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**Official Report
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Tuesday 20 March 2012

Mardi 20 mars 2012

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 20 March 2012

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 20 mars 2012

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SECURITY FOR COURTS, ELECTRICITY GENERATING FACILITIES AND NUCLEAR FACILITIES ACT, 2012 LOI DE 2012 SUR LA SÉCURITÉ DES TRIBUNAUX, DES CENTRALES ÉLECTRIQUES ET DES INSTALLATIONS NUCLÉAIRES

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 19, 2012, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 34, An Act to repeal the Public Works Protection Act, amend the Police Services Act with respect to court security and enact the Security for Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2012 / Projet de loi 34, Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la protection des ouvrages publics, modifiant la Loi sur les services policiers en ce qui concerne la sécurité des tribunaux et édictant la Loi de 2012 sur la sécurité des centrales électriques et des installations nucléaires.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further debate? The member from Lanark–Frontenac–Addington.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Lennox and Addington.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Lennox.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much, Speaker. It's my pleasure to speak to Bill 34 today. Of course, everybody in this chamber and everybody throughout Ontario recognizes the travesty and the injustice that happened back in Toronto during the G20 summit when this government passed a regulation in secret, when the House was not in session, which led to such a travesty of injustice due to the chaos and the complications of that regulation that was passed.

Although there was much hiding and running away from blame during that whole chaotic period of time, the Ombudsman did, I think, a very fine job in reviewing that travesty and providing a number of recommendations. I am very pleased to see that this government has indeed taken steps in their Bill 34 to minimize the opportunities for that sort of injustice to happen again.

Although they've taken steps in that direction, they have not gone far enough, in my view, Speaker. We

know that, had the government of the day followed the rules of the day, the rules that regulations must be clear and unambiguous and that they ought to be done in openness and with transparency, we would not have seen the chaos and the injustice that followed during the G20 summit.

Now, I know there have been a number of recommendations by the Ombudsman. His recommendation 3 has not been addressed by this new bill in front of the House—and there's actually no mention of it at all in the bill. The Ombudsman's recommendation is that the ministry should develop a protocol that would call for public information campaigns when police powers are modified by subordinate legislation, particularly in protest situations. There's not any mention of that and, again, I think all members of the House would recognize that that was indeed a significant failing of that G20 regulation. So the Ombudsman's recommendation that proper communication is put forward is silent in Bill 34. This bill still allows for regulations to be developed under Bill 34: for example, the creating of anybody—anybody—to be a peace officer with the authorities under Bill 34. It still allows that to be done through order in council and it allows it to be done without legislative oversight. Now, of course they're supposed to follow the rules, but we saw during the G20 that the government of the day did not follow their own rules. Will they follow the rules under Bill 34? I'm not sure.

I don't think anybody can be sure, because we've seen this is a real—the irony in this, Speaker, is that the laws are passed to punish lawbreakers. What happens when the lawmakers break their own laws? And that's what happened with the G20: The government of the day did not provide a clear, unambiguous regulation. They hid from it and they didn't tell anybody about it. We had the minister at the time, Minister Bartolucci; we had the chief of police; we've had the federal ministers—nobody knew what anybody was doing. And in the process, over 1,000 innocent people were rounded up, had their freedoms removed, were incarcerated. There were a number of truly abusive situations that came forward, and a few, a handful of the hoodlums, did get caught. I don't know how many more got away, but that's what happens when you create a situation of chaos and confusion.

But once again, the lawmakers didn't even follow their own rules, and I don't believe anybody in this Legislature would believe that it was an oversight or it was misfortune that that regulation was done in the fashion it was done when it was introduced when the House was not in session; when it was gazetted in dark-

ness; no public scrutiny at all. We knew that that G20 summit was coming long in advance. We knew that the regulation needed to be done up, but they waited until the House was out of session before that regulation was put forward.

Pieces of legislation that grant such authority are necessary, but what is also necessary is that safeguards are used judiciously, that they're used cautiously and that they're done in an open and transparent fashion so that we do not have thousands of innocent people incarcerated and the hoodlums who get away.

0910

I think the Ombudsman's report—he says here, “Generally, police authority is conferred through enactment of legislation, accompanied by the openness, transparency, and accountability inherent in the democratic system of government. There is a real and insidious danger associated with using subordinate legislation, passed behind closed doors.”

We still have that regulation-making authority within this act. I don't know when this act might be used again, when that regulation may be used again, but we know from history now and from experience that some governments will not follow their own laws, will not follow their own rules, and we will not necessarily get that openness and transparency that the Ombudsman so purposely recommended in this legislation.

I would hope and expect that recommendation number 3 is thoroughly discussed at committee and that there are indeed substantial safeguards included in this legislation so that if another regulation has to be made under it, we have indeed legislative oversight and not another travesty, like what happened at the G20.

Speaker, this speaks back to the role of this Legislature and all regulations, the very limited opportunities we have as legislators and as members of this House to actually scrutinize the value of the regulations that are passed. I think it's incumbent on all of us to ensure that there are indeed new mechanisms put in place that allow legislators to review all regulations here in this House, have them have a good airing so that we can see either the merit or the incompetence of regulations that are created by order in council and created behind closed doors, and we never get to see them in the light of day until a problem has already been foisted upon the people of Ontario.

There are some changes that could be done in the regulations and private bills committee to expand the scope of that committee that would have been able to look at this G20 regulation. I look forward that indeed all members of this Legislature see the value in this Legislature scrutinizing subordinate regulations. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Time for questions and comments. The member for Davenport.

Mr. Jonah Schein: I'm pleased to rise today because the question that we're talking about here is amending a law that deeply offended Ontarians and deeply impacted the civil liberties of people in this province. Ultimately, this is an issue of credibility. You know, we need to

make sure that we have the confidence of the people in this province, that one way or another people believe that there is a political system that is democratic and that is responsible.

During the G20, people were out on the streets because they had a severe lack of confidence about democracy around the globe, and we reinforced that concern on that day. At the time after that, back in 2010, the NDP did ask for a public inquiry and that's the thing we still need to get to the bottom of here: Should this have ever even taken place on the streets of this city? Should Ontario ever have hosted this? My colleague yesterday spoke about the richness of an international conference that was preaching austerity around the world, yet we spent over \$1 billion in security over that weekend. I would like to have an inquiry about what we could have done with that billion dollars. Was that the best kind of economic stimulus that we needed in Ontario, or could we have put that into creating jobs in this province? We still never heard from this government.

Part of the credibility crisis here is that Ontarians look around, and they see two parties—the PCs and the Liberals—who speak as if they're different, sometimes, but then they enact the same thing. So instead of taking responsibility for their Conservative cousins federally who brought this in, we throw it across to the Liberals provincially.

The truth is that Ontarians have lost confidence because they see Tweedledum and Tweedledee; it's really the same parties here doing the same things. If we're going to restore Ontarians' faith in the democratic process, we need to make sure that there's real accountability, real transparency, and that we actually have that public inquiry that gets to the bottom of this.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Yes, the House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: I listened with interest to the comments from the member from Lennox—where are you from?

Interjection: Frontenac.

Hon. John Milloy: —Frontenac and Addington, as well as the NDP speaker.

I am impressed with the amount of power and authority that the opposition has given this government. We had 20 of the world's leaders, including President Barack Obama and the Prime Minister of Britain. They all came to Toronto. We had the federal government spend \$1 billion to welcome them here and gazebos and everything else. We had security from across the nation here. We had the federal government putting together this huge summit. But Madam Speaker, it wasn't the federal government, according to the opposition, even though it was an international summit, even though we welcomed these leaders from all around the world, and our Prime Minister was there, and the Governor General was there, and there was federal security and national security. According to the opposition, no, that had nothing to do with them; it was all the fault of the Ontario government.

We were one piece of a larger security puzzle, a puzzle which was under—as it should have been, appro-

priately—the umbrella of the federal government. This was an international summit. It demanded complex security matters; that was taken control of by the federal government. We played a small part.

Were there problems? Of course there were, Madam Speaker, which is why we asked Mr. Justice McMurtry, a former member of this Legislature, a former Attorney General of the province of Ontario and former chief justice, to take a look at it and to come forward with recommendations, which we put forward in this bill.

What happened at the G20 is something that will be debated, something that is being looked at. But at the end of the day, it was the federal government, it was the Prime Minister, it was the federal security people who came to Toronto and had a summit, a summit which, as I said, welcomed some of the most vulnerable leaders, shall we say, from a security point of view, and demanded security across the board. We should be looking to Ottawa when we talk about the G20.

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

Mr. John O'Toole: The member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington—that's probably the start for a very long name for a riding—makes a very good point. I recall he said, “Lawmakers don't even follow their own rules,” and that's really the substance of why we're so upset on this side. In the climate that the previous member spoke about, yes, it was an important event for Toronto, the top city in Canada, and it was very kind of Harper to allow them to facilitate it, but what was left to the police forces in the province of Ontario, which come under the jurisdiction of the province, was to arrange the activity.

What Premier McGuinty and his cabinet did is really what's at question here. In fact, they realized they'd made a mistake, not responding appropriately to the security that was required for these world leaders, and they had a secret meeting, which has been disclosed now. In that meeting, they invoked sort of like the Trudeau-style War Measures Act. They kind of overreacted.

Then the forces themselves were in contradiction with the chief of police, as well as—what he said at one time and what he said at another time were a contradiction in themselves. It was the individuals' freedoms that were imperilled during the time—unfairly. There was no process to resolve those disputes. It's people's independence and freedom that really need to be stood up for.

Now, the government did admit they made an error because they called on Roy McMurtry, the former Chief Justice of Ontario, to look into the Public Works Protection Act, and his recommendation was quite—why didn't they call Mr. McMurtry or someone else before the secret meeting or during the secret meeting? This is the type of government McGuinty, in a sort of arrogant way, has: forgo the freedoms and liberties of individuals and look for the cloak-and-dagger method. That's simply not acceptable.

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

Ms. Cindy Forster: I'd like to respond to the comments from the Minister of Community and Social Services. In fact, Justice McMurtry and the Ombudsman both kind of placed the blame not only on the federal government, but on the provincial government as well in the reports that we've seen. We know that there were 18 months of police infiltration around the G20, leading up to the summit. This was intentional and planned and an abuse of authority and power—and in violation of our rights, in violation of our freedoms, unconstitutional in every way.

0920

It was the provincial government that actually passed regulation 233/10. It wasn't the federal government; it was the provincial government. So both levels of government, the provincial and the federal, need to take responsibility.

To date, they've never apologized to the people of Ontario, and I think that they need to apologize to the people of Ontario, and we need to still have that public inquiry. I think that the people of Ontario would feel better to have that inquiry and to be able to come and make presentations. I know that John Pruyn, who I spoke about here I think last week or the week before, in my riding, who was arrested, who was disabled, who was an amputee and had his leg ripped off, would be more than happy to have an inquiry. In fact, I had an email from him this week thanking me for raising this again in the House and asking me to continue to raise this issue until his concerns are addressed by this province.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you. I'd like to thank the members from Davenport, Durham, Welland and, of course, the government House leader for their comments.

Clearly, the government House leader started building that complicated puzzle and still hasn't finished it, and is still very puzzled about the work of the Legislature and what his role in it is.

Let me clarify, out of the standing orders of this House, what rules this government broke in the enacting of that regulation. The following principles are laid down to guide the committee in the examination of regulations: “Regulations should not contain provisions initiating new policy, but should be confined to details to give effect to the policy established by the statute....”

They “should be expressed in precise and unambiguous language.”

Now, take a look at that regulation. I challenge the member from Guelph, who was interjecting earlier, to actually read the regulation and see if it is precise and unambiguous. It is absolutely atrocious, Madam Speaker, that the member from Guelph, who hasn't read anything, comes in and says that this regulation is good. It is contrary to the standing orders of this House, that the regulation is not done in precise and unambiguous language, and there is still nothing in Bill 34 that would compel this government to follow through and protect the

rights and freedoms of the citizens and residents of Ontario so that they are not dealt injustice from the hands of government, which is there to protect them.

I said that this bill takes some important steps. Let's make sure that the steps are complete and the journey is complete—

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

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): A point of order?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I would like the record to reflect that what I said was that I had read the regulation, not that I had not.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): That's not a point of order; thank you.

Further debate?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: The designation of the security zone as a public work was done in secret by the McGuinty cabinet on June 2, through an order in council. The change was posted to the government's e-Laws website on June 16, but oddly, the designation did not appear in print until the July 3 issue of the government publication, the Ontario Gazette. The change to the little-known Public Works Protection Act came into effect on June 21, Speaker, four days before the G8/G20 summit, and it expired on June 28. This means the government had three weeks to inform the public and did not.

I was mayor of the city of North Bay at the time and a seven-year member of the police services board at the time, and I must say I was confused by the ambiguity. Speculation about what special powers had been granted to the police was swirling through the media, and yet the government did nothing to clarify the regulation. In fact, Speaker, the Ombudsman called it "a premeditated, conscious decision not to announce the existence of the regulation or the reviving of this wartime act."

Speaker, I would like to read you, if I may, the February 22 Toronto Star story called "'Secret' G20 Law to be Scrapped," which is what we're talking about today. It's written by Tanya Talaga and Robert Benzie of the Queen's Park bureau, with contribution, it appears, by Rene Johnston from the Toronto Star. It says, "The Liberals are replacing the archaic 'secret' law police used" to place hundreds of people under arrest during the G20 summit in 2010.

"The Public Works Protection Act has been shelved in favour of a new bill that would apply only to securing power plants and courthouses, said Community Safety Minister Madeleine Meilleur.

"The legislation, introduced Wednesday, was created out of recommendations of the former Chief Justice Roy McMurtry in the wake of the G20 fiasco. It is far narrower in scope than the old law.

"It will be limited because we are following Judge McMurtry's advice and, according to him, the Criminal Code covers the rest," Meilleur said Wednesday.

"The bill will allow people to be asked for identification and to be searched when they enter court build-

ings. It also allows for the use of reasonable force to remove a person where court proceedings are being conducted.

"It provides the power to arrest a person committing any of the offences listed in the bill, 'without warrant and using reasonable force if necessary,' the legislation states. A person convicted of any of the offences can be fined up to \$2,000, face imprisonment of up to 60 days, or both.

"During the June 2010 Toronto G20 summit, the obscure 1939 Public Works Protection Act, enacted to secure against Nazi saboteurs early in World War II, was used to quietly pass a regulation giving police broad powers of arrest.

"That directive was merely supposed to clarify police powers within the secure summit site at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, but people were misled into believing it applied to an area five metres outside the cordoned-off zone.

"While only two of the 1,105 arrests made during the G20 related to the act, there was widespread outcry over the so-called secret law.

"This was an occasion for us to review legislation passed in the middle of the Second World War," said Meilleur, who did not offer an apology for what many civil liberties groups felt was an abuse of power.

"Progressive Conservative leader Tim Hudak said the Liberals 'lost touch' with the public by using a World War II-era law to round up people during the summit.

"Nobody forced them to bring in the secret law at the G20. Nobody forced their arm," said Hudak. "It was a major scandal for the province."

0930

"NDP leader Andrea Horwath said the new law is an 'admission' of failure on the part of the Liberal government.

"They made a big mistake when they were preparing for the G20 and they're ignoring the fact that mistake trampled people's civil rights, civil liberties," said Horwath.

"McMurtry's 54-page report on the old law noted the 'potential for abuse' was 'beyond troubling' and said it was a 'loaded weapon' that threatened civil liberties.

"Under the act, police or private security guards do not have to justify their actions against citizens, he pointed out."

Speaker, again, I served as mayor of the city of North Bay during that period, which should have been a spectacularly wonderful period in Ontario. Instead, it left a black mark, and it left a lot of questions. I served as vice-chair of our police board, and even at the time we questioned our own police authority, our own police services, "What does this possibly mean? What could this mean?" Even then, we could not get the right answers. We could not get answers, period. That ambiguity led to confusion, it led to mistrust, and it led to part of the problem that we saw here in the city of Toronto and elsewhere.

This act, Bill 34, will rectify part of the problem, but it still does not erase the history that we saw. So I would

suggest that we continue the debate on this. I look forward to hearing the continued discussion on this, Speaker. I think that it's incredibly important that the law be clear. There can never be ambiguity. When we look at what happened that day and the days leading up to the events, we do know that people didn't understand what the law was. They weren't told. Even though the law was indeed passed in secret by the McGuinty cabinet on June 2 through an order-in-council—

Mr. Monte McNaughton: Like Samsung.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Yes, to my fellow member, it was passed in secret, like Samsung. It was posted on June 16, but it did not appear until July 3 in the Gazette. There was obviously an intention here to keep this secret, and if not secret, at least to keep it ambiguous. I think that when you put this change into effect on June 21, four days before the summit, but don't really explain to the public what this new law is—they didn't even know there was a new law, but then people were being charged under a new law that they didn't know existed. How can that be here in Ontario, Speaker? That doesn't sound like the Ontario that I like to live in.

Again, the government had three weeks to inform the public and chose not to do that. What does that say about the government, and what does that say about our services? Speculation about what special powers had been granted to the police swirled through the media and through the crowds. It was that ambiguity that caused so much problem here during the G8 and G20, which should have been a real opportunity to showcase Ontario. We ended up showcasing a different side of Ontario, with 1,105 arrests being made under this law that people did not even know existed. Again, the government did absolutely nothing to clarify that regulation.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on this.

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

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Thank you to the member from Nipissing for his comments. I would just correct one of them: There were 1,100 people detained—detained. Only two arrests were made. That's a very strong indication of what went wrong on the G20 weekend.

I was there all three days. On the first day, on Saturday, I demonstrated with hundreds of Tibetans who were demonstrating the occupation of their country. They witnessed very similar kinds of policing to what was going on in Tibet at that time, set into place—and this is a fact that cannot be disputed—by regulation 233/10, put into place by the McGuinty government.

Again, is there blame to go around? Absolutely. Federal blame? Absolutely. Provincial blame? Also, absolutely. This has been well documented in two inquiries: one, Justice McMurtry's, who slammed this government for their actions; and also, of course, the Ombudsman, who slammed them as well. In fact, his report was called *Caught in the Act*, referring to this government.

Again, these are all facts. They cannot be disputed. There's no point in debating them because they're truth.

The question remains, however, with the passage of this bill, which we're going to support, that there was never a public inquiry, which is what the New Democratic Party called for, so that we could actually question the cabinet and find out why, secretly, while this Legislature was in session, they passed a regulation no one knew about, and fewer understood, without bringing it to this assembly. I would say that was a breach of privilege, a breach of the democratic rights of everyone in this assembly and everyone that we represent. They brought it in. They did not debate it. We didn't know about it until well, well after. Again, that's an undisputed fact. For that, I think, Madam Speaker, we should have an apology.

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

Mr. Jeff Leal: Let me say I thought the member from Nipissing provided some very thoughtful commentary this morning on Bill 34. In fact, we all welcome that Bill 34 will be proceeding to have a thorough review at committee and clause-by-clause. There will be an opportunity for people to come in to make presentations.

Certainly, we welcome the report by the Ombudsman and the report done by Chief Justice McMurtry to help us put in place a new bill to deal with circumstances that perhaps will occur some time down the road, when another summit or international gathering would occur right here in the province of Ontario.

It is interesting, though, during a couple of situations—if you go back to the War Measures Act in 1970, at that particular time, because of police intelligence and other intelligence, there was an opportunity for people who were sworn in to the Privy Council of Canada so that that intelligence could be shared with them at that time. Perhaps at this particular time, there would have been an opportunity to swear in some people from the third party and the opposition, in terms of sharing any potential intelligence that was relevant in terms of the protection of people who were going to be assembled here in Toronto as a result of the G20 summit being held in this wonderful city.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. Further comment?

Mr. John O'Toole: I did listen closely to the member from Nipissing. With his experience that he has outlined, as a mayor of a municipality and as well being on the police services board, he was involved first-hand, if you will, at least in observing how the issue unfolded. I think he was right in his research. The report by the Toronto Star, I believe—the Toronto Star is often referred to as the “Liberal briefing notes.” That account was quite accusatory of the Liberals' secret deal.

In fact, as has been mentioned even here this morning, again, the admission of failure by the McGuinty government was clearly—Roy McMurtry's report was entitled *Caught in the Act*. He said clearly that it was a secret deal. What's most troubling, as I said in my last remarks, and I think the member from Nipissing said as well, is that it's the expunging or the infringement on civil rights of individuals—and that's really what the

government should be standing up for. I think the member from Nipissing used the term, “He had lost touch with the people of Ontario,” and I think it’s true.

In fact, I find it almost troubling when they introduced the HST, as an example, how it affected seniors. They’ve lost touch with their ability to pay. They’ve lost touch with respect to people’s individual rights and freedoms, and this is the most troubling part.

0940

This bill, although it needed to be reformed, the question then—a competent government would say, “How do I deal with this challenge of world leaders being here?” and consult with the chiefs of police and the OPP and other experts, including Roy McMurtry, and they would have realized the bill was an inadequate tool to deal with the situation. That’s a lack of leadership. That’s fundamentally what the discussion’s about here. And then, on top of it, watching the TV, it’s clear—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Thank you. The member for Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I also had the opportunity to listen very carefully to some of the remarks made by the member from Nipissing, and I agree with the concern regarding laws being clear and not being ambiguous. If we tie this into the issue of secrecy, what creates great concern is, what is our government’s, in total—our approach to dissent? What is our approach to democracy? If we believe that dissent is a healthy part of democracy, then if we look at this bill and we look at the fact that the government passed these laws or these powers in secrecy, look at the two groups of effects. One, it’s going to affect—there’s a security interest, which we’ll touch on in a moment, but there are either protesters or there are lay citizens. So this bill will affect those two components of society.

Now, by not making the law clear or not informing the public, it’s directly impacting those who are protesting and even those who are casually in that area. It’s directly affecting Ontario citizens, and it’s very concerning that, in light of the fact that this law will affect the citizens of Ontario, they weren’t consulted, nor were they even given the awareness of this law in the first place. It speaks to a lack of respect for dissent.

If we believe that a vibrant society should encourage dissent, should encourage people who don’t agree with what’s going on, raising their voice as a healthy part of a democracy, as a healthy part of society, then we should ensure that those people who wish to engage in that right have the right to do so—and are actually encouraged to do so—in a safe, secure manner; not in an ambiguous manner, not in a manner in which there is so much lack of clarity that people who are simply walking by an area just out of curiosity are caught up in this law or caught up and taken into custody, their rights being taken away.

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

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I would like to thank the member from Parkdale–High Park, the member from Peterborough, the member from Durham and the member

from Bramalea–Gore–Malton for their thoughtful comments on this as well.

Speaker, I do want to quote some script from Hansard, where our leader, Tim Hudak, weighed in on this. He was speaking when this first came out. He was speaking here in the Legislature, and he commented:

“This was not a simple error. It was not a simple mistake. The Ombudsman said that this was a premeditated plan to keep the general public in the dark.

“Before the minister, there were cabinet meetings, including up to 14 ministers who could have put a stop to this extraordinary law and who could have said, ‘No, it is wrong to conspire to keep what’s equivalent to the War Measures Act secret from the general public.’ Not one had the courage to stand up and say that this was wrong. In fact, the emails the Ombudsman has uncovered show you actually put your minds to work on how to keep these illegal war measures a secret.”

