

No. 47A



N° 47A

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario  
Second Session, 37<sup>th</sup> Parliament

Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario  
Deuxième session, 37<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 9 October 2001**

**Mardi 9 octobre 2001**

Speaker  
Honourable Gary Carr

Président  
L'honorable Gary Carr

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Greffier  
Claude L. DesRosiers

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 9 October 2001

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 9 octobre 2001

*The House met at 1330.  
Prayers.*

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** I rise today to address a problem that has come to my attention regarding the Conservative government's hastily passed Employment Standards Act. It appears that in the rush to pass this sweeping labour legislation, the government has created several problems that are adversely affecting Ontario's working families.

One such person, Mr Don Guest, is in my riding. Don works 12-hour shifts in continuous operations and has no choice but to work on public holidays. Recent changes to the Employment Standards Act allow for a formula to calculate public holiday pay. Public holiday pay now amounts to 8.4 hours' pay, which is hours worked over a four-week period divided by 20. A business can choose to pay overtime for the day and substitute another working day off, but is only required to pay 8.4 hours of pay for holiday pay, a loss of 3.6 hours of holiday pay for the employee working a 12-hour shift. A business can choose to pay overtime and public holiday pay of 8.4 hours and not give the alternative day off, again a loss of 3.6 hours of holiday pay for the employee.

The problem is that the employee who works eight hours a day, 40 hours a week, receives full holiday pay, while a person who works 12-hour days with mandatory overtime receives less than full holiday pay under the new Employment Standards Act.

I call on the minister to investigate this problem and correct it. Employees like my constituent Don Guest, working to meet production requirements for the type of work that keeps Ontario's economy booming, should not be punished economically for doing so because of your flawed legislation.

#### CANADIAN FORCES

**Mr Raminder Gill (Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale):** At this time, Canadian sailors are heading into harm's way to help defend all of us who value freedom from those who practise terrorism.

Canada is not a neutral country. Canada was a warrior nation long before it became a peacekeeping nation. I'm

glad to see that we are at last lining up alongside our friends like Britain and the United States who believe in free speech, religious freedom and the rule of law.

I want to salute the fighting men and women aboard HMCS Halifax, who are already on their way to join the multinational force in the Arabian Sea. The Halifax is the lead unit of a six-ship Canadian contingent to provide protection and logistical support to our allies. As well, they are tangible, concrete evidence of our commitment to the struggle against terror.

I call on the federal government in this time of crisis to stop neglecting our fighting forces. Canadians are in a generous mood. We will forgive past mistakes if the Liberals in Ottawa will begin funding the equipment, the recruits and the training dollars to let us carry our share of the load.

Canada's troops are second to none. Let us give them the tools they need to do their jobs. I urge all Canadians to give our sailors the support they deserve.

#### NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

**Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming-Cochrane):** This Thursday the Legislative Assembly committee will consider the Ombudsman's report on health travel for cancer patients in Ontario. As members will know and remember, northern Ontarians became very incensed by the inequitable treatment of the Harris government between the two very differently funded health travel programs when cancer patients in southern Ontario needed to be sent to northern Ontario for treatment of prostate and breast cancer. Northerners claimed this to be discriminatory and the Ombudsman in his report also agreed.

The government has done nothing to bring fairness to the northern health travel grant since this opinion has been made and we've yet to see the Ministry of Health's report that was dated August 2000, entitled Patient Travel Assistance Programs in Ontario. Why has this report not been tabled? Northern Ontarians and all Ontarians need to see this report. Why has the Harris government not yet brought equity to the various programs that they have established for southern Ontario cancer patients versus those in northern Ontario?

For years northern Ontarians, thousands of them, have paid thousands of dollars to obtain the health services they require. To see the government bring in a fully paid program for southern Ontario patients, as they did 18 months ago, while paying only one-way mileage for

northern Ontarians is not only galling, it's insulting. And it is discriminatory.

It's time the Harris government brought some equity to the programs in northern Ontario so that we would be treated fairly and that we'd have a northern health travel grant program that treats all Ontarians fairly. Northern Ontarians should have good and affordable access to the health care treatment that they require and that they deserve. We have greater distances to travel. We have lower incomes and greater costs. It is time the Harris government made those important changes.

#### D&D AUTOMATION

**Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex):** I rise in the Legislature today to recognize a company in my riding. D&D Automation, located in Stratford, was established in 1992. They design and provide industrial automation systems and training. Over the past few years D&D Automation has grown rapidly and has watched its client base extend throughout North and South America. The company recently moved into a larger facility in Stratford to accommodate the additional employees it has hired and to showcase its knowledge and expertise.

D&D Automation places a great deal of importance and value on their employees. The company's owners attribute much of their success to the dedication and loyalty of their highly skilled employees, many of whom are graduates of Ontario's colleges.

D&D Automation is also interested in rural economic development initiatives. They are part of the Huron Perth Development Alliance, which is a group of 27 local companies and municipalities that have come together to help young people in my riding find good jobs close to home. Several months ago, this alliance received funding from our government's rural youth job strategy fund to help the alliance create employment opportunities.

I want to congratulate the owners of D&D Automation—Mike McCourt, Doug Biesinger and Jeff Smith—and their 40 employees for their success and for meeting the needs of companies in this fast-changing and technologically advanced world.

#### EMERY ADULT LEARNING CENTRE

**Mr Mario Sergio (York West):** The Emery Adult Learning Centre is facing potential closure in June of next year. As the member for York West, I have been proud to be closely associated with the Emery Adult Learning Centre community and can attest to its excellent and vital role in the northwest quadrant of the city of Toronto.

The Emery Adult Learning Centre is a unique secondary school designed to help adult students get an education, prepare for post-secondary education and training and improve technical skills and get on with their lives in the workplace. Cuts to adult education at Emery will hurt people striving to improve their lives. From an initial enrolment of just under 400 students two years

ago, well over 1,100 students are currently attending as adult students.

Since 1996, Premier, we members of the opposition have continually raised the issue of erosion of funding levels for adult education. Ultimately, if Emery Adult Learning Centre should close, it will be because of your cuts and your complete disregard of the needs of our adult students. It would be a shame, Premier. Programs such as the Emery Adult Learning Centre improve people's quality of life, help them get off welfare, offer students better job prospects and teach the skills necessary to make a positive contribution to our society. I would only hope that you understand what we are talking about.

1340

#### FIREFIGHTERS

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** It's with great pride that I rise this week to speak once again about Ontario's firefighters, in this instance, firefighters from Niagara region. A team of them left this past weekend for New York City at the request of New York City officials. Members of the Critical Incident Stress Management team for Niagara, formed in 1999, are trained to assist other firefighters in responding to tragic incidents. These are firefighters from Niagara, as courageous as any could be, going there, assisting their sister and brother firefighters in New York City.

You will want to know that among that group are Rick Honsberger of Thorold; you've heard of him before. As well, we've got Dan O'Hearn and Barry Norton of St Catharines, Bruce Green of Niagara Falls and Sandy MacIntyre of Port Colborne. Captain Arnold Mackler and Bob Freeman are accompanying the eight others, as well as a long-time friend of firefighters and people across Niagara region, Reverend Doug Aikman, who's the chaplain for the firefighters and a pastor, a preacher, a reverend in Niagara region who has been a source of great strength for people in emergency services, including firefighters as well as numerous families. I praise these people, I salute them and I tell them that their concern and commitment is appreciated by all.

#### CHINESE FREEMASONS

**Mr Bob Wood (London West):** I rise today to report that the 32nd National Convention of Chinese Freemasons in Canada is being held in London between October 7 and 11, 2001. There are delegates from across Canada participating as well as representatives from the China Zhi Gong Party, the political party of the Freemasons in China. They are led by Mr Wang Sougda, deputy leader of the party and a member of the standing committee of the Chinese National People's Congress.

The London branch of the Chinese Freemasons is also celebrating their 81st anniversary and the 20th anniversary of the Dart Coon Club, which was incorporated to hold the properties of the Chinese Freemasons.

The spirit, traditions and values of the Chinese Freemasons are constant. Their goals are to support their motherland, to participate in social services in their adopted country and to assist Chinese communities in Canada. The biggest challenge facing the national convention is how to promote these values in the 21st century.

The opening ceremony was held on Sunday, October 7, followed by a parade from the London Convention Centre to the Covent Garden Market Square, where lion dances were performed. That evening, about 250 delegates, members and guests attended a banquet. Mrs Sun Shuxian, the Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Toronto, and other dignitaries were in attendance.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome the delegates and invited dignitaries to the great city of London and to express our best wishes for a very fruitful and successful convention. I know all members of this House will join with me in wishing the Chinese Freemasons a very successful 32nd national convention in London.

#### CANADIAN FORCES

**Mr Michael Bryant (St Paul's):** I'm sure I join all my colleagues in the House today in paying tribute to the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces. Over the Thanksgiving weekend, they received their mission: Operation Apollo, Canada's largest and latest contribution to the international fight against terrorism.

To the more than 2,000 families who have loved ones called to action, we offer our support and our prayers. We know that many of you had your Thanksgiving dinner interrupted with the call to action. You may not know where your soldier is going, how long they are going to be there or what they're going to do once they get there. What we do know is that Canada's commitment to the overall campaign has been described as an integral component and has received praise from the US President and the Secretary-General to NATO.

The mission is called Operation Apollo. Apollo is the god, they say, that strikes from afar. To those men and women who will be voyaging to the Persian Gulf, our Canadian Apollos, and to those who stand on guard for us here at home, we offer our humble gratitude. We are awestruck at your bravery and commitment to country. Understand, please, that there are a thousand watts of prayers and thoughts emanating from every seat in this House and every corner of this land. Good luck and God speed.

#### VISITORS

**Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale):** I'd like all members in the House to join with me in welcoming a group from Morse public school who are with us in the gallery with their teacher, Ryan Ward. This grade 5 and 6 group is representative of the entire student

body which recently raised \$359.48 for the Canadian Red Cross USA appeal. It's my honour to welcome them here today.

#### CANADIAN FORCES

**Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls):** I would also like to extend my best wishes and prayers to those men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces who are headed overseas.

As we know, many other men and women in the history of Canada have gone into battle for this country. This year, in celebration of a place that many of those men and women hold dear, the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 51 celebrated their 75th anniversary. A dinner dance with special presentations was held on Saturday, September 15, 2001. The program commenced with the Rev Donald Glennie providing a blessing and two minutes of silence for the victims and their families of the September 11, 2001, US terrorist attacks. Retired Brigadier General Kevin Troughton gave an informative speech on the peacekeeping medal and then presented it to Mr Robert Juteau. Other awardees included both Henry Grant and Jack Morrison who received 50-year legion membership awards. Past executive members were presented with past officer medals and bars.

I'm very proud to say that my own Uncle Ike, Mr Reginald Maves, received the 60-year legion membership award. While my Uncle Bart and my father attended the dinner, our whole family is very proud of Uncle Ike and all of his accomplishments. Closing ceremonies at the dinner were followed by live entertainment and dancing.

I stand in the House today to offer my congratulations to Branch 51 on their 75th anniversary and to all of the award recipients. Best wishes for the many years ahead.

#### MOTIONS

##### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader):** I move that pursuant to standing order 9(c)(i), the House shall meet from 6:45 pm to 9:30 pm on Tuesday, October 9, and Wednesday, October 10, 2001, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

*The division bells rang from 1348 to 1353.*

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

**Ayes**

Agostino, Dominic	Galt, Doug	Newman, Dan
Arnott, Ted	Gerretsen, John	O'Toole, John
Baird, John R.	Gilchrist, Steve	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Barrett, Toby	Gill, Raminder	Parsons, Ernie
Bartolucci, Rick	Gravelle, Michael	Patten, Richard
Bountrogianni, Marie	Guzzo, Garry J.	Peters, Steve
Boyer, Claudette	Harris, Michael D.	Phillips, Gerry
Bradley, James J.	Hastings, John	Pupatello, Sandra
Bryant, Michael	Hodgson, Chris	Ramsay, David
Christopherson, David	Hoy, Pat	Runciman, Robert W.
Clement, Tony	Hudak, Tim	Ruprecht, Tony
Coburn, Brian	Jackson, Cameron	Sampson, Rob
Colle, Mike	Johns, Helen	Sergio, Mario
Conway, Sean G.	Johnson, Bert	Smitherman, George
Cordiano, Joseph	Klees, Frank	Sorbara, Greg
Crozier, Bruce	Kwinter, Monte	Spina, Joseph
Cunningham, Dianne	Lalonde, Jean-Marc	Sterling, Norman W.
Curling, Alvin	Levac, David	Stewart, R. Gary
DeFaria, Carl	Martiniuk, Gerry	Stockwell, Chris
Di Cocco, Caroline	Maves, Bart	Tascona, Joseph N.
Dombrowsky, Leona	Mazzilli, Frank	Tilson, David
Duncan, Dwight	McLeod, Lyn	Tsubouchi, David H.
Dunlop, Garfield	McMeekin, Ted	Turnbull, David
Ecker, Janet	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Elliott, Brenda	Munro, Julia	Witmer, Elizabeth
Flaherty, Jim	Mushinski, Marilyn	Wood, Bob

**The Speaker:** All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**Nays**

Bisson, Gilles	Marchese, Rosario	Martin, Tony
Hampton, Howard	Martel, Shelley	Prue, Michael
Kormos, Peter		

**Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers):** The ayes are 78; the nays are 7.

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK

**Hon Helen Johns (Minister without Portfolio [Health and Long-Term Care]):** I rise in the House today to honour Mental Illness Awareness Week, which takes place this year between October 7 and 13. As well, I appreciate this opportunity to highlight our government's reform of Ontario's mental health system.

Ten years ago today the Canadian Psychiatric Association, in collaboration with a number of national organizations, launched the first Mental Illness Awareness Week campaign. Its slogan, "Let's Unmask Mental Illness," communicates the essential goal of this designated week. That goal is to remove the stigma of mental illness and create an environment where it's acceptable to discuss and seek information and/or treatment and support for mental illness. Such openness is critical in helping to ensure efficient and timely access to the mental health system, and this is central to our government's mental health reform.

Ontario's mental health system for the seriously mentally ill includes provincial and specific psychiatric hospitals, general hospital in-patient and outpatient units, institutional long-term-care services, homes for special care, the mental health homeless initiative, assertive community treatment teams and public education, and hundreds of community programs providing a wide range of services from crisis intervention to vocational and social rehabilitation.

Throughout this vast entity, the progressive thread of reform is taking mental health care out of the institution and moving it into the community. Supporting that goal is our government's investment in the mental health system, and I'm proud to say that since 1995 we have committed an additional \$377 million in mental health care services. In total, Ontario spends \$2.7 billion annually on mental health services.

Yet for all this, there is still much more to do. A mental health care system built to withstand the challenges of our time must be accessible, it must be integrated, it must be coordinated and it must be accountable to the people it serves and the people of the province. It must deliver without fail a full range of care. It must be driven by compassion and commitment. It must be available at every stage of life and as close to home as possible.

**1400**

The urgency of such an initiative is based squarely on the recognition that millions of Canadians are directly or indirectly affected by mental illness, and the cost of mental illness is far higher than often estimated—far higher in our personal lives, with our extended families, in the workplace, in the health care system and in the economy as a whole.

That's why Ontario is steadfast in its commitment to mental health reform; that's why previous ministers have established the mental health implementation task force as a mechanism through which recommendations are being developed on provincial psychiatric hospital restructuring, community reinvestments and the implementation of mental health reform; that's why the Premier of the province met with the joint task force in the last two weeks to discuss his vision for mental health reform and listened to the committee on their initial findings; and that's why nine regional task forces have been formulated throughout the province, because all of this is important to ensuring that we have the services where and when we need them.

Each mental health task force in the province has the flexibility to effectively address the implementation requirements of the region it serves. The task forces are working in collaboration with community providers, consumers, families, the business community and the ministry to identify local problems and blueprint an integrated, coordinated reform of the province's mental health system.

One of the greatest assets is the spirit of partnership that exists within these nine task forces. I have to tell you, I've met with many of the task force members, and

the commitment they have to making a difference in Ontario is truly outstanding. Each task force is a collaboration of determined individuals who represent many facets of our society. They represent people from the provincial psychiatric hospitals and facilities, consumers, families, community mental health agencies, community care access centres, district health centres and other caring and committed agencies clear across Ontario's mental health system. To assemble such a breadth and depth of mental health treatment knowledge under a single umbrella, I'm proud to say, is just a remarkable achievement.

