteins achieved multiple premier exhibitor and premier breeder honours at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Also, Peter's Heffering's Tara Hills stud farm has also achieved a remarkable record. Tara Hills standardbreds have won some of the most prestigious race events in the sport itself, including several "horse of the year" titles. Peter Heffering was inducted into the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame in 2004.

R. Peter Heffering is an outstanding leader in two agricultural industries and is a worthy addition to the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame. There will be a ceremony at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair on November 8, 2009. I would encourage everyone to recognize R. Peter Heffering and his work in agriculture.

#### ORLEANS Y

**Mr. Phil McNeely:** Last month, the province announced that it would be providing a portion of the funding to expand the Orleans YMCA as part of the Recreational Infrastructure Canada program. This funding is key to moving the project forward, a project that will improve the lives of a large number of residents in my community. It is also a clear indication of the province's ongoing commitment to the health, welfare and physical well-being of our citizens. An expanded YMCA/YWCA in Orleans will be able to provide services to as many as 15,000 new members. The new facilities and the additional programming will be of great benefit to our youth, families and especially seniors.

The YMCA/YWCA is a charitable organization with a well-earned reputation for providing services aimed at building a healthy mind, spirit and body. Through the construction of a new pool and additional space using the funds provided by the provincial government, the Orleans Y will be able to serve an even greater proportion of our community.

I want to acknowledge the enormous amount of work done by Tony Pacheco, president and CEO of the National Capital Region YMCA/YWCA, and his team on their successful application for rink funding. My sincere

thanks to the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure and Premier McGuinty for their vision and support in this matter.

#### GROVES MEMORIAL COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** As you know, I've repeatedly stood in this House to call attention to the need for a new Groves Memorial Community Hospital in Centre Wellington. On many occasions during the past six years, I have urged the McGuinty Liberal government to recognize our future need for a new Groves, to give us the go-ahead and support to proceed with detailed planning for the new hospital our community deserves, to stop creating new processes and bureaucratic roadblocks which only create disappointment and cynicism in communities across Ontario where there are some 70 hospital projects in waiting, and to give us a firm commitment as to when our new hospital will be built.

During constituency week I dropped in to visit Groves and learned that the hospital officials have written the Waterloo-Wellington LHIN asking for approval of the business case for the new hospital and the planning grant that goes with it. The hospital has established and demonstrated our need. Our community is behind it. Our hospital foundation has raised its share. The LHIN has all the requisite information.

I'm privileged to represent Centre Wellington in this House. Time and time again I have pushed this government to do the right thing. I say to the new Minister of Health: Come to Centre Wellington and see for yourself the special place that is Groves, then stand with us as we build the hospital we need in this 21st century.

#### TORONTO ANTI-VIOLENCE INTERVENTION STRATEGY

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** Students, teachers, police officers, TAVIS officers, members of the Toronto District School Board, local organizations and community leaders came together under one roof at York Memorial Collegiate Institute to thank TAVIS for the work they have done throughout the summer in York South-Weston.

This occasion brought an energetic anti-violence message through the use of theatre arts, beat-box performers and the spoken word. Many people who did positive work in York South-Weston in support of the Keele-Eglinton TAVIS initiative were present, and their efforts were recognized.

The TAVIS initiative in York South-Weston has worked in reducing criminal activity. The data indicates an overwhelming reduction in homicides and shootings. For this, I thank the TAVIS officers who patrolled our streets throughout the summer and the officers who will continue to protect TAVIS areas for a prolonged period of time, because the Toronto anti-violence intervention strategy is not only about police efforts, but includes the

co-operation of community members and organizations communicating and working together towards a common goal—community safety. We must not forget the contribution of community groups and residents in facilitating the officers' task.

**1510**

I am proud of this initiative that was funded by the provincial government and administered through the Toronto police. This is an important project because it confirms that when police and community members work together, neighbourhood safety is really possible.

#### AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

**Mr. Khalil Ramal:** I rise in the House today to share some good news from the city of London. Last week, my colleague Chris Bentley and I gathered with a large number of service providers, students and community members to announce funding for our government's after-school program, which means 400 kids in London will have a healthy, active and safe place to spend their hours after school. The staff and students at Arthur Stringer welcomed everyone to share the important celebration with them. Also, Arthur Stringer is the host of one of those programs.

The students at Arthur Stringer are an enthusiastic bunch, and they wanted me to tell you that they attend the very best school in the whole province. The service providers are enthusiastic about the program too, in part because it gives them a chance to implement a program that meets specific community needs. Good things happen in the city of London on a regular basis.

Also, I got the chance to speak with some providers. They told me this program means a happy day for many students across the city of London because they get the chance to spend good quality time with their friends and also to do meaningful things and learn from other students.

Again, Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to stand up and speak about the good news happening in the city of London, which I appreciate the government assisting our city and our students with.

#### CREDIT UNIONS AND CAISSES POPULAIRES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Last Thursday, October 15, marked International Credit Union Day. Credit unions started in the 1850s in Europe to give ordinary people the opportunity to borrow from savings pooled by themselves and their fellow members. Back then, the banks were not in the business of lending to workers, and workers had to resort to private lenders who charged huge interest rates.

In Canada, the first *caisse populaire* was created in Lévis, Quebec, in 1900, by Alphonse Desjardins. In 1908, the first financial co-operative in Ontario, the Civil Service Savings and Loan Society, was formed in Ottawa. After the Second World War, hundreds of credit

unions sprang up across Ontario, primarily in the union movement, in trades associations and in ethnic communities.

In northern Ontario, credit unions and *caisses populaires* serve communities too small or too remote for banks to be bothered serving us. Credit unions and *caisses populaires* are a big part of the economy, the history and the culture of Sudbury and Nickel Belt.

J'aimerais souligner quelques *caisses populaires* dans mon comté, telles que les *caisses populaires* d'Azilda, de Coniston, d'Alban, de Val Caron, la Caisse Populaire St-Jacques, et Vermillon. La semaine dernière, les *Caisses populaires Desjardins* de ma région ont annoncé un don de 50 000 \$ envers la Villa St-Gabriel, une nouvelle maison de soins infirmiers, et ce n'est qu'un exemple.

Credit unions' profits stay with the people. After all, they are owned by their members.

#### PETERBOROUGH MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

**Mr. Jeff Leal:** On Friday, October 16, 2009, I was joined by my esteemed colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, MPP Rick Johnson, Deputy Mayor Henry Clarke, Mr. John Gillespie of Flying Colours, Mr. Andy Mitchell of the Greater Peterborough Area Economic Development Corp., MPs Dean DelMastro and Barry Devolin, as well as other dignitaries, to participate in an important announcement that will have a positive impact on our communities for years to come.

We had the distinct pleasure of announcing the funding of some \$21 million from the infrastructure stimulus fund. Peterborough will now be in a position to develop a more comprehensive aviation industrial park, an aerospace cluster, at the Peterborough airport. This airside development program includes apron expansion, development of the general aviation areas, construction of a new central apron and air terminal building, and groundside commercial development.

This was a historic infrastructure investment for Peterborough airport. With this investment, we are creating jobs now that will help stimulate our local economy and will create a competitive advantage that will attract businesses and strengthen Ontario's economy in the future.

I want to congratulate everyone who contributed to the development and approval of this project, and I want to recognize the Premier and the Honourable George Smitherman for their commitment to our communities.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the October 20, 2009, report of the Standing Committee on Government

Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 108(f)9, the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

COMITÉ PERMANENT  
DE LA POLITIQUE SOCIALE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
SOCIAL POLICY

**M. Shafiq Qaadri:** Je demande la permission de déposer un rapport du Comité permanent de la politique sociale et je propose son adoption.

I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption and send it to you by way of page Matthew.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Lisa Freedman):** Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 179, An Act to amend various Acts related to regulated health professions and certain other Acts / Projet de loi 179, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne les professions de la santé réglementées et d'autres lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The Minister of Government Services.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** Consumer Services. It's okay. It was mistaken earlier in the day when referenced to some expenditure as well, so that's okay.

I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Agreed?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

The ayes have it.

The Minister of Consumer Services.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I move that notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item 42 be waived.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSES

CITIZENSHIP WEEK

**Hon. Michael Chan:** I am proud today to stand in this House to recognize Citizenship Week in Canada. As

Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, I have the honour of taking part in citizenship ceremonies for new Canadians. This year I attended a ceremony here at Queen's Park as part of the Canada Day celebration. I witnessed the swearing-in of 30 new Canadians: 30 individuals representing 20 families from 19 different countries. I watched as they pledged the Canadian citizenship oath and promised to fulfill their responsibilities as citizens.

It is such a good feeling to be sworn in as a Canadian citizen. It is a feeling that continues to stay with me throughout the years. It is a declaration of commitment to Canada that comes from the heart.