Speaker, he went on to say:

“According to the Ombudsman ... the Premier’s office ... also had its fingerprints on the ... G20 regulation and the plot to keep it a secret. On page 57, the Ombudsman quotes from a Ministry of Community Safety email which states that the Premier’s office had also been consulted and ‘are fine with this moving forward.’”

Speaker, this in itself indicates the intent of the government on the G20 act, and we’re looking—

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

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It’s a pleasure to rise today to speak on this important legislation that is so necessary following what the citizens of Toronto experienced last year during the G20.

I also want to thank my colleagues who have spoken so graciously and eloquently on the matter before me.

It’s important that we make clear exactly what happened that week: The G20 meetings in 2010, an event to be a source of pride for all Ontarians and particularly for the world-class city of Toronto—yet its hopeless mismanagement ended up being a blot on our province’s otherwise shining record as a place of enormous respect for civilians’ civil liberties.

Madam Speaker, our party has often spoken about the crippling, confusing effect that excess regulation can have on Ontario business, costing our province billions and leaving business owners feeling helpless and disoriented. In the span of events running up to the G20 meetings, we found out just what a devastating effect misplaced regulation can have on our civil liberties.

It was this cabinet that invoked a muddled use of regulation 233/10 of the Public Works Protection Act and turned the perimeter of the G20 meetings into a massive public work. In the days and weeks that followed, rumour began to spread about secret police powers that had been granted to our police forces, allowing them to arrest any citizen caught protesting within a given zone around the meetings. It was a moment of concern for all that these rumours were allowed to spread with zero clarification from the Premier or the then minister in charge.

Our police services were suddenly viewed with suspicion in the eyes of the public. The government that occupies this very House was seen as totalitarian and completely without regard for the freedoms we all enjoy as Canadians. We know that is not the case. I think we all understand and Ontarians understand that there's a time and a place when the public safety needs to be taken into account by means of extraordinary measures, where there is a threat of harm to innocent bystanders. Yet this act went too far in its implications and implementations, and the McMurtry report made that very clear. It was a good thing, too, because clarity was not forthcoming from this government at a very confusing time.

It's my belief, and one, I believe, shared by my colleagues, that the regulation invoked by the government at the time of the G20 meetings granted powers above and beyond the ability of the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services to dictate. It was a sobering moment for us all, yet not surprising to anyone on this side of the House, when Mr. McMurtry set out in his report a condemnation of the overreaching efforts taken by the government to address the challenge of security at the international summit.

I quote from the report, which said that the law had a "potential for abuse" that was "beyond troubling." "Beyond troubling," Madam Speaker—not words one would normally associate with a freedom-loving and respectful province such as Ontario. The report called it a "loaded weapon" that threatens civil liberties—again, Madam Speaker, yet another blot on the record of this government, who has shamefully refused to apologize for passing this legislation in the first place.

0950

I believe this legislation is the correct thing to do. It's the honourable thing to do after the honour of the province was so severely tarnished in the wake of this horrible mismanagement. It is with great pleasure that I support this effort, and I call upon the government to exercise the same discretion they have today in future, so that the need for such correctional legislation not rise again.

Furthermore, Madam Speaker, just a couple of other points I'd like to make on this issue.

The outdated Public Works Protection Act included wartime powers for the protection of public works, but relied too much on the discretion of the minister. In addition, the former Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the McGuinty cabinet used that discretion to secretly introduce special powers for police and fostered the widespread confusion that followed by abdicating any responsibility to clarify what the law said. This legislation removes the minister's discretion to grant special powers of arrest, but it does not address the lack of sound judgment and the finger-pointing demonstrated during the G20 by the McGuinty government.

Just as a bit of background, Madam Speaker, I'd like to bring forth a couple of additional points. You know, in the lead-up to the 2010 G20 summit in Toronto, the McGuinty cabinet invoked regulation 233/10 under the

Public Works Protection Act, making the G20 zone a public work from June 21 through to June 28. Media coverage leading up to the summit circulated around reports of police being granted special powers of arrest up to five metres on either side of the security fencing in the G20 zone, as requested by Toronto police chief Bill Blair. There was widespread confusion leading up to and during the G20 summit about exactly where the special powers of arrest applied amongst the public and police and in the media. It was only after the summit was over that the government publicly acknowledged that the police were never granted powers of arrest five metres outside of the area designated a public work under the regulation. This suggested to many that the government deliberately misled the public to bluff protesters from occupying the area surrounding the G20 security zone.

So again, it is with great pleasure that I support this effort, and I call upon the government to exercise the same discretion that they have today in future, so that the need for such correctional legislation not rise again.

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

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd just like to commend the member from Chatham-Kent-Essex for a good presentation.

I think there's a common element going on here in this House, Madam Speaker. We seem to believe that the party across the floor has a real problem with the words "I made a mistake. I'm sorry." They don't want to come forward and say it. I'm surprised that not one of the cabinet ministers, or even the Premier himself, simply could tell the people of Ontario, "We apologize for the G20 situation and we certainly are going to address it and make changes." They are addressing it and making changes, but what concerns me is the arrogance. When I was a small child or growing up, I was taught to say, "Sorry," if I did something wrong. It's not a big thing, but it's a big thing to the people you represent.

They want to hear, you know, governments are not above them. Governments are for them and work for them, and they want them to be human, a human side to this building. I don't think that goes on a lot around here. It's very disappointing, Speaker, that people can't take the path of forgiveness and ask for the people to consider that maybe they're human and maybe they made a mistake. I think that's what the problem is around here, that there should be more give-and-take and more working together as a group and taking responsibility for things that go wrong in this province. Mind you, in the last eight years, a lot of things have gone wrong, and we find ourselves in a deficit position that's never been done in this province before.

We certainly have to address these things. We have to come forward. We have to give good results to the people of Ontario. We have to show them that we can make mistakes, but we also can solve the mistakes. I don't see a lot of that.

They have to work together, and that's what I'd like to see more of around here, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Jeff Leal: I did listen intently this morning to my good friend the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex. Hopefully, in the not-too-distant future—I know the former member had a private member’s bill to actually rename the riding to Chatham–Kent–Leamington because Leamington, of course, is that section of Essex county that really is in this riding. I know there was great representation from the wonderful people from Leamington that were very supportive of the renaming of the riding to Chatham–Kent–Leamington to actually reflect the geographic area of that community, but we could have that debate another day.

I appreciate the member’s comments this morning. Bill 34 will be going to committee in the not-too-distant future. As the member has articulated, people get an opportunity to appear in front of committee as we go through clause-by-clause to make this piece of legislation as best as it can be and really putting in place a framework, if Toronto or some other Ontario city gets the opportunity to host another G20 summit or other significant international gathering in our wonderful province, where security will always be an issue, for how we can handle it for the future.

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

Mr. Steve Clark: I’m pleased to provide a couple of minutes of comments to the wonderful address from the member for Chatham–Kent–Essex.

I remember back to the last sitting of the Legislature, in those days leading up to the secret law being passed by cabinet. The Tuesday—Tuesday, May 31—we all sat here; it was a late session into the evening, and we did tributes to retiring members. The Premier even sat in the chamber for the entire evening, and it was that wonderful moment at the last sitting where we seemed to be moving forward together. We had wonderful non-partisan tributes to all of our retiring members. And then Wednesday, because the Speaker made a comment at the very end of the night that may have been seen as a bit of a jab to the Premier—the word started spreading the next day, on June 1, that we were going to prorogue, and we did that day. It was the next day, June 2, a day that we were scheduled to sit, that cabinet passed that secret law.

Again, I think many speakers today have talked about the arrogance of the government, the fact that it’s our role as elected officials to protect innocent citizens from being abused by the state. As MPPs, we had no chance to do that—

Interjections.

Mr. Steve Clark: Thanks for giving me the dates. I appreciate that. Thanks.

We’ve had no ability to stand up to those who were elected to serve us. We had no opportunity, and as the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington spoke about earlier this morning, it was a clear sign that this government has lost its way.

I can appreciate the member for Peterborough talking about committee hearings, but I think we have to address the issue, and I’m glad the member spoke this morning.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Yes, the member for Welland.

Ms. Cindy Forster: I just wanted to speak a little bit to the bill: section 138(1), about the requirement of a person who’s entering or attempting to enter a court proceedings; the requirement to provide identification; the requirement to provide information; and what kind of information that’s actually going to be.

It clearly doesn’t set out in this bill the kinds of questions that court officials are going to be able to ask people. The government, the week before last, talked about wanting to be more open and transparent with this legislation, but in fact pieces of it are very grey.

The kinds of questions that come to my mind that court officials might ask, and that might actually violate people’s human rights, are: What’s your political affiliation? Who’s your employer? What kind of work do you do? What is your ethnic background or your cultural background like? What is your economic status? What are your religious affiliations, or what are your family relationships? Do you have a criminal record, even a minor conviction, or does someone in your family? Those kinds of things concern me.

Yesterday, when I was out in the Toronto–Danforth area for the by-election, we had Canadian citizens actually turned away at the polls because they didn’t have the kind of information that the polling clerks wanted. People went with a passport, but they needed to have a driver’s licence. And on that note, I’d just like to congratulate Craig Scott on his win.

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

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Again, I’d like to thank the member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, the member from Peterborough, the member from Leeds–Grenville and, of course, the member from Welland for speaking as well on this particular and all-important issue.

Madam Speaker, one of the things we need to be careful of is that we don’t turn things into what I would call a police state. You know, people have rights; they have civil rights.

I’d like to quote something from our leader, Tim Hudak. Tim made this comment in 2010. He said that the Liberals have “lost touch” with the public by using a World War II-era law to round up people during the summit.

I’ve found that when you push people, the natural tendency is for them to push back, and suddenly force gets bigger and gets stronger on both sides, and the next thing you know, you almost have a riotous state, which is not good.

“Nobody forced them to bring in the secret law at G20. Nobody forced their arm,” said our leader, Tim Hudak. “It was a major scandal for the province.”

I’d also like to quote the NDP leader, Andrea Horwath, who said that the new law is an “admission” of failure on the part of the Liberal government: “They made a big mistake when they were preparing for the

G20, and they're ignoring the fact that mistake trampled people's civil rights, civil liberties."

McMurtry's 54-page report on the old law noted the potential for abuse was beyond troubling and said that it was "a loaded weapon" that threatened civil liberties.

Madam Speaker, we have not heard apologies from the opposite side, from the government, and I'm of the firm belief that when you mess up, you fess up.

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

Madame Meilleur has moved second reading of Bill 34, An Act to repeal the Public Works Protection Act, amend the Police Services Act with respect to court security and enact the Security for Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2012.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Mr. Jeff Leal: Absolutely not.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. No.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

Second reading vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Orders of the day.

Hon. John Milloy: No further business, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 10:30 of the clock.

The House recessed from 1004 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Laurel C. Broten: I'd like to introduce Maria Matias, who is my constituent in Etobicoke-Lakeshore. She's here today to see her granddaughter, Emma Mogus, who is one of our pages.

Mr. John O'Toole: I'd like to welcome the Camping in Ontario group here today. Specifically, I'm meeting later with Stéphane Deschênes and Roland Goreski. Welcome to Queen's Park today.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: These are the family of our wonderful page Seph Burghardt. His grandparents are here, Ann Marshall and Richard Marshall Sr.; his parents, Madeline Burghardt and Richard Marshall; his brothers, Tonnar Marshall Burghardt and Raffi Marshall Burghardt. All welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Michael Chan: I want to welcome two groups of great individuals visiting Queen's Park today. One is from Camping in Ontario. I want to welcome Robert Trask, Alexandra Anderson, Guida Williamson, Stéphane Deschênes, Mike Tomaszewski, Lisa Veritis. As well, from the organization the Ontario Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association: Chris Stovold, Roland Goreski,

Rick Allain, Andrew Thomson, Rob Edwards, Steve Meades and Larry Boyd.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I'd like to introduce Alexandra Anderson and Larry Boyd from Camping in Ontario. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I'd like to introduce two guests in the gallery today: Mr. Michael Giroux, who's the president of the Canadian Wood Council, and Marianne Berube, the Ontario executive director for Wood WORKS!. They were here for my launch of my private member's bill.

Mr. Bill Walker: I would like to welcome Robert Trask, president of the Ontario camping association, and Steve Meades, president of Ontario RV association, both from my riding. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: I'd like to introduce Maria Matias, the grandmother of our page Emma Mogus from Halton.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I want to welcome to the Legislature relatives of page Nicholas Peters on behalf of my colleague from Scarborough Southwest. Joining us today are: Joe Peters; Irene Makeeff; Lydia Makeeff; Winston and Nadia Shantora; and sister Olivia Peters, a former page of the Legislature. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Speaking of such, I would like to also introduce my other brother, Joe. Thanks for being here.

Sitting beside Joe is Mr. Steve Peters, the member from Elgin-Middlesex-London for the 37th, 38th, and 39th Parliaments and Speaker of the 39th Parliament. Welcome, Steve.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I have to say this again: I hope that when I come back and visit, I'll have the same reception. We'll have to see what happens.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All right, stop the heckling.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): At this time, I would ask all of our members to join me in welcoming our new group of legislative pages. If they can assemble, please.

Our pages now are serving in their first session of the 40th Parliament: Hassan Alayche from Hamilton Mountain; Asha Ali from Etobicoke North; Lauren Barry from Prince Edward-Hastings; Emily Chalmers from Don Valley West; Sharmeila Cherla from Mississauga-Brampton South; Julia Cole from Beaches-East York; Liam Donnelly from Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale; Alexander Forgay from St. Paul's; Abbigail Groskleg from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke; Teresa Han from Willowdale; Kyle Hendrikx from Sarnia-Lambton; Victoria Jagmohan from Scarborough-Rouge River; Ammaar Jan from Pickering-Scarborough East; Emma Lang from Kenora-Rainy River; Aylin Ma from Don Valley East; Seph Marshall Burghardt from Park-

dale—High Park; Domenique Mastronardi from Chatham—Kent—Essex; Preston McInnis from Windsor—Tecumseh; Emma Mogus from Halton; Nicholas Peters from Scarborough Southwest; Alexander Ruddy from Niagara Falls; Felix Weber from Perth—Wellington.

Welcome.

ORAL QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. Tim Hudak: My question is to the Premier. Premier, I want to return to our conversation yesterday about the high levels of debt in Ontario and its negative impact on job creation and investment. I'll remind you that you're on track to a \$30-billion deficit and tripling Ontario's provincial debt to some \$400 billion.

Rating agencies and investment banks in New York City told me that governments that have high levels of debt won't be able to afford lower taxes, won't be able to invest in infrastructure to make their economies competitive. They know that tax increases are far more likely to occur under governments that cannot control their spending. These signals affect the economy, they chill investment and they slow economic growth.

Speaker, the problem is, the Premier has already indicated that he's going to have higher taxes in his budget to finance further government spending.

Premier, do you believe that high debt and higher taxes create jobs or do they kill jobs in the province of Ontario?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, I am pleased to entertain the question and to speak to what has happened to taxes in Ontario. With respect to corporate income taxes, my colleague will know that we have reduced those a few times already. He will know we've eliminated the capital tax. He will know that we have cut the small business income tax. He will know that we've eliminated the small business deduction surtax. He will know that we've adopted the HST.

I know my colleague is fond of recounting his experiences outside the country, but just recently the finance minister and myself had a good meeting in Toronto, and we heard there that a Canadian bank is now paying—for every dollar they earn in New York City, they pay 45 cents in tax. If that bank earns that dollar here in Toronto, Speaker, they're paying 25 cents in tax.

We're giving our businesses a decided competitive advantage in the province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Tim Hudak: Well, Speaker, I think only Premier McGuinty believes that taxes are lower in Ontario under his government. That's certainly not what families and businesses say.

Premier, political leadership in 2012 is about reminding people why we need to reduce spending. Businesses won't invest; they won't create jobs in countries with a

debt crisis. I ask the Premier to name a business that's investing in Greece today.

1040

In fact, Premier, high debt is inversely related to confidence in our economy. It's inversely related to job creation and investment. Using new debt to pay for new spending may be politically expedient for you, but it is not political leadership in 2012.

Premier, for nine years—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question?

Mr. Tim Hudak: —you've kicked the can down the road. Will we see finally in this budget you'll pick up the can and make tough decisions to rein in runaway spending?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, let's try to move beyond the general and hone in on the specific. Let's talk about a specific choice. In government, Speaker, we believe that there are better choices than financing the horse racing industry to the tune of \$245 million on an annual basis. That's a specific choice, Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew, come to order.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: My honourable colleague and his fellow Conservatives are struggling with this very straightforward choice. We believe it's more important to use our precious dollars to support health care and education than to support the horse racing industry. We're very clear when it comes to that specific kind of a choice, Speaker.

I'd encourage my colleague to tell us why it is he stands against a preference for health care and education over horse racing in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: You know, sadly, Speaker, the Premier continues to engage in specious arguments that are effectively nothing more than tax grabs to finance further runaway spending.

Premier, what you fail to understand—and the lesson that's being felt in countries around the world—is that governments create the conditions for economic growth when they get the fundamentals right. We believe to keep your fiscal house in order, to keep marginal tax rates low, to encourage workplace flexibility, to let markets work on their own—when you get those fundamentals right, Speaker, jobs follow, investment takes place and Ontario will be a leader in Canada again.

Premier, which of those fundamentals do you disagree with? Because the last 166 days from the campaign, all we've heard about is further tax increases to finance more unaffordable spending.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Lots of speculation here, Speaker; lots of inferences based on fantasy, but again, I want to return to a very specific issue. I'm asking, again, my honourable colleague: Why is it that he feels that supporting horse racing in Ontario is of greater value to the people of Ontario than financing their schools and their health care, Speaker? To me that's a very clear

choice. It speaks to the right kind of choices and the wrong kind of choices. But I think, more importantly, it speaks to our values. I think we value health care and education more than we do horse racing, Speaker—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: It's about making, as my honourable colleague says—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To me, Speaker, it's a pretty straightforward choice.

In our budget we'll continue; we'll lay out a number of those straightforward choices, where we take the next step in an important plan to eliminate the deficit. It's a five-year plan, Speaker. We'll do it in a way that protects our schools, protects our health care and continues to build a strong foundation for growth and prosperity.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr. Tim Hudak: Back to the Premier: Premier, this is far from speculation and inferences. These are programs that you or your finance minister has announced. Pretty well any announcement you've made in the last 166 days has been about revenue increases and new unaffordable spending.

Premier, when I was in New York City last week, one of the things I was relieved to hear is a sense of growing optimism, albeit just starting out, when it comes to the global economy. And the view, Speaker, is more optimism about the country of Canada as a whole. But the concern I heard that was saddening and troubling is the growing concern and more questions being asked about the state of finances here in Ontario.

Premier, people can invest anywhere in the world, but if they don't think a government has its spending under control, they won't invest in Ontario, and you're pursuing policies that are making Ontario increasingly uncompetitive. While other countries, Speaker, are opening their doors for investment in their resources, they brought in the Far North Act and punishing energy rates. Premier, why are you punishing the resource sector in Ontario while other—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, I gather my honourable colleague has visited New York City and, while there, he got a lesson in Economics 101. I'm glad he's had that opportunity.

I'd encourage him to take a look at the RBC Provincial Outlook just put out. It says, among other things, that Ontario will be experiencing "a modest rebound in growth in the province to 2.5% in 2012 from an estimated 1.9% in 2011."

Now 2.5% is not 5%, 6%, 7%, 8% or 9% that they're experiencing in places like China and India, but I think in the grand scheme of things it's a good foundation. We're clearly moving in the right direction. The way we're

going to harden that momentum is through a thoughtful budget that is responsible, that makes the right kinds of choices.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: The Premier boasts about a modest rebound. That's the whole problem. Ontario should be the leader in Canada. We should be number one. We should be the best place in all of North America to find investment, to create jobs. That's what the Ontario PC Party believes in.

Premier, while you celebrate mediocrity, we want to see Ontario leading Canada again. We believe we should let markets work, let entrepreneurs, businesses and consumers be the ones who help markets grow. Cloud computing was not the result of some government grant. Apple did not become Apple because of government handouts.

Focus on the cost of regulation. Don't follow the European or American examples by overregulating the economy: another lesson clearly learned—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Question.

Mr. Tim Hudak: On Tuesday, will we see a change of course to get out of the way of business, get behind them and help them create jobs in the province of Ontario, and make us be number one again?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: I say to my honourable colleague with the greatest respect that it's going to take more than that. He's talked about Apple. He's talked about cloud computing. He's talked about the regulatory environment. He's talked about the tax environment. But when confronted with a very sharply delineated choice—are we or are we not going to support the horse racing industry in the province of Ontario?—he struggles with that.

To me, it's a very, very clear choice. They're going to cloak it with every possible negative. The fact of the matter is, you knock on Ontario doors and ask families whether their choice is health care and education over horse racing, and they'll tell you 100 out of 100 times that they want good schools and good health care. That's the foundation for a good quality of life.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Final supplementary?

Mr. Tim Hudak: The lesson the Premier has failed to learn for nine years is that not every solution involves a tax increase here in the province of Ontario.

One of the other lessons that has been clear internationally—business leaders from New York to Toronto and North Bay will tell you how important it is to get the fundamentals right, like affordable and reliable energy, to make sure we can compete in the global economy. Energy development came up in almost every meeting I had in New York City, just like it does here, but not a single person sang the praises of massive taxpayer subsidies for solar panels or electric cars.

The Premier referenced Economics 101 a while ago. I was in Economics 101 back around the time that the FIT energy program was invented in Germany in 1991. It's

outdated; it's expensive. It's a failed experiment—the kind of European-style subsidies even the Europeans have moved away from.

Premier, will you reverse course and focus—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Premier?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: On the matter of energy, again, we're making a very clear choice. We're not going to burn coal in Ontario. We've made that choice. Clearly, it is less expensive to buy coal from elsewhere, shovel it into a furnace in Ontario and create electricity that way. It is less expensive. That's their approach. That's not our approach.

Instead, we're going to be at the front of the curve. We know where the world is going. We know that, over time, the price of oil and gas will keep going up and up and up. The price of an—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I am at the point of having difficulty hearing the response, but I will say that the noise is coming from both sides. I would appreciate the questions in silence and the answers in silence. Thank you.

Premier, finish.

1050

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: Speaker, in addition to the clear choice we're making not to burn coal in Ontario, and to accelerate a program that is building us an exciting new energy, we've also indicated that, as a choice, we're prepared to invest in full-day kindergarten, because that benefits all of our children today and it benefits our economy tomorrow.

HOME CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday, in response to my questions on home care, your Minister of Health insisted that more people are receiving more care. If that's true, why are community care access centres telling us that they're cutting back hours and they are telling patients that they're going to be losing service?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think the facts speak for themselves, Speaker: We have increased funding by 69% to community care access centres, an increase of close to 70% since we were elected in 2003. That's \$2.1 billion a year more now than when we were first elected. We have invested tremendously in home care, but we do think there's more we need to do, because we do know that we still have people in hospitals who could be better served at home if they had stronger supports in the community. So as we move forward, as we implement our action plan, a big focus is going to be on further strengthening home care for the people of this province.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I think that's the saddest response I've heard. They're plowing more money in, but the home care system is getting worse and worse and worse in Ontario.

You know, the government loves to make good-news announcements, and with the scandal at Ornge and the looming sunshine list that's going to be coming out tomorrow, shedding the light on big CEO salaries getting their pay hikes, I suppose that these announcements are going to come even more fast and more furious to cover up what's really going on. I suspect that that's going to happen; we saw it again today.