Our principal goal is helping people with a serious mental illness and their families get the information and services they need in an efficient and effective manner. We're determined to ensure that the right services, and the right number of them, are in place, and that the system is set up so people can have access to them when it is appropriate, and to make sure that they have those services when and where they need them in Ontario.

The task force represents a golden opportunity to bring about change in the way mental health services are delivered in this great province. Once completed, accessibility, integration, coordination, accountability and sustainability will be intrinsic to a new system that better serves the needs of those with mental illness.

The mental health system that is in place today is complex. Mental health reform policies are unquestionably ambitious. And there is always resistance to change.

The task forces not only represent and link these various sectors and stakeholders as they develop recommendations for change but also champion the notion of change itself in the community. Reform automatically means a profound shift in moving the consumer to the centre of a people-oriented system. Mental health services will be tailored to consumer needs with a view to increasing their quality of life. Consumer choice will also be improved, and access to services will be streamlined. Services will be linked and they will be coordinated so that the consumer can move seamlessly from one part of the system to the other.

In our own lives, these actions translate into our loved ones receiving better, more appropriate care at a time of critical need. They translate as more support and assistance from other consumers, families, employers, colleagues and the public at large.

That ultimately takes us back to the purpose of this week: Mental Illness Awareness Week. I want to urge every member of this House to stress the importance of the goal of this week among their constituents specifically, to help raise awareness about the nature of mental illness, to help ensure that people are aware of the nature of mental illness and its surrounding issues, treatment, care and support. We in this hallowed chamber today can ensure that we make a difference as we work toward ensuring an education so that Mental Illness Awareness Week does not go unnoticed.

Thank you all in advance for your efforts. I look forward to working with everybody during this month.

**Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** I agree that it's important to recognize Mental Health Awareness Week to build public awareness of mental health and to try and move mental health issues and concerns on to the front burner. I think it's even more important to move mental health issues on to the front burner for government action, and I truly wish this government were serious about the kinds of reforms that are needed in our mental health system.

Our great concern, when Brian's Law was passed a little more than a year ago, was that the government would feel that it had responded to the concerns of those who advocate for mental health services and would not feel it needed to do much more. In fact, over a year later very little more has been done, and the government's focus of reform continues to be the closure of six of nine psychiatric hospitals.

There was an assurance from the previous Minister of Health, reiterated by the current Minister of Health, that there would be no closures, no loss of psychiatric beds until community supports were in place. In fact, we find in the estimates this year that five of six of those psychiatric hospitals have been officially divested, are no longer officially responsible for providing care. Yet we have not seen the community supports put in place.

We have had the reality. The implementation committees are set up, as the associate minister has just described, but they have not reported. We don't know when the first committee is going to report, and in the meantime there are no significant resources because there have not been recommendations placed on the minister's desk.

We know that the serious gaps in the mental health system mean that more people are being discharged from psychiatric hospitals to go into jails than to go into community support; 25% of the inmates in our correctional institutions have mental health problems. We keep raising the issues of specific individuals who have no place to go. I just signed a letter today to the Minister of Health about a constituent named Timothy, severely brain-injured. He is sitting in a Thunder Bay district jail because nobody in the mental health system across this province can find a place for Timothy to go. I consider that to be absolutely unconscionable.

There is so much that needs to be addressed. There was no mention of mental health in the budget—\$26 million for facilities. Let me correct that statement: for facilities, but when you look at the estimates book, there is \$13 million less for the operation of our mental health facilities. If you look at community housing, where a bulk of this ministry's money has gone, and community support of housing for the mentally ill is absolutely crucial, we applauded the decision to put money into community support of mental health housing. But if you talk to people who are supposed to be providing the housing out there, in communities from Toronto to Atikokan, my riding, the housing isn't getting provided because either the resources aren't sufficient or there are

bureaucratic rules put in place that make it impossible to meet the real needs in a particular community.

Talk about alcohol and drug addiction programs and ask the government why the \$5.4 million in one-time funding for last year to enhance those programs is not being renewed this year. Let's ask them why, at the same time, there is no mention here of children's mental health, because it isn't the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. I wonder who takes responsibility for children's mental health. There are 700 children in Windsor alone on a waiting list for mental health services because the minimal increase in funding to children's mental health has not kept pace with the cuts to education budgets, which has meant more and more children in need of care.

Let's indeed unmask the reality of mental illness, and let's unmask at the same time the gaps in our service to those who have mental illness.

1410

**Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London):** It's important that we recognize this week and pay tribute to the doctors, nurses and support staff who work in caring for our mentally ill patients in this province. But I think it's important too that the associate minister and other members in southwestern Ontario recognize some of the damage this government has done to the mental health system in southwestern Ontario.

I'm going to quote from the 2000-02 operating plan for St Joseph's Health Care, who are dealing with mental health:

"Our regional mental health care programs are facing significant cost pressures. To continue to provide these services into 2001-02 without interruption will require an increase in ministry funding..." We are facing a \$5.2-million shortfall. "Should we be required to realize savings to any extent to meet any shortfall then we would undertake an extensive review of existing services," even to eliminate or balance. So I guess you're going to go through another scoping and sizing exercise.

PACT teams: they're not going to be able "by the end of the year ... to meet the demand for service."

The adult programs are experiencing waiting lists of 10 to 15 patients.

Geriatrics: "The decrease of hospital-based facilities may cause harm to this vulnerable population unless adequate and well-planned community services are provided."

I could go on and on. The nursing plan: they talk about the need for nurses and the loss of nurses, all on the backs of this government. Did you read this plan?

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I am pleased, on behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus, to recognize Mental Illness Awareness Week this week. I appreciate the goal of this week, which is to remove the stigma of mental illness and to try and create an environment where it is acceptable to discuss and seek information and treatment and support for mental illness. I want to thank all those who will be involved in the campaign.

It's this very issue of support and treatment for mental illness which I want to focus on today, especially with respect to children's mental health. The fact is that this government's record on funding children's mental health is abysmal.

I want to refer to a pre-budget consultation document we all received from Children's Mental Health Ontario, which is a non-profit, independent organization that represents 90 children's mental health centres which serve about 150,000 people. They made this presentation to the Minister of Finance on March 19, 2001. To give you an idea of the extent of the problem, the facts are:

One in five of Ontario's children has a mental health problem.

Canada's youth suicide rate increased 400% in the last 30 years.

In the last 10 years, StatsCan figures show an increase of 121% in the incidence of youth violence.

A recent study from the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences reported an increase of 19% in Ontario's adolescents seeking help for mental health problems over the last decade.

According to Ontario's office of child advocacy, 80% of young offenders have mental health needs and are incarcerated in our jails at a cost of \$100,000 a year.

The Canadian Institute of Child Health says in its most recent report that emotional and behavioural problems and early learning difficulties have the greatest impact on lowering life quality and reducing the chances for Canadian youth and kids.

—One in six children with mental health problems is receiving the help they need from the formal care and treatment system. We have 8,000 children with critical needs who now remain on waiting lists in Ontario—8,000 children with critical mental health needs.

It's interesting that in the budget consultation this particular organization talked about the investment the government made last year and said the following:

"Meeting the objectives of the four-point plan"—which is the \$20 million the government put in last year—"has added to the already extraordinary pressure on the basic infrastructure that supports all children's mental health services. Since 1993, government's investment in core funding for children's mental health services has declined by 8%. The additional cost-of-living increase, plus unfunded pay equity and WSIB, means that children's mental health centres are facing a reduction of 20% to 25% in actual real dollars since 1990."

This is the legacy left by this government with respect to children's mental health.

The association made three recommendations to the Minister of Finance. The first was a need for \$50 million to base funding to try to recruit and retain those professionals who deal with children and their mental health problems. The government has done nothing about that issue.

The second recommendation they made was that this government needed to fund so that they could intervene

early with children under the age of seven, and that \$30 million be allocated in this regard. What did the government do? The government allocated \$6.9 million of federal dollars to this initiative in May. There has been no corresponding match of funds from this province, certainly no provincial dollars invested in this regard.

The third recommendation was to allocate \$30 million to help this organization work with the Ontario Public School Boards' Association and the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association to keep our schools safe and to intervene with kids in the schools. Again, what has the government done in this regard? Nothing. The fact of the matter is that since 1990, funding in children's mental health has declined by 20% to 25% in real dollars. I know the government doesn't want to hear that, but that's a fact, that's the truth, and today the Minister of Health should have been in here doing something about it.

Minister, if this government wanted to do two things, they could fund Family Solutions in Sarnia-Lambton, which operates at St Clair Child and Youth Services, one-time funding to keep families who are at risk together. They met with the minister on April 28. They got a letter last week saying their funding has been cut. Why, Minister?

If the government wants to do something, they can do something for Essex county kids. This government has had a proposal before them since May—all members have received a copy—to increase mental health dollars for kids in that area. Again, this government has done nothing.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### ONTARIO SECURITY

**Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):** My first question today is for the Premier. Ontarians would have learned during the course of the weekend about Canada having joined the battle against terrorists, and they would have awakened this morning to headlines which made ample reference to the word "war."

I think Ontarians understand that there is now an increased likelihood of terrorist retaliation, given the fact that we have joined this battle, and rightfully so. I think the question that is weighing heavily on the minds of Ontario families today is, are we any safer today, four weeks after September 11, than we were on September 11 itself? We think specifically of our water plants, our nuclear plants, public transit, tall buildings and so on.

So the question I have for you today, Premier, on behalf of Ontario families, is, what specific measures have you put in place since September 11? I'm not talking about plans or things that are being contemplated or being reviewed. What specific measures have you put in place since September 11 to make Ontarians safer from a terrorist attack?

**Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier):** The whole issue of security and safety, of course, is one of concern to all Ontarians, indeed to all Canadians, and I think to people around the world, not just for the actions of September 11 but the accelerated action, as you know, with countries that are involved in the action to strike back at terrorists, at this particular moment in time in Afghanistan, but a stated goal wherever terrorists can be found.

We have taken a number of steps. As you know, we have asked our own Ontario Provincial Police to work with the municipal police forces. They are working with the RCMP. As you know, we have stepped up security, for example, at nuclear plants and other facilities, and we have announced a number of other measures to continue to look at other areas where we maybe should do even more. But I'm pleased to assure Ontarians that I believe they are safer today than they were before September 11.

**Mr McGuinty:** Ontario families will not be looking for platitudes; they'll be looking for evidence of specific, concrete actions.

Last week, three weeks after the terrorist attack, a man slipped in through the fence at the Bruce nuclear plant and entered a building. Fortunately, all he had in mind was to make a phone call, and that's all he did.

I want to speak to you about the issue of nuclear safety. Coincidentally, just last week concerns were raised at the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission that your government has been sitting on an updated emergency plan for our nuclear power plants for five years now. Five years is a long time. I would also add that in the minds of Ontario families, four weeks since September 11 is a long, long time. My question is, why are you taking so long to put in place an updated and improved emergency plan for our nuclear plants?

1420

**Hon Mr Harris:** The Minister of Energy can respond directly to that, if you like.

**Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology):** I wouldn't mind if the honourable member would repeat the question.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Stop the clock. If the leader of the official opposition would like to repeat it, he can.

**Mr McGuinty:** In passing, let me say that the people of Ontario are looking to the Premier for leadership on all security matters, and it's unfortunate that he's deferring to the energy minister on this.

Nonetheless, for the benefit of the minister, my question has to do with nuclear safety in the province of Ontario and the fact that just last week a man slipped through the fence at Bruce, and in addition to that, coincidentally last week the matter was raised at the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission that your government has been sitting on an updated emergency plan for our nuclear power plants for five years now.

My question is, why is it taking this government so long to put in place a better and improved emergency plan when it comes to dealing with our nuclear plants?

**Hon Mr Wilson:** We are up to date in our nuclear security measures. In fact, since the tragedy of September 11 we've taken another look at the plans that are in place. There was a comment, which we take seriously, from one member of the Canadian nuclear safety authority who lives in Victoria, a criticism he made publicly that he had never made to this government privately or through any communication with this government. However, I do take the matter seriously, and we are reviewing our safety and security measures in light of that particular member's comments.

We have great confidence in the security at our plants. Everything humanly possible that can be done is being done with all local authorities, with federal authorities and with police forces across the province. If the honourable member has any further suggestions to make, I'd like to hear them.

**Mr McGuinty:** Minister, the fact remains that last week, three weeks after September 11, a man entered the grounds of the Bruce nuclear plant and actually got inside a building. Fortunately, all he wanted to do was make a phone call. That is an indisputable fact.

I'm asking you as well about the updated emergency plan for our nuclear power plants. This plan would coordinate the emergency response to a major nuclear incident, including a terrorist attack. More than four million people live under the radioactive shadow of our three nuclear plants in the province of Ontario.

This delay in your acting on this updated plan means that you've deferred decisions like the following: how should we mark evacuation routes with signs; how would we distribute radiation-protective doses of iodine; how wide an area should we give notification to after a major incident, including a terrorist attack?

I'm not sure why this was not a priority before, but surely it ought to be a priority in the post-September 11 world. I know it's a matter that has to be approved by the cabinet. Will you finally act and make sure the new emergency plan is on the agenda and approved at tomorrow's cabinet meeting?

**Hon Mr Wilson:** We have good plans in place. We are working with our American counterparts, and they assure us, upon review of our plans, that our plans are as good or better than many of the plans in place for US nuclear sites.

The honourable member has taken the tragedy of a man who fell into the water and was suffering from hypothermia and our staff were trying to help that individual—that's how the individual ended up in the plant.

#### CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):** My second question is for the Minister of Health. Parents in southwestern Ontario received some frightening news last week. Responding to your directive to cut their budget, the London Health Sciences Centre announced the cancellation of 18 programs, many of which affect very sick children.

These programs include specialized pediatric heart surgery, all lung and heart transplants and the treatment of babies who have been seriously burned. All these kids will now have to travel to Toronto. Parents are afraid that travelling to Toronto will endanger their children, and they're also afraid there may very well be no room for them in Toronto hospitals.

Minister, can you tell these parents now why you are making them travel so far for life-saving treatment for their children?

**Hon Tony Clement (Minister of Health and Long-Term Care):** I think the honourable member is drawing some conclusions here. I can tell the honourable member and this House that the programs that are proposed for scoping and sizing by the trustees of the hospital involve less than 1% of all the patient activity that occurs in that hospital. So I'd like this House to put those decisions in that perspective.

I would also like to say to this House, in answer to the honourable member's question, that, as the Ministry of Health and as the government of Ontario, we would of course ensure, for the reason of providing the best care in the best location rather than trying to be all things to all people, that those services are picked up by other excellent institutions within the province of Ontario health system.

**Mr McGuinty:** If the minister is so quick to dismiss the concerns of parents, then maybe he'll listen to doctors. This is what pediatric cardiologist Dr Gary Joubert said: "A child may die because of the decisions made this week." This is what Dr John Lee, a pediatric heart surgeon, said: "Parents across southwestern Ontario have a right to be very worried for their children." Dr Lee said he is terrified for children, because he regularly receives urgent calls from Toronto asking for beds in London because they are full in Toronto. He says: "It isn't unusual to wait weeks to send a patient from London to Toronto, or to be told that Toronto isn't accepting transfers." I quote again from Dr Lee: "This gets to be a life-and-death situation, and it is a lie for them to say that lives won't be affected."

Minister, why are you proceeding with these cuts at the London Health Sciences Centre when parents, and now doctors, are saying these cuts will cause harm to children?

**Hon Mr Clement:** I too am surprised that the honourable member seeks to dismiss out of hand the expert advice, the clinical advice, the advice of the trustees of the community when it comes to delivering the best programs for the community in London and indeed throughout Ontario.

The honourable member mentions pediatric cardiac surgery. This is a particular procedure that is being done at 50% less than the ideal rate to ensure the best clinical outcomes. If the honourable member wants to promote poorer clinical outcomes for kids who need heart surgery, that's his business, but that's not the business of the Ontario government.