Ontario has a long tradition of welcoming newcomers from all over the world. We are talking about people from more than 200 countries who have enriched our province with their contributions and their culture. To gain citizenship, newcomers must be able to answer questions about Canada, questions such as, which provinces formed Confederation and when did the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms become part of the Constitution?

This reinforces one message: We must understand our country's past in order to contribute to its future. Our government knows that to contribute to the future, newcomers must be able to put their skills to work—newcomers like Sanjay Lekhi, who immigrated to Canada from India in the year 2000 with a pharmacy diploma in hand. Sanjay wanted to work in his profession and eventually registered in the pharmacy bridge training program for internationally educated pharmacists. Since completing the program, he has been able to work full-time as a pharmacist.

When newcomers like Sanjay find a job in their field, they feel a sense of belonging, a sense that they truly belong to their new home. They form an attachment to this country, a connection that never, never goes away.

This week, I invite all members to reflect on how far we have come as a nation since 1947, when only 26 citizenship certificates were presented in the very first citizenship ceremony. Let us remind ourselves of the privilege it is to become Canadian citizens. And as Ontarians, let's keep in mind not just what we have to gain but what we must offer to this great province.

1520

Citizenship is a lasting bond with our nation. It bonds us to each other and to our shared commitment to be a stronger Ontario and a stronger Canada.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Responses? The member from Leeds–Grenville.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** The member from Thornhill.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I'm sorry, Speaker, for the confusion. The critic on this particular portfolio is new at the job. His name is Tim Hudak, and he's the leader of our party.

It's a pleasure to rise in the House this afternoon and speak on the occasion of Citizenship Week on behalf our

leader, Tim Hudak, and the Ontario PC caucus. It's a portfolio that I know reasonably well. It's one that I held for the last year and a half.

I am a second-generation Canadian citizen myself. In Canada, we were the first in the Commonwealth to be able to claim national citizenship when, in 1947, the federal government passed the Canadian Citizenship Act. My father obtained his own citizenship around that time, and obviously we are all descended from immigrants if not indeed immigrants ourselves.

Today we are celebrating the 62nd year of that act, and this celebration gives all Canadians the opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a citizen of Canada, to recognize the value of Canadian citizenship, and welcome new Canadians into our communities. Canadian citizenship means much more than a declaration at the border. Canadian citizenship means that we share in common with each other values such as equality, respect for cultural differences, freedom, peace, law and order.

In my own riding of Thornhill, we count approximately 150 different cultural groups and languages as part of the 150,000 people who make up that riding, and there is no place, arguably, in Canada, much less Ontario, that we don't see that first-hand every day.

The gift of our citizenship is the opportunity we each have to build a Canadian society that is more inclusive, democratic and caring—and build we have.

Since the first proclamation of the Canadian Citizenship Act in 1947, 6.5 million people have been granted Canadian citizenship. A remarkable 85% of eligible new Canadians become Canadian citizens, and the vast majority choose not only to live in Canada but to participate as Canadians. In Ontario, we are fortunate that almost 50% of those new Canadians have made this province their home, and their contribution to this province is remarkable.

We have recently celebrated Diwali and Eid, amongst the many festivals that occur around the world. But as the prayers were said in languages that are new to Canada, Canadian citizens went home those days to participate in their own communities and to strengthen the framework of this province.

The quality of life in Ontario and the health of our communities require the dedication and commitment of those who choose Ontario as their home. The richness of our diversity is woven into the framework of this province. The contributions are clearly evident in business, the professions and the arts. It is through volunteering, engaging in the political process and involvement in the lives of the more vulnerable in our society that we are all enriched.

It's an interesting thing to note, in listening to the minister's words, that over the past couple of years we have had occasion to participate together and, in this particular portfolio, across party lines to recognize contributions of citizenship in our communities.

I would at this point recognize some of those who will probably present themselves for those recognitions this year in my own riding, particularly in the municipality of

Vaughan, where we had some devastating tornadoes this past summer and where normal people did extraordinary things.

Citizenship Week celebrates the transition through immigration from new Canadian to Canadian citizen, and through this process, we are all equal. We are bound by our commitment to Canada and to Ontario.

Today is a reminder to all Canadians—those born in Canada and those who choose to become Canadian citizens—that we have a common bond, a right protected, and that we should be very proud to be called Canadian citizens.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's an honour and a privilege to stand on behalf of the New Democratic Party and our leader, Andrea Horwath, on national Citizenship Week and respond to the minister's statement.

I know my colleague has meant well, in all meanings of that word, in terms of new citizens and what they've been through—and he should know; he is one.

Unfortunately, from the New Democratic Party perspective, things aren't quite as rosy for new immigrants. There was a landmark study called the Colour of Poverty that outlined exactly the state of new immigrants and new citizens in the province, and it's not good; in fact, it's very grim.

Certainly new immigrants make up the bulk of those making minimum wage, and as the government will know, we have asked for a minimum wage that will set them above the poverty line at \$10.25. That's not yet in place, unfortunately, and therefore many new immigrants sometimes work two or three jobs a week, in poverty, because that law has not been enacted yet.

Second of all, we know that new immigrants make up the bulk of the homeless and the precariously housed, and we know that as of a study that was released in the Toronto Star today. So, again, what we ask this government to do, if their accolades for new citizens are to be truly meaningful, is to build new housing, provide new housing. Unfortunately, the housing budget has been cut year after year.

In terms of health care professionals and new internationally trained professionals and their hopes of securing something in their profession, unfortunately—although I appreciated the story told by my colleague—I have a number of stories from my riding of doctors and surgeons who have to return to their homelands because it would take an average of 10 years to be accredited here as a health care professional. This is in a province where we're screaming about the shortage of doctors, where many Ontarians don't have a doctor and would certainly benefit from those who are trained in other countries. It's not happening; I wish it were. Again, we've done forums in our riding about this.

Parkdale–High Park, as many of you know, is one of the most multicultural ridings in all of Ontario. In fact, there are over 165 mother tongues spoken at Parkdale high school in my riding. I know that's an exemplary place.

Currently, the major group that is inhabiting south Parkdale in an area we call the landing strip on Jameson, which is where new refugees and immigrants come, is Tibetan. Just this morning, I passed a note over to my colleague Mr. Tony Ruprecht, who tends to preside over the flag-raising here at Queen's Park, and I asked him if he would preside over the flag-raising of the Tibetan people here at Queen's Park. They would love to see such a day and would love to be acknowledged, a growing number—in fact, the largest number of Tibetans outside of Nepal—in Toronto right now, unacknowledged by this forum.

Certainly, in terms of Citizenship Week and the New Democratic Party and our place in this province, we'd say, absolutely, we welcome new citizens; we celebrate new citizens. But these are empty and hollow words unless we do something for new citizens.

That's what we call upon the majority Liberal McGuinty government to do: something for new citizens; not just awards, not just recognition, not just empty words, but actual real legislation. Housing, a minimum wage you can live on, and access to professions—not just health care, but all professions—again, many closed to new immigrants by virtue of how long it takes to get past the gatekeepers. So we need lots of work and not just empty promises.

And yes, I share with my colleagues the fact that we are all immigrants here. I know I share with Maria Augimeri, our councillor in this place—coming from Italian descendants. My ancestors came from Sicily, in fact, because there was no food and they were starving. So many of our refugees and immigrants come to this country looking for that which they could not get at home—freedom, entrance to professions, housing, a decent-paying job—and it's up to us to guarantee that they get it.

So I ask the government—I certainly know that it's not up to my colleague across the way individually; it is up to the cabinet, however, and it is up to the Premier—to do something about it, to change the face of poverty, which is now, as that landmark study said, a face of colour.

## PETITIONS

### TAXATION

**Mr. Bill Murdoch:** I appreciate the chance to speak on this petition. It's to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas residents in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound do not want a provincial harmonized sales tax (HST) that will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

"Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to house sales over \$400,000; and

"Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships, newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees; and

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"Whereas the blended sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families and low-income Ontarians;

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

"That the McGuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario consumers."

I've signed this and will give it to James and he will deliver it.

## DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition from the good people of Timiskaming-Cochrane asking for a PET scanner.

"Whereas the Ontario government is making ... PET scanning a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients...; and

"Whereas by October 2009 ... PET scans will be performed in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

"Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario, with the Sudbury Regional Hospital, its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

"We ... petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through the Sudbury Regional Hospital, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of northeastern Ontario."

I fully support this petition and I will affix my name to it and send it to the clerks' table with page Matthew.

## TOM LONGBOAT

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** I have a petition in support of the Tom Longboat Day Act. I would certainly like to thank Sheila and Wendell Lefave of Williamstown, Ontario, who organize every year the Great Raisin River Footrace honouring Tom Longboat. It reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Tom Longboat is one of Canada's greatest long-distance runners; and

"Whereas Tom Longboat is a great role model for all Canadians;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Tom Longboat Day Act into law so that we can honour this remarkable athlete and courageous Canadian, who is a great role model for all Canadians."