But for families who are more concerned about the real issues that they're facing—issues like the fact that they need to have home care so that they can avoid going into the hospital—the question is a very simple one: Why are community care access centres telling us that they're cutting back hours and telling patients that they're going to lose services?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, what I can tell you is that there is significant demand for home care. That is why we are making the choices we are making when it comes to improving health care. A very important part of our transformation plan, our action plan for health care, is about strengthening home care. It is about providing more care for more people. We are already serving close to 200,000 more people every year than when we took office. There are more people receiving more care—more hours of care as well. In fact, there are wonderful stories about people who were in long-term care who are now coming home with more robust supports than they would have had before. Our Home First program is proving to be a tremendous success as people in hospitals are coming home with those supports.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: We know very well that smart investments in home care are a key way to prepare our health care system for the future. More importantly, they're a lifeline for people who want to stay in their homes, and can stay in their homes with just a little bit of support, a little bit of help. Now, the government knows this, too. So the question is, why does this government insist on sticking with a system that just is not working and still leaves people scrambling with missed visits, missed appointments, reduced hours and cancelled time?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You know, Speaker, the member opposite and our government are on exactly the same page when it comes to this issue. We believe that there is more we can do to support more people in their homes. When we have someone in hospital who does not need to be in hospital but can't go home because there aren't supports, we know that we're not providing the best possible care, and we also know we're spending more money than we need to. So we are aggressively moving forward on expanding Home First, which is showing nothing short of wonderful results for people, and we welcome the support of the party opposite as we continue to strengthen home care.

HOME CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. Michael Marsh lives in northeastern Ontario and needs considerable personal care. His mother is his

primary caregiver, but she's also a working woman who has to leave the house every day to go to work if she's going to be able to pay the bills.

Michael and his mother were recently told that their home care hours would be cut in half. The minister claims that more people are receiving more care. Can the Premier explain why this is happening to Michael and his family?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: It is exactly stories like that story that drive us in our determination to do more to keep people in their homes, and there is significant support for our approach. Let me read a quote from the Ontario Home Care Association after I introduced our action plan: "The Ontario Home Care Association welcomes Ontario's action plan for health care. Presented by" the Minister of Health "today ... the plan sets an ambitious goal of making Ontario 'the healthiest place in North America'. Underpinning the goal is a commitment to relentlessly working to ensuring quality and accountability in health care."

People in the health community know that we're on the right track. We are moving forward as quickly as we can to strengthen supports in home care.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: A senior citizen in the north-east shared with us a very similar situation: She recently had a heart attack and is unable to get up and down her own stairs at home. Home care ensures that she can actually live in her home and get to her medical appointments. Her care has been cut from 13 hours down to two hours. Now, if this continues, she says she's going to have no option: She's either got to go to a nursing home or into the hospital.

If the government is investing more in home care, as they claim, why are families who rely on it telling us very clearly that they're going to be forced into hospitals because their support is being cut from underneath them?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, it's not that we're claiming we're spending more. We are spending significantly more because we believe that we can care for people in their own homes. That is the best for them and it is the best for our system, because very often it is the lowest-cost service available, certainly less expensive than hospital and less expensive than long-term care. That is why we are relentless in our determination to strengthen home care.

We need to continue to invest. We need to get the best possible value for our health care dollars. Our health care system depends on us taking the action that we are proposing, because our future actually is dependent upon our success in this initiative.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, it seems to me this is a classic Liberal government way of delivering health care in our system: You spend a heck of a lot more, but you get a heck of a lot less.

Everyday families know that home care is a smart investment, and they know that it's going to improve our system and will improve people's lives. But after years and years and years of empty promises, we're hearing from family after family that is receiving less support, not more, and when they're forced into hospitals, we're all going to end up paying more.

Will the government commit right now to making the changes required in our home care system to make sure that it actually works for people? Or are they going to continue with the status quo that leaves people stranded, waiting for care or forced into hospitals?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I cannot support the approach of the member opposite more. I believe—our government believes—that our big focus now has to be on home care, and that's why we're making difficult decisions in other parts of the health care system.

We're in an era where we have to make trade-offs. A 1% increase in what we spend on physicians, for example, can buy 30,000 home care visits. So we're making tough decisions because we know that home care is where we can get the best value for money and the highest quality of care for people.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mr. Frank Klees: My question is to the Minister of Health. The minister's responses to our questions regarding the Ornge scandal have not been very encouraging, neither to us nor the public, and certainly not to the front-line staff at Ornge. We can only draw one of two conclusions: Either the minister has had a convenient lapse of memory, or she really did not know what was going on in her ministry.

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But there was one response—and it was on March 1—that is encouraging, in response to my question as to whether the minister would support the striking of a select committee. The minister responded, "I am fully supportive of any decision this Legislature makes. If it's the will of this Legislature that that happen, I will, of course, be totally supportive of that."

Speaker, I'd like to know from the minister: Will she be present this afternoon when we debate that motion to strike that select committee and will she vote in support of striking that committee?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Health.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the Minister of Community and Social Services, Speaker.

Hon. John Milloy: We're going to have an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from St. Catharines will come to order. The member from Renfrew will come to order.

House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

We'll have an opportunity to discuss and debate the honourable member's motion this afternoon, but it seems,

Mr. Speaker, that the opposition can't take yes for an answer. They've asked for hearings by a committee of this Legislature, and the Standing Committee on Public Accounts has agreed that on March 28, April 4 and April 18 they will have hearings into the Auditor General's report on Ornge. The committee meets on Wednesdays at 9 a.m. and 1 o'clock until routine proceedings, in committee room 1. There is an opportunity for that member and members across the way to go and to conduct the type of committee hearings and inquiries that they're asking for.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Frank Klees: That has to be so embarrassing to the members of the government caucus. I can tell you, Speaker, my question was to the Minister of Health, and I asked if she would be in the House to debate that motion to strike a committee that she agreed she would support, and I specifically asked if she would vote in support of it.

We're all familiar with what the standing committee will do and the auditor's report, and we're also familiar with the police investigation. That's not the issue. We want a select committee so that employees, former employees and stakeholders of Ornge can come forward and tell us their story and tell us how we can restore confidence in Ontario's air ambulance service. That's what it's all about.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Government House leader.

Hon. John Milloy: Mr. Speaker, if it's embarrassing to anyone, I'd say it's embarrassing to the member's neighbour there, the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka, who is the Chair of the public accounts committee of this Legislature.

The public accounts committee is charged with reviewing the Auditor General's report. We'll be hearing from the Auditor General tomorrow. On March 28, April 4 and April 18, the public accounts committee, a committee of this Legislature, will have an opportunity to look into aspects of the Ornge situation.

I realize, Mr. Speaker, that the member asking the question is not a member of the public accounts committee, and far be it from me to interfere in their organizational aspect, but I'm sure if he asks the whip of the Conservative Party, he'll allow him to sub in for those hearings.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

M^{me} France G  linas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Sant   et des Soins de longue dur  e.

Beginning in 2009, Chris Mazza and other executives at Ornge, well, their salaries disappeared from the sunshine list. It turns out they were hiding sky-high salaries—over \$1 million, Mr. Speaker—and the government was letting them do it.

My question is simple. On Friday, they will release the sunshine list. Will Ontarians see the salaries and the

bonuses that were paid to the executives at Ornge for 2011?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, you know, the issue around Ornge is of course a very serious issue and one that is of deep concern to me and to members of this government. When we entrust people with a responsibility to deliver service to the people of this province, when we entrust them with taxpayer dollars, we expect them to live up to the responsibility that has been entrusted in them. In the case of Ornge, Speaker, we have been enormously disappointed with the leadership at Ornge. That is why we have taken the actions that we have taken to clean up the situation at Ornge.

We have taken decisive action. There is completely new leadership. There has been significant oversight and investigation of those parts at Ornge—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

M^{me} France G  linas: Well, that was not the answer I wanted. I wanted a yes or a no: Will they be there or not?

But anyway, in 2010 the NDP filed a freedom of access to information request. We wanted an explanation: Why was it that the executives of Ornge were not on the sunshine list anymore? We got a response from the ministry that said that they would not release the 32 records explaining the hidden salaries.

While the government used Friday's sunshine list release to spell out the salaries at Ornge—I'm hoping that we will see the salaries for 2011, but will we also see the previous years? And will you finally release those 32 records that we requested in our freedom of access to information?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I think members of this House are unanimous in their determination to understand what happened at Ornge and what we need to do so that it never does happen again. That is why we have taken the steps we have done.

Ornge did create for-profit entities. There was nothing in the performance agreement that gave us the power to prevent that, Speaker. That will change under the new legislation that I will be introducing shortly. I will include a component that will require ministry approval for the creation of new corporate entities.

We have lessons to learn from Ornge, Speaker, and we are learning those lessons and we are acting on those lessons.

MUNICIPALITIES

Mr. Grant Crack: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

There's constant discussion in my riding and across the province regarding the relationship our government has worked to form with our cities and towns since coming to government. I know that our government understands that, just like other governments around the world, Ontario municipalities currently have to make difficult decisions about costs and services for their residents, and these decisions aren't made any easier by the extra costs

that have been downloaded onto municipalities by other governments.

Mr. Speaker, could the minister please tell us what our government is doing to support our municipalities as we all face the harsh reality of difficult economic times to ensure that all Ontarians still have access to the municipal services that they currently enjoy?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to thank my colleague for his question. He's got a lot of experience in municipal governance and he knows how important that provincial-municipal relationship is.

One of the first orders of business for us when we were elected, Mr. Speaker, was to work to repair damage done by the previous government to that relationship between the province and our cities and towns. The province's relationship with the municipalities has greatly improved since the days of forced amalgamation and downloading, and our government entered into a landmark agreement with municipalities. As a result, we've uploaded \$2.7 billion of services from Ontario's cities and towns, which takes a huge burden off municipalities across Ontario.

Despite the province's economic challenges, we remain committed to the upload of municipal costs in accordance with the timetable agreed to through the Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review. We understand how important it is. Social assistance cost \$1.2 billion in 2012.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?
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Mr. Grant Crack: Thank you, Minister. I'm sure we can all agree that this is good news: that our government has made a firm pledge both to the province's municipalities and the uploading process. However, the government is committed to eliminating the deficit by 2017-18, and we all know that we have to make some difficult decisions.

Mr. Speaker, with this in mind, my question to the minister is: What is our government doing to ensure that the carrying out of these agreements the minister has referenced in her answer happens in the agreed-upon time frame?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What we did when we entered into these agreements, Mr. Speaker, was we put a very clear and defined timeline in place, and so that allows municipalities to know what to expect and to be able to better plan. I mentioned that \$1.2 billion in social assistance benefit program costs for 2012. We're going to continue to upload court security costs, to the tune of \$125 million. We've worked hard to ensure that our relationship is in good shape and is positive with the municipalities.

At the ROMA/OGRA conference in February, the Premier once again reaffirmed our government's commitment to our municipal partners, and we will continue to meet the promised upload of \$1.5 billion per year in social service and court security costs by 2018.

We have put that timeline in place, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to upload, because we know that that's a

critical component of our positive relationship with municipalities.

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: My question is to the Minister of Health. As you know, the Auditor General's mandate is to review the value for the money you handed over to Ornge, and of course, the mandate of the OPP is to review any criminal activity at Ornge. However, neither is looking exclusively at the systemic operational failures or the concerns that have been brought forward by front-line staff about their personal safety and the safety of patients. This is why a select committee is necessary. There are critical questions to be asked and answered. It is absolutely essential that we restore public confidence, because that has been eroded every time the minister says that she doesn't know.

I ask the minister today: Will you show leadership? Will you be here for the vote in favour of a select committee?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I look forward to the debate this afternoon. I know that many members are interested in the outcome of the debate today. But I do want to underline that we've got a lot of activity going on right now. There is a forensic audit under way. The Auditor General, of course, will be releasing his report, and his report will be considered by standing committees. The OPP are conducting an investigation. The Standing Committee on Public Accounts, as we've heard from the House leader, will be looking very closely at the issue at Ornge.

Speaker, I will be introducing now legislation. I know that when that new legislation is introduced, if it is passed, in fact it will go to committee for examination. There will be ample opportunity to discuss all of the issues that are important to all members of this Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: Mr. Speaker, to the minister again: The minister knows that complaints about Ornge's operating practices have gone unheeded at the Ministry of Health, despite the fact that many concerns about patient safety have been raised by hospitals, nurses, paramedics and pilots since 2006. We also know that the Ontario Air Transport Association called for a review because they were concerned about the long waits for ambulances and the fact that that was compromising patient care.

So I ask the minister today: Are you prepared to show leadership, leadership as the Minister of Health, and vote to put patients and front-line workers first and ensure that patient safety is never again compromised by Ornge?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, in my humble opinion, I have shown tremendous leadership on this file. We have new leadership in place. Their instructions were to put patient safety first. Patient safety is the number one issue, Speaker. It is the most important thing, and that is why we are going to be introducing a quality improve-

ment plan at Ornge. We are seeing the result that that approach is having at hospitals. When you measure patient safety, you can drive results to improve patient safety. That is why under the new legislation and under the new performance agreement, patient safety will be paramount.

I am focused on improving air ambulance service. I'm focused on improving accountability for public dollars. We're—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

The member from Toronto—Danforth.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question to the Minister of Energy: Given the continued problems with the refurbishment of Bruce A nuclear—repeated delays, billions of dollars of cost overruns, radioactive leaks—will the minister make public the cost of refurbishing the Darlington nuclear reactors before committing billions of dollars to a project that we may not even need?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I thank the member for the question. We have had a long history in the province of Ontario with nuclear energy. I know the third party was in power when the Darlington facility was completed and opened. In fact, Tom Mitchell of Ontario Power Generation led the international effort to deal with safety issues that arose as a result of the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

We have approached the refurbishment of Darlington—it's necessary, mid-life maintenance that's very extensive—in a slightly different way to make sure that we get better price protection for Ontario taxpayers and ratepayers and we get a better sense of what costs are before we actually incur them. That's why the first stage of the contract was for extensive planning and design of the first of about seven parts of it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Minister, your answer is a red herring—a glow-in-the-dark red herring. You either don't know or won't tell the cost of that refurbishment. Why are you setting up Ontario families for another huge hike in their hydro rates?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: It's actually the opposite. We don't want the refurbishments to end up with the cost overruns or the time extensions that we've seen in the past around the world, so there's a fundamentally different approach.

The experience from around the world has told us that the more you do up front in terms of planning design, the better price certainty you get. You can estimate whatever you like for the price right now, but until they actually plan it out, in this case to 30-minute intervals, you don't get as much price certainty. When you get better price certainty, you have others bid for the best price on the next parts of the contract. It's a different approach—better protection for taxpayers, more certainty for both price and time.

MEDICAL RESEARCH

Mr. David Zimmer: Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Innovation, and I ask this question as a former president of the Alzheimer Society of Canada.

It's estimated that brain disease and brain disorder cost our province \$39 billion annually, and the annual international market for diagnostics and therapeutics is estimated to be about \$130 billion—and that's growing every year.

Minister, what is Ontario doing to promote brain disease and disorder research and development in this area? It's a good opportunity for our economy and, more importantly, it's a good chance to offer hope to Ontarians who suffer from brain disorder and brain disease.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I want to thank the member for the question. I can absolutely assure him that this province remains on the leading edge when it comes to research in brain disease and disorders.

Earlier this month, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and myself joined Joe Rotman and Dr. Donald Stuss at the launch of the Ontario Brain Institute's first of three research projects to be carried out at facilities across this province. The OBI's research projects will create and sustain over 80 research jobs in institutions across the province. Combining the talents of these professionals and the findings of their research, Ontario expects to reap even more economic benefit from the commercialization of the discoveries related to these projects.

Through the Ontario Brain Institute's research, we'll find better therapies for our children and our youth who are impacted by brain disorders and help them reach their full potential.

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The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. David Zimmer: It's clear that Ontario is, in fact, the leader in life research and is recognized as a key player in neuroscience research globally, and that's due in large part to the Ontario Brain Institute.

Minister, you said the Ontario Brain Institute was focusing on three research projects; you announced those earlier in the month. Will you tell me and this House and the people of Ontario what the details of those projects are and how the projects are actually going to be executed?

Hon. Brad Duguid: I'm pleased to share with the member and this House a little bit of detail on these projects. Dr. Darcy Fehlings and a team of 27 researchers from the University of Toronto will be working out of the Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital. They're going to be using technology similar to video games, where researchers will help children with cerebral palsy strengthen their weakened limbs and improve their quality of life.

The second project has the Province of Ontario Neurodevelopmental Disorders Network working with 27 researchers from Sick Kids, Holland Bloorview and

McMaster University working with children who have a number of disorders, like autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, among others.

Finally, Doctors Burnham and Burneo will be leading 26 researchers from Western, McMaster and the University of Ottawa. They'll be working on the Epilepsy Discovery Project. Lots of exciting things going on in Ontario.

LICENCE PLATES

Mr. Todd Smith: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Minister, last week you announced a car tax. You couched it as a fee hike, but we all know that it's a tax. It's a way for this government to balance its incredibly poorly managed books on the backs of Ontario working families. This amounts to a 30% tax hike on every licence plate in the province of Ontario.

Just weeks after the Premier ruled out new taxes to pay for his big-spending ways, you come out and give us a tax with a slightly different name—the same tricks this government has played here since day number one.

Minister, will you, today, back away from your new plan to raise this car tax on every driver in Ontario?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss this in the Legislature today. First of all, the member should be aware of the fact that in New Brunswick, the fee to renew a licence plate is \$172; in BC, the fee to renew a licence plate is \$142; in Quebec, the fee to renew is \$104. In Ontario, it is currently \$74, and over three years it will go up to \$98. That will be about the average that exists in all of the provinces.

The commercial rate has not been increased in 24 years. The automobile rates have not been increased for 15 years. This is extremely reasonable. It's being brought in over a period of three years and it's going to contribute to our having safer roads and bridges in the province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Todd Smith: So it is a car tax. It is a car tax, and the car tax appears to be okay, and this appears to fly in the face of what the Premier said just a few weeks ago: that he wasn't going to raise taxes in the province.

You know, when you brought in this new car tax, I went into some meetings with local small businesses—family delivery and trucking companies, and some taxi services—and those business owners told me last week during the spring break, when you popped this on them, that your new tax was going to drastically increase their cost of doing business and, in some cases, they even said they were going to have to scale back or reduce their fleets.

Minister, if you cost a single Ontarian their job, you should lose yours. I ask again: Will you renounce this tax-raising, job-killing policy and get your hand out of the pocket of Ontario drivers by getting rid of this car tax today?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Once again, I'm pleased to respond. We're the party that's putting health care ahead of horse racing subsidies. There are some tough choices that lie ahead, but unlike the opposition, we don't think that subsidizing permits for dirt bikes and snowmobiles is necessarily a priority.

We, on the other hand, think it's important to continue to eliminate the deficit and invest in our highways, roads and bridges, and that's why fees must more closely reflect the actual cost of providing various services.

The increases that have been announced are still very significantly less than cost recovery, which the provincial auditor is telling us we should be moving towards. So they should be thanking us for going modestly. The people of Ontario are being well served by these modest increases, which will provide money for our budgets that will help keep our roads safe.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM FUNDING

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Premier, in your letter to AMO President Gary McNamara six days before the budget, you promised more support for municipal infrastructure. I quote the Premier: "Ontario Liberals agree that there needs to be more predictability and accountability in our relationship with municipalities—and we are going to create a predictable and permanent fund specifically for municipal roads and bridges."

Now we hear that the province is cutting infrastructure support. Which infrastructure projects is the government planning on cutting, and how many jobs will this cost communities?

Hon. Dalton McGuinty: To the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: You know, I think I just answered a question from one of my colleagues about the good work that we've been doing building our relationships with municipalities—

Interjection: Uploading.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: —and the uploading that we've been doing, taking those services, those costs, off the books of the municipalities, the towns and the communities and uploading them onto the provincial books: some \$2.7 billion, and we continue to upload another \$1.5 billion this year, 2012, of social costs coming onto the province's books.

We have been very, very clear, and we have made huge investments in infrastructure. My colleague the Minister of Infrastructure may want to comment on this, but we've made more investments in infrastructure since we've been in office than in a generation.

We will continue to make those investments, but the reality is that the uploading that we're doing gives municipalities more room to make these services available in their communities.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Mr. Speaker, a new casino built in downtown Toronto doesn't count as a comprehensive infrastructure plan.

The Conference Board of Canada estimates that each dollar on infrastructure spending in Ontario adds \$1.11 to the province's real GDP. It's a good way to create good jobs and boost long-term growth. In last year's budget, the Premier promised infrastructure aimed at protecting 300,000 jobs. How many jobs will be lost from the government's plan to cut infrastructure funding this year, and which communities will be finding it harder to pay for roads, bridges and transit systems come April 1?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm just going to take a look at some of the investments that we have made. Let's look:

—Arnprior: upgraded water and pollution control centre—\$5.3 million;

—Perth: revitalized Algonquin College local campus—\$4.8 million;

—Norfolk county: rehabilitated County Road 42—\$2.8 million;

—Grimsby: new west Niagara YMCA—\$6 million;

—Pelham: reconstructed a two-kilometre stretch of Haist Street—\$1.8 million;

—Milton: new arts and cultural centre library—\$8.1 million;

—Sarnia: built Lambton College Fire and Emergency Response Training Centre—\$4.9 million;

—East Ferris: East Ferris Community Centre—\$1.2 million;

—Newmarket: revitalized Newmarket's historic downtown—\$2 million.

Mr. Speaker, the list goes on and on. Add on top of that the \$2.5 billion a year that we have invested in highways, roads and bridges—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

SKILLS TRAINING

Mr. Jeff Leal: My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Constituents in my riding of Peterborough have been inquiring about the different programs that are available to help them increase their ability to find a good job. Most of them are adult learners who want to improve their literacy and numeracy skills so they can work toward their goal of a higher education and find a suitable job that will help them pay for their day-to-day expenses.

Speaker, these are hardworking Peterborough families. They are committed to supporting their families and communities. Our local economy thrives when these Ontarians have an education, a safe house and a good-paying job. In these uncertain times, our government needs to continue to help displaced workers and affected communities get back on their feet as soon as possible.

Speaker, through you to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities: How is the minister going to

ensure that constituents in Peterborough riding have the basic skills training to qualify for better and rewarding—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. The Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

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Hon. Glen R. Murray: I want to thank my friend from Peterborough for the question. In the 2011 Ontario budget, we added \$44 million in literacy and basic skills programs over three years. This was a remarkable investment. Being mindful and being prudent with the public purse, we deliver this through 223 agencies at 341 sites. We use existing organizations, community-based service providers, colleges and school boards. This allows us to deliver programs without additional administrative costs and to deliver those programs in almost every small rural community across Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jeff Leal: Through you, Speaker, thank you for that very comprehensive answer, and I will pass this information to my constituents in Peterborough on how they can access the government's literacy and basic skills program to improve their reading and writing, math and basic work skills.

These programs help Ontarians learn what employers want in an employee, and help Ontarians identify those transferable skills that help them feel confident about themselves, which results in increasing their chances for re-entering the workforce.

Students in these kinds of programs will have an opportunity in classrooms to be a team player and feel more close with their class and their teachers. These students will return to the workforce with motivation and encouragement and passion. This will empower them to go the extra mile.