*Interjection.*

**Mr McGuinty:** If the member for London-Fanshawe wants to go on record in defence of his constituents, then I'm quite prepared to cede my time to him. But until he does, we on this side of the House won't give up on those constituents.

It is bad enough that this minister is going to cut these life-saving programs and risk—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Order. The Minister of Labour, come to order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker:** Order. It's your leader's question. I'm trying to settle them down. It doesn't help when you yell across too.

**Mr McGuinty:** It's hard to believe, but this actually gets worse. It turns out that the minister doesn't even have a plan in place to manage where he is going to send these critically ill kids now that he is slashing their services.

Here's what Dr Timothy Frewen, chief of pediatrics at Children's Hospital of Western Ontario, says. He's "concerned that there is no agreement between London and other children's hospitals to provide the services being cut in London to these kids."

*Interjection.*

**Mr McGuinty:** If the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities wants to stand up for her constituents and fight for her hospital, then I'm prepared to cede my ground to her.

My question to the minister is, how can you do this to these children? You are proceeding with cuts that are harmful to their health and you don't even have a plan in place to help accommodate their needs.

1430

**Hon Mr Clement:** Let me assure this House that we do have plans in place. We would always have plans in place before transferring specific clinical responsibilities from one hospital to another. So the honourable member is quite simply wrong.

If he doesn't want to take my word for how it is important that we try to ensure that our hospitals deliver the best services to the community, then he can take the word of the president of the Ontario Hospital Association, who said just last week, at the same time that he was complaining about this—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker:** Order. Member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan, please come to order, and while we're at it, the member for Windsor West as well.

**Hon Mr Clement:** The CEO of the Ontario Hospital Association said, "We should move toward more differentiation in the types of hospital facilities we build. Hospitals don't need to be scaled-up or scaled-down versions of the same model in every community." That makes good sense. What the honourable member is offering is hospitals trying to be all things to all people, and the clinical outcomes suffer and the people suffer. If the honourable member wants to be on that side of the

debate, that's his business, but we're on the side of helping people in—

**The Speaker:** The minister's time is up.

## TAXATION

**Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, a certain finance minister was quoted two weeks ago in the Toronto Sun as saying that one way to fight the economic fallout is to go to the mall and spend. The same finance minister says that a provincial sales tax reduction could be in the cards if the economic fallout from September 11 persists.

Ontario has lost 26,000 jobs since May, and new layoff announcements are coming fast and furious: Nortel, Boeing, de Havilland, the auto sector generally. All of this has happened since this particular finance minister made the comment two weeks ago. Premier, will you admit that the time to reduce sales taxes, the time to say to consumers, "Go out and start spending," the time to restore consumer confidence is now? Will you bring in a reduction in sales taxes?

**Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier):** I appreciate the question from the Taxfighter, and I'll refer it to the Minister of Finance.

**Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance):** To the member opposite, I appreciate his conversion to reducing taxes as an economic stimulus, which is certainly what the Premier has followed in Ontario since 1995, to the great economic benefit of this province.

We now have a situation across Canada where in budget after budget provincial governments—including the federal government in the mini budget last October, I believe it was—reduced taxes. Indeed, personal income taxes have been shown to be the key instrument across Canada, and in the federal analysis, in Paul Martin's analysis, the key stimulus to direct economic growth.

**Mr Hampton:** I can tell the Legislature that the finance minister who was saying that a reduction in sales taxes would be in order, the finance minister who was saying that if bailouts continue, it might be the best way to restore consumer confidence, was none other than Jim Flaherty. Minister, in case it has missed you, there were 20,000 more layoffs at Nortel, thousands at Boeing and de Havilland, at least 2,000 in the auto parts sector, with more to come. How many more layoffs have to occur before you say to your Premier, "It's now time to reduce the sales tax; it's now time to address the issue of consumer confidence"? How many more layoffs have to happen?

**Hon Mr Flaherty:** There's no question that we've experienced a time of slower economic growth in the third quarter. There's also no question that that was anticipated. There's no question also that there are some quite significant short-term effects of the tragedies of September 11. Having said that, it's the duty of government to look at all the tools we have at our disposal to address those issues.

The informed judgment of the government has been that the acceleration of corporate income tax cuts, the acceleration of the reduction of the capital tax and the acceleration of personal income tax cuts ahead 90 days from January 1 are in the best interests of stimulating the Ontario economy in the short term.

**Mr Hampton:** I think the finance minister has his figures mixed up. There are 11 million consumers in this province, and they're asking for a sales tax reduction. There are the Big Six banks that have \$10 billion in profits, and they're the people you're giving the tax reduction to through your accelerated corporate tax cut. You've got it backwards. If you want to stimulate consumer spending, if you want to restore consumer spending, the banks, and a tax cut for banks, isn't the place to go. The place to go is all those consumers out there who want you to reduce sales taxes.

I ask you again—you were very generous with your friends in the banking industry who already have lots of profit and who will benefit overwhelmingly from the corporate tax cut—how many thousands of layoffs have to occur before you recognize that consumers need a break in the sales tax at the cash register?

**Hon Mr Flaherty:** It's clear that the personal income tax cuts benefit all the people of Ontario who pay income tax. With respect to corporate taxes, I had thought that even the leader of the third party would acknowledge by now that by reducing corporate taxes we leave more money in the hands of entrepreneurs who invest in plants, who invest in equipment, who create the jobs that are needed by persons in Ontario in order to keep our economy going; in other words, an engine of economic growth for all of us in the province of Ontario. It's of vital importance that we encourage entrepreneurs to re-invest in their businesses, give them the means to do so.

**The Speaker:** New question. The leader of the third party.

**Mr Hampton:** I'm sure people across Ontario will be happy to know that the finance minister considers banks to be the entrepreneurs of Ontario.

My next question is to the Premier. The other piece that's missing in your so-called economic plan is that the corporate tax cuts will only help those companies that are making a profit. Companies only pay taxes when they make a profit, and they pay them on the profit. If they don't make a profit, they don't benefit from the corporate tax reduction. That means that companies like Algoma, the dozens of sawmills in northern Ontario that aren't making a profit and a lot of companies in the auto parts sector will not benefit from your accelerated corporate tax reduction.

My question to you is: as the layoffs pick up, what is your government prepared to do to help the very industries, the very jobs and the very communities that are suffering and won't get one red cent from your corporate tax reduction?

**Hon Mr Harris:** I do want to say that I appreciate the member's new-found thirst for tax cuts.

For about the last 11 years, since I was elected leader of this party—a little over 11 years—I have campaigned for tax reductions from the massive tax increases of Liberal and NDP governments. I campaigned in 1990. I fought from 1990 to 1995 while the current leader was a member of the government that unmercifully hiked taxes to consumers, hiked taxes on incomes, hiked taxes on gas, hiked taxes on everything they could see. If it moved, they taxed it.

I want to say that I appreciate—and I think it's part of the healing process in understanding the mistakes one has made, to admit you made mistakes, to come to the party, to understand. I'm delighted that there are now two parties in the Legislature advocating for tax reduction.

**The Speaker:** The Premier's time is up. Supplementary.

**Mr Hampton:** This is wonderful certainty from a Premier who couldn't make up his mind on Thursday or Friday last week whether Ontario's economy was in recession.

Premier, I just want to sort of round out the record. Since your government came to power, the taxes that hit the average working person—sales taxes, gasoline taxes—haven't been reduced one bit, and you've added dozens upon dozens of user fees, copayment fees, management fees that all hit the average working person.

1440

But the question was, Premier—we see what you're prepared to do to help out your corporate friends the banks with a big corporate tax cut—what are you prepared to do to help those companies, those jobs, those communities that don't make a profit, that aren't going to show a profit, that won't benefit from the corporate tax cut? What are you going to do to help them sustain those jobs and sustain those communities?

**Hon Mr Harris:** This of course is from the leader of the party that increased gas taxes twice in the five years they were in office.

Gas taxes, as you know, hit those in northern Ontario. They hit consumers. They hit drivers. They hit those involved in the lumber industry and all those various companies he is now advocating that we assist.

Let me say that one of the most significant tax cuts for corporations is the capital tax, which we announced would start to kick in on January 1, 2002. We are accelerating that tax. The capital tax will benefit every company, regardless of whether they make a profit or whether they do not. I believe that is what the member is asking us to do and I will count on his support.

Perhaps I could have the Minister of Finance separate out the capital tax reduction so that you could have the opportunity to vote for that. I'd be interested to know if we can count on your support for the capital tax reduction.

IPPERWASH PROVINCIAL PARK

**Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt):** My question is to the Premier. A few days ago in the

Legislature, Premier, you said in regard to Ipperwash—and I'm quoting exactly—"The OPP had no communication with anyone from the government prior to the death of Dudley George." We also have an affidavit from you that you submitted to the courts, an affidavit that says, "In response to your request to admit dated August 10, 2001, the defendant Michael D. Harris admits the truth." It goes on to say that on September 6, you met with Scott Patrick. Then, your affidavit said, you met with Scott Patrick, then a sergeant with the OPP. That's what your sworn affidavit says.

The question is this: why would you say in the House that the OPP had no communication with anyone from the government, yet in your own personal court affidavit it says that you met with Scott Patrick, then a sergeant with the OPP?

**Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier):** I stand by the affidavit and the sworn affidavits that we have given. There was a meeting, as you know, that I indicated I attended. Mr Scott, whatever his name is—at the time I wasn't aware that he was at the meeting. It was an informal meeting. He was not there in the capacity of a police officer, didn't identify himself as a police officer and took no action as a police officer.

**Mr Phillips:** In the House, Premier—this was just a few days ago—you said, "The OPP had no communication with anyone from the government prior to the death of Dudley George." I assume that you knew what you were talking about then, that you had been told that there was no communication. But this is your own affidavit, the one that you supplied to the courts, the one that is a legal document. In that document you swear that you did meet on September 6 with Scott Patrick and your personal affidavit says, "then a sergeant with the OPP."

We have two statements by you, one your sworn affidavit in court saying you met with Scott Patrick, then a sergeant with the OPP, and this, by the way, is an affidavit that was submitted shortly after August 10, 2001. But in the Legislature you said something exactly opposite, there was no communication. Premier, which is the correct answer?

**Hon Mr Harris:** The correct answer is exactly as I've given. I have never given, nor has any minister, nor has any official of this government, any direction to the OPP. The sworn affidavit, which is now a matter of public record, indicates, that there were, I believe, OPP members at a briefing meeting. They were not in a command capacity. There were seconded to the Solicitor General's ministry to work as bureaucrats and they were at that meeting. I've given no direction and no official gave any direction to any member of the OPP.

#### BEVERAGE ALCOHOL SALES

**Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland):** My question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Business Services. Minister, as a representative of a rural riding and one that's very, very dependent on the tourist industry, I have some appreciation of the concerns that

people have in their ability to sell and to purchase beverage alcohol. I've been told that the access to beverage alcohol is inconvenient and is limited.

Minister, it's my understanding that you have some plans for change to modernize the beverage alcohol system. How will the system change, what will it do for the people of my riding, and will it improve convenience for the Ontario consumer?

**Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Consumer and Business Services):** We recently announced that we would put up to 150 franchise—or what are formally known as agency—stores in small-town, rural Ontario to provide underserved areas with access to alcohol beverages. This is in response to now over 600 requests from various communities across Ontario for this kind of service.

I think it's a tremendous move for small-town Ontario because a lot of these small communities have difficulty in maintaining a commercial structure, and this will allow a small retailer—a small general store—the ability to keep his or her doors open and will bring a little more traffic into that small store in rural Ontario. It's a tremendous opportunity in terms of a win by the LCBO, because they cannot service these communities in an efficient manner.

**Mr Galt:** I know that people in my riding will certainly welcome that innovative project. However, with an initiative such as this there are obvious concerns about the kind of social responsibility that would go with these new franchises. Can you assure this House that the same standards that now apply to the LCBO will in fact apply to these new franchises?

**Hon Mr Sterling:** Mr Speaker, through you to Dr Galt, who has been a very, very strong supporter of this particular initiative, we have 107 agency stores presently in the province. We have, over a long period of time—since 1962—not experienced any difficulty with service to minors from these different agency stores. However, we are ensuring that all of the operators of these stores would undergo the same kind of training as LCBO staff. As well, district managers from the LCBO will be paying visits to these particular stores to ensure that the standards are held up high and that underage people are not served.

As well, the franchisees have a double penalty. They not only would be charged under the law for serving minors, but they would lose their right to sell alcohol in the future.

I think it's a great program.

#### TAXATION

**Mr Dalton McGuinty (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is for the Premier. Premier, as part of your plan to get Ontarians spending again, you cut income taxes earlier than you had planned. You said it was important to get money into the pockets of Ontario families at the earliest possible opportunity. We said that a dollar a week for the average family was nothing more

than a sad joke and would do little, if anything, to get them to go out and spend.

We're now told by the Canadian Payroll Association that it could take as long as six weeks until Ontario families get their first loonie coming from your tax cut. Will you now admit, Premier, that your tax cut stimulus plan was drawn up on the back of an envelope, it wasn't thought out, and it is not going to work?

**Hon Michael D. Harris (Premier):** What I can tell you is that from day one, you personally and your party have been violently opposed to any tax reduction for any Ontarian, rich or poor, large business or small business. We know that.

Now the New Democratic Party has come on side with an understanding that reducing taxes is a good thing to do, that leaving more money in the hands of Ontarians is a good thing to do. This will help create jobs and help stimulate the economy. I guess they looked at your record and their record and saw all the jobs being lost, double-digit unemployment, record deficits, and then they looked at the record over the last five years of declining taxes.

The Minister of Finance, when you ask your supplementary, can give you an update of the details. Some things take a little bit of time, but what we are saying is that we are accelerating the tax cuts. We're not going to listen to you and your ilk, who say higher taxes are a good thing, big government is a good thing. I'm surprised you haven't got that through your head yet.

1450

**Mr McGuinty:** I can understand why the Premier is embarrassed. This thing has fallen completely flat. I can understand why the government members are afraid to stare into the face of this, but the fact is that we have the slowest growth in the country. We lost 26,000 jobs since May, and this is the best that this government can come up with? Putting together its most creative and innovative thinking, they come up with a loonie a week that won't kick in for another six to eight weeks? I ask you, Premier, how is a loonie a week that won't kick in for another six to eight weeks going to act as a real stimulus and induce Ontario's working families to start spending? That's my question.

**Hon Mr Harris:** A loonie a week is more in their pocket than you would give them. You want to extract every last loonie, nickel, dime and penny you can take out of Ontario's working people. You voted against tax cuts to take low-income people right off the tax rolls completely. You said, "No, tax the low-income people, tax the poor," on voting against that. You voted against tax cuts for moderate-income people. You voted against tax cuts for every hard-working family member in this province. For you to stand in your place and say that we should not cut taxes today is absolutely ludicrous.

You're out of sync with your federal counterparts. You're out of sync with the NDP, for gosh sake. You are left of the NDP, and that's why—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** New question.

## GOOD NEIGHBOURS WEEK

**Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre):** My question is for the Minister of Citizenship. October 8 to 14 is Good Neighbours Week. When I look out the front door of my home, I see people from not just the traditional English, Irish and Scots families, but Lebanese, East Indian, West Indian, Greek, Italian and Chinese. In light of the events of September 11, when terrorists killed more than 6,000 in the US, it confirms that the true quality of life is rooted in our capacity to care for each other and to respect diversity.

Minister, could you please tell us your perspective on what Good Neighbours Week is and how Ontarians can take part in it.

**Hon Cameron Jackson (Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors):** All members of this House have had occasion the last couple of weeks to share expressions of the inspirational acts of caring that have been occurring not only across Ontario but across Canada. Being a good neighbour is all about understanding your neighbours' needs and responding to them effectively.

Here in Ontario, our program of Good Neighbours has been very successful, and we encourage people to continue to extend their hands and their understanding to seniors, persons with disabilities, persons with illness, loneliness and, yes, even people who suffered a catastrophe. The program has been very successful in Ontario, and I think that as our entire nation is full of people who are caring for each other, we are reminded today that we are also here in Ontario good neighbours to our friends the Americans.

**Mr Spina:** There are a number of events. Minister Clement and I just the other day were participating in opening the new Knight's Table Restaurant, which is a restaurant for homeless and needy people. We are very proud of that event and the opportunity to participate in such a reaching out to our community.