As I agree with this petition, I shall sign it and send it to the clerks' table.

## HOSPITAL SERVICES

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I'm pleased to read a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario regarding the new Milton hospital, signed by over 10,000 names.

"Whereas the town of Milton is the fastest-growing community in Canada, with a population that is expected to surpass 100,000 by 2014; and

"Whereas the Milton District Hospital is designed to serve a population of 30,000; and

"Whereas young families, seniors and all residents of Milton are currently unable to access quick and reliable health care services; and

"Whereas the excellent doctors and nurses at Milton District Hospital are constrained by unacceptable conditions and a lack of resources;

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to immediately approve and initiate the process to expand Milton District Hospital and to provide adequate interim measures to prevent further suffering for the people of Milton."

I'm pleased to sign my name to this and pass it to page Shaan Ali.

## JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** I've received a number of petitions from the Save Our Children organization. The petition is addressed to the Parliament of Ontario and the Attorney General. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the Canadian Judicial Council has been asked by Ontario's Attorney General to probe the judicial behaviour of judges; and

"Whereas judges are human beings and have been known to make serious mistakes in the judicial system, leading to devastating consequences and unfair justice for Canadian citizens; and

"Whereas some judges ... have fallen asleep in the midst of a trial...; and

"Whereas some judges have been observed making biased, disrespectful comments and abusing their judicial powers; and

"Whereas Canadian families need to be protected from these judges who are unable to change their habits, unable to follow the rule of proper conduct and unable to exercise recommendations set by the Court of Appeal, and consequently commit grave injustices;

"Therefore we, the undersigned citizens, are strongly requesting the following changes in our judicial system:

"(1) That a 'judicial demerit point system' be applied to ensure that judges are accountable for their judgments rendered; and

"(2) That a yearly review of their performance be established" by the Canadian Judicial Council.

I am signing this petition and I am delighted to send it with Madeline.

## TAXATION

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'll try to be as quick as possible.

"Whereas Premier Dalton McGuinty is increasing taxes yet again with his new 13% combined sales tax, at a time when families and businesses can least afford it;

"Whereas by 2010, Dalton McGuinty's new tax will increase the cost of goods and services that families and businesses buy and use every day. A few examples include: condo fees; coffee, newspapers and magazines; gas for the car, home heating oil and electricity; haircuts, dry cleaning and personal grooming; home renovations and home services; veterinary care and pet care; legal services"—the list goes on—"the sale of resale homes," and, finally, funeral services;

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised he wouldn't raise taxes in the 2003 election. However, in 2004, he brought in the health tax, which costs upwards of \$600 to \$900 per individual. And now he is raising our taxes again;

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

"That the Dalton McGuinty government wake up to Ontario's current economic reality and stop raising taxes on Ontario's hard-working families and businesses."

I'm pleased to sign and support this and hand it to Henry, the page.

## TAXATION

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition signed by 100 people from throughout Ontario, from Windsor to Cornwall to Foleyet to Thunder Bay, and it goes as follows:

"Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Be it resolved, I am opposed to Dalton McGuinty's 8% sales tax grab and call on the Parliament of Ontario to cancel its plan to introduce a harmonized sales tax on July 1, 2010."

It's short, simple and easy to understand. I fully support it, will affix my name to it, and send it to the table with page Matthew.

## CEMETERIES

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** I have a petition signed by a number of members of the North York Historical Society, and it reads as follows:

"A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's cemeteries are an important part of our cultural heritage, and Ontario's inactive cemeteries are constantly at risk of closure and removal; and

"Ontario's cemeteries are an irreplaceable part of the province's cultural heritage;

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

"The government must pass Bill 149, the Inactive Cemeteries Protection Act, 2009, to prohibit the re-

location of inactive cemeteries in the province of Ontario.”

As I agree with this petition, I shall sign it and send it to the clerks' table.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Bill Murdoch:** I have yet another petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and it is the same as the last one:

“Whereas the residents of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound do not want a provincial harmonized sales tax that will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

“Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to house sales over \$400,000; and

“Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services”—unless you book them ahead of time, I guess; I've heard that—“gym memberships, newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees; and

“Whereas the blended sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families and low-income Ontarians;

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

“That the McGuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario consumers.”

I've signed this and send it with Kira.

#### FIREARMS CONTROL

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** I have a petition that concerns the Unlawful Firearms in Vehicles Act. It's a petition to the Parliament of Ontario, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the growing number of unlawful firearms in motor vehicles is threatening innocent citizens and our police officers;

“Whereas police officers, military personnel and lawfully licensed persons are the only people allowed to possess firearms; and

“Whereas a growing number of unlawful firearms are transported, smuggled and being found in motor vehicles; and

“Whereas impounding motor vehicles and suspending driver's licences of persons possessing unlawful firearms would aid the police in their efforts to make our streets safer;

“We, the undersigned citizens, strongly request and petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 56, entitled the Unlawful Firearms in Vehicles Act, 2008, into law, so that we can reduce the number of crimes involving unlawful firearms in our communities.”

Since I agree with this petition, I'm delighted to sign it.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the residents of Ontario do not want a provincial harmonized sales tax (HST) that will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

“Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to house sales over \$400,000; and

“Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships, newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees; and

“Whereas the blended sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families and low-income Ontarians;

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

“That the McGuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario consumers.”

I agree with this petition, am pleased to sign it and give it to my page, Hannah.

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#### CEMETERIES

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** I have a petition signed by a number of Ontarians from Unionville, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas protecting and preserving Ontario's cemeteries is a shared responsibility and the foundation of a civilized society; and

“Whereas failure to safeguard one of our last remaining authentic cultural heritage resources, Ontario's inactive cemeteries, would be disastrous for the continuity of the historical record and our collective culture in this province;

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

“The government must pass Bill 149, the Inactive Cemeteries Protection Act, 2009, to prohibit the relocation of inactive cemeteries in the province of Ontario.”

As I agree with the petition, I shall sign it and send it to the clerks' table.

#### PENSION PLANS

**Mr. John O'Toole:** I'll take this time to present a present a petition on behalf of my constituents. It reads as follows:

“Whereas General Motors has contributed significantly to the Ontario economy over many years and has contributed “to the pension benefits guarantee fund (PBGf); and

“Whereas the General Motors of Canada salaried” employee “pension plan fund (plan 0340950) is severely underfunded due to the government’s lack of responsibility in allowing policies (regulation 5.1, ‘too big to fail’ legislation) which permitted GM to underfund the pension; and

“Whereas GM is experiencing severe financial problems and there is a potential”—or was a potential—“for bankruptcy; and

“Whereas, unlike stakeholders such as vendors and suppliers that accept the risks associated with business, GM retirees and surviving spouses entered into their GM pension plans in good faith, based on the understanding that the funds set aside on their behalf would be secure; and

“Whereas GM salaried retirees contributed a percentage of their annual income to pension plan 0340950 and were permitted only limited contributions to RRSPs due to the federal government’s CRA, discriminatory RRSP restrictions for defined benefits pension plan members;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, support the GenMo salaried pension organization in petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to honour its commitment to totally fund the pension benefits guarantee fund; and

“That, in any approved restructuring plan of General Motors of Canada, provision be made that General Motors fully fund pension plan 0340950, and that General Motors continue to provide lifetime benefits to retirees and surviving spouses in accordance with employment entitlements and retirement agreements....”

I can draw to your attention that this now is being suspicious. All publications, last week, by this company are failing to commit to their obligations.

I’m pleased to sign this petition on behalf of these people.

#### RAIL LINE CONSTRUCTION

**Mr. Tony Ruprecht:** I have a petition here that concerns the residents of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, and I’m sending it over to the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. The other petition I have here concerns the residents of Davenport. It reads as follows:

“Whereas GO Transit’s West Diamond project is using a method of pile installation that is ill-suited to an urban environment and causing undue disruption and harm to residents in neighbourhoods on both sides of the railroad tracks;”

“Whereas there are other methods of installing piles that would” be minimal in terms of disruptions “and no harm would occur to residents or property;

“Whereas the actions of GO Transit have been inadequate to mitigate the human and property concerns experienced by residents;

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

“Cease the current method of pile installation used in the West Diamond project immediately and engage in a

consultation with the community residents to find a mutually agreed upon method that ends the damage to our homes, our quality of life and our physical health.”

I am sending this petition to you through page Shaan Ali.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND SAFETY STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2009

##### LOI DE 2009 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI A TRAIT AUX NORMES TECHNIQUES ET À LA SÉCURITÉ

Mr. McMeekin moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 187, An Act to amend the Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000 and the Safety and Consumer Statutes Administration Act, 1996 / Projet de loi 187, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes techniques et la sécurité et la Loi de 1996 sur l’application de certaines lois traitant de sécurité et de services aux consommateurs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters):** Further debate?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I just want to say that I’ll be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, Mr. Jim Brownell.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** “Stormount.” How do you spell that?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** With a big B. Beatitudes, right? That’s what you use when your A attitudes don’t work.