Speaker, through you to my friend the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities: How is the minister going to ensure that the federal government continues to invest in the program—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: It's interesting, because our partnership with school boards and with colleges and the not-for-profit sector continues, but we have lost our largest partner, the federal government.

My predecessor, the member from Kitchener, wrote two letters to Minister Finley, without an answer. I have also written Minister Finley and have not received an answer. We now know that the federal government is withdrawing all of its funding from these programs and will be leaving us on our own with our community partners.

Right now, we have about 63,000 Ontarians in literacy programs. We understand that basic literacy is not only important to jobs and to participation in the economy, but as one person said to me, "When I learned how to read, at age 52, I read my granddaughter a bedtime story for the first time."

We know this is profoundly important to people's family lives, and I want to thank my predecessor for his leadership—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I do remind all members to sit down when I ask you to.

New question.

HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

Mr. Bill Walker: My question is to the Minister of Finance. Hanover Raceway is halfway to completion of a \$9-million expansion project, the Carriage Hall convention and banquet centre. The Hanover, Bentinck and Brant Agricultural Society, owners of the raceway, had made this investment in consultation with the OLG, which is under your realm, Minister, and with certainty that funding from the slots-at-racetracks program would remain. With no warning, you ended the agreement and thus their ability to fund this project. As many as 220 jobs are now at stake. You're decimating our local economy; you're killing jobs.

Minister, will you immediately advise the Hanover, Bentinck and Brant Agricultural Society of your decision so that they can continue with this important community project and save rural jobs?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Given our current deficit situation, this government has to establish priorities. We have chosen to invest in full-day learning in your riding. We've chosen to hire more nurses in your riding. We've chosen to train more doctors who can practise in your riding. We had a full two-year—a full six-month consultation on this. We are no longer going to support the horse racing industry with \$345 million a year.

A variety of groups were consulted—more than 50. It was well documented. As difficult as these choices are, our priority is with education, our priority is with health care and our priority is to get the budget balanced again. We simply cannot afford to subsidize the horse racing industry to that—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary? The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance. My riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock and our neighbour riding of Peterborough have been hard hit by higher-than-average unemployment rates. The loss of Kawartha Downs would have a devastating impact on this part of Ontario, where hundreds of people would lose their jobs.

This uncertainty you've created is causing problems now. The breeding industry is falling apart now. Veterinarians are losing their jobs now. Grooms, drivers, trainers and farmers don't know what their future will hold. I met a driver on the weekend who was turned down by his

bank for a home mortgage because he was employed in the horse racing industry.

The member from Peterborough won't ask the question, so I will: Will you assure the people of my riding, the people of Peterborough and across the province that you will reverse this ill-thought-out policy which has created uncertainty for a key industry in the communities across Ontario?

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Mr. Speaker, we've announced portions of the land-based gaming review. We'll have more to say about that as Paul Godfrey—members opposite will know Mr. Godfrey; he's a well-known Ontarian, a supporter of their parties. We'll have more to say about new investments, Mr. Speaker. I know the member from Peterborough has been working very hard on some of those investments.

I regret that you're opposing this plan right now. I think you'll probably regret that fairly soon, because what we're doing is we're creating 2,000 new jobs.

That party, who two weeks ago said you shouldn't subsidize businesses, wants to keep subsidizing an industry with \$345 million.

We're fixing it. We'll be making investments in rural—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

HIGH-OCCUPANCY VEHICLE LANES

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Taxis represent one component in a strategy to reduce traffic. They provide an alternative to taking one's car. When used with other forms of transportation, they can ease congestion.

Taxi drivers have raised a concern that when they use high-occupancy vehicle lanes, they are able to use them when they have a passenger but when they don't they often get stuck in traffic. My constituents have approached me, indicating the members of this government have committed to expanding HOV lanes to allow taxi drivers to use them. However, many of these promises were made on the eve of the election.

So my question to the minister is, through you, Speaker, will the minister actually commit to expanding the HOV lanes, allowing taxi drivers to use them and addressing the concerns of my constituents and taxi drivers across the GTA?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I thank the member for the question. Indeed, I have heard from representatives of the taxi industry, both in the GTA and in the Ottawa area. I have heard them out on a number of occasions. I have raised this issue with people in my ministry, and certainly, as we look at creating more HOV lanes across the province and looking at existing HOV lanes, there is serious consideration being given to that particular request.

I assure the taxi drivers and the taxi industry across the province that they are being given full attention by my ministry on this issue.

DEFERRED VOTES

SECURITY FOR COURTS, ELECTRICITY GENERATING FACILITIES AND NUCLEAR FACILITIES ACT, 2012 LOI DE 2012 SUR LA SÉCURITÉ DES TRIBUNAUX, DES CENTRALES ÉLECTRIQUES ET DES INSTALLATIONS NUCLÉAIRES

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

Bill 34, An Act to repeal the Public Works Protection Act, amend the Police Services Act with respect to court security and enact the Security for Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2012 / Projet de loi 34, Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la protection des ouvrages publics, modifiant la Loi sur les services policiers en ce qui concerne la sécurité des tribunaux et édictant la Loi de 2012 sur la sécurité des centrales électriques et des installations nucléaires.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1138 to 1143.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Take your seats, please. I would ask that the members take their seats, please.

The Sergeant-at-Arms is doing his job.

Thank you.

Madame Meilleur has moved second reading of Bill 34, An Act to repeal the Public Works Protection Act, amend the Police Services Act with respect to court security and enact the Security for Electricity Generating Facilities and Nuclear Facilities Act, 2012. All those in favour of the motion please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Elliott, Christine	Meilleur, Madeleine	Wong, Soo
Fedeli, Victor	Miller, Norm	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Miller, Paul	Yakubuski, John
Forster, Cindy	Milligan, Rob E.	Yurek, Jeff
Gélinas, France	Milloy, John	Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed?

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):

The ayes are 99; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Minister.

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: I would ask that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): So ordered.

There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1148 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'm delighted today to introduce representatives from the Ontario Co-operative Association, also known as On Co-Op. They are located in my wonderful riding of Guelph. In the gallery we have Mark Ventry, the new executive director—congratulations; and Peter Cameron. They will be holding a reception starting at 5 in rooms 228 and 230, and they would love to see everybody come and visit them. While you're waiting for the 5:50 vote, you have something to do now.

Mr. Steve Clark: There's been an Ottawa senator sighting here in the building today. Although he isn't in the chamber right now, he was in this chamber for 29 years. My predecessor, now-Senator Bob Runciman, is here today with Todd Smith, the member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

JOHN NEWMAN

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It is my privilege today to stand in honour of my constituent from Nepean-Carleton, John Newman of North Gower. On June 10, Mr. Newman will be inducted into the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame, a distinction that he is very deserving of.

John began to make his mark in farming when he and his lovely wife, Marion, purchased Jomar Farms in 1966. Just a year and a half ago, they celebrated a very important milestone. I actually caught them at a Michael Bublé concert and it was really nice to see. Of course, I was very excited to be there myself, because it was Michael Bublé.

Since then, their farm has been recognized for its excellence, including being recognized by both Kemptville college and the University of Guelph, which use their farm to teach students. John and Marion were further recognized with Master Feed awards for top stocker

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Hardeman, Ernie	Moridi, Reza
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harris, Michael	Munro, Julia
Arnott, Ted	Hillier, Randy	Murray, Glen R.
Bailey, Robert	Horwath, Andrea	Naqvi, Yasir
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoskins, Eric	Natyshak, Taras
Barrett, Toby	Hudak, Tim	Nicholls, Rick
Bartolucci, Rick	Jackson, Rod	O'Toole, John
Bentley, Christopher	Jaczek, Helena	Quellette, Jerry J.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jeffrey, Linda	Pettapiece, Randy
Best, Margaret	Jones, Sylvia	Piruzza, Teresa
Bisson, Gilles	Klees, Frank	Prue, Michael
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Broten, Laurel C.	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Campbell, Sarah	Leone, Rob	Schein, Jonah
Cansfield, Donna H.	MacCharles, Tracy	Scott, Laurie
Chan, Michael	MacLaren, Jack	Shurman, Peter
Chiarelli, Bob	MacLeod, Lisa	Singh, Jagmeet
Chudleigh, Ted	Mangat, Amrit	Smith, Todd
Clark, Steve	Mantha, Michael	Sorbara, Greg
Colle, Mike	Marchese, Rosario	Sousa, Charles
Coteau, Michael	Matthews, Deborah	Tabuns, Peter
Crack, Grant	Mauro, Bill	Takhar, Harinder S.
Craitor, Kim	McDonnell, Jim	Taylor, Monique
Delaney, Bob	McGuinty, Dalton	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dickson, Joe	McKenna, Jane	Vanthof, John
DiNovo, Cheri	McMeekin, Ted	Walker, Bill
Duguid, Brad	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
Duncan, Dwight	McNeely, Phil	Witmer, Elizabeth

quality and an OSCIA certificate for soil management and crop production.

John has offered more than just excellent farming in Ontario and Canada. Through the years, Mr. Newman has also taken on extraordinary leadership and communication roles within the beef industry. He served for several years on the Ontario Cattlemen's Association board and was integral in the process of restructuring the organization and implementing its new strategic plan.

In 2000, Mr. Newman became a founding director of the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency. When the BSE crisis hit the Canadian beef industry in 2003, Mr. Newman became a key spokesperson for Ontario beef. At that time, he became the chair of the Beef Information Centre, and his leadership over the next four years helped maintain Canadian consumers' confidence in Ontario beef. For that I am so grateful, as we all are in this chamber.

I know John and his wife are watching at home. On behalf of this chamber, John, we want to say: We salute you. We're proud of you. Thank you and congratulations.

AGNES MACPHAIL DAY

Mr. Michael Prue: Every year on March 24, the community of East York celebrates Agnes Macphail Day in honour of the first woman to be elected to the House of Commons in Ottawa and the first woman, also, to take her seat here in this Legislature.

This year will be the 19th anniversary of our celebration, and it will take place on March 24 between 7 and 9 o'clock at the East York Civic Centre. We will have wonderful entertainment from the East York Choir, now known as VOCA. The Agnes Macphail speaking contest winner, Haris Babar, will be giving her speech; she's a grade seven student. There will be an address by Jane Gibson and Barry Penhale.

Of course, the highlight of the evening is the award presentation. This year's winner is Alice Carriman. She is known in our community as the grandmother of Thorncliffe Park. She is a nurse, a mother, and throughout her entire life has spent time on education issues, health care, seniors and tenants.

Here are just a few of her accomplishments over the last number of years. She started the first breakfast club. She has planted gardens in the school courtyards. She crochets for homeless people. She started a Scrabble club to teach literacy to young people. She raises funds to subsidize field trips for those students who cannot go on them. She has after-school programs—the East York spelling bee was started by her. The tenants' association, Neighbourhood Watch, intergenerational programs and Scouts Canada—all from one remarkable woman whom we will recognize and honour on the 24th.

NOWRUZ

Mr. Reza Moridi: Today is a very special day. Today is Nowruz. Nowruz is the celebration of the spring equinox and usually occurs on March 21 or the previous or following day, depending on where it is observed.

Nowruz is commonly perceived as the most Iranian of all celebrations. Nowruz is widely celebrated in various Asian countries. It's also the official new year and the start of the calendar year in Iran, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, Nowruz has been celebrated for at least 3,000 years and is deeply rooted in the traditions of the Zoroastrian belief system. The year 2012 marks 3,750 years since Asho Zarathushtra propounded his teachings to humanity. The core of his teachings, compiled in the Gathas, have brought us the earliest encouragements to strive for peace, social justice and the attainment of righteousness. These have been summarized in three phrases: good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

About 250,000 Ontarians from various ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, such as Iranians, Afghans, Azeris, Kurds, Zoroastrians, Baha'is and Ismailis, celebrate Nowruz every year.

Nowruz is also the rebirth of nature and can easily be celebrated by all the people in the world. I wish all Ontarians a happy Nowruz. May this Nowruz bring harmony, peace and prosperity to everyone around the world.

Remarks in Persian.

FINES

Mr. John O'Toole: I rise to inform Ontarians that we have a problem in Ontario with unpaid fines, much like the Premier has a problem with spending. This government has ignored the issue to the tune of \$1 billion each year. That's right; according to the Ontario Association of Police Service Boards, unpaid fines already total over \$1 billion. This number is growing each and every year.

Speaker, this problem undermines public safety, the rule of law and, in fact, accountability. It tells me that this government has chosen not to enforce the law. More tools and resources are needed for our local municipalities who administer much of the Provincial Offences Act. We need a proper information database so that one ministry of the government and another can cross-reference and make references to these fines. You would think in the 21st century, with computers and automation, that the government could get on with solving this problem. We need more carrots and more sticks.

Let's give an example: Why not provide some incentives here, like a discount for fines that are paid early? Or double the costs of fines that are paid late? The government must work co-operatively with their partners and the municipalities and the police around the province to get the job done.

I put it to you this way: Unless the Liberal government sets out to solve this problem in some deliberate way, it is doing nothing more than downloading to our municipalities.

CHILD CARE

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, next week, here in this chamber, we'll be receiving the budget from the McGuinty government. All over Ontario, families are

waiting to see if their child care centres will get the funding they need to survive. Failure on the part of this government to put in place a good transition plan for us to go into all-day kindergarten has meant financial crisis for many child care centres. We face the closure of those centres.

For many single parents who are waiting for that budget, they know what they're facing is child care or welfare.

Once again, I take this opportunity to ask the government to put the funds in the budget so that our child care centres are protected, so that our families are protected.

1510

BUY-LOCAL POLICIES

Mr. Mike Colle: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure you'd be surprised to know that recently, Ontarians crossing the border to Erie county—we know where Buffalo is—paid about \$1.25 billion in sales tax collected in Erie county. The people in Erie county tell us that most of it's coming from Canadian shoppers.

This got me to think, Mr. Speaker: Why aren't we doing more to encourage people in Brantford, people in the Lake Simcoe region, everywhere, to shop and buy locally made products? Why do we always go to Walmart and buy products made in China? Let's buy products that are crafted, designed, made here in our own communities so we can keep Ontario jobs, we can reward Ontario entrepreneurship and ensure that our children have jobs in the future.

In my area of Eglinton–Lawrence, I have an amazing area called the upper Dufferin village, where we have shirt manufacturers that make Ontario-made shirts, believe it or not. They're in suits. They make Ontario meat products, like Katz's Deli that makes brisket that's better than any brisket you can get anywhere else outside of Ontario and Toronto.

So I just want to try and support this idea of: Buy locally and support your local manufacturing, your local entrepreneurs. You don't always have to go to Buffalo. Shop locally.

BRADY HESLIP

Mrs. Jane McKenna: Speaker, I rise to recognize a three-time all-star from Burlington's Nelson High School and a current guard for the Baylor Bears—Brady Heslip.

On Saturday afternoon, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Brady nailed nine three-pointers, lifting his team to an 80-63 win over Colorado and into the Sweet 16. Those 27 points were a career best. His nine three-pointers were just shy of the tournament record. It was the stuff of Hollywood scripts and highlight reels. It had him trending as the number one topic on Twitter.

He might come by it naturally. His father, Tom Heslip, was an all-Canadian basketball player. His uncle, Jay Triano, spent 11 years on our national team and is a former head coach for the Raptors.

But Brady leaves nothing to chance. His work ethic is just as amazing as his on-court performance. As a young boy, he practised relentlessly and now, as an honour student at Baylor, he hits the gym two or three times every day in the off season and reportedly makes 150 three-pointers before each practice. That dedication is the mark of a true champion.

However the 2012 bracket plays out, one thing is for sure: Brady Heslip is someone we'll be hearing a lot more of in the years to come. We're very proud to have him from Burlington, Ontario.

ONTARIO CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I would like to recognize the Ontario Co-operative Association, which is hosting its annual Queen's Park reception today to meet with members and to commemorate the International Year of Co-operatives. The United Nations proclaimed 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives, and co-ops in more than 75 countries are taking part.

Ontario's 1,300 co-ops are holding events throughout the year to celebrate and promote the important role that co-operatives play in our economy. On January 12, I participated in a flag-raising ceremony at Guelph city hall and in the national launch of the international year, which involved an historic webcast and coast-to-coast celebrations.

Co-operatives are business enterprises owned and operated for the benefit of those using their services. They build sustainable communities and foster local economic development. Twice as many co-operatives remain in business after 10 years as other types of corporations. Co-ops work. The province's co-ops, credit unions and caisses populaires operate 1,900 locations in 400 communities across Ontario, serving 1.4 million members, generate more than \$20.1 billion in revenue and employ more than 1,550 people. Guelph alone has more than 40 co-ops.

Please visit the co-op association's reception in room 228, and they'll tell you lots more about our wonderful co-ops.

TAXATION

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I rise today with concerns about the changes implemented to the Trillium tax benefit and the impact this is having on families in my riding. Without any notice or consultation, the Liberal government implemented changes that affect Ontarians who rely on an income tax refund.

I've also heard from retirees in my riding who, out of necessity, are working to supplement their income. With two or more sources of income throughout the year, many end up owing income tax. In previous tax years, their tax credits could have been used to offset any income tax owing. This year, because taxpayers received no notice about the payment change for provincial tax

credits, seniors were unable to plan for the change and are struggling.

I'm also concerned about how this change affects the collection of child support payments. We know that the Family Responsibility Office garnishees income tax in an effort to collect arrears on child support orders. Because of the changes made this year by the Liberal government, the families who are owed child support may have to wait even longer for the money they are owed. Individuals with a garnishment order should have access to the lump sum payments as soon as possible. I would ask that the Minister of Finance make changes immediately to the Trillium tax benefit to ensure that families waiting for child support payments will receive money that is owed to them without any further delay.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received a report on intended appointments dated March 20, 2012, from 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.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT, 2012

LOI DE 2012 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

Madame Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 49, An Act to amend the French Language Services Act with respect to the French Language Services Commissioner's reporting requirements / Projet de loi 49, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services en français en ce qui concerne les rapports exigés du commissaire aux services en français.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ça me fait extrêmement plaisir, en cette Semaine de la francophonie, de présenter un projet de loi qui s'appelle la Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services en français en ce qui concerne les rapports exigés du commissaire aux services en français.

It is my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, in this week de la francophonie, to introduce a new act that's called An Act to amend the French Language Services Act with respect to the French Language Services Commissioner's reporting requirements, and that it now be read for the first time.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for un petit statement.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Merci, monsieur le Président. Bien, ça va être très court. Présentement, la Loi sur les services en français dit que le commissaire aux services en français doit soumettre son rapport annuel et ses rapports spéciaux à la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones. Le projet de loi est tout simple : il amène un amendement à cette loi afin que le commissaire relève de l'Assemblée législative dans son ensemble. C'est tout. Merci.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

LA FRANCOPHONIE

L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Je suis très fière de souligner à l'Assemblée législative que nous célébrons aujourd'hui la Journée internationale de la francophonie. Encore cette année, les francophones de l'Ontario, de l'ensemble du Canada et de toute la planète joignent leur voix pour exprimer leur fierté envers leur patrimoine culturel et linguistique.

Cette année, les célébrations revêtent une signification encore plus grande pour deux raisons. Dans un premier temps, l'Ontario fait face présentement à des défis économiques et budgétaires qui nécessitent une plus grande solidarité entre tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes.

The francophone experience is a good example of the mutual assistance and collective effort of which we are all capable. I believe that intercultural solidarity is a truly unifying factor that enables us to address together the challenges we are experiencing within government and in Ontario society as a whole, whose diversity is one of its greatest assets.

1520

Je tiens à féliciter mes collègues des trois partis politiques ontariens qui savent reconnaître l'apport des francophones à l'avancement social et économique de l'Ontario.

Ensemble, depuis l'adoption unanime de la Loi sur les services en français, il y a plus de 25 ans, les parlementaires d'ici contribuent non seulement au renforcement de la solidarité francophone mais à la consolidation de notre diversité culturelle. Je suis très fière de tout ce qui a été accompli.

Cette unanimité parlementaire est à l'origine de très belles réalisations politiques, gouvernementales et institutionnelles pour l'avancement des francophones.

On n'a qu'à penser aux écoles françaises qui connaissent un succès remarquable, aux services en français, aux services communautaires et de justice en français et au rayonnement de l'ensemble des institutions francophones partout en Ontario.

These are all achievements which this Legislative Assembly can declare a success. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all MPPs who have contributed to the advancement of francophones in Ontario.

Monsieur le Président, la Journée internationale de la francophonie est importante pour une deuxième raison. Cette année, le thème de cette journée est « Le français est une chance ». Je pense que ce thème est une belle occasion de réfléchir au statut de notre langue chez nous.

Au Canada et en Ontario, nous vivons des cycles où l'on a tendance à tenir pour acquis certaines réalités liées à la francophonie.

The issue of French language and culture, in a society as diverse as ours, remains a lifelong challenge from one generation to the next. But, yes, we are truly lucky to be francophone in such an open and tolerant province as Ontario.

Toutefois, il nous faut toujours et sans cesse travailler fort pour le maintien des droits linguistiques et des institutions francophones qui connaissent des succès en Ontario. Il s'agit d'un défi de tous les instants qui exige courage, détermination et vigilance.

Comme le dit si bien le secrétaire général de la francophonie, M. Abdou Diouf, dans son message d'introduction de la Journée internationale de la francophonie 2012, je souhaite que l'on continue de célébrer la chance d'être francophone.

Je le cite : « Savourons cette chance, non pas comme un acquis, mais comme un défi à relever jour après jour, comme un puissant moyen d'action, comme un formidable levier pour faire émerger une autre vision du monde et du destin qui nous lie, une vision acceptable par tous, équitable pour tous. »

Monsieur le Président, je termine en invitant chaque député à se joindre aux célébrations qui se tiennent dans leur comté cette semaine. J'invite également toutes les citoyennes et tous les citoyens de l'Ontario à célébrer la diversité linguistique dans notre province en pleine conscience de demeurer vigilants et constructifs lorsqu'il s'agit du fragile équilibre entre les droits de la majorité et le devoir de celle-ci de respecter les minorités fondatrices de notre pays.

Je vous invite tous et toutes à souligner la chance d'être francophone et la chance d'être solidaires dans cette riche diversité qui est la fibre même de l'Ontario moderne. Bonne Journée de la francophonie. Merci.

CO-OPERATIVES

COOPÉRATIVES

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased today to speak to you about our long-standing work with the co-op sector, and I join my colleague the member for Guelph in welcoming the Ontario Co-operative Association to Queen's Park today.

The Ontario Co-operative Association develops and promotes the entire co-op sector in Ontario. It's a

resource and a common voice for Ontario credit unions, co-operatives and caisses populaires.

J'aimerais en particulier rendre hommage aux efforts qu'ils déploient pour veiller à ce que les Ontariennes et les Ontariens aient accès à tout un éventail d'options de logement abordable.

In particular, I would like to recognize their work to ensure Ontarians have access to a range of affordable housing options. As you may know, the United Nations has named 2012 the International Year of Co-operatives. The International Year of Co-operatives is raising public awareness of the invaluable contributions of co-operatives in reducing poverty, creating jobs and helping social integration.

Earlier this year, the Premier wrote that "co-operatives boast a proud history of enriching our communities, strengthening our society and building our nation."

As Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, I'd like to recognize the work of the Ontario region of the Co-operative Housing Federation, which focuses on co-operative housing. Our government has a long history of working closely with the co-op housing federation in Ontario.

Nous reconnaissons l'importance du secteur des coopératives qui offre des options de logement abordable pour les familles de l'Ontario, et nous savons que la fédération déploie des efforts inlassables pour y arriver.

We recognize the importance of the co-op sector in providing affordable housing options for Ontario families, and we know that the federation works hard to help make this happen. We share the federation's commitment to maintaining a strong co-operative housing sector.

I want to acknowledge the unique nature of co-op housing that allows people to have an active role in the place that they live. I think that is really fundamental to the success of the co-op movement. Our government has always had a close working relationship with the federation.

For our part, we recognize the need for affordable housing and its role in supporting the growth and health of communities across Ontario. Housing, as everyone in this House knows, is much more than the buildings in which Ontarians live. Housing is a secure base from which people go to school, from which people find work, and that's why we developed a long-term affordable housing strategy. It's actually the first of its kind in Ontario.

The long-term affordable housing strategy supports our poverty reduction strategy and sets a strong foundation for a more efficient, accessible system for those who need safe, affordable housing, and provides increased flexibility for our housing partners to meet local needs in their communities. In other words, the money that has gone out as part of that affordable housing strategy has gone out in such a way that municipalities can work within a framework to meet the needs that they have identified in their own communities.

We've made, as a government, the largest commitment to affordable housing of any other government in

the history of Ontario. Mr. Speaker, last November the provincial and federal governments announced a combined investment of \$480.6 million under the Investment in Affordable Housing for Ontario program. Members in the House will know that as the IAH program. This initiative will help to build or repair approximately 7,000 units of affordable housing over four years and will create 5,000 jobs in Ontario. The program builds on our record of providing \$2.5 billion already in affordable housing—as I say, more than any previous government. This allocation will build and repair more than 270,000 units and provide 35,000 rent supplements.

Monsieur le Président, notre gouvernement réalise qu'un logement décent est bien plus qu'un abri. Il offre stabilité, sécurité et dignité.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, our government realizes that decent housing is much more than shelter, much more than a building. It provides stability, security and dignity. It plays a central role in reducing poverty and, as I've said, creates a strong base from which to find a job, raise a family, contribute to strengthening the Ontario economy.

Our government has made significant progress on our housing agenda. We'll continue to work with our co-op partners so they can continue to provide affordable housing options for Ontario families. I believe that together we're making a real difference in the lives of families around the province.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to continuing to work with the co-op housing federation. We believe that the diversity of housing in Ontario is not complete without a healthy co-op sector.

I would just say, Mr. Speaker, that in addition to that work that we're doing with our partners in the province, we will continue to need a federal partner in providing affordable housing in Ontario. That's something that we have had. As I say, the \$480.6 million that has flowed to communities around the province is a partnership between the federal government and the provincial government, and we look to the federal government to continue that partnership beyond 2014, which is the last date at which there is any of that money available.

1530

I'm also very happy to extend an invitation, as the member for Guelph did, to attend the Ontario Co-operative Association annual reception here at the Legislature later. The focus of the event is a very important issue that we should all support: building a better Ontario, strengthening communities, creating jobs and building resilience.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merci, monsieur le Président.

Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac): Merci beaucoup.

LA FRANCOPHONIE

M. John O'Toole: Je suis très heureux de me lever dans l'Assemblée aujourd'hui pour rendre hommage aux Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Ontariennes pour

l'identification du 14^e anniversaire de la Journée internationale de la francophonie.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of our leader, Tim Hudak, and the PC opposition, I'm honoured to stand before this assembly to pay tribute to francophone Ontarians for their 14th anniversary on this International Day of La Francophonie.

Félicitations et merci.

Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac): Merci beaucoup, monsieur.

CO-OPERATIVES

Mr. Steve Clark: I am pleased to rise in this, the International Year of Co-operatives, to speak on behalf of our caucus.

I, too, would like to join in welcoming members of the Ontario Co-operative Association here to Queen's Park for their annual lobby day. Thank you for the work that you do, and I look forward to meeting with you later and discussing some of the successes and legislative concerns that you have.

Speaker, I think it's important that we do take a moment today and recognize the tremendous range and breadth of co-operatives in Ontario. We've all seen, in our communities, this sector doing tremendously good things, whether it's a local credit union, a housing co-op or an agricultural co-op. But it's not until we take a step back and take a province-wide look at co-operatives that we truly grasp the important role they play in our communities.

Consider that there are more than 1.4 million Ontarians who count themselves as members of some form of co-operative. They account for over \$30 billion in assets and employ a remarkable 15,000 people. When you come from a rural riding like I do, Speaker, in Leeds–Grenville, you really understand the amount of jobs that are really at stake.

It's important also to remember that the wages of those employees and the assets held by those co-operatives stay in communities and help make them stronger. In short, Speaker, they're a very invaluable and true component of our communities that enrich the social fabric of all Ontario.

I would like to, again, mention the fact that the United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed this year the International Year of Co-operatives, and I can think of no greater endorsement for the organization than receiving that UN proclamation.

Co-ops work because of their member-driven philosophy. It means that the policies and decisions that the members make are by members themselves and benefit those organizations. You know, I think Ontarians probably wish that we had that same influence on policies that the government put forward.

We all know that co-ops benefit sectors like agriculture, energy, child care, finance and many others, but as the minister noted, the most well known are co-op housing. Currently, in my riding of Leeds–Grenville—I

want to do a shout-out to two wonderful co-ops in the city of Brockville: the Brock-Seaway Housing Co-operative on Dana Street and the Shepherd's Green Co-op on Liston Avenue, two organizations that certainly, as a former municipal politician, I'm well aware of. If you've visited either one of those two 30-unit buildings, I think you would see a tremendous amount of vibrancy in those co-ops, and they add a lot to the neighbourhoods that they're in. It's an example that they're an essential part of a housing strategy.

I think the concern that many of them have is that there are now 122,000 people on not-for-profit co-op housing waiting lists in Ontario. I think we have the need that we need to look at in terms of improving organizations like the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada. And in my part of the province, the Co-operative Housing Association of Eastern Ontario certainly knows that there are some issues that the government needs to deal with.

Today is a day, though, that we should be celebrating. But before we do, I just want to bring a couple of points. Recently, I've met with the Ontario region of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada, and they've had a long-standing request of this government to move co-op housing tenure disputes from Ontario courts and into the Landlord and Tenant Board. It's surprising that, even though the government's given them every indication that they're favourable in moving this common-sense move forward, a move that would save countless amounts of time and money—yet they've been very frustrated that they've seen nothing happen from this government since the Legislative Assembly met again.

In closing, I just want to say that today's a time for us to celebrate the co-operative movement in Ontario, and again, I join in encouraging folks to visit their reception this afternoon.

LA FRANCOPHONIE

M^{me} France Gélinas: Monsieur le Président, ça me fait extrêmement plaisir d'ajouter ma voix aux célébrations de la Journée internationale de la francophonie. Comme vous le savez, il y a quelques minutes, j'ai présenté un projet de loi dont, je crois, le temps est venu. Le temps est venu de donner à notre commissaire aux services en français, M. François Boileau, un petit peu plus de pouvoir que ce qu'il a. J'aimerais vous lire des lettres d'appui à cet effet.

En premier, de l'ACFO du grand Sudbury, qui dit : « L'ACFO du grand Sudbury croit que le Commissariat aux services en français devrait déposer ses rapports directement au Président de l'Assemblée, comme le font les autres commissaires, plutôt que de les déposer à un ministère. L'ACFO croit que l'adoption de cet amendement permettra une meilleure visibilité des services en français ainsi qu'un meilleur accès à ces services pour toute la communauté franco-ontarienne. » C'est signé « Joanne Gervais, Directrice générale ».

Également, un mémo de l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens, qui nous dit : « L'AEFO estime ... que le temps est venu de franchir une dernière étape pour assurer à ce poste l'indépendance et le prestige qui doivent revenir à un protecteur du citoyen. Nous croyons que l'amendement que propose le Nouveau Parti démocratique aurait l'avantage de dépolitiser la fonction du commissaire aux services en français et de mettre ce poste à l'abri de décisions de nature partisane. » C'est signé « Le président, Benoit Mercier ».

J'ai également l'Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario, qui nous dit : « Étant donné que nous considérons important le travail du commissaire, nous croyons qu'il est pertinent de modifier cette loi pour donner une plus grande visibilité au travail du commissaire. » C'est signé « Le maire du comté McGarry et président de l'AFMO, Clermont Lapointe ».

J'en ai d'autres. J'ai également la Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario, mieux connue comme la FAFO, qui nous dit que la FAFO « accueille favorablement le projet de loi ... La FAFO ne peut que soutenir les initiatives qui renforcent le rôle du Commissariat aux services en français. Bien que l'Office des affaires francophones assume bien son mandat.... Le dépôt du rapport du commissaire aux services en français au Président de l'Assemblée législative affirme cet état de faits. » C'est signé « Olivia Roy », au nom de la FAFO.

J'ai également l'Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario, qui nous dit : « L'Assemblée de la francophonie soutient l'initiative du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario de présenter un projet de loi voulant que le commissaire aux services en français réponde directement de l'Assemblée législative, comme c'est le cas pour le vérificateur ... »

J'en ai bien d'autres, mais je dois partager mon temps. Merci.

CO-OPERATIVES

Ms. Cindy Forster: It's a pleasure to rise today in recognition of International Year of Co-operatives, who play a huge role in communities across Ontario. About two million Ontarians are members of at least one co-op, and over 70,000 volunteer their time on co-op boards. We have many co-op housing units in my riding, and a well-respected and well-loved former MPP, Mel Swart, is—his name is in honour of one of those co-ops in my riding.

Co-ops exist in all sectors of the economy, and they are a way for communities to exercise control over the economic, social and cultural activities that affect the lives of community members. The NDP has a proud history of supporting co-operatives. Of course, our parent organization, the CCF, had a “co-operative” in its name.

We need to support greater involvement in the co-op movement, particularly in affordable housing. Unfortunately, the long-term affordable housing strategy is not

meeting the needs of 152,000 households in Ontario that are waiting for affordable housing. That number has increased by 18% over the last two years.

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The co-op housing association and thousands of members have urged the government to create an environment that encourages the development of co-operatives, allowing them to compete on an equal footing with other business enterprises, and this means updating the regulatory environment to enable them to be more competitive.

So today I would say, let's celebrate the contribution that co-ops make to communities in Ontario, and let's work tomorrow to take actions needed to support a thriving future for co-ops in Ontario.

I encourage all of my NDP colleagues to go out to the reception today at 5:30 before our meeting.

PETITIONS

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to present another petition on energy from my riding of Durham, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas Solray Energy Corp. has given notice of its proposal for a class 3 solar power facility known as Epsom Solar Farm to be located in the township of Scugog; and

"Whereas the site is on prime farmland that has been in production for many generations; and

"Whereas we consider productive farmland to be of vital importance to farm and rural communities by providing healthy, locally grown food and ensuring the sustainability of Canada's food supply; and

"Whereas class 1 to 5 farmland and land that is zoned rural or agricultural should be protected from the current proposal and similar projects that may be considered in the future; and

"Whereas other sites of less value to agriculture are better locations for solar power developments;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature not to allow large, industrial solar farms on prime agricultural land, and we further express our support for giving local communities, through their elected municipal councils, the power to control and approve large-scale renewable energy" projects, wind or solar.

I'm pleased to sign and support this and present it to Victoria, one of the pages.

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from all over Ontario, and it reads as follows:

« Attendu que la mission du commissaire aux services en français est de veiller à ce que la population reçoive, en français, des services de qualité du gouvernement de

l'Ontario et de surveiller l'application de la Loi sur les services en français;

« Attendu que le commissaire a le mandat de mener des enquêtes indépendantes selon la Loi sur les services en français;

« Attendu que contrairement au vérificateur général, à l'ombudsman, au commissaire à l'environnement et au commissaire à l'intégrité qui, eux, relèvent de l'Assemblée législative, le commissaire aux services en français relève de la ministre déléguée aux services en français;

« Nous, soussignés, demandons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario de changer les pouvoirs du commissaire aux services en français afin qu'il relève directement de l'Assemblée législative. »

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to change the reporting relationship of the French language commissioner so that he reports directly to the Legislative Assembly."

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

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I have a petition from my riding of York South-Weston that is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and reads as follows:

"Whereas St. John the Evangelist Catholic elementary school in Weston is overcrowded, with 480 students in a school designed for 260; and

"Whereas the students will be relocating 40 minutes away in September 2012 during the duration of the Metrolinx Weston tunnel construction; and

"Whereas the Toronto Catholic District School Board has placed St. John the Evangelist third on the urgent capital priority list for 2012;

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

"Respectfully request full funding to replace St. John the Evangelist school during the Metrolinx Weston tunnel construction; therefore, the students are not relocated twice."

I agree with this petition. I will hand it over to page Victoria.

TAXATION

Mr. Victor Fedeli: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas many Ontario residents have come to rely on receiving their full Ontario tax credit early in the year; and

"Whereas changes to the tax credit payment schedule were not widely publicized;

"We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the government of Ontario to reinstate the Ontario tax credit payment schedule utilized during 2011."

I agree with this. I will affix my name to it and give it to page Emma M.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Phil McNeely: This petition is from parents in the Avalon Public School area of Ottawa–Orléans.

“To the Legislature of Ontario:

“Whereas the current enrolment of Avalon Public School is 687 students;

“Whereas the student capacity of the school is 495 students, as determined by the Ministry of Education’s own occupancy formula;

“Whereas the issue of overcrowding and lack of space makes it impossible for Avalon Public School to offer full-day kindergarten until the overcrowding issue is addressed;

“Whereas Avalon Public School is located in a high-growth community;

“Whereas the enrolment at Avalon Public School is expected to continue rising at a rate of 10% to 15% a year for the foreseeable future;

“Whereas the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board has made building a new school in Avalon a top capital priority;

“We, the undersigned, call on the province of Ontario and Ministry of Education to provide the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board with the necessary funding to build an additional school in Avalon, to open no later than September 2014.”

I agree with this petition, and I will send it forward with Nicholas.

EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE CENTRE

Ms. Laurie Scott: The Beaverton community employment centre is due to close.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we are asking for intervention to reverse the decision made by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to close the employment resource centre in Beaverton, Ontario;

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

“To request that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities of Ontario continue to fund, or find alternative funding for, the employment resource centre in Beaverton, Ontario. This is a vital service for Brock township and a centre point for social assistance in our community.”

I present this to page Sharmeila and affix my signature to it.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Todd Smith: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there is a growing body of evidence confirming industrial wind development has serious adverse effects on host communities;

“Whereas over 135 people in Ontario have reported serious negative health effects from industrial wind

development, and at least a dozen families have been bought out of their homes;

“Whereas Ontario’s Green Energy Act has ended local planning control by stripping municipal councils of their rights;

“Whereas 80 municipal councils, representing two million Ontarians, called on the government to put in place a full moratorium on industrial wind development until an independent epidemiological health study is completed, proper environmental regulations and protections are put in place, and local democracy is restored;

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

“Immediately put a moratorium on all industrial wind proposals; fund an independent epidemiological health study to develop safe setbacks; legislate those findings; develop stringent environmental protection standards for natural areas; and require all projects to comply with regulations based on science and local planning.”

I agree with this petition and will sign it and send it to the table with Alexander.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have a petition from the people of the northeast, and it reads as follows:

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

“Whereas,” since October 2009, “insured PET scans” are 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 Health Sciences North, “its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

“We ... petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through” Health Sciences North, “thereby serving and providing equitable access to the” residents of the northeast.

I fully support this petition, Mr. Speaker, will affix my name to it and ask page Victoria to bring it to the Clerk.

CELLULAR TRANSMISSION EQUIPMENT

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I’ve got a petition from some constituents in Oakville, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the operation of cellular commercial transmission equipment on new or existing cell towers has been proposed near residential areas in Oakville and other communities around the province;

“Whereas Industry Canada has ultimate authority to approve the location of cellular communications transmission equipment under the federal Radiocommunication Act;

“Whereas the province of Ontario has no jurisdiction in the placement of cell communications equipment or services;

“Whereas many area residents and local elected officials have expressed concerns with the location due to its proximity to residential areas;

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

“That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada review the siting of cellular commercial communications transmission equipment in residential areas; and

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“That the province of Ontario request that the government of Canada place a moratorium on the installation of cellular commercial communication transmission equipment on new or existing towers within 1,000 metres of residential homes until an improved separation distance is established by the federal government.”

I agree with this, Speaker, and, unlike some members of the opposition, will sign it and send it down with page Abbigail.

OPPOSITION DAY

AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

SERVICE D'AMBULANCE AÉRIENNE

Mr. Frank Klees: I move that it is the will of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that the McGuinty government call and appoint an all-party select committee to investigate and report on issues relating to Ontario's air ambulance system (including Ornge and its affiliates), addressing specifically, but not limited to, issues of patient and employee safety, management, oversight, governance and accountability mechanisms, and that anyone called to testify or report before this select committee be afforded whistle-blower protection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Klees has moved opposition day number 3.

The member from Newmarket–Aurora.

Mr. Frank Klees: Speaker, I want to begin this debate by setting out four goals that we hope to achieve through the establishment of the select committee being proposed by this motion and the hearings that will be conducted within the proposed terms of reference accompanying this motion. Our goals are as follows:

—first, to restore the confidence of the public, taxpayers, stakeholders and patients in Ontario's air ambulance service;

—second, to ensure that the safety of citizens and patients is the first priority of the air ambulance network by installing professional, dedicated service providers and by returning primary oversight of the system of our air ambulance service to the Ministry of Health;

—third, to address the problems created by the establishment of Ornge and the related for-profit entities,

and to ensure that a similar incident can never happen again in any ministry of the government; and

—fourth, to establish strict controls over the strategic direction and daily operations of air ambulance by centralizing command and control within the Ministry of Health, and to ensure that effective oversight and accountability measures are in place.

Why is the establishment of a select committee so imperative to achieving these goals? I think, in order to answer that question, it's important to put into context the events that have led to the tabling of this motion.

Concerns were first raised about what was going on at Ornge more than a year ago. We heard from numerous past and current employees and contractors of service to Ornge who provided information to us concerning questionable business practices that resulted in the leveraging of public health care dollars to spawn a complex web of private, for-profit companies for the enrichment of a select few friends of the government. The standards and quality of service under the air ambulance services were progressively eroded, and patients, as a result, were put at risk.

Speaker, we brought these issues to the attention of the minister—did so repeatedly. The minister claimed for the longest time that she knew nothing about it. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the minister was questioned about Ornge during hearings of the Standing Committee on Estimates on November 16, 2010. The minister, deputy minister and the assistant deputy minister for direct services were questioned about the lack of salary disclosure, procurement policies and the role of the for-profit companies. Most questions at that committee were left unanswered, with the commitment that these issues would be looked into. Well, apparently they either weren't looked into or, if they were, nothing was done about it.

The minister was again warned about the questionable business practices at Ornge, the lack of accountability and the lack of oversight of this organization when I raised specific concerns on three separate occasions in the Legislature, on April 5, April 13 and again on April 21. Rather than act on the information we provided and the warnings that public health dollars were subsidizing the empire-building that was going on under the cover of Ontario's public air ambulance services, the Premier, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Finance insisted that Ornge was in full compliance with its accountability agreement with the Ministry of Health.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is that stakeholders have made numerous attempts to alert the government to the fact that Ornge was not meeting its obligations as set out in its agreement with the Ministry of Health. Those warnings were repeatedly ignored by this government. As early as July 2008, MPP Michael Gravelle forwarded a letter of concern to then-Minister of Health Caplan, who dismissed his concerns by simply referring the complainant back to Ornge itself.

Contrary to the insistence of the Premier, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Health that all was well,

the fact is that the government received numerous warnings that standards of service were being compromised and that public health care dollars were being leveraged to spawn a web of for-profit companies whose boards were populated with friends of the government and, quite frankly, people who should have known better than to allow the abuse of public dollars. In addition to ignoring our call for an investigation months ago, the government's successive ministers ignored letters from stakeholders who provided first-hand information about questionable business practices that were becoming common knowledge within the industry among stakeholders about Ornge.

Following the government's refusal to act on our concerns regarding Ornge in April of last year, I met with the Auditor General and I conveyed to him copies of the letters and emails and records of meetings with present and past employees and stakeholders and suppliers of Ornge. I continued to pass along information as I received it, and we'll see the results of his findings when he files his report tomorrow. Speaker, I'm confident that while the government may have ignored our warnings, it won't be able to ignore the report that the Auditor General will file tomorrow. One of the many warnings about Ornge was contained in a letter sent to the Minister of Health on May 4, 2011, by the Ontario Air Transport Association—a five-page letter, Speaker, that speaks to the patient care that was being compromised, that speaks to many issues that were blatant in terms of transgression of the performance agreement that Ornge had with the government.

Suffice it to say that as we continued to receive information, we called on the Minister of Health to direct Ornge not to proceed with any of its planned reorganizations that were under way, including waiting until at least the government received the report of the Auditor General. That request was also ignored by the government.

Speaker, that's why we're calling today for an all-party select committee to be struck by the government in co-operation with opposition parties: so that we can get to the bottom of what has taken place. This is not about simply wanting to look to the past. We must learn from the past, and the only way that we can do that is by ensuring that we provide a forum for current and past employees of Ornge, who are professional men and women, dedicated to providing important emergency health services to the people of our province—giving them a safe place to come to tell their story.

Why is it important that these people come forward? Because they, too, will be able to provide us with advice in terms of how we can best restore confidence in our air ambulance service.

I challenged the minister this morning during question period to be here, to participate in this debate and to add her support to vote for the establishment of this committee. I reminded the minister that she herself, in question period on March 1, made a very specific commitment that if, in fact, the Legislature expresses its will

to establish this select committee, she would support that. I asked her to repeat that again and, unfortunately, I sensed a backing off from that commitment.

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We will be watching the debate, as are many people across this province. Speaker, this is simply about ensuring that the important emergency air ambulance services of our province are restored to the point where patients can have confidence in the delivery of that service, where the front-line paramedics and pilots and front-line dedicated dispatchers and administrators in that service can once again be proud that they represent the air ambulance service of our province. We are looking forward to moving forward to restore that confidence.

We need that select committee to ensure that the truth can be found out. We need to hear from front-line people without intimidation, who have the protection of whistleblower protection so that they will not be retaliated against, so that we can once again celebrate the excellence of our air ambulance service in this province.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Further debate? The leader of the third party.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you very much, Speaker. Do you know what? Often, when I rise to speak to an issue, I say how happy I am to be up speaking to a particular issue, to be joining the debate. But, Speaker, it brings me no pleasure to be standing in this place on this issue yet again.

There's only one reason why we're here: We're here because we owe it to the people of this province to do right by them when it comes to uncovering all of the information that needs to be in the public eye when it comes to Ornge and the air ambulance system. I say that, Speaker, even knowing that there are other efforts under way, even knowing that tomorrow there will be a report tabled by the Auditor General, even knowing that there's an OPP investigation under way in terms of the potential criminal activities that may have occurred at that organization.