Continuing on that theme, Minister, what other programs can you talk about that would demonstrate the true character of the people of Ontario that really go largely unreported?

**Hon Mr Jackson:** One of the most valued traditions in our province is that of volunteering and volunteerism. It's clear that in Ontario we built caring communities, and because of that they are stronger, they are safer and volunteerism plays a vital part in their prosperity.

This government recognizes that it is an important value. That's why since 1995 we've invested over \$22 million in volunteerism initiatives. This year, in the International Year of Volunteers, we have invested \$15 million of taxpayers' money to support, encourage, enhance and expand that important infrastructure.

Finally, next week will be Citizenship Week. It's a chance for us to reflect on the importance of what it has meant to so many people who have come from so many different countries to live in our province. Everyone here has the right to live with respect and dignity, to be free

from fear and have equal opportunity. Being a good neighbour and being a good volunteer are wonderful examples of good citizenship here in Ontario.

#### COLLÈGE DES GRANDS LACS

**M. Gilles Bisson (Timmins-Baie James):** J'ai une question pour la ministre des Collèges et Universités, mais je ne la vois pas ici à l'Assemblée.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** One moment. I believe she's just in the back.

Proceed.

**M. Bisson:** Ma question, madame la ministre, s'adresse directement à vous. Vous savez qu'on a appris il y a quelques jours que le Collège des Grands Lacs allait fermer son seul dernier établissement ici à Toronto. Actuellement, on a une soixantaine d'étudiants qui fréquentent le Collège ici à Toronto.

Pourtant, il y a eu une réunion le 27 septembre dernier. Le conseil d'administration du collège avait décidé à l'unanimité que l'établissement allait demeurer ouvert jusqu'à l'an 2002, au mois d'avril. Mais depuis cette date, la direction du collège a laissé courir le bruit dans les médias que la fermeture de l'établissement était immédiate.

Êtes-vous au courant de cette volte-face de la direction et, plus important, est-ce que vous approuvez cette direction ?

**Hon Dianne Cunningham (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues):** In response to my colleague, we did receive a letter last Friday from the board at Grands Lacs that they in fact did decide to officially wind down the college. We support the board in its decision, as we do boards across the province, to put the interests of students in the francophone community first.

I would describe our plan, or their plan, that the students will continue their classes until other arrangements can be made in the best interests of the students.

**M. Bisson:** J'ai un peu peur, quand vous dites—avez-vous en effet dit votre plan? Tout ce qu'on sait, c'est que le 27 septembre il y a eu une rencontre avec l'établissement faisant affaire avec le conseil, et il y a eu une décision à l'unanimité de ne pas fermer le collège cette année. Là on trouve, à peine une semaine après, que tout à coup la décision a été renversée.

Moi, je me demande, quand vous vous levez et que vous dites votre plan, est-ce vraiment votre plan, comme ministre responsable, de fermer cette université, ou est-ce que c'était directement celui du collège lui-même ? Je commence à croire que c'était vous.

**Hon Mrs Cunningham:** The member knows well enough that this is a decision for the board at the Collège des Grands Lacs. This board has been working for a couple of years in trying to make this college a go. They've worked on their own and any decision is their decision.

The member is correct: there was a different decision a couple of weeks ago. But we did receive a letter, and

obviously they had their proper meetings, which says, "Last night the board of directors met to review the situation," and they've made a number of recommendations. I would be happy to share this with the member.

I think the member's concern is for the students, and I just want to say that I will spend time letting you know what I know. I understood that the students were having some meetings beginning today. I share his concern. I think it's unfortunate, but the board has made its decision. I think he and I want to make sure, as does this Legislative Assembly, that the students will receive a good education and have choices, and we will do that.

1500

#### SEXUAL ABUSE OF STUDENTS

**Mr Ernie Parsons (Prince Edward-Hastings):** My question is to the Minister of Education. Your government has known since 1995 of allegations of physical and sexual abuse against students at Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf in Belleville. Let me remind you of the process you put in place to deal with them.

You paid out over \$8 million, much of it to people who simply filled out forms. There was no investigation. The accused individuals had no opportunity whatsoever to clear their names. On the other hand, claims from victims of convicted abusers were denied because they were not told of the arbitrary cut-off date of December 1999, even though there is no statute of limitations on sexual abuse of children. You refused promised counselling, and you are ignoring claims from former students at the E.C. Drury school and the Robarts school even though there have been convictions.

Minister, will you confirm for me that although you have misspent millions of dollars, there are still hundreds of claims outstanding for physical and sexual abuse at provincial schools for the deaf?

**Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader):** As the honourable member is no doubt aware, there has been considerable work done by staff and by legal officials to make sure this case is dealt with appropriately and that those who require compensation are getting compensation. It's a difficult, complex issue. There has been considerable work done to try to make sure those victims are helped and get appropriate support. It only underlines for me the importance of having in place the kind of legislation we brought forward to this House this month to prevent sexual abuse of students in schools such as this and in all our schools.

**Mr Parsons:** Minister, this shows you have no moral authority to lead the issue on safety for students. You have refused to provide counselling that you committed in writing to provide. You have refused to entertain claims from students who have been victimized by convicted abusers.

Your role is to ensure justice is done. Radio newscasts mean nothing to these students. Many are illiterate in written English. You didn't so much as do a press release

on this issue. You counted on word of mouth for the deaf community to find out that they were entitled to compensation. Your role is to ensure justice is done.

Minister, this has gone on long enough. Will you commit to reopening this entire issue and establishing a new, fair, open and well-publicized process to ensure that justice is finally going to be served?

**Hon Mrs Ecker:** It will not be surprising that I disagree with the honourable member's characterization of this situation. I would be very surprised if he would not support that there needs to be a process for determining claims. That process has been followed. There has been communication. I appreciate that the honourable member disagrees with that, but there has been considerable effort taken to try to assist individuals who have been abused in this fashion. It is unacceptable. It is not tolerated.

There does need to be help and assistance to victims in such circumstances. The government, with the advice of many legal and other appropriate officials, has taken great steps to try to provide that support. Again, it's one of the reasons the legislation is so important, so we can try to prevent this from ever happening again. It should not have happened. It is something that is unacceptable, and work indeed has supported and continues to support victims of sexual abuse.

#### TOURISM

**Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls):** My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. As the minister knows, tourism is vital to the economy of Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake, and tourism everywhere in the world is down in the wake of the September 11 attacks.

Last month, representatives of your ministry's Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corp came to my riding to present their 2002-03 marketing plan to my tourism operators. Could you explain to the House just what this corporation does and how it can now help tourism businesses in my riding and throughout Ontario?

**Hon Tim Hudak (Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation):** I thank the member from Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake for the question and for his ongoing interest in tourism issues.

The Ontario marketing partnership is an agency of the province that receives a record \$170-million investment over six years from the Mike Harris government for tourism marketing, partnering with municipalities, the private sector and the industry. In previous governments, funding had been reduced substantially. We've built that back up with great success. In fact, you will probably hear that the first two quarters were record quarters in the Niagara Falls area.

We had the meeting in the Falls to share our strategy for 2002-03, which was very well attended, one of 15 across the province, and I personally enjoyed my opportunity to present the plan and participate in that meeting.

**Mr Maves:** Minister, tourism operators in my riding have told me that they need to market themselves aggressively in order to grow. Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake are world-class tourist destinations, but not every tourism business has the budget to market itself internationally. How can your ministry help these businesses market themselves to a broad audience throughout Canada, the United States and the world?

**Hon Mr Hudak:** There's no doubt that whether it's Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake, one of the leading areas in tourism in the province, or smaller parts of the province that are positioning themselves to be major tourism operators down the road, they can benefit from the programs of the tourism marketing partnership, whether you're a big operator in Niagara Falls or a more modest facility on Lundy's Lane or in Fort Erie, for example.

One of the new initiatives we launched this year is an e-marketing initiative to make sure that even the small operators can have an opportunity to benefit from the latest in e-marketing strategies, Web sites, e-mail, tracing where the interest is coming from so they can help to adjust their marketing plans accordingly—a great success of the Mike Harris government. I'm confident that with the dynamic part of the industry, the great attractions we have, the great potential, we can weather the storm that's going on internationally today and bounce back and have great tourism years in the future, as we did this summer.

#### WATER QUALITY

**Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** My question is for the Minister of the Environment. There's a serious crisis in rural Ontario that has been created by your government through the downloading of water and sewage and the elimination of such programs as the Ontario water protection plan and Clean Up Rural Beaches.

Protecting our water right at the source is very important, and that is why I've written to you repeatedly, since your disastrous downloading exercises, on behalf of numerous constituents in my riding who have pleaded with your government to introduce new funding to replace the water protection programs that you have previously axed.

Recently I've been inundated by calls from concerned citizens. Your new guidelines concerning communal wells will be costly and beyond the means of owners and users. This government must understand the impact your legislation will have on the viability of rural communities across Ontario.

Rural Ontarians pay taxes and must be able to count on clean drinking water. Minister, will you provide immediate funding to assist them in complying with your new legislation?

**Hon Elizabeth Witmer (Minister of the Environment):** I will refer that question to the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

**Hon Brian Coburn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs):** Ensuring that rural and small-town Ontario communities remain viable, healthy and sustainable is a priority for our government. Certainly the rural economic development and the sustainability of infrastructure in terms of water quality is important to those communities.

In fact, we have already approved 210 option 1 study projects in terms of engineering analysis toward the solution of the water challenge that we have in small-town and rural Ontario. It's a rigid process to meet the drinking water requirements and regulations in the province. That is something we're working aggressively on to be able to have these communities work on their infrastructure and maintain them properly.

**Mr Hoy:** My question involves funding for these people who must comply with your legislation. Your government has done enough rehashing, repeating and reannouncing of funding commitments. It is simply irresponsible for your government to continue to turn your back on rural Ontario while you spend millions on partisan government advertising and millions more on consultants and spin doctors.

Communal well operators have only until December 31, 2002, to comply. Many of them will have no choice but to shut down, because they simply do not have the financial resources to meet the new guidelines. Rates will significantly rise for users. There will be serious health implications from cutting off water to residents who cannot afford the increased rates. Homeowners will have difficulty selling their homes. This will be a detrimental blow to rural Ontario. You must act now to ensure that everyone in this province has access to clean, safe drinking water.

Minister, will you allow for direct funding to flow today?

**Hon Mr Coburn:** As I indicated in my previous answer, we have the applications in front of us now, and the process has started in terms of approving these projects, the 210 projects we have in front of us now. We have approved the engineering study. That is a rigorous process so that we take advantage of new technology and the best technology and find the best solutions. That is working in concert with the municipalities that have submitted the projects.

As we work through those, the funding will be announced and the projects will move ahead expeditiously.

1510

#### NORTHERN TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**Mr Norm Miller (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** My question today is for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. I understand that last week the Minister of Northern Development and Mines gave a videoconference address to the Emerging Technologies 2001 conference in Thunder Bay. I'd like the minister to tell my constituents in Parry Sound-Muskoka and other

members of this House more about this conference, the Emerging Technologies 2001 conference.

**Hon Dan Newman (Minister of Northern Development and Mines):** I'd like to thank the member for Parry Sound-Muskoka for his question.

I want to congratulate the organizers of this event—they were Thunder Bay Telephone and Contact North—for their hard work and success in attracting an estimated 300 to 400 registrants who travelled to Thunder Bay. I know too that my colleague the Minister of Energy, Science and Technology was supportive of this conference as well.

Emerging Technologies 2001 took place on October 3 and 4 and was made possible through the support of many sponsors, including Microsoft Canada. On October 1, in my capacity as the chair of the heritage fund, I was pleased to announce a heritage fund contribution of \$40,000 toward this conference. The heritage fund contribution helped make possible a productive dialogue on emerging technologies that will ultimately lead to increased economic activity in the north.

This conference was truly an outstanding event to showcase wireless and cutting-edge technology.

**Mr Miller:** I'm proud that our government has shown leadership in supporting innovative telecommunications in northern Ontario. I know how delighted the people in Parry Sound-Muskoka were in February of this year when the northern Ontario heritage fund was doubled from \$30 million to \$60 million, a \$300-million investment over five years.

I can also recall the Minister of Northern Development and Mines announcing new programs for the fund for infrastructure, including telecommunications. Minister, could you please give us some examples of new initiatives to support telecommunications in northern Ontario.

**Hon Mr Newman:** I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight a new initiative that is in place under the heritage fund that supports the expansion of cellular service along the northern highway corridors in our province. Already the Mike Harris team, through the heritage fund, has announced funding for three projects: \$1.7 million for the Atikokan-Fort Frances area, \$1.5 million from Kenora south to Highway 11 and \$2.5 million for the Greenstone to Constance Lake region.

We believe that more good news may be on the way, as we have funded projects to evaluate the requirements for improved cellular service in the Timmins and Sault Ste Marie regions. I want to assure you that the heritage fund will continue to play an important role in promoting telecommunications opportunities across the north, because the Mike Harris government remains committed to building strong communities in northern Ontario.

#### BEAR CONTROL

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. You know that ever since you abandoned the responsibility

for trapping and relocating bears and ever since you've downloaded to municipalities, nuisance bears have been endangering communities across northern Ontario. In fact, last month there was a 600-pound bear in the community of Dryden, terrorizing the people within that community; they were wondering if they were going to be at risk.

Two weeks ago, a black bear badly mauled a woman taking a walk in Peterborough county. The woman survived the attack, but the only reason she survived the attack is because her dog scared off the bear.

We're saying to you, Minister, a good safety policy when it comes to dealing with bears is not making sure that somebody has to keep their dog with them; it has to do with you as the minister making sure that the ministry does what it's supposed to do, takes responsibility and re-uploads the responsibility for trapping nuisance bears. Minister, will you do that?

**Hon John Snobelen (Minister of Natural Resources):** I thank the member opposite for the question. Obviously, it's a matter of extreme importance when the safety of anyone in the province is put in jeopardy because of a bear attack.

I might say there's a difference between nuisance bears as a general statement across communities in the province and those incidences which are truly a safety issue. The authorities in all the municipalities, I believe, know how to deal with attack situations where a bear might put someone's life in jeopardy, and they do respond quite quickly to those circumstances.

In the nuisance bear situation, obviously the reports of nuisance bears go up and down from year to year, depending on food supplies and other issues. We continue to work very closely with municipalities. We have an extensive amount of information available on our Web site, and I would refer the member's constituents to that Web site, which might help them avoid being irritated by nuisance bears.

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** When the minister talks about Web sites, he obviously doesn't understand how serious this situation is. Minister, in my community alone there have been over 1,000 calls to the bear hotline this year, far more than ever before. There have been over 350 calls that the Sudbury police have been forced to respond to. That's five times more than last year. These are police resources that could be better used somewhere else. Police Chief Alex McCauley was correct when he recently said publicly, "This is definitely an MNR responsibility. The MNR has to be persuaded in the strongest possible way to take responsibility for this."

Minister, are you going to continue to ignore the health and safety of my community, or are you finally going to fully assume your responsibility for the trapping and relocating of bears?

**Hon Mr Snobelen:** I can quote from a letter on this very subject, funding for nuisance animals, to a municipality, in this case a letter from the Minister of Natural Resources to the city clerk at the corporation of the city of Thunder Bay. It says, "In recent years, with

reduced budgets, the level of this service has decreased and the ministry is moving toward a facilitation and partnership role in establishing new arrangements to address such public requests for action." That letter was dated, I believe, back in 1994, and was by the minister, Howard Hampton. Perhaps the member would like to talk to him about that subject.

#### COMPETITIVE ELECTRICITY MARKET

**Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence):** I have a question to the Minister of Consumer and Business Services. Across this province there are these door-to-door energy marketers that are ripping off small business people, ripping off ordinary Ontarians, by making them sign five-year contracts for fixed rates when these five-year contracts aren't worth the paper they're written on. The rate for their energy is going up. They basically have no protection from your government. In fact, one company, Direct Energy, has over 1,600 complaints.

What are you going to do to stop this ripoff of small business and ordinary consumers in Ontario?

**Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Consumer and Business Services):** We've been working on, along with the Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology, consumer protections with regard to electricity contracts in an unregulated market. We thought we were at an agreement to put into place a code of practice which would be enforceable by the energy board. Unfortunately, one of the partners fell out of step with that, but we're hopeful to bring that particular partner, Toronto Hydro, into line in the very near future.