I am privileged to rise in the House today for second reading of the Technical Standards and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2009.

Ontario’s technical standards are amongst the best in the world. They work well to protect the people of this province every single day.

This past spring, my colleague, the Honourable Harinder Takhar, former Minister of Small Business and Consumer Services, introduced Bill 187 that would amend the Technical Standards and Safety Act, 2000.

The Technical Standards and Safety Act is administered by the Technical Safety and Standards Authority, or TSSA, on behalf of our government. The TSSA is a self-funded, not-for-profit corporation formed under the Corporations Act that has been delegated the responsibility of administering the act and regulations on behalf of the Minister of Consumer Services. The TSSA works every day to protect the men, women, children and families of our great province. It delivers regulatory services and technical safety in five key areas in this province. These key areas are: upholstered and stuffed articles, boilers and pressure vessels, amusement and elevating devices, fuel safety, and operating engineers.

This past summer, I had the opportunity to actually see the TSSA in action at the Canadian National Exhibition. The CNE is an event that families take part in every year. It is also a major tourist attraction for our province, and the TSSA plays a major role in ensuring the CNE's success, from inspecting the rides each day to making sure that the stuffed animals offered as prizes contain only new, clean fill materials. The TSSA does a good job of making sure that the public can have a safe and enjoyable time. Keeping the public safe is a top priority for this government. There is no doubt in my mind that Ontario's technical safety standards are among the best in the world.

The TSSA has demonstrated positive public safety results in the sectors that they regulate. They have increased their capacity to carry out inspections, which has resulted in a decrease in the number of incidents, injuries and fatalities in the industries they regulate. And TSSA has developed innovative approaches to public safety through targeted education and public awareness programs.

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Even though the TSSA has a strong performance record in safeguarding the public, it is prudent to look at amendments that will strengthen our governance and accountability framework and which will strengthen public confidence in our safety system. I'm sure my honourable colleagues would agree that it is incumbent on us to constantly work to improve our technical safety systems and standards even further. It's our job to continually identify and act where improvements can be made, and that is precisely our intent with these proposed amendments to Ontario's Technical Standards and Safety Act. Our proposed amendments are designed to build on the work the TSSA is doing to help further strengthen Ontario's technical safety system. Our proposed amendments would do a number of important things:

First, we would require the TSSA to appoint a chief safety and risk officer. This position would provide independent advocacy for improving safety and would report annually and publicly on how the TSSA is meeting its public safety mandate. This officer will also work with the TSSA to bring new safety best practices into the TSSA.

Second, we propose to give the Minister of Consumer Services the power to guide the strategic focus of the TSSA by issuing policy directives. This could help align government and TSSA priorities. These could include emerging public safety issues or energy efficiency and conservation.

Third, we propose to give the Minister of Consumer Services the power to appoint the chair and the vice-chair of the TSSA's board from among the directors. We have a strong interest in the effective operation of the board and the entire organization. All board members, whether elected or appointed by the minister, would be required to meet competency criteria approved by the minister.

Fourth, we propose to allow the Auditor General to access the TSSA's records should the auditor choose to

conduct an audit. Consultation with the Auditor General has already taken place, and the Auditor General supports this approach. As you know, the Auditor General's role extends beyond looking at financial information; it includes assessing the effectiveness of an organization's policies and procedures as well as providing recommendations for improvements. Should the Auditor General choose to conduct an audit, I am confident the TSSA would welcome this independent review of their operation, as it continually looks for ways to strengthen public safety.

Fifth, we propose to require the minister and the TSSA to enter into a memorandum of understanding on the governance of the corporation, one that clearly articulates the roles and responsibilities of the government and the TSSA. An MOU would increase transparency and could include a variety of accountability tools and requirements, including policies consistent with government legislation, such as access to information, privacy requirements, French language standards and an ethical framework for employees. The use of an MOU to provide clear direction in such areas would improve visibility and transparency.

Sixth, we propose to allow the Minister of Consumer Services to require performance, governance, accountability or financial reviews of the corporation.

Two of the amendments would address recommendations made by Ontario's propane safety review panel last November.

As my honourable colleagues will be aware, the panel reported that the building blocks for public safety in Ontario are already in place. The panel also stated that, over the years, these building blocks have served the people of Ontario well. However, as with any review, there is always room for improvement. Where improvements can be made, it is our responsibility to identify them and to put them in place. Our children, our families, and men and women across this province expect no less than our constant vigilance to ensure they are safe, day in and day out.

Among their 40 recommendations, the vast majority of which have already been acted upon, there were two which would require a legislative change as distinct from regulatory or other changes, and it is these two we propose to address in these amendments.

The panel advised that our government provide the TSSA with clear authority to respond to imminent hazards to public safety and charge the cost back to the operator. Our proposed amendments address this recommendation.

We also propose to provide authority to require propane operators in Ontario to carry insurance as a condition of licensing. This addresses yet another recommendation made by the panel.

Our amendments to Ontario's Technical Standards and Safety Act clearly demonstrate that we are serious about building on our province's technical safety system to keep Ontarians safe.

In closing, I wish to remind my colleagues of the TSSA's vision "to be the world leader in public safety

services.” Its mission is to enhance public safety. To this end, I quote from the TSSA’s most recent annual report: “TSSA’s passion is to make people’s lives better by putting public safety first.”

Through our proposed amendments, the people of Ontario can be confident that we are taking steps to make this province an even safer place, and they can take pride in choosing to work, live and play in a province that considers technical safety of paramount importance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim Brownell:** It’s my pleasure to stand in the House this afternoon in second reading debate in support of the Technical Standards and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2009.

Ontario’s technical standards are among the best in the world. They work well to protect the people of this province every day. In Ontario, the Technical Standards and Safety Authority works day in and day out so that Ontarians from all walks of life—our children, our families and the men and women who work in this province—can be assured of their safety every day.

This past spring in the Ontario Legislature, our government introduced proposed changes to our province’s Technical Standards and Safety Act. This legislation is administered by the Technical Standards and Safety Authority, or TSSA, on behalf of our government.

As we heard from the minister just a few moments ago, the TSSA is a self-funded, not-for-profit corporation formed under the Corporations Act. It works every day to deliver regulatory services and technical safety in five key areas in the province. These five key areas are: upholstered and stuffed articles, boilers and pressure vessels, amusement and elevating devices, fuel safety, and operating engineers.

In terms of upholstered and stuffed articles, the TSSA works to protect the public from potential hazards related to the use of upholstered and stuffed articles sold in this province, everything from teddy bears to mattresses. The TSSA ensures such items are properly labelled and that filling materials are disclosed to the public. This is done by making sure that manufacturers, both domestic and foreign, use only new and clean filling materials.

In addition to promoting safety, TSSA’s aim is to protect consumers against fraud and misrepresentation of upholstered and stuffed articles. In the last fiscal year, the TSSA also worked with Canada Customs to ensure that used furniture and mattresses are not being imported for sale in Ontario.

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The TSSA is also responsible for regulating all pressure-retaining components manufactured or used in Ontario, with a commitment to ensuring the safety of boilers, pressure vessels and piping systems. In addition, the TSSA inspects pressure equipment and registers the designs of equipment in accordance with recognized codes and standards.

In terms of amusement rides, the TSSA regulates the safety of more than 1,600 amusement rides in Ontario, such as roller coasters and Ferris wheels. The TSSA conducts inspections, reviews and registers amusement ride designs, and licenses devices to ensure they conform to the legislation, regulations, as well as codes and standards. Ride operators must also be licensed and are responsible for the safe and proper set-up, maintenance and operation of all rides.

The TSSA also delivers public education campaigns at special events and national fairs, and conducts technical seminars for engineers, inspectors and operators.

In terms of fuels safety, the TSSA oversees the safe transportation, storage, handling and use of hydrocarbon fuels, including gasoline, diesel, propane and natural gas. TSSA regulates fuel suppliers, storage and dispensing facilities, transport trucks, pipelines, contractors and their certified employees, and equipment or appliances that use fuels, including residential appliances.

Educating the industry is a key priority, and this past year the TSSA conducted over 300 presentations to industry, as well as published several articles in industry magazines.

Finally, in terms of operating engineers, the TSSA examines and certifies 12,000 operating engineers to ensure they are qualified to operate boiler and pressure vessels. In addition, TSSA inspectors conduct inspections to ensure that boilers are registered, operating safely and in compliance with safety regulations.

It’s a vast mandate, but the TSSA does it well. TSSA has accomplished much since its inception in 1997, and consistently strives to achieve positive safety outcomes. It continually seeks opportunities to improve its operational efficiencies and effectiveness, with the goal of further enhancing public safety. Continuous improvement is critical for progressing to TSSA’s vision: “to be the world leader in public safety services.”