Speaker, the reality is that we are about to see, at the end of this week, the sunshine list unveiled in the province of Ontario. We know that there was a person who used to show up on the sunshine list, or at least a position that used to show up on the sunshine list, for a number of years, and then all of a sudden that person's name no longer appeared. That was the person who was the head of this organization called Ornge. The CEO, Chris Mazza, suddenly disappeared from the sunshine list in 2009. In 2008, he was making \$300,000. We heard nothing in 2009, nothing in 2010. We don't know if he's going to show up on the 2011 list or not. We're all waiting anxiously to see that list on Friday.

It turns out that in those years where he just happened to not be listed, he was making \$1.4 million. It went from \$300,000 to \$1.4 million, and that doesn't include all of his perks, all of his cushy trips all over the world, his private gym, his private chef, his mortgage, the loan to buy his own personal home. None of that was reported because, all of a sudden, Mr. Chris Mazza, the CEO of the day of Ornge, wasn't on the sunshine list.

Speaker, this was not something that went unnoticed. This is something, in fact, that was raised by MPPs. It was raised by former leader Howard Hampton, that the sunshine list all of a sudden didn't have the Ornge executives included on it.

So the question is, why, when this issue was raised, did the government simply ignore it? Why did they turn a blind eye to that situation? Why did they sweep under the carpet the very real criticisms that have been coming up time after time after time for a number of years, only one of which I just mentioned an example of? And that's only one. There have been a number of issues raised over the last several weeks recalling some of the concerns that have been voiced, not only by MPPs but by past employees and by others—by current employees, frankly. Yet the government, year after year, simply closed its eyes, simply didn't want to hear, didn't want to look into it, didn't want to bother—I don't know—didn't want to rock the boat, didn't want to anger their friends. I don't know, Speaker. It seems like that's the case to us.

That is why it's so important to have this select committee struck. We need to know who knew what and when across the way there. Who in the government knew what was going on?

What we know already for sure is that there was a time not so long ago, in January 2011, when in fact an actual report was given to the Premier's top advisors and to top officials in a number of the ministries. Incredulously, again, nobody noticed or nobody took any notice whatsoever that there was a potential problem here. That came in 2011, after a couple of years of flags already going up, and yet documents provided to the top people in the government and the top people in the Liberal offices—they think it's funny over there, but I don't think it's funny at all—in the Premier's office, the top people received a document that should have set the alarm bells ringing. Right? It should have set the alarm bells ringing when private people were profiting from leveraging our tax dollars, particularly our health care dollars, for their own private good, to line their own pockets.

But I guess because the report and the briefing came from the former president of the Liberal Party of Canada, everybody had to take a hands-off approach. It's obvious it's got to be something good. If it's not good for the taxpayers of Ontario, if it's not good for the people of the province, at least it's very good for the Liberal insiders.

This is a movie that we have watched year after year after year with this government across the way. We watched it with the Collegiate scandal, right? We watched it with eHealth, and we're watching it once again with Ornge. I suspect that it's happening in a whole bunch of other places, whether large scale or small, and we have to put a stop to it. We cannot tolerate this kind of lack of accountability, this kind of lack of transparency and this kind of lack of acknowledgement by a government that's simply wasting our most precious resource, which is our tax dollars and, more specifically in this case, our health care dollars.

It is unacceptable, and it's not just unacceptable to me, Speaker. It's unacceptable to every single person taking up a seat in this Legislature, and I dare say it should be unacceptable to everybody on that side of the House as well.

There are a number of New Democrats that are going to speak to this motion. I'm really pleased that it's here in front of us, finally. The question has come: Why? Why bother with a select committee? There is an investigation already. There is an auditor's report already. Definitely, that's the case, but a select committee can undertake all of the things that are indicated in this motion, and the member who brought the motion forward has very clearly stated what the purpose of the select committee is. It's not only to find out exactly where the holes were and why they were allowed to exist in the first place, but also to make sure that this never happens again, and that if it is currently happening again somewhere else within this government's regime, that it's stopped and it's stopped immediately. That's what the purpose of this committee is.

I think we all owe it to the people of Ontario to have at this issue in the most open and most transparent way. Wouldn't that be a breath of fresh air breathed into the whole Ornge mess? Because that's the only way the people of this province are going to feel confident not only about Ornge as an organization, but about the ability of governments to actually do the right thing, to do the honest thing and to do right by the people of this province.

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

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I'd like to begin by talking a little bit about my experiences with select committees because the only select committee that has happened in the experience of the vast majority of people sitting here is the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addiction. I think we all agree that that select committee worked very, very well. All three parties supported the report that was ultimately produced, and the stakeholders in the mental health and addiction field also supported the work that the committee did.

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I think it's useful to go back and look at why did it succeed. The first thing, and maybe the most important thing, was that when we started, all three parties—every single member of the committee—agreed that the purpose of the committee was not to assign blame, that looking at who should have a fault assigned to them was not on the agenda of the select committee. In fact, we specifically agreed that our only agenda was to figure out how to fix the problem, how to improve the mental health and addictions system. It was certainly true that that was the intent of the member from Whitby—Oshawa when she suggested the select committee. It was certainly true of Minister Caplan when he brought the motion to create the select committee, and in fact it was in concert with his expert advisory committee, which was doing similar work. Everybody worked together. Everything we did,

we achieved by consensus, and it was a very successful select committee.

But that's not what's going on here, Madam Speaker. We've spent the last three months with both parties opposite looking at how to assign blame. In fact, the official opposition has called for the resignation of the minister no less than 13 times up to March break. I didn't count to see how many times they did it this week. The member for Newmarket–Aurora, who has proposed the select committee, just spent most of his time telling us how we needed to assign blame. The leader of the third party has just spent time telling us how we need to find time to make sure we have the right people to blame. That's not how you get a select committee to work. The people on that side want to have an exercise in politics where we assign blame. The people on this side of the aisle, the people in the government, want to solve the problem, and we are not going to want to participate in a political game of playing politics with patient care. We are fixing the problem, and that's what we're going to focus on.

I think it's worthwhile to note that there are a lot of things already being done, a lot of things where there are already investigations. So let's just have a little bit of a look at what is already in progress.

First of all, the Minister of Health sent the Ministry of Finance's forensic audit team into Ornge and said, "Find out where the money went that we gave from the public accounts to Ornge. What happened to the money?" The preliminary report that the minister got back was very disturbing, and she immediately turned it over to the Ontario Provincial Police for investigation to find out if there is any criminal wrongdoing involved—which is exactly where that investigation should be—and the forensic auditors continue to do work.

The Auditor General began looking into air ambulance service in Ontario as part of his routine audit. In fact, he looked at air ambulance several years ago, and this was just coming back in the normal rotation. He wanted to look at air ambulance again, and obviously there had been significant transitions. It didn't become part of his regular report because he found out he was being stonewalled. When the minister found out what was going on in terms of being stonewalled, she supported him working with the forensic audit team, and the forensic audit team sharing information and working in concert with the Auditor General.

The Auditor General will in fact table his report tomorrow, and I'm sure we're all looking forward to finding out what the Auditor General has found out. Knowing that the Auditor General will table his report tomorrow, public accounts has already had a discussion, and all three parties have supported beginning public hearings on the auditor's report on Ornge next week, March 28. Anybody who wants to come, anybody who wants to tune in, is invited and—

Interjection.

Mrs. Liz Sandals: I said is invited to attend and watch and see what's happening, and we've agreed that

there will be hearings going on for three weeks, and people can invite witnesses. It isn't that we're just going to talk. We've already agreed that we will have other witnesses. So if the parties opposite want to invite other witnesses, they are perfectly free to do so. I heard this morning that they want to invite people from the front lines to talk about their experience. Well, I'm sure that that will overlap with some of the topics that the auditor has raised. They're free to do that.

Mr. Frank Klees: Will the minister come?

Mrs. Liz Sandals: If you wish to invite her, I'm sure we can deal with that. But instead of wasting time playing politics, maybe you should pay attention to the process of public accounts, which is a serious process and is one whereby, quite frankly, Madam Speaker—and I know you've spent some time on public accounts—ultimately we do come to consensus. That is the history of public accounts. We did many hours of hearings on eHealth. We even came to consensus on eHealth. We need to fix the problem.

Of course, the other thing that is going to happen, as the minister has said, is that she will be tabling legislation tomorrow and releasing the new performance agreement, and we will be able to have committee hearings on that legislation—another opportunity.

So there are a lot of opportunities; a lot of good things have happened. The select committee and political gamesmanship is just not necessary. There are so many other things already happening to fix the problem.

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

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: I'm really very pleased to join today in the opposition day motion that has been put forward by my colleague Mr. Klees which does call on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to appoint an all-party select committee to investigate and report on issues relating to Ontario's air ambulance system.

I want to begin by acknowledging the diligence, the persistence and the hard work of the member for Newmarket–Aurora. I remember when the member first raised the issue nearly a year ago. At that time, the government was quick to brush off his concern and refused to answer the questions that he has posed in any meaningful manner. So I commend the member for working so hard on behalf of the patients and taxpayers in this province to make sure that we address the unacceptable practices and policies at Ornge.

Madam Speaker, as the Ornge scandal continues to evolve—and I say "evolve" because each day there are new revelations—it becomes ever more complicated, confusing and sadly disturbing. To think that in this day and age in Ontario the kind of deception practised by the management at Ornge was allowed to take place and was ignored by this government—it was totally unacceptable.

It has permeated like a cancer throughout the highest levels of the organizational hierarchy and throughout the government. But do you know what is most disturbing? It has occurred at the direct expense of the safety of the front-line workers and patients.

We know that the Ornge saga is far from over. There continue to be employees and former employees who want to share their stories and their experiences because they don't want the risks that were suffered by patients to ever occur again. These people tell us about routine, detailed business practices that were intentionally designed to mislead and deceive. They describe how their warnings went unheeded and were simply ignored by the ministry.

What's clear is that the government allowed this to carry on, never once stepping in and exercising the authority and oversight it was provided with in the original performance agreement.

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As the Ornge scandal has evolved, we've learned that serious and significant operational gaps in service have detrimentally affected the level of service provided to patients. The decisions of those at Ornge and in the minister's and Premier's offices have compromised patient and crew safety. We know that the coroner's office is currently investigating a number of incidents involving an air ambulance in patient deaths. We know that Ornge helicopters have been grounded for over 47,000 minutes in the past three months alone due to a shortage of pilots and paramedics. We know that patients, including newborn children, have waited hours for an ambulance. We know that the interiors of the helicopters are not conducive to allowing paramedics to perform CPR, the most basic lifesaving procedure available to them.

Madam Speaker, these operational gaps have had an immense negative impact on the quality and accessibility of care made available to patients. These operational deficiencies have jeopardized the integrity of this great Ontario air ambulance service. It is inexcusable, and those responsible need to be held accountable. It is yet one more reason why we must strike a select committee. We must restore public confidence in our air ambulance service.

As we look forward to the future, we need to acknowledge that this government has failed in its responsibilities to provide oversight. So today we are having this debate about whether the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, the representatives who have been elected by the people of Ontario to safeguard the public good and protect the public trust, believes that an unprecedented level of deceit and corruption at an organization owned and funded by taxpayers necessitates the striking of an investigative committee.

Today we have an opportunity to stand up for patient safety. We have an opportunity to make sure that those who have stories to share have an opportunity to do so. There are nurses, patients, pilots and paramedics who are looking to us to strike this all-party select committee in order that they can provide additional information which will ensure that this will never happen again in the province of Ontario. They want to ensure that no more patients are ever put at risk, they want to ensure that there is effective oversight of our air ambulance service, and they want to make sure that our once-great air ambulance

service is restored and held in the confidence and trust that it was in the past.

So I ask the members across, vote today to make sure that public confidence in our air ambulance service and the men and women who work there can be restored.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Let me begin by thanking the member for Newmarket–Aurora for bringing about this motion today. I think it's vitally important to instilling some confidence back into this House and some transparency as to what happened—exactly what happened—at Ornge and how we move forward.

I also want to thank our leader, Andrea Horwath, for adding her comments to the debate today. She prefaced her remarks by saying that she takes no comfort—or she really did not enjoy being here to speak about this, because it is such a difficult issue, and it is quite sad.

I, on the other hand, am very happy to be here to debate this issue and to talk further about some of the issues that arose under the government's tenure and under the government's watch when it came to delivering air ambulance service to Ontarians. I'm happy, Madam Speaker, because perhaps there is not one other issue in my riding that members want me to focus on in terms of bringing about accountability and transparency from this government. I think they realize that the decision to wash their hands from any responsibility when it came to delivering this service put lives at risk, ultimately. Of course, the lack of oversight and the waste of dollars is bad enough, but when we see patient care being compromised, and we see a service that certainly isn't living up to the standards that we would expect in this province, that really goes to the fundamental lack of ability of this government to handle such an important issue.

Perhaps I'll go back to the beginning of Ornge air ambulance and how this scheme was conceived. You know, there was quite a brain trust that was involved in this. We had insiders of the Liberal Party who were brokering deals, working the legal framework, which should have set off some alarm bells from the outset, from the beginning. When you have the Liberal Party president involved in government operations, building a network of for-profit entities under the guise of a not-for-profit service delivery model—who on that side brought any common sense to the table and said, "You know, this could come back to bite us at some point"? Evidently, no one.

So all the more reason that it is fully justifiable to strike a select committee. I think the large, vast majority of Ontarians want us to focus solely on this issue, and not to allow any other potential issues, permeate through the committee on government affairs—what is the committee again?

Interjection.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: The public accounts committee. I think it is the right thing to do, and I know that our party is entirely supportive of it.

Again, back to the beginning, where the minister at the time was involved in this scheme: Perhaps we could take

some quotes from what his opinion is on it today and some other quotes from newspapers.

In a letter to the *Toronto Star*, the former health minister and Liberal MPP, George Smitherman, says that the controversy at Ornge is that “Ornge acquired a new head office; Ornge paid a whopping salary to their CEO; and Ornge pursued private sector business opportunities. In the matters that are central to the *Star*’s investigation, it is very clear that these activities occurred following my five years as Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.”

We see one of the largest passings of the buck that I think has happened in this Legislature. On one hand, we’ve got the former minister, who conceived the deal, passing it along to his successor; his successor washing his hands of it; and now the current member bringing it back to the original minister—the dog chasing its tail there, with no one wanting to take responsibility.

We’ve only heard one submission from the government side today in regard to our request for a select committee to be struck. To compile what was said already and to condense it, it was a series of excuses. There was no admission of responsibility, something that we’ve called for from the outset—another series of excuses as to why the minister acted, why she did not act, the stone-walling that was put up. Aren’t you the government? Don’t you have the ability to bust through stone walls? Do you have no power whatsoever? You were a majority government at that time. You would think that you could have put a full stop to the activities that were happening at Ornge. Yet it was status quo. They were left to their own devices, and lots of people got rich.

In fact, people, apparently, hopefully, got smarter, because we were paying for their MBAs. Some people got an education out of this too. What a slap in the face to Ontarians. What a slap in the face to students who are struggling today to pay for their post-secondary education. What are you telling them? “Come to the dark side, and somewhere along the line, we could potentially get you an MBA.”

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Actually, it wasn’t open to just anybody; these were family members who rose through the ranks that Ornge was paying for their MBAs. In fact, up to \$600,000, we now know, was spent from 2005 to 2011—\$600,000.

I see the Minister of Finance laughing. I don’t know if he’s giggling at the figure, but it’s quite sad.

Interjection.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: It’s an embarrassment; it is a total embarrassment.

Here’s one that should shock anyone: Ornge’s charitable arm partnered with New York-based Orange County Choppers. You guys see them on TV, OCC, Orange County Choppers. Do you know how much one of those motorcycles is?

Interjection: Too much.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Too much. Maybe \$150,000? I would think it’s getting close to that, indeed. And I like that show, actually. It’s quite a neat show. But you’ll see large corporations use these as promotional entities,

right? You’ll see DeWalt drills and other entities build a nice bike and roll it out there to promote their business. What did Ornge need to promote? Why would a \$150,000 motorcycle be justified as an expense?

Mr. Frank Klees: Two motorcycles.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Two of them. What were you selling? Were you saying, “Hey, we’re the only air ambulance service in town. If you’re ever in an emergency, we’ve got a helicopter that may get you there. We’ve got fixed-wing airplanes that can’t fly you into the United States if you need care, but we’ve got this beautiful shiny new motorcycle here.” It makes no sense whatsoever. It’s one of the more disgusting aspects of what happened at Ornge. To our opinion, those on this side of the House that I think are offering some much-needed common sense, I think it’s one of a whole host of issues that justify the striking of this select committee.

I certainly look forward to playing a part on that committee, not only because I think it’s the right thing to do but because the people of this province are demanding it to happen. I will be quite interested to hear some more submissions from that side, because every day that they neglect to take responsibility is a day that they get deeper and deeper into the hole that they’ve dug.

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

Mr. David Zimmer: It’s my pleasure to speak to this. I’d like to speak to some of the process issues here first. But before I do that, let me just say on the record that the Minister of Health, Minister Matthews, since this issue came to the attention of the House, has in my judgment left no stone unturned to get to the bottom of this.

Laughter.

Mr. David Zimmer: Now, you may laugh. You may laugh, but the minister has left no stone unturned to get to the bottom of this.

Here are the facts; here’s what the minister has done since this issue came to the attention of this Legislature. She in effect has got four, or will soon have four, investigations or reviews going on. The first thing she did was call in the Auditor General. The Auditor General has been working on his report, and his report will be presented to this legislative body tomorrow.

Madam Speaker, I urge you to—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order.

Mr. David Zimmer: Thank you.

She called in the Auditor General. The Auditor General has been doing his work. She’s called in the Ontario Provincial Police, and they are doing a criminal investigation. What can be more serious than a criminal investigation? That criminal investigation is ongoing, and in due course we’ll receive their report. That’s two initiatives that are under way.

The fourth initiative that is under way is that the public accounts committee met on March 7, about two weeks ago, 10 days ago, and the public accounts committee has agreed that, on receipt of the Auditor General’s report tomorrow, at the public accounts

committee's next meeting we will schedule hearings of the public accounts committee into the various matters raised by the Auditor General's report. Those hearings are going to commence on March 28 and they're going to continue for a number of days.

Now, what's interesting that the public accounts committee has undertaken this responsibility is that the public accounts committee is composed of a Chair of the committee, who is a member of the official opposition, and it's composed of three Conservative members, two NDP members and four Liberal members. So the opposition parties not only have the Chair of the public accounts committee, but they've also got the majority vote on that public accounts committee.

Mr. John Yakabuski: No, they don't. It's a tie vote.

Mr. David Zimmer: There are three Conservative members and two NDP members. That makes five—

Mr. John Yakabuski: The Chair doesn't vote.

Mr. David Zimmer: That makes five, and there are four Liberal members and there's a Conservative Chair. The opposition parties are well armed to take that committee in whatever direction it wants to. They've got the chairmanship and they've got the majority on the committee.

The next thing that's happening is, I understand the minister is introducing legislation as early as tomorrow to deal with and to reform the way Ornge operates. What the members opposite have conveniently forgotten is that once that legislation is introduced to reform, essentially, the way Ornge does its business, that proposed piece of legislation will eventually be referred to yet another committee, and that committee will conduct a review of how the proposed legislation intends to deal with the Ornge issue. I expect that in the process of doing that, they'll be reviewing some of the history of Ornge. So that's where we are today.

Now, the official opposition is asking for a select committee. I think that the better process here is to let those four investigations or reviews complete their work: the Auditor General's report, which will be completed tomorrow; the OPP investigation, which will be completed in due course and come up with its recommendations regarding criminal wrongdoing, if that's the case; the public accounts committee will start its hearings on March 28, and that will go on for several days—again, I point out that that committee's chaired by a member of the official opposition and the opposition parties hold the majority of votes on that committee, so they will no doubt steer that committee as they see fit; and then the legislation, which will be introduced tomorrow, I'm informed, will go to committee, and that committee will conduct hearings. So when those four reviews or investigations are completed, then, I think, it behooves the opposition at that time—not now—to look at the findings of those four reviews or investigations, because what comes out in the Auditor General's report, the OPP, the public accounts committee and the legislative committee that's looking into the legislation may well better inform what this House may want to do or not do in terms of setting up a select committee. So it's a matter of process.

There's a principle in law generally that when you've got an issue that you're looking into and you've got several entities charged with the responsibility of looking into a matter or reviewing it, you let each of those entities that have a responsibility complete their work, and when they've completed their work, you've got the four reports in front of you, you consider all of their findings in their totalities and how each finding relates to another, and then sit back and take a responsible and a mature decision whether to proceed with yet a fifth review of this by way of a select committee.

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But I think the better—in fact, I submit that the better process is to let those four committees do their work. This Legislature will then have the benefit of informing themselves what's contained in those reports, and then we can proceed in a more balanced and mature way to decide whether we're going to proceed with a select committee or not.

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

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: The problem with the previous speaker is that we already know that the system is set up to prevent all the information from coming to the floor, and that will not happen under his proposal. The only way that will happen is with a select committee.

But I would like to say a few words about the highly skilled people who work at the operational level of Ornge: highly skilled helicopter pilots, fixed-wing pilots, highly skilled EMS workers, highly skilled engineers who keep the planes flying, dispatchers. These people want to do a good job. They're highly skilled, they're very intelligent, and they're going through a very difficult time. And I say to them, if they're watching: Hold your heads up high; you are not the ones who are creating these problems. This is a problem that comes from the government, that has started at the top of that organization and has eventually, at this point in time, been shown to be the real problem. This is not about the employees of Ornge; this is about the management and lack of oversight. People have wondered why Ornge is spelled funny. The "a" stands for accountability, and it's been left out of the name, and therein lies the problem.

A select committee will dig into the process and find out the hows, the wheres, the whys, the whats, and who knew what when. Those are the kinds of questions that a select committee can discover, because the people who testify before that committee are held harmless with their testimony. And that brings out the truth. Whether it be a police investigation, the Auditor General's investigation, the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, those same situations don't exist. That creates a real problem to getting to the truth, and the truth is what we're looking for in this issue.

We've seen eHealth. We never really got to the bottom of that, but we know a lot of Liberal friends made a lot of money out of it. We saw Collegiate, where \$31 million went out the door because it was the end of

the year and had to be spent in a month, and we saw a lot of Liberal friends get a lot of that money.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Like who?

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Well, the Toronto Cricket Club was one. They got \$1 million they didn't even ask for. The member wants to know who. I can give you a list of them if you like. It was a disgusting spending of Ontario taxpayers' money—just absolutely disgusting.

Interjections.

Mr. Ted Chudleigh: Apparently, the truth hurts.

Providing the right venue to get to the bottom of this is what this is all about, and we've seen it time and time again. The Maid of the Mist was another one that happened.

You know, we're approaching a time when the mother of all special interests may be upon us. The Pan American Games and the expenditures of huge amounts of money on venue sites is coming down the road, and I urge the government: Conduct yourself in a transparent way. Let's not have any more of this nonsense that we've seen in Ontario, with the huge expenditures of taxpayers' dollars in a frivolous way. Let's see if we can pull off the Pan American Games in a reasonable way, not mimicking eHealth, Colleague, Maid of the Mist, Ornge and all the rest of the disasters that this government has foisted on the people of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member for Kenora-Rainy River.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to speak in favour of this motion. For the last three months, we've heard details of the Liberal government's mismanagement of Ontario's air ambulance system trickle out through the media. And for months, we, members of the Legislature, have been trying to get answers. It's clear that at some point along the way, there was a massive violation of the public trust. What was supposed to be a coordinated system to provide emergency health care to people across the province somehow ballooned into a web of mismanagement, reckless spending, for-profit subsidiaries who also spent recklessly, and, quite likely, political cronyism.