Our eye is on this particular problem. Of course, it is necessary for us to consult with all the partners that are involved in this, but the energy board is quite willing to be engaged in this particular practice if necessary.

**Mr Colle:** Mr Minister, this has been going on with your government for the last five years. Your government has stood by while ordinary Ontarians have been ripped off by these door-to-door energy marketers. They have no protection. In fact, these companies continue to misrepresent themselves, they continue to force people to hand over their energy bills, and your government has done nothing.

I want you to assure this House that you will immediately put a halt to these door-to-door sales. Instead of putting these propaganda things on television, why not give advice to consumers on what they should expect in deregulation? How are you going to protect them?

**Hon Mr Sterling:** Door-to-door sales, as you know, are part of our commercial transactions that go on from day to day. To say that our government has done nothing is just not there because, as you know, in August and May of this year we extended the protection in terms of door-to-door sales significantly by allowing a 10-day cooling-off period. Even if somebody signs a five-year contract at the door, they can negate that unilaterally within a 10-day period. So we have already started

consumer protection in that regard and, as I said in my previous answer, we are looking at other methods to deal with these kinds of consumer concerns that are going to be coming on the horizon with the deregulating of the electricity market.

1520

## PETITIONS

### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain):** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas 49 children are currently attending a JK/SK split class with two teachers; and

“Whereas the number of children, their respective ages and the physical restrictions of the classroom present enormous challenges to the educational well-being of these children; and

“Whereas the parents are concerned about their children’s health and safety, as well as their intellectual, social and emotional development;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to take immediate action to increase funding to school boards to adjust the funding formula and to cap primary class size at 20 students.”

I affix my signature on this petition.

### OHIP SERVICES

**Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt):** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the Harris government’s decision to delist hearing aid evaluation and re-evaluation from OHIP coverage will lead to untreated hearing loss; and

“Whereas these restrictions will cut off access to diagnostic hearing tests, especially in geographic areas of the province already experiencing difficulties due to shortages of specialty physicians; and

“Whereas OHIP will no longer cover the cost of miscellaneous therapeutic procedures, including physical therapy and therapeutic exercise; and

“Whereas services no longer covered by OHIP may include thermal therapy, ultrasound therapy, hydrotherapy, massage therapy, electrotherapy, magnetotherapy, nerve therapy stimulation and biofeedback; and

“Whereas one of the few publicly covered alternatives includes hospital outpatient clinics where waiting lists for such services are up to six months long; and

“Whereas delisting these services will have a detrimental effect on the health of all Ontarians, especially seniors, children, hearing-impaired people and industrial workers; and

“Whereas the government has already delisted \$100 million worth of OHIP services,

“Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately restore OHIP coverage for these delisted services.”

This petition was sent to me by M. Glowaki of Hamilton. I’d like to thank the petitioner for gathering it, and I agree with these petitioners as well.

### CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

**Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North):** To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario,

“Whereas the Criminal Code of Canada considers animal cruelty to be a property offence; and

“Whereas those who commit crimes against animals currently face light sentences upon conviction; and

“Whereas those who operate puppy mills should, upon conviction, face sentences that are appropriate for the torture and inhumane treatment they have inflicted on puppies under their so-called care;

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

“That the Ontario provincial government petition the federal government to move forward with amendments to the cruelty of animal provisions in the Criminal Code as soon as possible.”

I’ll sign my name to that as well and present to Meg.

### COMMUNITY CARE ACCESS CENTRES

**Mrs Sandra Pupatello (Windsor West):** To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario,

“Whereas the Mike Harris government promised to institute patient-based budgeting for health care services in the 1995 Common Sense Revolution; and

“Whereas community care access centres now face a collective shortfall of \$175 million due to a funding rollback by the provincial government; and

“Whereas due to this funding rollback, community care access centres have cut back on home care services affecting many sick and elderly Ontarians; and

“Whereas these cuts in services are forcing Ontarians into more expensive long-term-care facilities or back into hospital;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately lift the funding freeze for home care services, so as to ensure that community care access centres can provide the services that Ontarian working families need.”

This comes to us from the region of York, and I read this on behalf of those constituents.

### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas this year 130,000 Canadians will contract cancer and there are at minimum 17 funerals every day

for Canadian workers who died from cancer caused by workplace exposure to cancer-causing substances;

“Whereas the World Health Organization estimates that 80% of all cancers have environmental causes and the International Labour Organization estimates that one million workers globally have cancer because of exposure at work to carcinogens;

“Whereas most cancers can be beaten if government had the political will to make industry replace toxic substances with non-toxic substances in work; and

“Whereas very few health organizations study the link between occupations and cancer, even though more study of this link is an important step to defeating this dreadful disease;

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

“That it become a legal requirement that occupational history be recorded on a standard form when a patient presents at a physician for diagnosis or treatment of cancer; and

“That the diagnosis and occupational history be forwarded to a central cancer registry for analysis as to the link between cancer and occupation.”

I have signed that petition.

#### AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

**Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury):** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it's entitled “Listen: Our Hearing is Important!”

“Whereas services delisted by the Harris government now exceed \$100 million in total; and

“Whereas Ontarians depend on audiologists for the provision of qualified hearing assessments and hearing aid prescriptions;

“Whereas the new Harris government policy will virtually eliminate access to publicly funded audiology assessments across vast regions of Ontario;

“Whereas this new Harris government policy is virtually impossible to implement in underserved areas across Ontario;

“Whereas this policy will lengthen waiting lists for patients and therefore have a detrimental effect on the health of these Ontarians;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to permanently fund audiologists directly for the provision of audiology services.”

I affix my signature to this petition.

#### NURSES

**Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the nurses of Ontario are seeking relief from heavy workloads, which have contributed to unsafe conditions for patients and have increased the risk of injury to nurses; and

“Whereas there is a chronic nursing shortage in Ontario; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has failed to live up to its commitment to provide safe, high-quality care for patients;

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

“We demand the Ontario government take positive action to ensure that our communities have enough nursing staff to provide patients with the care they need. The Ontario government must:

“Ensure wages and benefits are competitive and value all nurses for their dedication and commitment; ensure there are full-time and regular part-time jobs available for nurses in hospitals, nursing homes and the community; ensure government revenues fund health care, not tax cuts; ensure front-line nurses play a key role in health reform decisions.”

This is signed in this case by a number of people from the Sudbury area. It adds to the over 10,000 people who have signed this petition, and I add my own signature once again in agreement with their concern.

#### AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** This petition reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas services delisted by the Harris government now exceed \$100 million in total;

“Whereas Ontarians depend on audiologists for the provision of qualified hearing assessments and hearing aid prescriptions;

“Whereas the new Harris government policy will virtually eliminate access to publicly funded audiology assessments across vast regions of Ontario;

“Whereas this new Harris government policy is virtually impossible to implement in underserved areas across Ontario;

“Whereas this policy will lengthen waiting lists for patients and therefore have a detrimental effect on the health of these Ontarians;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Mike Harris government move immediately to permanently fund audiologists directly for the provision of audiology services.”

I affix my signature. I'm in agreement.

#### POVERTY

**Mr Mario Sergio (York West):** I have another petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas we are seniors and low-income people finding it very hard to live and pay all expenses every day; and

“Whereas with all the increases in our utilities in the last several months, we no longer can afford to have a

warm house, or buy enough of a variety of foods, or buy some of the drugs that we desperately need; and

“Whereas we feel helpless, abandoned, and totally neglected by our own government; and

“Whereas, without some sort of assistance from our government, either in terms of subsidy or lowering the cost of utilities, especially the gas for heating, we will have to seriously limit the quality and quantity of prescription drugs, or decide to buy food or pay the ever-increasing utility costs;

“We, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to help us live in dignity and with compassion and care.”

I will affix my signature to it.

1530

#### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** I have yet another petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas this year 130,000 Canadians will contract cancer and there are at minimum 17 funerals every day for Canadian workers who died from cancer caused by workplace exposure to cancer-causing substances known as carcinogens; and

“Whereas the World Health Organization estimates that 80% of all cancers have environmental causes and the International Labour Organization estimates that one million workers globally have cancer because of exposure at work to carcinogens;

“Whereas most cancers can be beaten if government had the political will to make industry replace toxic substances with non-toxic substances in work;

“Whereas very few health organizations study the link between occupations and cancer, even though more study of this link is an important step to defeating this dreadful disease;

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

“That it become a legal requirement that occupational history be recorded on a standard form when a patient presents at a physician for diagnosis or treatment of cancer; and

“That the diagnosis and occupational history be forwarded to a central cancer registry for analysis as to the link between cancer and occupation.”

I've signed that petition as well.

#### ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

**Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex):** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the November 2000 announcement of massive privatization of Ministry of Transportation services will have a significant detrimental effect on citizen road safety, confidentiality of citizens' information and on the economy of Ontario; and

“Whereas the employees of the Ministry of Transportation are recognized in writing by the provincial government to have provided excellent service on the government's behalf; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario is taking away the livelihood and decreasing the standard of living of thousands of employees and families by its actions both directly and indirectly through spinoff effects; and

“Whereas citizens of Ontario are entitled to safe roads, consistency in driver testing, and competent truck inspection, school buses and vehicles carrying dangerous goods; and

“Whereas communities continue to need to retain decent-paying jobs if they are to maintain viability and vibrancy; and

“Whereas we taxpayers have entrusted the provincial government with the maintenance of public safety with an apolitical and efficient public service, a service free of profiteering and protected from conflicts of interests; and

“Whereas privatization is an abdication of such public trust;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to place a moratorium on any further privatization and to restore and promote public service as being of significant value in our society.”

I sign this petition.

#### AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

**Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London):** “Whereas services delisted by the Harris government now exceed \$100 million in total;

“Whereas Ontarians depend on audiologists for the provision of qualified hearing assessments and hearing aid prescriptions;

“Whereas a new Harris government policy will virtually eliminate access to publicly funded audiology assessments across vast regions of Ontario;

“Whereas this new Harris government policy is virtually impossible to implement in underserved across Ontario;

“Whereas this policy will lengthen waiting lists for patients and therefore have a detrimental effect on the health of all Ontarians;

“Therefore, be it resolved that we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario Legislature to demand the Harris government move immediately to permanently fund audiologists directly for the provision of audiology services.”

This is signed by over 200 constituents of Elgin-Middlesex-London and I will sign my signature in full support.

#### REQUEST FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands):** I have a petition that's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It's a local petition and it states:

“Whereas Sharon Reynolds, a seven-year-old young girl, died tragically; and

“Whereas the crown’s case against Louise Reynolds was not proceeded with; and

“Whereas there are many unanswered questions relating to the circumstances surrounding the death of Sharon Reynolds,

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

“That the Premier of Ontario and his cabinet colleagues call upon the Lieutenant Governor in Council pursuant to section 2 of the Public Inquiries Act to order a full and independent inquiry into the death of Sharon Reynolds.”

I agree with the petition and have signed it. It’s also been signed by about 13 individuals. I’m handing to Emma McGuire, our page from Kingston.

#### COMMUNITY CARE ACCESS CENTRES

**Mr Mario Sergio (York West):** I have a further petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Mike Harris government promised to institute patient-based budgeting for health care services in the 1995 Common Sense Revolution; and

“Whereas community care access centres now face a collective shortfall of \$175 million due to a funding rollback by the provincial government; and

“Whereas due to this funding rollback, community care access centres have cut back on home care services affecting many sick and elderly Ontarians; and

“Whereas these cuts in services are forcing Ontarians into more expensive long-term-care facilities or back into hospital;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately lift the funding freeze for home care services, so as to ensure that community care access centres provide the services to Ontario’s working families.”

I will affix my signature to it.

#### HOME CARE

**Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury):** This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the need for home care services is rapidly growing in Ontario due to the aging of the population and hospital restructuring; and

“Whereas the prices paid by community care access centres to purchase home care services for their clients are rising due to factors beyond the control of community care access centres; and

“Whereas the funding provided by the Ontario government through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is inadequate to meet the growing need for home care services; and

“Whereas the funding shortfall, coupled with the implications of Bill 46, the Public Sector Accountability

Act, currently before the Legislature are forcing CCACs to make deep cuts in home care services without any policy direction from the provincial government;

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

“(1) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to take control of policy-setting for home care services through rational, population-based health care planning rather than simply by underfunding the system; and

“(2) That the Legislative Assembly direct the provincial government to provide sufficient funding to CCACs to support the home care services that are the mandate of CCACs in the volumes needed to meet their communities’ rapidly growing needs; and

“(3) That the Legislative Assembly make it necessary for the provincial government to notify the agencies it funds of the amount of funding they will be given by the government in a fiscal year at least three months before the commencement of this fiscal year.”

I affix my signature as I’m in complete agreement.

#### MOTIONS

##### ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader):** We’ve worked out unanimous consent as to how we would like to proceed with a bill this evening. I would like to ask for unanimous consent to move a motion regarding the terms of this evening’s debate on Bill 30, on organized crime.

**The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr):** Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

**Hon Mrs Ecker:** I move that, notwithstanding the motion dated October 1, 2001, G30 be called as the first order of the day this evening; that the Speaker shall recognize no further speakers from the government caucus or from the official opposition; that the Speaker shall recognize up to two members of the third party to speak to the second reading stage of the bill, after which time the question shall be put and the vote may be deferred; that, at the conclusion of the second reading stage of the bill, the bill shall be referred to the standing committee on justice and social policy; that the standing committee on justice and social policy shall be authorized to meet in Toronto for one day of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY ACT, 2001

#### LOI DE 2001 SUR LA QUALITÉ ET LA SALUBRITÉ DES ALIMENTS

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 2, 2001, on the motion for second reading of Bill 87, An Act to regulate food quality and safety and to make complementary amendments and repeals to other Acts / Projet de loi 87, Loi visant à régler la qualité et la salubrité des aliments, à apporter des modifications complémentaires à d'autres lois et à en abroger d'autres.

**Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan):** I'll be sharing my time with the member for Hamilton Mountain.

**Mrs Marie Bountrogianni (Hamilton Mountain):** I rise to debate Bill 87, the food safety bill. The Ontario Liberals support the idea behind this bill. Of course everybody supports the idea behind food safety. But we oppose this bill because there is no commitment of additional funds to implement it. OMAFRA's food inspection budget has been cut by 45% by this government, and the number of food inspectors has been cut by 38%. Even before these new responsibilities are added, it's obvious that Ontario's food inspection service is overstretched.

Secondly, almost all the important details in Bill 87 are in the regulations. We haven't seen these regulations on any side of the House. An overarching theme of the entire bill, however, is that food safety will be delivered, and I quote, "as much as possible through alternative delivery mechanisms." We believe this is Toryspeak for privatization, downloading or dumping responsibility on to farm commodity groups.

You would think after Walkerton that we would have learned that government does have a role in safety, environment and food regulation. As well, as my colleague Steve Peters has pointed out, there isn't any coordination with the Ministry of the Environment. There should very well be coordination and communication with that very important ministry with respect to this bill.

**1540**

The budget for food inspection and food safety has declined by 45%, from \$12.5 million to \$7 million this fiscal year. The number of inspectors has declined from 130 to 80. There are now only five enforcement officers for the entire province. This sounds very familiar. It really reminds me of the debates after the fact after Walkerton.

Another important food safety resource that is drastically underfunded is the animal health lab at the University of Guelph. Millions of dollars in cuts have let the animal health lab's ability to monitor antibiotic resistance drop. It has also seen its ability to conduct surveillance on emergency animal diseases drop. The government's response to these vital concerns has been

to say that farmers and the public should rely more on farm organizations and the private sector to perform these vital food safety services.

The province is looking to repeal the Edible Oil Products Act within this new Food Safety Act. This is a drastic change of policy for the province of Ontario. The blending of oil products with dairy has been forbidden in both Ontario and Quebec. To contain any of the following words or labels, a product may not contain any vegetable-based oil like butter, cream, milk or cheese—up until this point in time, consumers were assured that the contents of the dairy case were truly dairy products. Not any more; not with this bill.