While Ontario’s technical safety standards are among the best in the world, it is our job to identify and act on where improvements can be made. That is why we have proposed amendments to the Technical Standards and Safety Act. Our proposed amendments are designed to build on the work the TSSA is doing, to help further strengthen Ontario’s technical safety system. Bill 187 would also improve the transparency and accountability of the TSSA.

Our proposed amendments would do a number of important things. First, to improve public safety, we would require the TSSA to appoint a chief safety and risk officer. This position would provide independent review of the TSSA and report annually and publicly on how the TSSA is meeting its public safety mandate.

Second, we propose to give the Minister of Consumer Services the power to guide the strategic focus of the TSSA by issuing policy directives.

Third, to increase accountability, we propose to give the Minister of Consumer Services the power to appoint the chair and the vice-chair to the TSSA’s board.

Fourth, to increase transparency, we propose to allow the Auditor General to access the TSSA's records should the auditor choose to conduct an audit.

Fifth, we propose to require the minister and the TSSA to enter into a memorandum of understanding on the governance of the corporation.

Sixth, we propose to allow the Minister of Consumer Services to require performance, governance, accountability or financial reviews of the corporation.

Last November, Ontario's propane safety review panel issued a report on their review of this province's propane safety system. The panel reported that the building blocks for public safety in Ontario are in place, but as always, there is room for improvement. Our proposed changes to the Technical Standards and Safety Act address two of the panel's recommendations. These are the only two recommendations which would require a legislative change as distinct from regulatory or other change, and that is why we are dealing with them here in this bill.

The panel advised that our government provide the TSSA with clear authority to respond to imminent hazards to public safety and charge the costs back to the operator. Our proposed amendments address this recommendation. The panel report also recommended that we require propane operators in Ontario to carry insurance as a condition of licensing. Our proposed amendments address this recommendation as well.

Thirty-three of the panel's 40 recommendations have been acted upon to date, and two of the recommendations were immediately acted upon. First, the Minister of Consumer services has requested Transport Canada to examine the potential benefits to public safety of thermal requirements for highway tank trucks. Second, he has requested the Canadian Standards Association to review and update the relevant sections of the propane installation code.

In December 2008, new regulations were filed which addressed a further 18 of the panel's recommendations and further improved the propane system. The remaining recommendations require additional work and will be reported in the near future.

Our proposed amendments and actions taken to address the panel's recommendations clearly demonstrate that our government and TSSA are serious about building on our province's technical safety system to keep Ontarians safe. No organization can remain static and be successful. The government will work with TSSA to respond to new opportunities and challenges, whether they are in the safety services themselves or the governance model used to deliver those services.

To quote the chair of TSSA, "I am confident that TSSA will build on its successful track record of advancing public safety in Ontario by working effectively with the government of Ontario and the industry sector we regulate."

The people of this province can rest assured that our government is taking steps to make this province even safer, and they can take pride as well in choosing to

work, to live, and to play in a province that considers technical safety paramount.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Questions and comments? The member from Halton.

**Mr. Ted Chudleigh:** It's interesting to listen to the government speakers. I'm pretty sure they used the same notes. I'm pretty sure they gave the same speech.

They started off by talking about how Ontario has the best standards in the world and we inspect all these kinds of things, and then they went through everything that they're going to do, and they concluded by saying we're going to have the best standards in the world. I don't know. It sounded like they didn't actually need this, and they could actually ignore the Sunrise propane explosion. That was a rather sad time for the government over there because I think it was about four days before one of your members showed up at the disaster site. I think our leader at the time, John Tory, had been to the site two or three times before a government member even showed up. It was rather sad that that had to happen in order to draw the government's attention to the lack of the best standards in the world that existed in Ontario at that time.

This bill does tend to give the government a lot more power, but I don't believe that it addresses the kinds of things that the industry over the last year has brought to the attention of the government: the example of fee structures, the failure to base new regulations on the evidence that exists in the industry, in the province—those kinds of things, which business groups have told us are ignored by this legislation. That's a shame because this legislation only comes along every once in a while—and hopefully, it'll come along without the advent of a major disaster—and when that happens, it's important to get it right.

**1610**

We in the PC Party would be very pleased to work with the government on this bill. It's a very important piece of legislation. I think it could use a lot of improvement, and we look forward to giving substantial suggestions as to how those improvements take place when this bill gets to committee.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I find it quite extraordinary that the government has spoken for slightly over 20 minutes on a bill that is the aftermath of a spectacular explosion in this city and, frankly, that follows an explosion that happened in 2004, one that rained hot metallic debris on the 401 and caused the closure of the rail line between here and Kingston. To come forward with a piece of legislation that deals with something that is that extraordinary in this province—frankly, a piece of legislation that, in terms of what has to happen in Ontario, is sadly lacking—and to spend only 20 minutes defending it is extraordinary to me. It says to me that this government is well aware of the complete hollowness of what they have brought forward.

We have heard words about Ontario being amongst the best in the world in terms of protection and safety. I

suggest that the members read the panel report on propane safety. The writers of that report were discreet and diplomatic, but they looked at European legislation, they looked at requirements in Quebec, in Maryland and American states that require insurance so that the catastrophe doesn't fall on the heads of those who have the hot metal raining down on them.

Frankly, if you look at what has gone on in the rest of the world where people have dealt with very severe problems—the Seveso explosion in Italy—and have brought forward legislation that is in fact protective of the public, looks at the question of siting, looks at the question of making sure that there's an adequate setback from hazardous facilities, then we would have a debate in this House on a very substantial piece of legislation. We don't even have debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I certainly was impressed with the minister's very comprehensive approach to this issue of regulating safety in this province, because I was here in this Legislature when the former government stripped away all regulation. They said, "Let the propane industry and all these industries regulate themselves. It's all going to be okay." We know it hasn't been okay, and this is an example of where government has to step in and ensure the public is protected.

My colleague here from Halton mentioned that there was no member from the other side there, that their former leader John Tory was there. Well, let me tell you, I was there at 6 o'clock in the morning. I jogged up to the site to go right into the site. I talked to the residents and I talked to—I remember George Webster was there, a local resident. I talked to the owner of a storefront church who said, "Look, all these storefronts are all blown out. Thank God my windows were not blown out." I talked to the people who were affected at 6 o'clock in the morning, and I got on the phone right away and phoned the minister, Mr. Bartolucci, and I said, "We need to support the local firefighters here. The police are here doing a great job, blocking off the area. Let's see what emergency management can do." And he right away said, "Yes, I'm on the phone to them. I've already spoken to them." That was at about 8 o'clock that same morning. So before you speak, have the facts.

The critical thing here is that the local residents in the west end were affected by it. I know, at 4 o'clock in the morning, I was woken up by the windows rattling. I went outside. I thought, "This is a weird storm," went inside again and the windows rattled again. I just couldn't understand what it was. I said it must have been some kind of flash of lightning or something, and then I turned on the TV—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Thank you. Comments and questions?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I'm sure I wasn't the only one in this House, after listening to the minister's lead-off debate and the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry—I'm sure everybody in this House was struck

with a sense of *déjà vu* as we heard the member from SD&G. I guess the government, in the wake of eHealth, is being a little bit more careful with their consultants and sharing the same speeches, and not paying twice for the same nonsense.

As the member spoke just previously, he forgot to let people know that it wasn't really the Conservatives who gutted regulations, as he said. We created the TSSA. Wake up and smell the roses and don't be asleep. Maybe you need to have another little storm to wake you up.

We saw with the introduction of Bill 187 that, really, when there's a problem with the Liberals, what do they do? We see two very important recommendations or two very important actions coming out of Bill 187—more patronage; now the Liberals are going to appoint the chair and the vice-chair. This is how we're going to solve things in Liberal Ontario: Appoint more of our friends when it comes time to do some legislation—appointing their friends, playing fast and loose with the facts, as we heard from some of the members over there, and then having the gall to show this House that they have no care for democracy when they have the same prepared speeches by the members on the Liberal side.

Let's have some honest discussion and buy another speechwriter, I guess, is what you could do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Response?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I appreciate the chance to respond, and I am particularly pleased that some members opposite indicated they looked forward in breathless anticipation to working with our government to enhance this legislation. Of course, that's always a helpful position for people who are sent to this people's place to take, and we want to advantage that.

The best political advice I ever received was from the late, great Sterling Hunt, a farmer in my riding who said, "Tell them what's broke and how you're going to fix it." I think that's pretty good advice for those of us who have the privilege of coming to this place. We come with an attitude of not wanting to fear the future, but, on a good day, to shape it and to change it for the better.