At this point, I do not believe that we know the full scale of the problem, but we do know that public confidence in our province's air ambulance system has been shattered, and with it confidence in this government's management of one of our most essential services, health care.

We've heard the minister suggest that she acted when she became aware. This may be the case, but it may also be false. The only way we're going to get the answers we need to this question is to create an all-party committee that will investigate this matter and find out exactly what happened.

There are many answers we need to know, including how many jobs this scandal has cost us across the province. I know that, in my riding, the creation of Ornge has led to some serious changes in the number of our air carriers. They've told me that they used to receive a number of calls for transfer of patients, that it was a good

part of their business and, to be honest, they did it well. But once Ornge popped up, those calls stopped.

I've heard stories of one business being on the ground in Fort Frances, ready to pick up a patient, but Ornge, with their nearest aircraft sitting on the ground in Sudbury, was called to pick up the patient, with a wait time of two-plus hours and a tremendous cost to the taxpayers.

Needless to say—

Interjection: They don't care.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: No, they don't care.

Needless to say, this affected the Fort Frances company's bottom line and, after several years, it led to the bankruptcy of their company. This meant the relocation of the pilots and their families, and it led to their salaries being taken out of our region and into another province, Manitoba. The relocation of just a few families might not seem like a big deal to people in this Legislature, but small businesses in our small towns are already facing hardships as a result of the downturn in the economy, and it does make a big difference. I've asked them, "If Ornge is eliminated, will you come back?" They've told me that they'd like to, but they've moved on. They've found new roots and new clients with a new company.

So what I'd really like to know is: How many businesses are in the same situation? How many jobs have been lost in our communities? How many municipally run airports have lost landing fees as a result of companies finding new home bases? What is the ultimate price of this scandal? And most importantly, is the infrastructure still in place to take over from Ornge if dissolving the company is the only solution to this problem?

I disagree with the member from Guelph. I don't want this to be a blaming exercise, and I don't want to find scapegoats. I don't think the people in the province of Ontario want that either, but we do want answers. We want to know who created the mess, who knew about it and how it was permitted to happen with all the checks and balances that we're supposed to have with our system. Mismanagement of this magnitude is not supposed to happen in this day and age. We need to find out exactly how it did happen and build in additional checks to ensure that this type of wasteful mismanagement never happens again.

But most importantly, it's my hope that setting up this committee can allow us to focus on other important issues. This scandal has dragged on for months, and it has drawn attention away from other significant issues. This air ambulance issue has turned Queen's Park into a three-ring circus, and it is time that we put the sideshow in its own place and that we get back to the work of fighting for our constituents.

I agree the Ornge scandal has been a massive violation of the public trust, and I agree that we need answers, but I also firmly believe that there are other pressing issues that need to be dealt with—issues such as health care delivery in the north, job creation and bringing our

spending under control—all of which haven't been getting the attention that they deserve because of this scandal.

We need the answers, but we need to seek those answers in the right setting, and this committee is the right setting and the right place. Hopefully, it will lead to us stopping the political posturing and getting real answers for the people of Ontario, the answers that they deserve.

As I said before, we have many questions that need answers, and we need to restore public confidence in the system, and that's why I'm happy to support this committee.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Phil McNeely: I'm pleased to speak to the Conservative opposition motion moved by the member from Newmarket–Aurora proposing an all-party select committee to look into the events surrounding Ornge.

We have a lot happening in just this week. The Auditor General will be tabling his report tomorrow around noon. The auditor has been involved in his investigation of Ornge, his audit of Ornge, since October of 2010, I believe. The value-for-money audit of Ornge air ambulance started then. We will see better what he is reporting and the action he is suggesting.

The minister said she would be tabling new legislation soon. The minister has removed the board at Ornge, and a competent new board has been put in place. When the new board came on, the minister gave them very specific instructions to focus on patient safety, work with the forensic audit team and wind down the for-profit entities created by Ornge. These steps are exactly what should be done. They've started winding down the for-profit organizations and have taken other steps to improve care and restore public confidence. There's new management in place, led by Mr. Ron McKerlie, a distinguished public servant. He has patient safety at the very top of his list of priorities. The board has appointed one of their new members, Barry McLellan, president and CEO of Sunnybrook Hospital, to spearhead the development of a patient safety framework. I'm confident that the minister will be making changes in the performance agreement between Ornge and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care that will protect taxpayers in the future.

So we have the following happening now and over next few weeks: The Auditor General is about to deliver a report—we'll get that tomorrow around noon—and the minister is about to bring in legislation to make sure Ornge is run according to rules to ensure taxpayers are protected. Let's not forget this new legislation itself will need to go to committees, another place where the Legislature will have a chance to discuss issues surrounding Ornge. That's the point that the member for Willowdale made very clearly: that is going to be another opportunity for members of this Legislature to have input.

The legislation, if passed, would give the government enhanced oversight powers. The minister will be prepar-

ing a very strong performance agreement—we've heard that from her—with Ornge, based on the auditor's report and other information. This performance agreement will strengthen the approval required for any changes to the corporate structure at Ornge and fiscal accountability along with enhancing patient care.

The minister sent in the forensic auditors last fall. Following that, the minister requested the OPP to do a criminal investigation, and they will report.

In addition to all this, the public accounts standing committee, of which I'm a member, will soon start hearings on Ornge. We meet tomorrow. Witnesses will be called on March 28, on April 4 and on April 18, after the constit week. We meet this week to determine who we will call as witnesses. This is the job of the standing committee, and this will take place over several weeks. These are the proper procedures. The decision to conduct hearings on Ornge at the Standing Committee on Public Accounts was supported by all parties.

So I ask the member and his caucus to wait for the Auditor General's report. Wait for the OPP investigation. Wait for the legislation. Wait for the public accounts standing committee's report. Let the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care prepare and execute a new performance agreement. Your motion would put in place a parallel inquiry that would call many of the same witnesses, review the same documents and come out with a parallel set of recommendations that would add no new information to the issues.

While we are discussing this issue, we should take a moment to look at the accomplishments of this government over the past eight years. Health care in Ontario has seen over one million more Ontarians with a family doctor, over 200 family health teams in place, the shortest wait times in Canada and many, many more improvements.

The minister announced yesterday the transition of hospitals to patient-based funding. New funding will transition over three years from a global funding model to funding based on health-based allocation models and quality-based procedures. Health-based allocation models are based on the number of patients served and the characteristics of the population served and performed. Who would have thought that we were going to do it on that basis when we've done it the other way for so long? Quality-based procedures are based on the costs of providing specified target services and the outcomes that hospitals provide. Part of the payment to hospitals will remain global in nature, but this marks a transformation of health care. Imagine, after 50 years we're moving to paying hospitals based on their performance.

Ontario air ambulance has run into some difficulties, and we are taking action to correct those problems. This is a situation, of course, that no one wants to be in, but we can see from the initiatives the minister has taken, the audit the AG has completed and the hearings the public accounts committee will hold that this motion calling for the appointment of a select committee is, at the best, grandstanding.

The minister took action. She replaced the board at Ornge. She put in new administration personnel. She's bringing in new legislation. She sent in the OPP. She will sign a much more comprehensive performance agreement with Ornge. From the beginning, she has said that patient safety is number one. When questions began to arise about the operations of Ornge, the minister started asking questions. When the answers to those questions were not good enough and the former leadership at Ornge showed they were stonewalling the Auditor General, the minister took action.

This motion would authorize duplication of effort. The facts are coming in quickly. This Legislature will soon have all the facts. We need to allow for all the investigations to be complete. I urge the member from Newmarket–Aurora to withdraw this motion, which is certainly going in a direction of rehashing and duplicating the processes that are already under way.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mrs. Julia Munro: I'm happy to stand in support of today's motion. The biggest concern I have about the Ornge fiasco is oversight, or the lack thereof. That is why I support a select committee. The examples that I'm going to use demonstrate why a select committee is the only appropriate vehicle.

It seems that the executives at Ornge had free hand to do whatever they wished with the millions of dollars they received from Ontario taxpayers. Meanwhile, the government did nothing. They did not even stand up to Ornge when they refused to divulge their budgets.

On Dalton McGuinty's watch, changes to air ambulance services have resulted in a 450% cost increase and reduced accountability.

The member from Newmarket–Aurora had warned the Premier and his ministers about questionable business practices at Ornge and the lack of accountability and oversight. Rather than act on the information, the government insisted there were no problems with Ornge.

On April 13, 2011, the member from Newmarket–Aurora asked the Premier why the annual report for Ornge did not make one reference to financial information, yet 12 million of taxpayers' dollars had been transferred to this company. He also pointed out that Ornge had just moved into a \$3-million facility. Capital expenses attributed to Ornge for the 2008-09 fiscal year were \$2.25 million. In 2009-10 they increased to \$8.6 million, followed by another increase in 2010-11 to more than \$12 million.

The member from Newmarket–Aurora asked how much of that taxpayer-funded capital had subsidized equipment and facilities that are actually being used for the for-profit businesses that are also owned by the Ornge organization. What was the answer given by the Minister of Finance? He said, "The Minister of Health is rightly proud of the achievements of the new Ornge ambulance service, which is expanding air ambulance service across the province and, as I understand it, doing it in a very, very efficient way." It turns out the Minister of Finance

and the Minister of Health believe that wasting taxpayer dollars is efficient, even though those dollars were allocated to serving Ontarians in need of health services.

On April 21, 2011, the member for Newmarket–Aurora stated, "According to Tom Lepine, chief operating officer at Ornge, taxpayers have no right to that financial information."

There has been absolutely no oversight of Ornge, a taxpayer-funded organization. The Premier and his ministers did not even have the courage to confront Ornge, although all their secrets were being unveiled, and the Premier failed Ontarians who depend on Ornge to save their lives.

The Minister of Health has said that the government will be introducing legislation that will bring enhanced transparency, accountability and oversight to Ornge. My concern is, what kind of legislation can we count on the government to introduce if current legislation did nothing at all to protect Ontario taxpayers?

It is for these reasons that I support the motion being brought forward today to have a select committee to investigate the issue.

1700

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Mr. Speaker, at the outset I'd like to make it very clear that I wholeheartedly support this motion, and I applaud the efforts of the member from Newmarket–Aurora for having the courage to stand up in this House and to bring this motion forward.

We have been calling for this motion as well because it's incumbent on us as elected officials to realize what our duty is. We have a responsibility. We have a greater duty than many others because we are here elected to represent those in Ontario. We have a duty to ensure that the scarce resources that we have are used appropriately. That is our duty in this House, and we must take this duty very, very seriously. In order to do so, any steps that we can take to ensure that our money, our taxpayer dollars are spent properly is not enough; we need to do as much as possible.

With respect to accountability, it's very concerning that this organization was set up at its outset in a manner that obscured legislative accountability, that obscured the ability of elected officials to investigate what was going on. It was purposely set up with this, and that's why we want to know who knew what, when. Who knew what and when? It's incumbent on this government to disclose who knew the details, who was aware of what the scheme was and when they were aware of this so that we can prevent wastage of precious dollars in the future.

It's not enough to come to the bottom of this scandal alone. We need to ensure that there are proper checks and balances so that we do not have such a scandal occur in the future, so we can prevent this from happening.

On the horizon, we have looming cuts. We have a report which indicates that we need to cut services to families. When times are difficult, we need to be able to say to Ontarians that their precious dollars were used

effectively and with some accountability, and the fact that they weren't is a shame and a disgrace.

That's why I wholeheartedly support this select committee. We need to get to the bottom of this. The select committee will have greater powers to delve deeper into the true reasons why this occurred and to come up with some recommendations on how we can avoid this in the future.

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

Mr. Jeff Leal: It's a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to spend some time this afternoon discussing this issue, the motion that's been put forward by the member from Newmarket–Aurora.

It's interesting, Madam Speaker, when you look at the history of this place. I just took a quick scan of select committees from 1991 to 2003, and in every case over that period of time when a select committee was put forward, there was always a consensus on all sides of the House that this would be the appropriate mechanism to go forward to look at something.

In 1990, we had the Select Committee on Ontario in Confederation. In 1997, we had the Select Committee on Hydro Nuclear Affairs. In 2001, we had the Select Committee on Alternative Fuel Sources. In 2005, of course, we had the Select Committee on Electoral Reform in the province of Ontario. In 2008, we had the Select Committee on Elections in the province of Ontario. We had the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, a committee that I had the privilege to serve on, along with others. We also had the Select Committee on the proposed transaction of the TMX Group and the London Stock Exchange Group back in 2011. These are all select committees that were put together—all non-partisan, all discussing very important topics of the day. When you take the opportunity to look at this research, you'll see that there was a consensus on recommendations that the government of the day took into consideration, and indeed it implemented these things.

But it is very interesting that the members opposite have found religion for select committees. I just want to review a couple of things. There was a select committee that was requested to look into day trading at Agricorp back in 1995 and 2003. Was there a select committee that looked into that? No.

There was a select committee that was asked for—a former distinguished member of this House the honourable Gerry Phillips asked consecutively, for nine years, about having a select committee into the circumstances around the tragic death of Dudley George at Ipperwash. Was there a select committee that ever looked at that, Madam Speaker?

Hon. James J. Bradley: No.

Mr. Jeff Leal: The answer is no. Thank you, Mr. Bradley.

Another issue that cropped up—I just happened to look at it today—is the work that was done by the former member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, and a very honourable gentleman, Jim Brownell. He was the

guy that came forward to make sure that we had an investigation in Cornwall, Ontario, but interestingly enough—

Hon. James J. Bradley: Along with Garry Guzzo.

Mr. Jeff Leal: I'm going to talk about Mr. Guzzo, the former very distinguished member from Ottawa West. During his time that he served so ably as a member of the Conservative caucus, from 1995 to 2003—he was a retired judge—he asked consistently of the government of the day to look at the events that were surrounding the abuse of young people in the greater Cornwall area. Did that ever happen, Mr. Bradley?

Hon. James J. Bradley: No.

Mr. Jeff Leal: No.

So when we had the opportunity to have the privilege of forming government in the province of Ontario, one of the first things we did is we had a formal inquiry into Ipperwash, and then we had a formal inquiry into the events surrounding the abuse of young people in Cornwall, Ontario. When people get the religion, it's great to notice that, the old Saul on the road to Damascus routine.

Interestingly enough, we have a vehicle available, the public accounts committee, which can be duly tasked to look at this. They have the power to request people to make presentations to that committee.

Interjection: Non-partisan.

Mr. Jeff Leal: A non-partisan committee, formerly chaired very ably by Norm Sterling, who I happen to think did an excellent job when he was chairing the public accounts committee.

Interjection: Where is he?

Interjection: Done in.

Mr. Jeff Leal: Threw him under the bus.

But my experience, of course, when I subbed in the public accounts committee, was it was the opportunity to bring ministry staff forward, to look at the issues of the day, to come up with recommendations, to look at events surrounding a particular event. There are nine committees available. The public accounts committee has the ability to bring everybody they want to have the opportunity to look at the Ornge issue.

I think the current Minister of Health and Long-Term Care has made great strides into getting rid of the board at Ornge. It's exactly the same thing that a former Premier of the province of Ontario did. Those folks in the opposition who served with Mike Harris from 1995 to 2003 will remember that when the Agricorp issue was brought to his attention, what did he do immediately? He brought in a new board. His response to the opposition questions of the day? He responded and said, "I brought in a new board. We have the public accounts committee working on it. We're straightening it up," and I could rest assured there would be no more problems at Agricorp. It's exactly the same approach that the Minister of Health has initiated: requesting the Auditor General to take a look at circumstances around Ornge, bringing in the OPP to do a full criminal investigation. We look forward to the results of that criminal investigation and the possibil-

ity of bringing in new restrictive legislation dealing with Ornge.

So it's great that the opposition has found religion. I appreciate that; I think it's great. But when you look at their track record in the past, from 1995 to 2003, when they were asked to do select committees on issues that were just as important to the people of Ontario as Ornge is—I know I still get questions in my office from my First Nations community in Peterborough, Hiawatha and Curve Lake about the events surrounding Ipperwash. I know there are also some people who were interested in the Cornwall area. But when we had the privilege of forming government, we decided we wanted a full investigation.

Madam Speaker, there are committees available. The public accounts committee will take a look at this, and we'll move forward with the review of Ornge.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'm pleased to rise today in support of the opposition day motion presented by my colleague from Newmarket–Aurora and thank him for his dedication to uncovering all the problems that have gone on with Ornge. It was over a year ago that the Ontario PC caucus warned that provincial health care dollars were being used to subsidize this complex web of for-profit companies.

The member opposite just spoke of finding religion; well, we gave you the tip over a year ago that there was something wrong, and until we pushed it and pushed it and pushed it, are you actually trying to do something—not enough in our books. We're trying to push it further. But finding religion, that's just a story that's hogwash, if I can say, Madam Speaker.

1710

In 2005, Ornge was born under a cloud of Ontario's air ambulance services, being turned over to Dr. Chris Mazza for a dollar with no competitive bidding process. You see in the intervening years we've witnessed a legacy of misuse, abuse and greed. Ornge has been funded by Ontario taxpayers to the tune of \$150 million a year. The very people that the health minister entrusted to deliver and safeguard air ambulance services have betrayed that trust for personal gain. Separate companies were established for the purpose of paying exorbitant salaries which would not be reported on the province's sunshine list. The president and CEO received an annual salary of \$1.4 million, which, incredibly, was not on the sunshine list. Taxpayers paid \$600,000 for Ornge executives to pursue business degrees at overseas institutions. One of the for-profit companies received a payment of \$6.7 million for the Italian supplier of 12 new helicopters to Ornge. Despite the fact that high salaries were paid out to deliberately avoid the sunshine list, the Ornge employees who did appear on the list jumped from 16 in 2006 to 116 in 2011, for an increase of 725% in five years.

The member from York–Simcoe already brought up that the overall cost to the taxpayer for Ontario's air

ambulance services has increased by 450% under the McGuinty government. In what universe can that actually be defended and justified? It is outrageous.

The PC and the NDP caucuses stand united in demanding the establishment of a select committee of the Legislature to thoroughly investigate this ongoing scandal at Ornge. As my colleague from Newmarket–Aurora so aptly spells out in his motion, the select committee needs to “investigate and report ... on Ontario's air ambulance system (including Ornge and its affiliates).”

It's simple. We're asking them: select committee. They're throwing all this other stuff out about there are investigations going on; these other committees can cover it. They can't. That's why we are united with the NDP in asking for a select committee. The committee can concentrate on those things, such as “patient and employee safety, management, oversight, governance and accountability mechanisms.”

When this motion was tabled, the health minister assured the Legislature she would respect the will of the House in terms of establishing a select committee. We will soon find out if it's true or not. We await her appearance.

The crisis at Ornge is a lightning rod for everything that is wrong with this government. They sit there with their heads down and blah-blah, but it is a lightning rod. It's evident, the mismanagement of this government; they've let it go on for so long.

We're all witnessing this unprecedented legacy of mismanagement, out-of-control spending, misuse and abuse of public trust and, in this particular case, throw in greed and corruption. The people of Ontario demand the full truth on Ornge. In addition to the criminal investigation being conducted by the OPP, the Legislature does owe it to the voters and taxpayers of Ontario to determine not only what went so terribly wrong, but how did it all happen under their watch?

I'm urging all the members in the Legislature to vote for this motion demanding a full select committee investigation into this Ornge fiasco and scandal.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): The member from Timmins–James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: To have a few minutes to make a couple of comments on this, I just want to say the first thing—and I just don't want my Conservative friends to all of a sudden think I'm going somewhere else. A select committee is something normally where people want to get together and work on an item. I had this conversation with different people, and I understand the argument. However, in this Parliament, that's not allowed because the mechanism by which we would have to be able to deal with this whole issue, either at public accounts or, more importantly, at a standing committee to which the Ministry of Health is now supposing to report to—we have asked the government to move the Ministry of Health from an opposition-chaired committee to a government-chaired committee, and the government has refused.

Part of the problem I have is that the mechanism that I would like to have in order to deal with the review of Ornge, the government doesn't want to allow us to do it because they're leaving the Ministry of Health in a standing committee by which there is a tie, and with that tie, the Chair—if the government decided to vote in block against the opposition, we would not have an opportunity, by using standing order 126, to review Ornge as we have the right to do. So understand why I'm in the position where I actually support the motion because I think the government has put us in a position where we don't have a lot of choice.

Just to make it clear, now that I got my thoughts together, because I was trying to pull the standing orders as I was getting up to speak: Normally the members of this assembly have an opportunity to do what's called a review under standing order 126, and in that particular review, any member can go into one of the standing committees, either general government, justice committee and others, and be able to say, "I want to look at a particular item, and I want to do a review." That would be one of the mechanisms that the opposition would have to review Ornge.

The unfortunate reality is, when I as an NDP House leader went to the Legislative Assembly committee and proposed that the government take the Ministry of Health out of the committee for which there is a tie and rather put it into a committee for which there is not a tie but that is governed by the opposition by sheer numbers, the government refused. So where am I going to go? If the auditor decides he or she is not going to do something, there's not a lot of places you can go. It's fairly limited what you can do under government agencies, I say to the former House leader from the Liberal Party from years ago, because government agencies reviews government agencies and Ornge is not a government agency. So I can't review it there either. So where am I to go?

The only choice we have is to move a motion in the House that says that we'll form a select committee. It's not my preferred option. My preferred option would have been to have the government say, "Let's move the Ministry of Health out of the committee that it's currently at and let's put it in a committee where the government doesn't control the committee by way of a tie."

That's why we're at where we're at. I just wanted to put that on the record.

The second thing I want to say, and very quickly, is that we had a pretty good system before Ornge was actually created. We had the hybrid of the Ministry of Health and we had private providers that were doing the work of transporting patients to and from various hospitals in this province. In my riding, there was a company that just closed its doors about two months ago, and that's aviation commerciale, or Commercial Aviation, that's run out of Hearst. For years, they operated a very successful carrier where they did both charter work and medevacs for the Ministry of Health. As a result of Ornge coming in, they've essentially taken all the business away, so that aviation commerciale,

which had bases in Kapuskasing, in Hearst and in Timmins, have closed their doors. Why? Because the contract that they had with the Ministry of Health, eventually through Ornge, was pulled away. They said, "We'll allow you to bid on another contract for a year's time." How do you finance airplanes on a one-year contract? You can't do it.

So, je viens de dire, pour mes amis à aviation commerciale que j'ai connus très longtemps—M. Lanoix et les autres qui travaillent là—c'est une compagnie qui a travaillé très fort pour donner un service excellent, non seulement aux clients sur les avions quand ça vient à des charters, mais aussi quand ça vient à la question de déplacer les patients d'un hôpital à l'autre. Et parce qu'il y a des décisions qui ont été faites à Ornge, on se trouve dans une situation où ils ont perdu leur contrat, et en perdant leur contrat il a fallu fermer leurs portes. Ça veut dire des mises à pied à Hearst, à Kapuskasing, à Timmins. Ça veut dire des ambulanciers, ça veut dire des pilotes, ça veut dire des mécaniques, et c'est un service qu'on perd dans notre comté que, franchement, on n'avait pas besoin de fermer. Donc, je vais laisser ma collègue parler, mais je voulais mettre ça sur le record. Merci.