Both the provinces of Ontario and Quebec have vigorously defended in the courts their prohibition of blending. The government did not consult with the industry before making this particular decision. This came as a complete surprise to the industry, and the minister did not seem prepared to discuss it with the dairy industry earlier at the launch of Agriculture Week. The government is using the political excuse of interprovincial trade and not wanting trade challenges from other provinces. This is an interesting argument, considering Ontario and Quebec make up 80% of the consumer market and production. Perhaps rather than worry about the other 20% of the market challenging us, we should be challenging them.

The ultimate goal of the Food Safety Act is to have across-the-board national standards. We support this. For most provinces, this means raising the bar up to national standards. But the question we need to ask ourselves is whether or not we are moving down to national standards in Ontario.

The soybean growers are endorsing this proposal, but research has shown that companies that market these products do not tend to use soy. Most often used are the cheaper offshore oils, like coconut and palm oils, and they require less, if any, hydrogenising. The dairy farmers of Ontario have some valid concerns about the health and nutrition of Ontarians if the repeal of the Edible Oil Products Act goes through without proper consultation. Considering the minister does not appear to want to speak with them, it is on their behalf that we, the Liberal Party, raise these concerns.

The change this government is pursuing will allow the mixture of hydrogenated vegetable oils with dairy products, sneaking these products into the dairy case under such guises as I Can't Believe It's Not Butter! or spray cheese. This will increase the consumption of trans fatty acids and the risk of heart disease. The Ontario dairy industry has extensive information about how the government's food safety plans can proceed while eliminating or minimizing the proven risk to the health of Canadians.

The minister must demonstrate that this government is committed to the health of Ontarians and properly and extensively consult with all stakeholders and, as they said earlier in the Legislature, work with them in partnership. This is a very drastic change in food policy, and to just

arbitrarily repeal the Edible Oil Products Act is unacceptable.

I want to bring attention to an article of October 2001 from the paper *The Grower*. The headline of the article is "Food Safety Enabling Legislation: Growing Concerns over Bill 87." The article reads:

"The bill is causing some concern for industry stakeholders as it moves closer to ratification.

"At a recent information session in Guelph, industry leaders had a chance to learn more about Bill 87, its intent and its probable impact on food producers. At the close of the session, guests were invited to ask questions and provide feedback."

Michael Mazur, who is the executive secretary to the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, "took the opportunity to question the government's commitment to protecting the horticultural industry. He asked if officials would comment on the ministry's position with respect to including provisions to protect the economic competitiveness of producers within the legislation." Because there isn't any money committed to this, some mom-and-pop operations that have been going on generationally are at risk. They have to foot the bill for implementing this new policy.

"Where is the government's social conscience in terms of this issue, and what is the government providing in terms of a backup so that producers can retain their competitiveness?" he asked." Beverly Alder, coordinator of legislation and regulation for the food safety system development branch of the agriculture ministry responded to the concerns "with assurances that the food safety legislation will increase the marketability of Ontario-grown produce," but did not add any details as to how this would be done.

"Other interested parties reiterated Mazur's concerns throughout the question and answer period. Several criticisms focused more on the exclusion of provisions to protect primary producers from the biohazards that are associated with visiting inspectors. 'I hear some serious problems in here with respect to biosecurity,' said one gentleman. 'I don't like what I see and I suspect that the people overseeing this legislation have very little agricultural experience. From what I see here, the costs and risks of this are all going to be dumped on to the producers.'"

I want to refer back to my colleague Pat Hoy who, in an earlier debate on this bill, basically talked about the many, many smaller organizations—not the large conglomerates, but the smaller organizations. The picklers, the people who jar jams and so forth are extremely concerned. One of his constituents estimated that it would cost her tens of thousands of dollars to implement this without additional resources. Perhaps in the regulations that will magically appear. We're waiting for that, but at this point, there's a great deal of concern out there in the rural communities as well as in smaller towns.

Mr Hoy referred to the "mom-and-pop small businesses that are across rural Ontario," that have worked "hard to maintain that family name"—quite often

that family name appears on the jars and on the packages—"the pride of ownership and the trust that they have earned from their clientele, which is repeated over and over again with their visits to their market. They have developed a long-time, loyal and confident consumer base." It's this consumer base which has these concerns and which we're representing today in this debate. As I mentioned earlier, a lot of these are generational. Kids have inherited these businesses from their parents or their grandparents; they've been there for almost a century and they are extremely concerned that they will lose their heritage if proper funding of this bill isn't in place.

Who are these people? These are people who have created new wealth and jobs for rural Ontario. They hire people to come in and help them during the rush season, sell the product and pick the fruits or vegetables, along with their family members. They've developed name recognition within their own communities that is identifiable by all and they've also created a name for their business, their farm and their product that is well known elsewhere.

If indeed the regulations reflect solutions to these concerns, we may relook at the bill and support it on this side of the House. But at this point in time, this bill looks like a nice media practice or a spin, that, "Yes, we are going to do something," but actually has no resources to back it up. Again, I reiterate, you would think after Walkerton we would have learned the lesson that perhaps privatizing certain areas of responsibility is not the way to go—health care, environment, education, agriculture, food safety. There have to be strict regulations across the province, resources to back the implementation of new acts as well as consultation with those who are directly affected. The fact that they were not consulted with respect to the Edible Oil Products Act being repealed and brought into this act is actually a surprise. It just seems common sense to have consulted people who are directly related to the repealing of an act and absorbing it into another act.

Again, I want to reiterate on behalf of the Ontario Liberals and my leader, Dalton McGuinty, that we support the notion of food safety. Of course we do. Most of us here are parents and grandparents. We care about our own health and our children's health. But without the resources to back this act, it's just another exercise in media relations, of trying to fool the public that you will do something about something which clearly, unless the resources are in place, will fail.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown):** Questions and comments?

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Our member for Hamilton West will be speaking to this bill shortly, when his opportunity arises in rotation. I'll be speaking to it later today. The bill is of great relevance to the part of Ontario where I come from, down in Niagara region, in the communities of Welland, Thorold, Pelham, south St Catharines, because Niagara region, of course, has an incredibly strong agricultural base. The food production

industry, both livestock and crops, is a significant part of the economy down there.

**1550**

None of us are alien to some of the shocking news revelations regarding the illegal slaughterhouses, which drew a whole lot of people's attention to problems in that particular industry. But I want to make it very clear that I know many of these food producers down in Niagara. I know that they have been in compliance with and are eager to comply with fair legislation. But I also know a whole lot of the former inspectors whose jobs have been cut, the same inspectors who tell me that they've lost their jobs in the public sector, and then more than a few have been hired on by way of contract for 10, 15, 20 hours a week earning picayune incomes, where the enthusiasm is long gone.

I have been warned by these very same inspectors about the dangerous prospect of privatization. Again, those now ubiquitous clauses, those ubiquitous sections, are in this bill too, the ones that permit the contracting out, the privatization of these inspection services, a very dangerous prospect. I hope and trust that this government, this Legislature and its members, will focus very much on the dangers of the privatization prospects that are in this piece of legislation.

**Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland):** Thanks to the member for Hamilton Mountain. Obviously she did quite a bit of research prior to speaking on this particular bill. But I would point out that I'm commonly hearing from members of the opposition that there are no funds attached to this particular piece of legislation. Of course there aren't, because it isn't a budget bill. Funds come with budget bills, and this is not a budget bill; this is another typical bill that goes through the Legislature. Regardless of the stripe of government, this is indeed consistent.

I was very pleased to hear her express concerns about the Animal Health Laboratory in Guelph, certainly an exceptional laboratory with exceptional veterinary pathologists who work there. I was very pleased to hear her comment on that.

She was also commenting on the commitment to health in this province. I just wish that her counterparts in Ottawa were in fact committed to health in Ontario as well as maybe in all of Canada. But there's a marked lack of commitment to health on the part of the federal Liberals, particularly the Minister of Health, the Honourable Allan Rock. It would be very nice if they would come on side with the province of Ontario and support health.

There was a comment made about economic competitiveness in our agricultural sector. That's certainly something that the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Honourable Brian Coburn, has been very concerned about, and he has been designing a made-in-Ontario safety net type of program that is certainly being recognized by leaders.

The other one that she commented on is biosecurity, a really good point both in this particular bill as well as

with the nutrient management bill. It's certainly something that farmers are concerned with, and rightly so, the biosecurity in both of these bills.

**Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale):** Speaking of nutrient management, the member who preceded me sure got his two minutes' worth.

I must say that here again I want to follow up and comment on the excellent presentation by my colleague from Hamilton Mountain. She makes thoughtful observations on a bill that has none of the follow-up required to in fact make it of the considerable value that it could be to the citizens of this province.

We had this presentation from the member for Northumberland, who even in a short period of time, when he was to be focusing his comments on the excellent presentation by my colleague, managed to get a little good-time fed-bashing in there.

It strikes me that on a bill where we in the opposition have been very clear to point out to the government that they have failed yet again to do the necessary task of putting in place the resources to do as the bill promises to do—this government is a one-trick pony, and that pony is getting a little tired of being pulled out—

*Interjection.*

**Mr Smitherman:** It's making noises—and put on parade but not fed properly. That's really what this government does to the public service in Ontario.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Smitherman:** I hear the rather bellicose Minister of Labour, here for his afternoon feeding, and I want to say to that member that his ministry, the Ministry of Labour, is but one more example of this government's attitude to everything. Put a big, loud spokesperson out front who makes promises but create nothing more than a symbol of a ministry that was once great and has no resources available to do the necessary investigation or regulation.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions and comments? The member for Timmins-James Bay.

*Interjection:* Now we'll get the bare facts.

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** Yes, I've got to say you will get the bare facts from me.

I guess part of the difficulty we have with what the government is doing with this legislation is that the details are going to be coming in the regulations. It's almost a pattern this government has when it makes enabling legislation that they give us nice, good words in the legislation, and the title of the act sounds good. As a member of the Legislature, either government or opposition, you say, "I kind of like the title, and I kind of like what the bill says." But when you read the bill, it doesn't do anything.

What this bill basically does is consolidate a number of issues into one bill, which most of us would agree with. But when you look at the details of how we are going to make the processing and distribution of food safer, there are really no details, because all that is left to regulation after. So we're being asked by the govern-

ment, "Trust me." They're saying, "Don't worry; be happy. Just trust me."

We say we've been down this road before. As New Democrats, we've seen the government come into the House, introduce legislation and tell us they're going to do one thing. But when the regulations come out, it's totally the opposite thing. So I have some difficulty, and I'm asking the government, in the time it has here at second reading, to tell us what they're going to put in the regulations so we clearly understand what steps this government really wants to take when it comes to food safety.

The other point I want to make is simply that the government talks a good line, again, by way of the language of the title of the bill. But when you look at what their actions have been over the last five or six years, you've really got to say it's not exactly a stellar record.

They reduced—I should say they fired—food inspectors across Ontario in great numbers in their move to restructure government, and as a result we now have fewer food inspectors. You can toughen the legislation all you want, but if you've got nobody minding the candy store, we're in deep trouble.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Response?

**Mrs Bountrogianni:** I'd like to thank all the members for their responses, but I want to reiterate one point. I think the one thing we all learned from Walkerton, on all sides of the House, is that there has to be more coordination between ministries. This act was lacking in this area, as were other acts formerly that had to do with the environment, which may have led to the crisis at Walkerton; that is, the Ministry of the Environment should have been doing this in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture. I think that's an obvious gap, and there's no shame in saying, "It was an oversight. Let's start from the beginning and do this right."

I want to reiterate that the Ontario Liberals are for food safety. But let's do this right. Let's not just have a media exercise. You cannot implement anything without the appropriate resources. Without looking at any draft regulations at all, how do we know what we're even supporting? There is even the failure of any mention of the Ministry of the Environment here.

It is one thing to have legislation in place. But again, much like the nutrient management legislation that we saw previously, there is no financial commitment here. Let's reiterate that in 1993 there were 130 inspectors inspecting the meat industry in this province. There were 50 less in the year 2000. We're down to 80 inspectors. You're talking about the importance of food safety and what you want to do, but you're not backing it up with the resources needed. We've seen the budget in this area fall from \$12.5 million to \$7 million. So you're asking people to do more with much less, and this is really going to affect the smaller organizations, those mom-and-pop shops, those family businesses that have been doing this for years. Those are the people you will be hurting.

You've done this without consultation, without coordination with the Ministry of the Environment and without the appropriate resources—another media exercise.

1600

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Bert Johnson (Perth-Middlesex):** I want to add my comments to this debate on Bill 87. I represent all of Perth county and about a third of Middlesex. Most of you are aware that those are very food-productive parts of the province. The safety and quality of food is very important to my constituents.

Ontario has an enviable reputation for food safety, with some of the highest standards in the world. I want to assure everybody that Ontario food is safe. But we can and must do better to protect the public and to ensure that our agri-food businesses remain competitive. Ontario's current food inspection system has served the interests of people well. However, the system was originally developed several decades ago and has not kept pace with the sometimes rapidly changing developments in the area of food safety and quality.

Several factors contribute to the need for modern food-safety legislation. Advanced technology, the diversification and aging of our population and changes in lifestyle have encouraged the introduction of new or more convenient foods and beverages. We eat different foods now, including more ready-to-eat products such as bagged salads. My grandmother would be interested to know that I had a sandwich made with pita bread for lunch. I can remember visiting her home several times as a kid. She never baked pita bread. Food is more widely distributed, and we eat foods from around the world. Trade requirements are changing. New, more persistent types of food-borne bacteria have been identified. We must continually and proactively improve our food safety systems with regard to safety and quality to address the risks that come with such changes.

The agri-food industry in Ontario is worth \$28 billion annually. Bill 87 will help ensure it is well equipped to meet the demands of the future. Food safety is a very important issue to a great many people. Anecdotal evidence suggests that almost everyone has had, or knows someone who has had, a food-borne illness. Fortunately, most of the time, the illness is only a short-term inconvenience. Food-borne illnesses, though, can be serious.

If we can help make sure Ontario's food is even safer, we must do so. Proactive action such as Bill 87 is needed. Consumers rely on action such as Bill 87 for food producers, manufacturers and retailers to ensure that the safety of their food is excellent. They also expect governments to exercise their authority to set food safety and marketing standards and to make sure the standards are met.

Times, as we know, have changed. In my younger days, my family belonged to a beef and food ring. As some of you know, that was where you and your neighbours got together and butchered a pig or a cow and

ate the results of that for as long as they lasted, and then one of the other neighbours would contribute and you would just keep going. Those farmers relied on their neighbours' skill and help, and they knew that it was safe because they were there to participate. We don't have the advantage of that now. Ready-to-eat foods form a greater part of our diet. We're eating foods from around the world, and our legislation needs to change too.

For example, there are currently no specific food safety standards that address certain risks we now recognize as being associated with the production and processing of some fruits and vegetables. This has been demonstrated in recent years by outbreaks of illnesses associated with unpasteurized cider, sprouts, imported raspberries and mussels from the east coast. Bill 87 would give us the ability to deal with food safety issues as quickly as the world changes. Science-based risk studies have shown us that the process is a key tool in controlling potential hazards to the end products.

Some of you will remember that it was the Federation of Women's Institutes in Ontario that insisted in the early days that milk be pasteurized. We have institutions such as the women's institutes to be thankful to for that part of food safety.

Currently, food inspections are under the jurisdiction of three ministries and seven provincial statutes: the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, with the Health Protection and Promotion Act; the Ministry of Natural Resources, with the Fish Inspection Act; and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, with the Dead Animal Disposal Act, the Edible Oil Products Act, the Farm Products Grades and Sales Act, the Livestock and Livestock Products Act and the Meat Inspection Act.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Health Protection and Promotion Act has been updated in recent years, but the six food-related statutes under OMAFRA and the Ministry of Natural Resources have not. Those food-related statutes are not as effective and efficient as they could be. They must be modernized to take advantage of the current levels of scientific knowledge, national standards and industry initiatives. Bill 87 is enabling legislation that would consolidate the food safety and quality components of six existing food-related acts.

We heard not so long ago that the regulations aren't accompanying the bill. Of course we in this House all know, even those who criticize that very fact, that regulations are never developed until an act has been passed. I guess it's a little like the chicken-and-egg argument, as some will recognize. There would be no reason to have regulations if the bill didn't pass. Therefore, we wait until it's passed before the regulations are published, not necessarily all developed afterwards.