The event at Sunrise was tragic—tragic events, tragic consequences, and certainly consequences that no one in this House ever wants to see repeated. That having been said, we did set out an independent review—it wasn't a government review; it was an independent review. There were 40 recommendations, and we acted very, very quickly, not to point fingers, but rather to point direction. Anybody can look back and curse the darkness, but we really need to move forward to further enhance public safety. So we acted quickly on the recommendations, and we look forward to an enhanced accountability here.

As government, you're darned if you do and you're darned if you don't: "Take charge, show that you care," and then, when you put accountability mechanisms in place, it's not always well received. But we look forward to doing that and we look forward to a better TSSA.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** Madam Speaker, as you are aware, the opposition was not advised that this bill

would be called for debate until early this morning. On that basis, our critic is unable to attend, as you well know, and I would ask for unanimous consent to defer our leadoff.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Agreed? Agreed.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate that. As I said, the House schedule was changed early this morning, and we were advised that Bill 187 would be called. There was really no effective notice to the opposition parties, and our critic the member from York–Simcoe, Ms. Julia Munro, was unable to attend. We know what an effective spokesperson she is in this portfolio for the residents she represents who are residing in York–Simcoe.

As you know, we've just finished a break week, a constituency week, where the government had at least five working days to plan their schedule and clearly couldn't do it. This is not simply a case of failing to show respect for opposition parties; it's also a stark display of this government's disarray. It's administrative incompetence.

The McGuinty government was recently described as Canada's worst government. We've seen that incompetence with the scandals at eHealth, at the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp., with the idiotic closure of service centres along the 401 and with the closure of cost-efficient and effective licence-issuing offices in favour of more government bureaucracy.

Madam Speaker, as you know, the opposition has few tools to express its dissatisfaction with the government. The government, by its failure to provide adequate notice for a significant change in the business of this House, compels us to use one of those tools to express our dissatisfaction. Therefore, I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Mr. Runciman has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour?

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a—

**Interjection:** There weren't five in their seats.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Yes, there were.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1622 to 1652.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Mr. Runciman has moved adjournment of the debate.

All those in favour will rise and remain standing.

All those opposed will stand.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 13; the nays are 38.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I declare the motion lost.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Runciman.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** We know this legislation, Bill 187, is an important piece of legislation. There's no question about that. We do have a number of concerns. Our critic has a number of concerns with respect to the legislation and what we believe are important omissions with respect to what has been tabled in this Legislature.

We asked for adjournment of the debate quite simply because we were not notified until this morning of a change in the House business agenda, which I think anyone, even on the other side of the Legislature, would agree was showing a very distinct lack of respect for the other members who sit in this place and have a role to play in terms of representing their constituents, and others who may have concerns with respect to initiatives or a lack of initiatives undertaken by the current government.

As I indicated earlier, I think this is an indication of disarray within this government, recently described as the worst government in Canada, and based on that, I now move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Mr. Runciman has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Order. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1655 to 1725.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Mr. Runciman has moved adjournment of the House.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing. Thank you.

All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 14; the nays are 39.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** I declare the motion lost.

Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Madam Speaker, we have gone through two adjournment calls in the last hour. Frankly, I know that the matter before us is of great moment. It is extraordinary to me that this government went back on an agreement about scheduling for this week, moved this debate from Wednesday and Thursday morning to today, on notice this morning, so that we in our parties didn't have an opportunity to do the preparation that we wanted to do. We have had the Liberals speak for 20 minutes—the lead on their legislation—trying to justify their lack of action on this issue.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** There are interjections from others, but I will say to you—and I watched the clock—a total of 20 minutes elapsed, in which little was said.

When you bring forward legislation, as the minister has said, that is of consequence, when we are dealing with issues of safety and of life and death in this province

and we have a government that presents a bill and does not even speak to that bill, does not justify the basis for the bill, does not go through an analysis of why their legislation is of consequence in this province, frankly, it shows a lack of respect for this House.

I have to say that the opposition was correct to call for adjournment twice. I am not calling for adjournment; I intend to speak. But I want to say this: When the government shows disrespect for the House, when it shows disrespect for its own legislation, then it's going to have to expect that there will be disruption in this House. This isn't the last time this is going to happen. Show some respect and I'm sure that you can find a way of working with everyone here. Show a lack of respect and we will respond accordingly.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'm absolutely amazed that members opposite would be playing the kind of games with public safety that are being played here. The reference from the previous member who just spoke, talking about a 20-minute substantive speech being followed by some kind of vacuum—the vacuum that I think we all just experienced in this House was 60 minutes of wasted time on a subject that both opposition parties claim is of utmost importance and needs to be moved forward. So I think when the people who are watching this at home stop and think about it—you know, we come to this place to try to make a difference, and it's tough, on a good day, to try to make a difference. It's even tougher when we've got people on other sides who want to play games with public safety.

1730

This government doesn't want to play games with public safety. We want to get on with the job. That's why we put an independent review team in place. That's why that group came back with 40 recommendations. That's why this government is moving quickly to implement all of those recommendations. And it's why—and I say this with as much respect as I can muster, given the circumstances—people in Ontario quite rightly feel cynical about politics, when they see that kind of behaviour from the other side of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further comments?

**Mr. Dave Levac:** Very quickly, the tradition in this place is to talk about the bill, and one of the members from the NDP has difficulty with measuring the importance of a bill by how many words you say, as opposed to the value of the bill that's coming forward with the recommendations that were created. I always thought a long time ago that if you make your point and say no more, people will understand it much better. So to simply measure by how much time you speak about a bill, the member knows better, that if you take an hour to speak about a bill that is already—you can say nothing in an hour, and quite frankly, I praise the two members who spoke because they captured exactly what the bill was trying to do. We're trying to make it better.

A member on the Conservative side said that he took great credit for the creation of the TSSA. Well, when they were in charge and I was the critic, we found out that only 50% of the people were qualified or even had a licence to look at a machine. So for them to stand up and crow like the roosters they are, to take credit for the sun rising, is absolutely pathetic.

Quite frankly, what we have here is a minister who stepped forward to make some corrections as a result of a third party making recommendations to make this a safer community. I think we should be praising him and thanking him for bringing the bill forward. I think he should get credit for doing that. Instead, we've got somebody over there who says that you have to say so many words in order to make your point. I think he made his point very salient and very straightforward, and I think the people of Ontario will appreciate the fact that public safety is on his mind. I think this minister deserves our praise and thanks for bringing this legislation forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member from Thornhill.

**Mr. Peter Shurman:** I find it passing strange to listen to the indignation coming from the other side on a bill that was introduced not by that minister but by his predecessor in May—and you have to rush it in today, with a couple of hours' notice, and all of you feign righteous indignation? I've got to tell you, if I could laugh and put it on the record, that's what I'd do, because this is patently ridiculous. So before you accuse us, take a look in the mirror and decide what it is that you're doing.

As a matter of fact, for a government that is looking to fix the problems with the TSSA—this is a government that has established itself as being famous now for locking the stable door after the horse is gone. It was a year ago August that we had the propane explosion, so you want to fix it by making administrative changes to an organization that both of you began by describing as an organization that has introduced some of the best safety standards that exist anywhere, basically, in Canada, if not the world. So you're doing that. This is a government that—again, talking about locking the stable door after the horse is gone—introduced legislation to control sourcing of contracts, to control unbridled expenses. This government wrote the book on that kind of thing. So don't talk about Conservatives. We're six years after the fact. Don't point your finger unless your own hands are clean, which clearly these days they are not.

So as far as this bill is concerned, we'll debate anything you put before us, but not on three hours' notice, not this way, and not until you get it right.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** The member has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Robert W. Runciman:** I thank all members for their interventions, but especially the member for Toronto–Danforth and the member who just spoke representing Thornhill, for their non-partisan participation.

The reality is that we were being criticized for ringing the bells for 60 minutes. I think the minister was saying,

“We want to get on with the job.” The reality is, as my colleague from Thornhill pointed out, that this legislation was introduced some time ago, and all of a sudden, after a week which they had to plan the agenda going forward, they give us in opposition virtually no notice that they’re calling this legislation before the House. I think it’s an enormous slap in the face to both opposition parties. We represent hundreds of thousands of Ontarians too. There’s a role for the opposition to play in this place, and it’s not being given the respect that it merits by the government of the day. There’s no question about that.

We have very few tools available to us. Some of you sat in opposition and you know the limitations that are placed upon you in this role—very few tools. All three governments had a role in making rule changes around this place; I’ll be the first to say that. We have very few opportunities to get our views on the record. Our own critic is not available because of the short notice. I think it speaks to the incompetence of this government, the disarray within the ranks of this government. They’ve been recently called the worst government in Canada. We’ve seen the mess at eHealth, at OLG, the 401 service centres, the licence bureaus being closed across this province so that we can have more bureaucracy. I think we are clearly justified in what we have done, and if this government continues in its arrogant ways, they’re going to see much, much more of this in the days ahead.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I will very quickly get to the substance of this bill, but before I do, I want to say to the member from Brant and to the minister that I don’t measure the quality of a speech by its length. I have heard people make very brief, powerful statements in this House that have had an impact on me emotionally and intellectually. But I have to say that when you have a bill on the table that comes forward based on a man-made disaster in this city, in this province, and you say that you’re going to take the steps necessary to prevent something like that from happening again, when you make claims that the safety standards here are amongst the best in the world and then you read the report of the panel on propane safety, then I expect you to take the time to set out the intellectual case, the logical case, the rationale for the manner in which you’ve brought forward this legislation.