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

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Fixed-wing air ambulance service started in the late 1970s with doctors and hospitals calling air carriers directly. Through the 1980s, it developed a consolidated system whereby the Ministry of Health coordinated the transfer with air carriers offering to carry patients on a per-trip basis. The Ministry of Health wanted a dedicated air ambulance service using helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft which had customized or dedicated interiors and government-provided paramedics.

In 2001, the Ministry of Health consolidated their air service with two contract companies, one for fixed-wing and one for rotary or helicopter. Speaker, together those two companies had bases in eight communities throughout northern Ontario, plus Toronto and Ottawa. They each employed 25 to 30 personnel, comprised of 11 pilots, 11 paramedics and three or so maintenance technicians and administrative support in each company.

1720

Not leaving well enough alone, in 2005, the provincial government announced the creation of Ornge. Instead of continuing to use the two private sector airlines which, for 30 years, had provided a valuable service to northern Ontario, Ornge instead used valuable health care dollars to purchase aircraft: 10 Pilatus single aircraft, plus helicopters. These are tens upon tens of millions of dollars. They used potential MRI dollars to set up hangars across the north and in the south, and emergency room dollars became aircraft maintenance bays. Basically, Speaker, they needed to purchase or acquire everything needed to get into the airline business. They obtained an operating certificate, which allows them to fly. They obtained an aircraft maintenance organization certificate, which gives

them the authority to perform maintenance on their own aircraft. In fact, their AMO certificate is very specific to the Pilatus, Sikorsky and the Agusta helicopters—specifically, the three aircraft that they fly.

They also became basically an extremely large government-owned airline. Contracts across the north were terminated, and long-term employees throughout the north were also terminated. The very air operators and aircraft maintenance organizations that were providing services to the Ministry of Health for over 30 years—the ones with the expertise, the human resources and the ability to safely and reliably provide service to the province and our patients—are gone. The air ambulance employees throughout the north are gone, and so is all the expertise, the very expertise Ornge said they wanted to sell around the world. It's no wonder the for-profit companies failed: They had nothing to sell.

Speaker, this all-party select committee is meant to look at more than the financial problems at Ornge. They've got managers that have absolutely no air ambulance expertise. This committee will get to the bottom of the problems the front-line staff are raising about operational decisions that affected both their crew and patient safety. The purpose is to give the front-line staff an open, transparent forum to speak out about their concerns publicly. Speaker, only a select committee will provide the appropriate forum.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to lend my support to this very important motion. A couple of weeks ago, I stood beside the member from—oh, I should have looked this up—

Mr. Frank Klees: Newmarket–Aurora.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Newmarket–Aurora. I stood beside the member for Newmarket–Aurora, and together, representing his party and mine, we requested a select committee.

I did not take this decision lightly, Madam Speaker. It came after many, many weeks of work, many weeks of work where we really tried to give the members of the government an opportunity to show us and tell us that they had the intention to get to the bottom of what had happened at Ornge. During all of that time, I stood in this House and asked questions daily, and so did the member from Newmarket–Aurora—stood and asked questions. For all of the questions that we asked, we got pretty much the same answer: that the auditor had been called in, that the OPP was investigating, and that was going to be it. That was going to be the end of it.

The work that is being done by the forensic auditors and the work that has been done by our Auditor General, as well as the investigation of the OPP, is all important work. I don't want to take anything away from this, but there are big pieces that will still not be touched at all, and we owe it to the people of Ontario to be accountable.

When something like this happens, when you see people pocketing \$1.4-million salaries that were hidden from the public view, when you see a slew of personal

chefs and personal trainers and an abuse of taxpayers' money, people lose confidence, for good reason. We want to rebuild that confidence. We want to make sure that whatever derailed, whatever allowed for this to happen, never happens again.

Tomorrow, the Auditor General will table his report. He does excellent work as an Auditor General. He gets to the bottom of value for money. This is what he does. We already know we didn't get value for money at Ornge, but he will put it in black and white, and I'm sure it will be a good report. Then we will have three days where the way it really works, we have to put in a list of key witnesses who will be invited to come and answer questions from the people in public accounts. I'm one of them.

The problem with this is, myself and the member from Newmarket–Aurora and maybe others also have dozens and dozens of emails from people who know of wrongdoing, who know who knew when and what and did nothing. In those emails they tell us what they know, but they say, "But I don't want my name used, because if you say this out loud, they will know that I told you this because I'm the only person who has that knowledge." There is no way I can call this person to come and testify in front of public accounts. I have to give a list of the witnesses I want to appear. This person has already told me, "You can't use my name. I'm afraid for my job. I'm afraid for myself. I want you to know what really went on, but you can't use my name."

So, what we want to do is, first, we give the government a chance to say, "Yes, we will create a forum to get to the bottom of this. Yes, we will create a forum where whistle-blowers and people who want protection will have an opportunity to come and tell us what they know." They're telling me right now, and they're telling the member from Newmarket–Aurora, but there's nothing we can do with that information because those people are scared and need our protection.

So, after looking through all this, after taking the time to ask questions, trying to get a briefing, trying to get to the bottom of this and trying to basically judge a little bit the amount of collaboration we were going to get from the Liberal side of the House, we took the very unusual decision that both opposition parties would stand together at a press conference and ask for a select committee.

Then, today, after we had formally repeated or asked in the House many, many times, and always being served the same answers, we brought it as a motion in the House. We do have a glimpse of hope here because the Minister of Health is on record as saying that if it was the wish of the Legislative Assembly, they will respect that wish. Well, in a few minutes, the Legislative Assembly will have spoken. We will speak through a vote on this motion. If a vote on this motion carries, that the wish of the Legislative Assembly is to get to the bottom of this by setting forth a select committee, that will allow us to bring forward people who say they will only come forward if we afford them protection, people whom there is no way we can call to public accounts, there is no way

we can call them on another committee because when we do this, we have to submit our list of witnesses. Those people have to be afforded a safe environment to come and tell us what went wrong, because things that went wrong are huge.

1730

At the basis of any change is, first, if you want to change something, you have to admit that there's been a mistake. Once you admit there's been a mistake, you learn from it and you move on. There is nothing more that I would like than to move on from Ornge. There's nothing more that I would like than to be able to turn the page and say, "Here's exactly what went wrong. Here's who slept on the switch, here's who didn't do their work and here are some of the contractual arrangements that allowed for all of that to happen. Here's the wrongdoing that we want to change so that we can build confidence in our air ambulance system," because right now, it has been shaken to the core—shaken to the core, to the point where a lot of the good paramedics, physicians and everybody else who works within the system are jumping ship. They don't want to be associated with that organization anymore, and that puts all of us at risk.

I want us to be proud of our air ambulance system, to know that—I live in the north. My constituents depend on a good air ambulance system, I would say more than most of the people in the south. We need and we want a good air ambulance system. In order for that page to be turned, we need that select committee to be struck. We need to give a safe forum for people to come forward, people who have already told us what they know but don't feel the confidence to share it if we don't provide them with a forum for them to do that safely. Public accounts cannot give them that. Public accounts is not a forum that can give people the assurance that the whistleblowers will be protected. This is not how public accounts works.

The need to get to the bottom sometimes is acknowledged by the people from the Liberal Party, but we also need to act.

I realize that I only have a few seconds left on the clock.

Once you start to dig into some of the dealings that were going on at Ornge, it looks like a mafia movie. It's unbelievable everything that went on in there, from money laundering, to kickbacks, to you-name-it. It all happened, and it all happened with taxpayers' money. There are people out there who saw those transactions who know exactly who got what, when, who raised the alarm bell, who tried to alert—and they will come forward. They will come forward once we give them a select committee.

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

Mr. Kevin Daniel Flynn: It's a pleasure to join the debate today. I've been listening to the comments from members across the aisle and those from my colleagues in my own party.

I had the privilege in the last term of government of chairing one of the select committees, and I have to tell

you, Speaker, it was one of the best experiences of my political life. But I'll tell you that that Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions wasn't born in the way that is being suggested today for this one. It was born in a sense of co-operation, and I think it was born for the best of reasons. I think that was a major ingredient in the success of that committee in drawing all sides together, in what is a pretty partisan place, usually, on most issues.

I want to say from the outset how proud I am of the paramedics and the front-line workers. The previous speaker talked about living in a northern community and how important Ornge is to her. I live in a community where the QEW bisects it. I often spend an awful lot of time driving up the 400. Certainly, my experience with the Ornge choppers is usually when they're landing at a very tragic traffic accident.

I've heard the reasons for forming a select committee. They're not reasons at this time that I would agree really meet the intent or the test for why you would form a select committee. We've got the public accounts committee; we have that option; we've got the OPP actively involved in investigating at Ornge; we've got the Auditor General bringing in his report today; and we've got legislation that is coming that's going to require hearings through the committee system as well. So it seems to me that maybe, at some point in the future, there is a need for a select committee, but I think, with everything that's going on, with the actions that the minister has taken to date in replacing the board, that it's time right now to get to the bottom of something that we all agree should not have happened, and perhaps at that point we can move forward.

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

Mrs. Christine Elliott: We are nearing the end of our time for debate on this important subject and I don't have a lot of time to speak, but there are a couple of points that I would really like to make, starting, first of all, by commending my colleague the member from Newmarket–Aurora for his persistence and diligence in voicing the many concerns that have been brought to him over the last couple of years and for not dropping the ball on this, which has led to the debate that we're having here today. It was only because he was consistently brushed off by this government, who refused to recognize that there were problems going on over at Ornge until it erupted into a crisis, and that's why we find ourselves here today asking for the creation of a select committee to find out what went so badly wrong at Ornge right under the government's nose, so to speak.

The government members today have raised a number of reasons why we don't really need a select committee, that there are other ways that we can deal with this issue. I'd like to deal with each one of them to show why I believe that these are arguments without merit.

First of all, there is the argument that existing committees can deal with that. Certainly I would suggest that an issue of this depth and complexity isn't really

something that can be properly dealt with in the public accounts committee.

Secondly, the Auditor General and OPP are conducting their examinations and the Auditor General will be coming forward with his report tomorrow, but with all due respect, the Auditor General is looking at something different. He has a different focus; he's looking at value for money. Similarly, the OPP is taking a look at evidence of criminal wrongdoing. What we really want to find out is what went on here; how, despite numerous warning flags being raised, this government failed to respond. That's what we need to get to and that's why we need a select committee.

Now, the government is also saying, "Don't worry. We've got it covered. Everything's okay. We're bringing forward legislation to make sure that it doesn't happen again." Madam Speaker, we don't know what "it" is. The public doesn't know; the members of this Legislature don't know. I would venture to say that the Premier and the ministers don't even know. How can you possibly suggest any kind of legislation that's going to be meaningful when you haven't even properly defined the problem? That's why the legislation is premature, because we don't even know what we're dealing with.

I will say, Madam Speaker, that we had a situation where, in January 2011, a 21-page letter was written to the Minister of Health from the chairman of the board of Ornge to talk about the reorganization of the air ambulance system in Ontario; fair enough. But 21 pages to describe how you're restructuring something that's been around for many years?

I don't think this qualifies as a prop, but I think the people need to see the very complicated inter-relationships between the for-profit companies and the not-for-profit companies that Ornge set up here—and a total of 12 companies, including management agreements and all kinds of things.

In a former life, I worked as a bank inspector in tax savings in different parts of the world, and I can tell you, when you see a setup like this, you know that people are trying to draw you off track. They don't want you to know what's really going on. That's why we need to have a select committee to get to the bottom of Ornge and understand why all of this was necessary.

I would say also, from some of the corporate searches that we've done, that as of December 8, 2011, there was another company that was incorporated: Ornge Global Brazil Holdings Limited. How does that possibly relate to the operation of an air ambulance service in Ontario? That's why we need a select committee.

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

Mr. Frank Klees: Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for participating in this debate. I want to thank my colleagues from the NDP caucus as well.

I want to just say to you how disappointing it has been for me to hear members from the government caucus stand in their place and obviously tell us that they're

going to be voting against this motion. The reason I'm so disappointed is because I know that the people of this province are seeing, once again, a government that is intent on hiding the truth rather than having the truth come forward so that we can deal with it.

The members of the government have spoken. Each one who stood in their place spoke about process and how everything is all right. Well, Speaker, we have heard that from this minister time and time again while a scandal was brewing all the time under her watch. We need the minister now to honour her commitment that she would support the will of the Legislature, which will be determined by a vote in just a few minutes. We'll see what the integrity of the minister is all about in terms of how she responds to this vote.

1740

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Mr. Klees has moved opposition day number 3—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Oh, we're not out of time.

Further debate?

Mr. Bob Delaney: There are some things to agree with in the discourse by the member from Newmarket–Aurora, and there are some things to disagree with as well.

This is a serious member who speaks seriously and speaks well on any issue he addresses. Indeed, in his demeanour in the Legislature, the member for Newmarket–Aurora is someone for new members to look up to. So let's look at what's to like, what's to differ with and whether or not honest people of good character can or should disagree.

The member for Newmarket–Aurora and his party advocate a greater role for the private sector in the delivery of health care; and a previous Minister of Health in the province of Ontario thought the concept had some merit a number of years ago.

On this side, we agree with the member for Newmarket–Aurora in feeling angry, outraged and betrayed at what seems to be a corporate culture of the worst kind of greed. We are both beyond disappointment, indeed shocked and appalled, that an accountability agreement intended to govern a relationship between honest and ethical parties acting in a reasonable and a respectful manner should apparently be twisted, flouted, misused and abused by Ornge.

The evidence this House has seen suggests that the former Ornge management must be held to account. All the members of this House agree on that. When the Ministry of Health began to take apart Ornge, the member spoke on the issue, and we applaud him for that.

When the member asked the minister what she planned to do about Ornge, she told him that the Auditor General's staff was taking apart the operations of Ornge, or at least trying to. The member knows that when the Auditor General could not get answers, the minister hauled in the management of Ornge and ordered them to

disclose information to the Auditor General's staff. We expect the Auditor General's report this week.

Here is where I differ with my friend from Newmarket–Aurora, and it's an honest difference. I ask the member whether his call for a select committee before the auditor has presented his report presumes the findings in the Auditor General's report. I ask the member whether it might be a better idea to hear from the Auditor General first. What if, as expected, the Auditor General does his usual thorough and rigorous analysis? How could the member for Newmarket–Aurora respond to the House and say, "Well, we have an opinion from the House that we ought to have a select committee, but it seems that the Auditor General has gotten into the dark corners that our select committee had in mind." Wouldn't the member from Newmarket–Aurora like to have the select committee as a viable contingency instead of presuming the outcome of the Auditor General's report?

When the member from Newmarket–Aurora asked who was looking into the allegations of whether the executive team broke the law, the Minister of Health told him and this House that the Ontario Provincial Police were investigating Ornge. The member and indeed all Ontarians had to take "yes" for an answer to the question of, if there was wrongdoing at Ornge, were the police on top of it and could they get to the bottom of it?

The member for Newmarket–Aurora served in cabinet while his party was in government. He held two portfolios and served both well and honourably. I commend him. But he knows from having sworn his oath to enter cabinet that no minister of the crown controls the police. No minister of the crown may start, stop or in any way affect a police investigation, and an OPP investigation is ongoing.

Speaker, a question the member may wish to answer to me or to the House is this: Does this opposition day motion presume the outcome of an independent police investigation? And while the OPP looks into whether anyone at Ornge broke the law and the Auditor General finishes his investigation into the books and the network of affiliated companies, does the member's call for a select committee risk tainting any evidence?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order. I ask the members to take your conversations elsewhere.

Mr. Bob Delaney: Does the member's call for a select committee risk tainting any evidence or testimony, or risk the integrity of two independent, arm's-length inquiry processes? If he answers no, I respectfully differ with him. It is possible for people of integrity to disagree. To protect the integrity of the investigations by the Auditor General and the OPP, I suggest he stand his proposal down until we've had a chance to hear first from the Auditor General and the OPP.

The member for Newmarket–Aurora also knows that an all-party committee of this Legislature ordered hearings to review this week's Auditor General's report. That committee is the Standing Committee on Public

Accounts, chaired, in fact, by the member's own caucus colleague the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka. I know that the member from Newmarket–Aurora does not mean, directly, indirectly or by implication, to diminish the role of his caucus colleague from Parry Sound–Muskoka, or to presume the outcome of deliberations of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. The member from Newmarket–Aurora has enormous respect for the institution of government and for the role of this Legislature. So, for the third solid and fundamental reason, I ask him whether he wishes, by design or by accident, to presume or to duplicate the work of this Legislature or of the committee if it's an all-party committee chaired by his own colleague.

Finally, Speaker, should legislation arise from the Auditor General's report—which seems a high probability—that legislation would itself be sent to another committee of this Legislature. That means at least four separate investigations are either in process or highly likely on the subject of Ornge.

We share with the member from Newmarket–Aurora the outrage over the allegations of shenanigans, secrecy and management misconduct at Ornge. We could understand this initiative if it were all this Legislature had, or if it proposed to examine an area not currently under investigation, or if it addressed findings or recommendations or an oversight that the Auditor General or the OPP or the standing committee, or if its proposed or evaluated findings—but it does none of these things.

So I ask the member from Newmarket–Aurora a final time, would he stand down this well-meaning but at best premature resolution until the Auditor General, the OPP, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and/or the Standing Committee on Public Accounts table findings or results that may give substance to such an initiative?

I agree with him, Speaker. Let's get to the truth. But Speaker, where I differ with him is, let's do it right. I think the manner in which this member has proposed a worthy proposal doesn't do the—

Interjections.

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

Mr. Klees has moved opposition day motion 3. 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 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1749 to 1759.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): Order. Mr. Klees has moved opposition day motion 3. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.
Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby

Hudak, Tim
Jackson, Rod
Jones, Sylvia
Klees, Frank

Ouellette, Jerry J.
Pettapiece, Randy
Prue, Michael
Schein, Jonah

Bisson, Gilles
Campbell, Sarah
Chudleigh, Ted
Clark, Steve
DiNovo, Cheri
Dunlop, Garfield
Elliott, Christine
Fedeli, Victor
Forster, Cindy
Gélinas, France
Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Michael
Hillier, Randy
Horwath, Andrea

Leone, Rob
MacLaren, Jack
MacLeod, Lisa
Mantha, Michael
Marchese, Rosario
McDonell, Jim
McKenna, Jane
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul
Milligan, Rob E.
Natyshak, Taras
Nicholls, Rick
O'Toole, John

Scott, Laurie
Shurman, Peter
Singh, Jagmeet
Smith, Todd
Tabuns, Peter
Taylor, Monique
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vanthof, John
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Witmer, Elizabeth
Yakabuski, John
Yurek, Jeff

Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bradley, James J.
Brotten, Laurel C.
Cansfield, Donna H.
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika

Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Gerretsen, John
Hoskins, Eric
Jaczek, Helena
Jeffrey, Linda
Kwinter, Monte
Leal, Jeff
Mangat, Amrit
Mauro, Bill
McNeely, Phil

Naqvi, Yasir
Piruzza, Teresa
Qaadri, Shafiq
Sandals, Liz
Sousa, Charles
Takharr, Harinder S.
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): All those opposed will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Albanese, Laura
Balkissoon, Bas
Bartolucci, Rick
Bentley, Christopher

Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Duguid, Brad
Duncan, Dwight

Meilleur, Madeleine
Milloy, John
Moridi, Reza
Murray, Glen R.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):
The ayes are 53; the nays are 41.

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

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Julia Munro): It being past 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1803.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. David C. Onley, O.Ont.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

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
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Bartolucci, Hon. / L'hon. Rick (LIB)	Sudbury	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Bentley, Hon. / L'hon. Christopher (LIB)	London West / London-Ouest	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Best, Hon. / L'hon. Margaret R. (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Consumer Services / Ministre des Services aux consommateurs
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Minister of the Environment / Ministre de l'Environnement Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Broten, Hon. / L'hon. Laurel C. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Cansfield, Donna H. (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre de Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Chudleigh, Ted (PC)	Halton	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Craitor, Kim (LIB)	Niagara Falls	
Damerla, Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development and Innovation / Ministre du Développement économique et de l'Innovation
Duncan, Hon. / L'hon. Dwight (LIB)	Windsor–Tecumseh	Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / Président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement Deputy Premier / Vice-premier ministre 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
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	Deputy House Leader, Recognized Party / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gerretsen, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	Attorney General / Procureur général
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse
Jackson, Rod (PC)	Barrie	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Jaczek, Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Jeffrey, Hon. / L'hon. Linda (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Minister Responsible for Seniors / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées
Klees, Frank (PC)	Newmarket–Aurora	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Leal, Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	
Leone, Rob (PC)	Cambridge	
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Marchese, Rosario (NDP)	Trinity–Spadina	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	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	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGuinty, Hon. / L'hon. Dalton (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	Premier / Premier ministre
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	Leader, Government / Chef du gouvernement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
McNeely, Phil (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
		Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milligan, Rob E. (PC) Milloy, Hon. / L'hon. John (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Moridi, Reza (LIB) Munro, Julia (PC)	Richmond Hill York–Simcoe	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Naqvi, Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	
O'Toole, John (PC)	Durham	
Oraziotti, David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Oshawa	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Piruzza, Teresa (LIB)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Prue, Michael (NDP)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Sandals, Liz (LIB)	Guelph	
Schein, Jonah (NDP)	Davenport	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Shurman, Peter (PC)	Thornhill	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sorbara, Greg (LIB)	Vaughan	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Hon. / L'hon. Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	Minister of Government Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Witmer, Elizabeth (PC)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, David (LIB)	Willowdale	

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COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Grant Crack, Kim Craiton
Vic Dhillon, Michael Harris
Rob Leone, Taras Natyshak
Rick Nicholls, Michael Prue
Mario Sergio
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Teresa Piruzza
Bob Delaney, Victor Fedeli
Cindy Forster, Monte McNaughton
Yasir Naqvi, Teresa Piruzza
Michael Prue, Peter Shurman
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: David Zimmer
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Joe Dickson, Rosario Marchese
David Oraziotti, Laurie Scott
Todd Smith, Jeff Yurek
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

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permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Phil McNeely
Donna H. Cansfield, Helena Jaczek
Bill Mauro, Jim McDonell
Phil McNeely, Randy Pettapiece
Peter Tabuns, Monique Taylor
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

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la justice**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Shafiq Qaadri
Laura Albanese, Teresa J. Armstrong
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Mike Colle
Frank Klees, Jack MacLaren
Paul Miller, Rob E. Milligan
Shafiq Qaadri
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Laura Albanese, Bas Balkissoon
Gilles Bisson, Donna H. Cansfield
Steve Clark, Garfield Dunlop
Jeff Leal, Lisa MacLeod
Jonah Schein
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Toby Barrett
Toby Barrett, France Gélinas
Phil McNeely, Norm Miller
Reza Moridi, Jerry J. Ouellette
Liz Sandals, Jagmeet Singh
David Zimmer
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Vanthof
Michael Coteau, Grant Crack
Vic Dhillon, Randy Hillier
Rod Jackson, Mario Sergio
Peter Tabuns, John Vanthof
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ted Chudleigh
Ted Chudleigh, Dipika Damerla
Cheri DiNovo, Kevin Daniel Flynn
Ernie Hardeman, Tracy MacCharles
Amrit Mangat, Michael Mantha
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Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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