Bringing these together would allow for a common, consistent approach to food safety and quality in the province, making our food safety systems stronger. Between the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, we would truly have field-to-fork coverage of our food

system. The broad scope of the proposed legislation would increase the confidence of Ontario's food products not only for provincial consumers but for existing national and international markets and perhaps new ones. They all expect and deserve the highest level of safety and quality. Bill 87 would help ensure that Ontario's agri-food industry delivers.

The scope of the foods covered by Bill 87 is defined broadly and would be complemented by more specific regulations. It includes food, plants, animals and fish intended for use as food, and covers all those items currently regulated under the six food-related statutes that would be consolidated. The scope of activities under Bill 87 includes, among other things, the food safety and quality aspects of production, harvesting, packaging, processing, transportation, distributing, grading and advertising of anything with respect to food. These broad definitions mean the proposed legislation is flexible. It would be able to adapt to changing and emerging food hazards as well as new developments in science and technology, ensuring a safe quality of food supply for the people of Ontario.

The bill provides for effective and efficient legislation that avoids duplication and overlap with other jurisdictions. It provides a legislative framework to allow the government to minimize the risk of a food safety hazard as well as permit a more effective coordinated response to situations that present critical food safety risks.

Any new legislation is only as good as its enforcement. To address this, Bill 87 contains various tools and powers for use in administering and enforcing the act and its regulations, and most importantly, to protect the public in situations where food or animals or plants that may be used for food appear to present food safety risks. What constitutes a food safety risk is clearly defined in Bill 87 and only applies to the designated foods.

#### 1610

I just wanted to say a word about the inspectors because we've been told two figures: one is that inspectors have been reduced from 130 to 80. That would be a reduction of 50, according to the math that I learned at school. But the other figure the same speaker gave a few minutes ago was that the inspectors had been reduced by 37. So I'm not sure if it's 37 or 50, but I think the people of Ontario deserve to know why that is. The reason for that is that this government, in concert with the federal Department of Agriculture, has tried to combine inspectors in certain areas. A few years ago for instance we couldn't see why, if an abattoir was killing a cattle beast, both a federal and a provincial inspector had to be there. The reason, of course, was that if any of that beef crossed the provincial boundary into either Manitoba or Quebec, it had to be inspected by a federal inspector, and if it was all going to be consumed presumably within the province of Ontario, then an Ontario inspector had to inspect it.

But the process had a lot of duplication, and I wanted the people to know that I don't consider the reduction in the inspectors as a criticism; I take it as a compliment. If we can have one inspector instead of two, still guaranteeing that the food is safe, because it has to be just as safe for the consumers in Ontario as it does in Quebec and Manitoba, then why should one inspector not do, given the proper training and tools he needs to practise his trade?

Where there are grounds to believe that a food safety risk constitutes a significant risk to public health and safety, inspectors could be authorized to trace the food safety risk wherever it occurred in the food chain. I just want to illustrate that the HACCP program within food processing companies, very similar to the ISO designation that manufacturing and transportation companies and those sorts of companies have, will enable that to be done. The livestock growing industry is adapting that as well, and those that are producing cereal crops, corn and those sorts of things will as well. I haven't heard about it in fruit and vegetables, but I assume that will be the next step.

Inspectors would have the power to issue orders to prevent, control and eliminate risk. Bill 87 would have clout. While Bill 87 was being developed, there was general agreement that current penalties under food-related statutes were not adequate. Stakeholders, and I should tell people that those stakeholders are s-t-a-k-e, indicate that penalties needed to be increased to deter potential offenders and minimize public safety risks due to food safety issues. Bill 87 would do this.

Regulations that would be developed under the proposed legislation would address risks along the food continuum that has been identified using science and technology. Inspection programs would be modified to take advantage of this and would become more science-based. They would focus on those parts of the food continuum that have been determined to be high-risk. The agri-food industry has taken many steps of its own to minimize food safety risks.

Bill 87 would provide the backbone for a science- and risk-based food safety system. The regulations that would be developed under Bill 87 would put Ontario's food safety system on a firm, science-based foundation. This means that we would take advantage of new science and technology that are available. We could ensure that standards for the quality and safety of food products in Ontario are not arbitrary but are based on science that has shown what are the higher risks in the safety of our food.

Because Bill 87 is enabling legislation, as new science and technologies are developed we would be able to take advantage of them quickly and easily, ensuring that members remain at the forefront of food safety and quality with modern, effective legislation governing the agri-food industry.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Natural Resources were key supporters during the development of Bill 87. These ministries

continue to work with OMAFRA in ensuring the safety of Ontario's food from field to fork.

The agri-food industry in Ontario has been working hard at this for years. It is partly thanks to their diligence that we have such an enviable reputation for food safety and quality. Bill 87 would allow everyone to play their roles more effectively. Food safety is recognized as a key strategy for the marketing of Ontario food products.

In addition to traditional inspection methods that have provided a high degree of protection for consumers, industry and governments are adopting scientific advances in practices and technology to further reduce the incidence of food-borne illnesses. To varying degrees, sectors in the agri-food industry are already implementing quality assurance and process control systems to provide buyers with food safety assurances and to demonstrate and document a commitment to food safety.

The regulations will be forthcoming after the bill—if it is passed—has been passed. I would ask that if the members who have been listening so attentively this afternoon have some comments about the issues I have brought forth in my remarks on Bill 87, they be given that opportunity now.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions or comments?

**Mr Rick Bartolucci (Sudbury):** I guess what the member forgot to do was to talk about the shortcomings of this bill. I think the members on both sides of the House would have loved to have seen some draft regulations. I don't think there's an issue with food safety, about getting buy-in. Everybody—everybody—in the province of Ontario is concerned about our food, and we want what's best for the people of Ontario.

But the people of Ontario also want to ensure that the bills that are passed will be in their best interests. I would suggest to you that this would have been one bill where it would have been very appropriate to ensure that we see some draft regulations. The argument from the government is that you don't see regulations until you see the bill. Well, that's not true, because there have been precedents set in this House on many occasions by all different governments that in fact draft regulations have been presented. I suggest that this is one time when that would have been very appropriate.

We on this side of the House have some concerns with regard to the commitment the government is going to make to ensure, once the bill is in place, there are sufficient resources to ensure that the mandate—whatever that may be, because we haven't seen any of the regulations—is carried out in an expeditious and a very complete way.

If you look at the government's history, you'll see that they've cut the budget by 45%. I suggest to you that it has had a profound effect on enforcement. Charges are way down because there just aren't the enforcement officers in place to ensure that every precaution is taken.

So I guess a word of advice to the government is, show us some draft regulations so that we on this side of the House can have some buy-in.

1620

**Mr Kormos:** Well, I did listen carefully to the speech by the member from Perth. His comment that the regulations are forthcoming is indisputable, but that's the problem. This bill should go to committee. As a matter of fact, New Democrats are insisting that it have committee hearings. But those committee hearings are going to be incredibly hampered by the absence of the regulations. There are any number of people out there, any number of participants in our agricultural food production industry, who would dearly love—indeed, feel compelled, have a responsibility—to participate in a discussion about the actual standards that are going to exist, about the actual enforcement techniques or tactics that are going to exist.

One of the things we've got a responsibility to do is to ensure the safety of food products. We also have a responsibility to ensure that the little guys, the kind of people who tend to operate down where I come from in Niagara region—I know the member is no stranger to that type of operator. We've got a responsibility to make sure that they are protected, to make sure that the standards that are imposed are not so onerous—I'm not talking about standards that are necessary to protect public health and safety, but that the standards that are imposed are not so onerous that they create a real prejudice, a real bias in favour of the big packers, for instance, in favour of the big Canada Packers and Swift's meats and operations like that, as compared to the small operators, family-run operations, as often as not farmers who are working at an industrial job in addition to running their farms. These folks—you know that—are doing double duty. These folks are working double shifts every day, producing good-quality food for their communities. That's why it's critical that regulations be put forward. That can be done at committee.

We'd love to hear from this government that if it's not going to be part of the bill, those regulations at least be tabled now.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions, comments?

**Mr Galt:** I just rise to compliment the member from Perth-Middlesex on an excellent presentation—well-delivered, excellent content, very thoughtfully researched and put forward. The people from Perth county and Middlesex should be very proud to have a member who would go into this kind of depth to put this forward.

He mentioned things like tracing a risk and the HACCP program and drew the parallel—I thought it was quite interesting—with ISO programs that are in industry. I thought it was just an excellent comparison that he drew. He also talked about a science- and risk-based system that this particular piece of legislation would promote. Really that's the whole substance of what we're talking about here in this bill of food safety and quality.

He also referred to it as being on a firm science base, a seamless system of a food chain. We commonly refer to that as “from field to fork,” just a great slogan that the ministry and also the people in rural Ontario have as they work with their food system.

What I'm hearing from the opposition is that they're more concerned about partisan politics and playing that kind of game than they are about food safety. All they can really criticize on this is that the regulations aren't here. Well, that's the way most bills go through. They indicate that maybe there have been some others—I don't remember any—from 1985 to 1995. But really, rather than them playing partisan politics, they should suggest what could be used to improve this bill when in fact it's all about strengthening the food safety system here and updating the standards in the province of Ontario.

**Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands):** I too found the comments of the member from Perth-Middlesex very interesting, particularly the point when he said that you'd have two inspectors going in to inspect something, and why would two go in if only one was needed? I think everybody would agree with him on that, but I think he should also go back to the facts as to what's actually happened within the Ministry of Agriculture in the last six years.

Here are some of the facts. In the food safety and inspection area, the budget has been reduced from \$12.5 million to \$7 million, a decrease of 45%. He should have told the people of Ontario that. He also should have told us that the number of OMAFRA inspectors has decreased from 130 to 80. As a matter of fact, in the province right now there are only five enforcement officers, five people who can lay charges with respect to food safety issues.

The other interesting statistic is that in the three-year period between 1996 and 1999, there were only 18 charges laid. No, I should be correct. Eighteen people or corporations were convicted of breaking food safety rules: 18 in a three-year period.

I think what the people of Ontario want is to make sure their government has an inspection system in place whereby they can be guaranteed that the food they consume on a daily basis is safe for them to eat. With the drastic cuts this government has initiated in this ministry over the last four to five years, they certainly don't have that assurance. This act is not going to change that at all until the government decides to put sufficient resources into this whole area.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Response?

**Mr Johnson:** I wanted to thank the member for Sudbury, the member for Niagara Centre, the member for Northumberland, and of course the member from Kingston and the Islands for contributing to the debate and for their comments this afternoon.

The member for Sudbury talked about my lack of bringing forth the shortcomings of this bill, and I did; I intentionally neglected to bring those, because I knew he would do it. It's his nature. I knew he would bring out the shortcomings. I thought I should give out, if I could so call it, the “longcomings,” because I wanted to indicate to all the members the benefits and the advantages of this bill.

The member for Niagara Centre talked about the bills, the regulations and the draft regulations and so on, and he's perfectly right. Draft regulations could be brought

out at any time. But I would like to know the number of bills between 1990 and 1995 that came out where the regulations were with the bill in second reading. He can look that up some other time. He doesn't have to let me know today, but I'd be interested in knowing that.

I'd like to thank the member for Northumberland for his acknowledgement of the term "field to fork." It's a simplification of the term that a lot used in the old days. It was one step. You went out to the garden and got what you wanted; you went to the barn and got what you wanted. You got your own. You didn't have to depend on somebody else's safety.

I just wanted to say thanks very much, Mr Speaker, for your attention this afternoon.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Further debate?

**Mr Joseph Cordiano (York South-Weston):** I'm delighted to speak to this bill. I will be sharing my time with the member for Kingston and the Islands.

The bill I'm speaking to is vitally important to Ontario's economy and to the people of Ontario in general. Let me just start off by saying that the first line of defence for us in order to have food safety is to ensure that we have a viable agricultural industry so that more of what we consume is produced right here in Ontario. That can reassure people that in fact the food we eat is safer.

Over the years I've spoken to farmers and people who are in agribusiness, and they have quite clearly indicated to me that we can't be too certain of what we eat when it comes in from other countries. We import a lot of our fresh fruit during the winter from a variety of countries around the world, and a lot is left to inspection in those countries. We have to reassure ourselves that in fact what we're eating is safe, but we can't do that because it's offshore. We rely on Agriculture Canada to ensure that what we are eating is safe. A lot of it is based on what happens in those countries, so it's not inspections that we can control.

However, food that is produced here in Canada certainly is something we can control, so I would say that would be our first line of defence: increasing what we consume in terms of the production that's possible right here in Ontario. We are not doing enough in Ontario to ensure that the agricultural business—agribusiness, the agri-food business—is a viable industry in Ontario. In fact, this bill, which the Liberal caucus supports in its intention—who would be against food safety? Naturally anyone in this place is for that, but that's not what we're talking about here. When you dig beneath the surface, you realize that there are a lot of things left to be desired here. Let me just touch on some of those.

**1630**

We are concerned about two things with regard to this bill. First of all, there is no commitment for additional provincial funding for inspections. The food inspection budget, as has been often repeated by my colleagues, has been cut by 45%. The number of food inspectors has been cut by 38%. It's a dramatic decrease from what we had previously. The number of inspectors has declined

from 130 to 80, a significant drop. It's part of a pattern of this government. I'll get to that in a moment.

The second thing is that this bill, the bulk of it, will come in regulations. Every government I've seen or witnessed before this Legislative Assembly has always attempted to put more of its legislation in regulations when it was fearful of something in a bill: "And we'll deal with it in regulation." By and large, I think this government is suggesting that they are fearful of something, and that probably has to do with cost. The fact is, they're downloading on to the agri-food business the costs associated with self-regulation and the requirements for further inspections, and they don't want to deal with that up front. I think the government is suggesting, "Well, we'll deal with it by way of regulation so that the costs to be downloaded on to the industry will somehow—we'll have to massage that as it moves along."

That's part of the problem. I would suggest to the government that food safety is a huge priority in the minds of Ontario citizens. In fact there was a poll in the *Globe and Mail* that revealed that 68% of our population is extremely concerned about the quality of the food they eat. This was pointed out by my colleague Mr Peters earlier in his comments. That speaks volumes about the concern that people have with respect in general to health and safety matters.

Health and safety: that's where we should be drawing the line with regard to the question of privatization. I think this government has failed miserably on that front. I'm all for privatization where it is, practically speaking, a good thing; where it enhances what we do by way of making things more efficient and more effective. But you have to know where to draw the line. This government, I would suggest, has gone too far by way of privatizing in the areas of health and safety when it concerns the public interest and the public good.

I think people have woken up to this reality. It's no accident, I say to the members of this House, that this government's popularity is declining at the present time. I think it has a lot to do with the fact that they have overlooked this vital area and have not acted in the public interest in this province. You cannot privatize everything and expect that it will maintain the same high standards; not when it comes to health and safety matters.

So I suggest to the government members that they are failing the Ontario public, as was the case in Walkerton, where private labs were called upon to test water safety. It failed and failed miserably, tragically, unfortunately.

When it comes to the question of what's going on in our health care system, you are privatizing and privatizing with no end. It's going too far. It's going too far in a number of other areas as well. When it comes to the environment, we see a tremendous decline in the Ministry of the Environment's budget. It's no accident that we have ongoing problems with respect to air quality, with respect to water and a number of other areas that concern the environment.

I am convinced that privatizing services is valuable and is something that we need to get right, but this government has gone much further than it should have with respect to the question of privatization. When it comes to health and safety, that's where we would draw the line. That's where I think Liberals would say, "We can't go there. It's far too important." We need to reassure the public that the food they eat is safe, that the water they drink is safe, that inspections are conducted routinely and that there is the highest standard that accrues to those types of inspections.

In my opinion, and I believe in the opinion of members on this side of the House, we can only reassure the public of that when it's done in the public arena. We can make certain that what's conducted is in the interests of the public good, that there is the highest standard in terms of inspection and safety when it comes to health care and social services. These are things that must be maintained in the public sector.

I repeat, I think it's no accident that this government is declining in popularity as a direct result of the public's lack of faith and trust in this government's ability to ensure that the safety and health of people is maintained. It's no accident.