What we had for 20 minutes was largely devoid of content and of history. There was no talk about Sunrise Propane. The only time I heard Sunrise mentioned was when the member from Brant made an insulting reference to the opposition. That was it. So, trying to act as if you’re actually dealing with substantial matters with 20 minutes of blah-blah is not a credible claim. That’s the substantial lack of respect that this government has shown to this Legislature and to the people of this province. What it says to me that is quite extraordinary is that the government is lowballing this piece of legislation. I didn’t expect that.

Most people don’t pay attention to regulation unless something blows up. The world financial crisis—people

paid attention to the lack of regulation of the financial markets and financial instruments. Otherwise, most people don’t spend a lot of time thinking about securities commissions. People don’t spend a lot of time thinking about regulation of propane, of natural gas, of other substances on a day-to-day basis because they expect the responsible authorities to have thought a bit about it, to have taken the necessary steps. So the idea that you would take an issue that most people aren’t going to pay a lot of attention to and then give it even less attention; that you don’t have the respect for this legislative chamber to actually present your ideas; that you put it on on very short notice, contrary to an agreed-upon agenda: That is the reason for the two adjournments today and the anger on this side of the House at a lack of respect for the democratic process.

**1740**

That being said, I want to speak to this bill. We’ve had the opportunity today of Councillor Maria Augimeri being here. Councillor Augimeri represents the area this was hit by the explosion at Sunrise Propane. She dealt directly with the pain and the disruption of the people in her ward at an extraordinarily difficult time.

Ms. Josephine Petcher is here today from the Communications, Energy and Paper Workers Union of Canada—5,000 members who deal with very powerful substances, who are the people who deal with natural gas who are out there working on the pipelines, people who work in the petroleum industry, people whose lives and well-being are at risk if we don’t have a thorough, rational, strategically driven program for managing public safety in this province. So there are people here who are watching, there are people here who are present for whom this bill is of great consequence.

What we have before us is a bill that I don’t believe, that my party doesn’t believe, will actually deal with the fundamental problems at the Technical Standards and Safety Authority, the TSSA; will not deal with the issues that are at hand. And since the government did not speak to this, I want to speak briefly about the context within which this legislation came to us, because it wasn’t just that some day, somebody in the ministry thought, “I think we could have a better bill. I think we could have better administration. Mr. Minister, Mr. Minister: Hey, I’ve got some ideas.” No, we had a spectacular failure of the regulatory system in this province, and that is why we’re having this debate today. And we didn’t have it just once. We’ve had a few failures here and there, but the ones that really catch your attention—in 2004, an explosion in Northumberland. For those who are out there, I just want to read the words from Northumberland Today so you know in human terms what we’re dealing with.

November 11, 2004, the report: Durham Police Sergeant Paul Malik was called out shortly before 8 p.m. because of a fire at Caledon Propane. Emergency services responded to the call “and noticed a couple of hundred [propane tanks] were on fire and exploding.” Well, that would catch your attention. That would wake you up, eh? That would make you think, “Hmm, I’ve got a problem here.”

This is what a local resident had to say. “Steffi Nathan lives in a condominium 400 metres from the propane plant and was on the phone when she heard the first explosion.

“‘I heard a little boom and the power went out, but it came back again. Then I heard another boom and the power went out permanently. Then the booms kept coming and coming.’

“Ms. Nathan and her husband, Gary, rushed to their balcony. They couldn’t believe what they were witnessing.

“‘Then after about half an hour, there was a huge explosion. It was so hot that I could feel it right next to my face. It lit up the whole sky. It was brighter than daylight,’ she said.

“The couple were in the process of gathering their belongings when a police officer came to their door and told them to leave.”

Northumberland Today goes on to report, “There were reports of debris landing on Highway 401 and Canada’s busiest highway was shut down until 11:30 p.m.”

Canadian Press reported—and I think this is an interesting bit: “A liquid propane storage facility that exploded into flames Tuesday night, sending hundreds fleeing and showering hot debris onto a major highway, will have to move, says John Mutton, mayor of the municipality of Clarington.

“There were no deaths or injuries but damage is expected to run into millions of dollars.

“Mutton, however, said his chief concern is the safety of nearby residents and drivers on Highway 401, a couple of hundred metres away.

“‘I’m almost speechless at what could have happened,’ he said. ‘There’s obviously concern about the location. This (business) won’t be up and running before we have a talk with the owner, I can tell you that.’”

A preliminary estimate suggests the price tag of \$2.5 million worth of damage. Damage was spread over 1.6 kilometres.

“‘There’s no doubt in my mind that this thing could have blown sky high,’ Durham Regional Police Chief Kevin McAlpine said.

“The biggest propane tank on the site had a capacity of 18,000 US gallons but was mostly empty.” Talk about lucky—talk about lucky.

That was 2004. Now, in 2004, this government was in power, and I’m happy to have someone correct the record, but I don’t remember people saying, “Hmm, I think we’ve got a problem with our regulation here. I think we have substantial issues here.” That realization waited until 2008 with the explosion at Sunrise Propane here in the city of Toronto. Now, I have to tell you that that explosion in 2008 had been preceded two decades earlier by an explosion in the old city of York. Efforts on the part of municipalities to take action were ruled outside their hands by the courts, and so the power to act was left entirely in the hands of the province. All the anger that was directed at the city of Toronto, possibly anger that was directed at the municipal authorities in

Clarington, that anger should be directed at those who hold the power in their hands and have the responsibility for taking action to protect the public safety.

I want to read a few bits, the human response, the human experience of what happened at Sunrise Propane, because I have to say to all of those who are in this House and those who may be watching today that when you debate this legislation, often it sounds fairly dry, technical and distant, but in fact what we debate in this chamber and the decisions we make have direct and real consequences on the lives of people.

The Toronto Sun, August 11, 2008:

“Thousands of people were evacuated early yesterday after a massive propane explosion rocked North York.

“Before firefighters got to her, Vicki Arciero huddled with her family and two dogs in the basement of her demolished home while explosions ripped through the 24-hour, seven-day depot at Sunrise Propane Industrial Gases on Murray Road ... at about 3:20 a.m.

“Arciero said her home was ‘terribly rocked. I thought we got hit by lightning at first.

“‘I ran out, freaking out, it was just too intense,’ she said. ‘And then the second explosion hit.’

“Arciero said her family of four and two Shelties sought refuge in the basement ‘because our windows blew out, light fixtures came down and part of our ceiling.’”

Another person who experienced the explosion, Canadian Forces Corporal Robert Halman, who lives across the street, about 30 metres from the depot, said his small home collapsed around him as he slept because of the “tremendous explosion ... that lit up the sky.”

“Halman said he was at first dazed when he was hit on the head by debris, but then he grabbed a few things and fled.

“‘Everything was dusty and I just grabbed some clothes. I didn’t know what was going on,’ he said. ‘I’ll be okay.

“‘I think the house is totally destroyed,’ he said. ‘I was just trying to get out of there. I felt the heat and started running. I could feel the heat, it was burning the back of my shirt, so I kept running in the opposite direction.’”

That is amongst the best regulatory and safety systems in the world. That’s how people experience it when it goes wrong. That is the physical experience of citizens of this province living with the consequences of a regulatory regime that is inadequate; inadequate for the purposes at hand, inadequate for the protection of human life, inadequate for the protection of human property. As you well know, everyone has said that it was miraculous that only two people died as a result of that explosion, because children would have been walking past that location on their way to school if that explosion had happened early in the morning. Buses could have been going past; trains could have been going past. We were extraordinarily lucky. And if I’ve learned one thing in political life, it’s that luck eventually runs out, and at some point you get caught. We’ve been lucky. We didn’t have big casualties in Bowmanville. We didn’t have

massive casualties at Sunrise Propane. So when we have a piece of legislation that comes forward to deal with a substantial issue that really calls out to be dealt with, then it needs to be accorded the serious presentation and thought that these sorts of matters demand.

**1750**

Now, that isn't the end of the Sunrise Propane/TSSA saga, because those of you who had the opportunity to read the papers in the following days got a sense of the full flavour of the TSSA at its best.

"Propane Company Twice Violated Safety Codes, Regulator Reveals"—Globe and Mail, August 14, 2008: "Sunrise Propane was found violating provincial safety codes twice in the past two years at the site levelled this week by multiple explosions, but the company was neither shut down nor fined by Ontario's fuel safety regulator.

"The revelations came as details—some later found to be outdated or flawed—about Sunrise and the propane industry continued to trickle out of the regulator, the Technical Standards and Safety Authority. The TSSA said yesterday it investigated Sunrise in 2006 and 2007 and found 'minor infractions.'"

Those minor infractions were cited in the shutdown of this operation. Somebody in 2006 and 2007 didn't put together those minor infractions and understand that what you had—what we had, what this society had—was a company that didn't know how to operate safely, a company that put itself, its employees and its neighbours at risk. And yet the TSSA did not take the action that would be necessary. I'll read their comments later because I found them fascinating.

But what caught most people's attention at the time was that "a list of Toronto's 73 such TSSA-monitored propane sites was released yesterday, including six said to be as big as the Sunrise operation. But visits by the Globe to each of those sites revealed that one company had closed two decades ago, and another two years ago. Three of the sites turned out to be gas stations selling propane in small amounts.

"However, other gas stations with comparable tanks, such as the one at 3925 Keele Street, are not on the list....

"Among the outdated listings was Superior Plus Inc., once the site of a Superior Propane facility that was closed on Oct. 12, 2006, and no longer has propane on site. Another, Lightning Towing, went under 15 or 20 years ago...."

Here you have a company that's responsible for safety and it doesn't even have a current list of the sites that are of concern to the regulator. What does that say? The thing that's extraordinary to me—and maybe it's because the TSSA is not an open body and we don't have access to its inner workings. But I would have fired the senior management. I would have dismissed the board. We look at what's gone on with eHealth, and what went on with eHealth was indefensible, but in the end, eHealth was dealing with dollars and not lives. That board should have been dismissed. That senior management should have been thrown out on the spot. Clearly, they were

incapable of defending the public interest. Clearly, public trust was not a consideration for these people. If you don't even have a list of the properties that you're regulating, how can you regulate them? What is the basis for your credibility? You don't have credibility. That's the TSSA. That's the organization that was given that responsibility.

The minister at the time, Harinder Takhar, expressed his anger. In the papers, it was reported that he read the riot act. It doesn't report that people were fired, and they should have been. It doesn't report that people were demoted. It doesn't report that that the minister took the action that one would expect when you have a spectacular and profound failure of an authority to operate in a business-like manner in a way that protects the public interest. It's not there.

The lists were wrong. Reporters—no offence to folks in journalism, but generally speaking, I don't think of journalists as my first line of defence on regulatory authorities. But thank God they actually were able to take their cars, drive around, check the list and find out that the list was useless. They were critical in terms of bringing that authority and this government to account for a lack of proper diligence.

In the end, the city of Toronto had to move in and take responsibility for the cleanup. Not only did the government turn over the power for regulation to a body that clearly was incapable of doing that, not only did the government actively fight in court to stop cities from protecting their residents from propane-run operations, but in the end it left the city holding the bag to do the cleanup—extraordinary. I have to say that if this is amongst the best in the world, then one can only hope that Providence is looking out for us, because clearly this government is not.

This authority was set up under the Mike Harris government to be a private corporation with a board of directors drawn primarily from industry. Because it's a private corporation, the TSSA is not accountable to the public as a government agency would be; it doesn't fall under government oversight. That is a huge mistake. That should not have been put in place initially, and it should not have been kept on when a government that claimed to reject the legacy of Mike Harris came to power. In fact, this is a government that has embraced the legacy of that jurisdiction. That's a reality.

This government's Bill 187 reiterates that the TSSA remains a corporation, that its officers, directors and employees are not agents of the crown and that the crown is not liable for any acts or omissions by persons who are not agents of the crown. Again, I ask: Who takes the heat? Where does the buck stop? This government can say, "Not us. We have an arm's-length agency."

When something goes disastrously wrong, the minister may be questioned by us, but the minister who was responsible for this should have been dismissed from cabinet and, further down in the TSSA, the board and the senior management should all have been dismissed.

I want to read to you the director's decision to suspend the authorization to operate a propane filling station. It's

interesting, in light of the comments about the TSSA twice finding that Superior Propane—sorry, not Superior; Sunrise—that Sunrise Propane acted improperly. In writing about why this company should not be allowed to proceed, the director at the time writes:

“On or about November 9, 2006, an inspector from the Technical Standards and Safety Authority attended to conduct a spot inspection of the Murray Road facility. As a result of the inspection, the inspector had reason to believe the authorization holder had been carrying out truck-to-truck propane transfers.” For those who haven’t had a chance to read the file, it’s those truck-to-truck transfers that are particularly hazardous and, in this case, were the element, the action, that precipitated the explosion. “The inspector issued an order pursuant to section 21 of the act to cease and desist the truck-to-truck propane transfer procedure.” That was in November 2006.

It’s interesting: The director goes on to say, “Despite the order issued by the inspector, the authorization

holders or their directors or officers routinely allowed the unsafe practice of transferring propane products from truck to truck.”

In fact, it was known that that unsafe practice, contrary to regulation, was going on. We were lucky, from November 2006 to the summer of 2008, that Sunrise Propane didn’t blow up, but in the summer of 2008 it did. Finally, this ignoring of regulations and rules caught up with the operator, the poor man who was killed in the course of this, the tragic death of the firefighter who was part of the team sent out to deal with this, and this company was shut down. That should not have gone on that long.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro):** It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. Wednesday, October 21.

*The House adjourned at 1801.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

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Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Steve Peters

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Lisa Freedman, Tonia Grannum

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Aggelonitis, Sophia (LIB)	Hamilton Mountain	
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	
Arthurs, Wayne (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
<b>Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)</b>	Sudbury	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
<b>Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)</b>	London West / London-Ouest	Attorney General / Procureur général
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
<b>Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Health Promotion / Ministre de la Promotion de la santé
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Brotten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Brown, Michael A. (LIB)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Brownell, Jim (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
<b>Cansfield, Hon. / L'hon. Donna H. (LIB)</b>	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Caplan, David (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
<b>Carroll, Hon. / L'hon. M. Aileen (LIB)</b>	Barrie	Minister of Culture / Ministre de la Culture Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
<b>Crozier, Bruce (LIB)</b>	Essex	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
<b>DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)</b>	Parkdale–High Park	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Dombrowsky, Hon. / L'hon. Leona (LIB)</b>	Prince Edward–Hastings	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)</b>	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
<b>Fonseca, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines et des Forêts
Hampton, Howard (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	
Hoy, Pat (LIB)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jeffrey, Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Johnson, Rick (LIB)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Kormos, Peter (NDP)	Welland	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Kular, Kuldip (LIB)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Jean-Marc (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Levac, Dave (LIB)	Brant	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Cambridge	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Mauro, Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
<b>McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)</b>	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	
<b>Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Mitchell, Carol (LIB)	Huron–Bruce	
Moridi, Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	
<b>Munro, Julia (PC)</b>	York–Simcoe	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pendergast, Leeanna (LIB)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
<b>Peters, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (LIB)</b>	Elgin–Middlesex–London	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Gerry (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
<b>Pupatello, Hon. / L'hon. Sandra (LIB)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Minister of Economic Development and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Ramal, Khalil (LIB)	London–Fanshawe	
Ramsay, David (LIB)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Runciman, Robert W. (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Ruprecht, Tony (LIB)	Davenport	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Savoline, Joyce (PC)	Burlington	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Monique M. (LIB)</b>	Nipissing	Minister of Tourism / Ministre du Tourisme Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
<b>Smitherman, Hon. / L'hon. George (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Deputy Premier / Vice-premier ministre Minister of Energy and Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Énergie et de l'Infrastructure
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	
Sterling, Norman W. (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de parti reconnu
<b>Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)</b>	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Van Bommel, Maria (LIB)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
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<b>Wilkinson, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)</b>	Perth–Wellington	Minister of Revenue / Ministre du Revenu
<b>Wilson, Jim (PC)</b>	Simcoe–Grey	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
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Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

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Peter Tabuns  
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David Ramsay, Liz Sandals  
Norman W. Sterling, Maria Van Bommel  
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permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Paul Miller, Bill Murdoch  
Michael Prue, Tony Ruprecht  
Mario Sergio  
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**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vic Dhillon  
Sophia Aggelonitis, Vic Dhillon  
Cheri DiNovo, Linda Jeffrey  
Sylvia Jones, Jean-Marc Lalonde  
Carol Mitchell, Shafiq Qaadri  
Elizabeth Witmer  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions / Comité  
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Chair / Président: Kevin Daniel Flynn  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Christine Elliott  
Bas Balkissoon, Christine Elliott  
Kevin Daniel Flynn, France Gélinas  
Helena Jaczek, Sylvia Jones  
Jeff Leal, Liz Sandals  
Maria Van Bommel  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Susan Sourial







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