This is an area that is very vital to us. It's also vital that we have an agri-food business that is vibrant and contributing to the Ontario economy in the way that it can. It's a significant contributor to the Ontario economy, and it's important that we get this right, that food safety is maintained. Otherwise, the industry will be ill-affected. If there is an outbreak of some sort of salmonella poisoning or any number of other problems that could occur as a result of the lack of food safety, the agri-food business could be adversely affected. We don't want this to happen. It's an important and vital part of our economy. So we need to ensure that this bill gets it right. But without the necessary resources for inspections, without the inspections being conducted by the public sector, I believe we're going to fall very short, and we are quite concerned about that.

It's the same concern we had on a number of other fronts in a number of other industries. I think the pattern repeats itself with this government. It is again sacrificing public safety and health for the sake of reducing the overhead to itself. That's not helping the public interest; that's not helping the overall economy in the long run.

**Mr Gerretsen:** I too am pleased to speak on this bill. I would like to just take up some of the points that were raised earlier.

I know the members of the government will say that there's nothing unusual about the rules and regulations under an act being set out in regulations. Generally speaking, I will agree with them on that. There are always regulations under most acts that are passed, to give effect to the purpose of the act. But in this particular case—and I would draw the government members' attention to section 11 of the act—there are over 25 different areas within the food safety area that the Lieutenant Governor in Council, which is cabinet,

basically has the power to pass regulations on. It deals with every aspect of food safety. One would hope that the government would have a much better idea and be much more open about what it wants to do with respect to food safety than to allow it to put an entire act into effect by the way it will interpret, in the future, the regulations they want to pass under it.

It deals with regulations, for example, that talk about the standards with respect to food, agriculture and aquatic commodities. It talks about prohibiting persons who can be involved in these activities. It talks about requiring the analysis, testing and grading of things of an agricultural nature. It talks about the qualifications, education, training and certification of the people who will be doing our food inspections. It goes on to talk about governing the locations and hours of operations where this can take place. You can just go on and on.

**1640**

They've taken six other bills that already exist, put them into one bill and basically are telling the people of Ontario, "Trust us. We will pass the necessarily regulations in order that the food you eat on a day-to-day basis is safe for human consumption." I say to the government that that's simply not good enough, particularly when we look at your record and what you've done over the last five or six years.

The fact that we've only got five enforcement officers who can lay charges under the existing six acts and that over the last three years only 18 persons or corporations have been charged with respect to the violation of any food safety rules and regulations simply isn't good enough. That does not give the people of Ontario any sense of security that this government is interested in the food they eat on a day-to-day basis.

The other thing we're really concerned about is the fact that once again the government as much as possible uses such words as "alternative delivery mechanisms" in order to put this act into action. What does that mean? What does "alternative delivery mechanisms" mean? It means only one thing. Well, it can mean a number of different things.

First of all it can mean privatization; in other words, that a whole area of food inspection delivery that is set out in these 25 different areas of rules and regulations can be done privately. It could mean that a lot of this responsibility is downloaded perhaps on some of the agricultural organizations, perhaps on municipalities. It could mean a whole variety of things.

The point simply is that there are certain activities that a government should be involved in so that the people out there can feel a sense of safety and protection, particularly in this day and age. With everything that has happened since September 11, people are probably crying out for a sense of security and safety more than anything else. They want to make sure there is enough government control over the activities they're involved in on a day-to-day basis, that they can rely on the safety features, whether it's food or many other activities that they're involved in on a day-to-day basis.

We've seen what happens when there aren't enough inspectors or when a senior level of government, such as the provincial government, doesn't take the same kind of interest in a particular item that it should. We saw what happened in a case like Walkerton. We saw what happened there. The inspection rules and regulations became laxer, there were fewer inspectors, fewer inspections done, and as a result a calamity occurred. The same thing could happen in this area. It is absolutely imperative that a government, if it wants to give assurances to people, does not just allow a whole area of responsibility to be privatized.

I think the record speaks for itself. Certainly there's absolutely no excuse for the fact that over the last four fiscal years the budget for food inspection in the Ministry of Agriculture has declined by 45%, from \$12.5 million to just over \$7 million, this fiscal year. The fact that the number of OMAFRA inspectors, the people who are involved in our day-to-day activity with our agricultural community and the commodities they produce, has decreased from 130 to 80 I'm sure is not something that gives the people of Ontario a sense of security or a sense of safety.

Yes, we are concerned. Perhaps the notion of this bill in itself is not a bad one. Your collecting all the various laws that are out there and codifying them into one document is fine, but it's what you didn't do in this bill that's important. You didn't say, "We are going to make sure that the people of Ontario will have all the assurances possible that this government can give, because we're going to increase the budgetary allocation to the inspection area." You've cut it by 45%.

Surely you owe it to the people of Ontario, if you're really serious about the issue of food safety, to make sure that government takes some responsibility and is accountable. That's what it's really all about. The government should be accountable, and the more you privatize or the more you download to local municipalities that may not be in a position to deal with a lot of these issues, the less accountable you are. We've seen this happen with this government more and more. I know there are a fair number of people out there who see absolutely nothing wrong with privatization until something goes wrong, and then they say, "Where was the government in this?" What we're simply saying is, let us not in the food safety area make the same mistake that we made in the water inspection area.

I'm absolutely convinced that the vast majority of people, even those people who are of right-wing persuasion, absolutely depend on their government for certain safeties and securities in their life. They include that the drinking water they have is safe for human consumption, and certainly that the food that they eat on a day-to-day basis is safe for them to eat. Merely codifying everything in a bill that doesn't provide any additional resources—you've taken many of the resources out of this area over the last five years—simply doesn't do it.

I say to the government, we know you're going to pass this bill. You've got the majority here; you're going to pass this bill. But give a commitment to the people of Ontario. Since so much of the way that you're actually going to put this into existence is going to rely on regulations, give people an opportunity to comment on those regulations: not just the various interest groups, but the consumers out there as well, the people who will be affected by these rules and regulations on a day-to-day basis.

We know you're going to get this bill. You're ideologically committed to it. You're ideologically committed to the notion of privatization. We on this side of the House think that isn't good enough. Give an assurance to the people of Ontario that you will publish and have public hearings on the rules and regulations that you're going to pass under this bill so that at least the people of Ontario who will be directly affected by this will have an opportunity to comment on it.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Thank you. Questions or comments?

**Mr David Christopherson (Hamilton West):** I'm pleased to rise and comment on the remarks of the members for York South-Weston and Kingston and the Islands.

I thought it was interesting that the member for Kingston and the Islands, in the closing part of his remarks, put emphasis on the fact that amalgamating the bills that exist, in and of itself, is not a bad thing nor a good thing. Usually it's a good thing, but in and of itself it's neither. What really matters, and I want to underscore the point that he made and that the member for York South-Weston made, is the whole issue of privatization. Obviously, those of us in the NDP caucus have a problem overall with the amount of privatization that's going on and this government's absolute hell-bent-for-leather attitude that everything and anything can and should be privatized. That makes the world a better place, as they see it. But in this instance, obviously the Liberal caucus has some concerns with it, and I think all Ontarians ought to have a concern with this.

There are indeed, regardless of one's philosophical bent, certain things that the majority of Ontarians approve of to be in the private sector and others that they want to remain in the public sector. I think we should be very cognizant of that overwhelming majority feeling about our hospitals. Notwithstanding any attempts on the part of this government to privatize hospitals, Ontarians in large numbers want it kept in the public domain. The same with our fire services; the same with our police services. The point being made here today and that I want to underscore is that inspection of our food ought also to be on that list of services that remain in the public domain.

**1650**

**Mr Galt:** There must have been a blueprint put out for the members of the Liberal Party, because all their speeches are on the same basis and they make the same points. They talk about the reduction in the number of

people. I'm interested in the yardstick they use to measure. It's reduction of people and reduction in dollars spent. But do they ever talk about outcomes? Do they ever talk about the real safety at the end of the pipe? No. They talk about dollars spent. We went through a decade of dollars being spent, and were we better off in 1995 than in 1985? I don't think so. You should be talking about outcomes.

They also talk a lot about privatization. Do you remember the inquiry by the federal government into the ship that went out from Tobermory and sank, taking with it some students who drowned? In that inquiry, did the Prime Minister go before the inquiry? No. Did any of the federal ministers go before the inquiry? No. Who was the inspector for 32 years? It was staff, members of the bureaucracy; it wasn't privatized. They got a clean bill of health from regular staff, saying the boat was just fine and it wouldn't sink; that is, a leaky boat that went out and sank and took children to the bottom with it. But it was OK, because the federal government wasn't trying to save money. Had that been the provincial government trying to save some dollars, had it been a private company inspecting that ship, it would have been just terrible. But because the federal government had lots of money to spend—throw it around; don't worry about it—and had an inspector go and approve a leaky ship, and it comes out in an inquiry, everything is just fine.

They try to draw a comparison with water inspection. In the water inspection, it was the private people who were doing a great job. Where were the mistakes made? Have a look. Draw the comparison with that ship.

**Mr Dave Levac (Brant):** I appreciate the opportunity to tell this government exactly what its privatization will do. Let's go specifically to a disaster that could have been avoided if this government had not gone down the road of privatization. The Technical Standards and Safety Association—TSSA—has been privatized, and they took pride in the fact that 50% of their inspectors were not certified. The minister himself sent a letter to one of my constituents that basically said it was perfectly OK to have 50% of their people not certified in a private situation. That's not acceptable. For the member opposite, there's a little piece of information for your data that you want to fill in.

The fact that one of my constituents had an accident on one of these rides is not acceptable. The fact is that privatization is a danger to our communities, and we should be very serious about looking into it before we haphazardly give it all away.

We want to take a look at what this privatization bill does. We've done the research and told you that in this bill a lot of local issues are going to be taken care of. You're going to close down arbiters on a local level in really small communities across the province. Why? Because you want to hand it over to privateers. Quite frankly, I'm disappointed in the members opposite who want to turn around and praise the fact that privatization—listen to the name they give it, "alternative delivery mechanisms." Why don't you call it what it is?

Why don't you call it privatization? You're afraid of the word. You're not going to call it privatization because you're afraid of the word.

We tasted privatization in corrections, privatizing our jails. Everybody up there, when asked if they wanted it, said no. But what are you doing? You're forcing it down everybody's throat. Seventy per cent of the people in Penetanguishene said no to privatization. What did this government do? The government said, "You're getting it whether you like it or not." The people of Ontario are saying no to privatization. Are you listening? No.

**Mr Kormos:** I have but two minutes at this point, and I'll tell you now that the member for Hamilton West is going to be speaking to this bill next.

The concern about privatization has been accentuated by the incident in Walkerton. There was a time in the life of this province when people assumed, rightly so, that when they turned on the tap and drank the water, they were drinking safe, potable water.

One would like to think, and indeed there was a time in this province's history not that long ago, that when you went to the butcher's store, the meat market, and bought meat, you were buying safe and not only edible but disease-free meat that was slaughtered by the butcher in a clean and safe way. There was a series of revelations in the Toronto Star which indicated that was no longer true about meat products, and Toronto was one of the destination points of this illegally slaughtered meat, in the same way we've learned in the saddest and most dramatic way that it's no longer true of Ontario's water.

Mention has been made over and over again of the dramatic reduction in the number of inspectors by this government, inspectors literally laid off. We've already witnessed the privatization over the course of their six years as inspectors have been cut loose and then called back to work 10, 15 or 20 weeks. I've met these inspectors; I've talked to them. They're telling me that they, experienced inspectors, are ready to go. The next job opportunity they get, they're out of the meat inspection business. What that means is that at the hands of this government we're going to endure not just privatized inspection but inspection by far less experienced, less trained and less competent people.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Response?

**Mr Gerretsen:** Let me say, first of all, that you get good, competent people and some incompetent people in the private sector and in the public sector. You've got good people and bad people in everything, but that's not the issue. The issue is accountability. Who is ultimately accountable and responsible for food safety in this province or for water safety in this province? It's the government. The more you privatize some of the essential services that are out there, the less accountability there's going to be and the less qualified the people are going to be. That is the issue.

I'd like to thank all four members for responding to my speech. The only leaky ship I can think of right now is the government, because they're allowing all these areas to be privatized, and therefore the people of Ontario

have less confidence in the services or in their own safety and security in a lot of these different areas.

If there's anything we've learned from Walkerton, and if there's anything we've learned from September 11, it is certainly the notion that government should be at the forefront of making sure the people of Ontario can feel a sense of security and a sense of safety. The only way that's going to be done is if there are sufficient rules and regulations in place in a variety of areas, including the food safety area, so that people can have confidence in the products they consume on a day-to-day basis.

That's what this is about. It's about accountability. It's not about having good people or bad people in the private or public sectors. That's a given. I would say that the vast majority of people in the public sector are doing a darned good job for us.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Christopherson:** It's a pleasure to join the debate. I'd like to point out, first of all, that with the amalgamation of the new city of Hamilton, there's now a significant agricultural portion of our economy that's part of the city. It's always been part of the former regional municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth, but it's now part of the city of Hamilton proper.

Just for the record, for those in the House who would be interested, the latest stats show that we have over 6,000 persons who are employed in agriculture and other resource-based industries; that the products grown in our city and marketed are worth over \$150 million, in terms of the gross income those products earn; and that just for the fiscal year 2000, the value of building permits that were issued for agricultural purposes in the new city of Hamilton were worth over \$4.5 million. Clearly, this is an issue that affects the constituents in my hometown of Hamilton, in the city of Hamilton, on both sides, both on the growing and delivery of agricultural products and obviously on the consumer side, in the urban part of the city, which is actually the area that I represent.

**1700**

The first thing I want to mention—and I have about four different points that I wish to raise this afternoon—is to point out that for a government which has consistently said—and I emphasize the word “said,” because once again it's the difference between the world of what the government says and the way the world really is. The Harris government says that agriculture is a priority for them, that they recognize the importance of agriculture in our economy and that they want to address it as a priority, and yet the numbers tell us a different story. The numbers tell us that you have cut, since you've been in power, from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, from the operating side of the budget, at least \$200 million. That's a strange and funny way to show support or to say that something is a priority, by turning around and cutting in the neighbourhood of \$200 million.

I would remind you, Speaker, that for every cut they made, they always linked it to their tax cuts, which of course was why they had to make these cuts, because they had to pay for the lost revenue. And all of that was

to do two things for the economy. One was to get the economy going, which happened. We've always argued it happened mostly because of the US economy booming. But the other part of why they were doing all this was to make Ontario recession-proof, which is why there was the big kerfuffle the other day when the Premier inadvertently let the word “recession” slip past his lips. He had to correct it the next day, and there was all kinds of scrambling: “Oh, no, no, no, the Premier didn't say that, or he didn't mean that.” That's a dangerous word for them, because one half of their whole economic plan that they put forward and the rationale for what they did to so many people in this province was that it was going to make us recession-proof, that we were going to somehow magically construct, through tax cuts, an economy that would survive no matter what.

We argued at the time, “The only reason your tax cuts are working right now is because the US economy is booming and you can't help but increase your revenue and can't help but increase the economic activity in the province of Ontario.” And further, we said at the time that as soon as the American economy starts to cool off and, heaven forbid, if they ever should go into recession, we will be immediately behind them and probably in many ways we could be hurt more. Whether it's more or the same at this point is rather insignificant when you're talking about the kind of recession that they're facing in the United States.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Christopherson:** I recognize that one of the backbenchers in the government can pop up and say that technically there's been no recession because we haven't had two straight quarters of negative growth, but at this point that's pretty much an academic debate. For all intents and purposes, we in North America are in the midst, and have been for a while now—not just as a direct result of the horrible things that happened on September 11, although that exacerbated things and accelerated them. But we've been into this recession for quite some time, and now we're seeing it in the province of Ontario: tens of thousands of layoff slips being handed out.

I say all of this because if all of this was not supposed to happen, and that was going to make the whole notion of the cuts, like the \$200 million out of this ministry, acceptable, that it was, I guess, an investment, a down payment—put whatever spin you want—the fact of the matter is that we told you then it wasn't going to work, and we're saying now it doesn't work.

If you want to make something a priority, at some point, when it's a public service, it's going to cost us collectively to provide that service or we aren't providing it, or at least we're not providing it to the degree and the efficiency that we should. That doesn't take an economics degree.

Secondly, the government has touted Bill 87 as a state-of-the-art bill. This was going to modernize the governance of the growing and inspection of food products. Isn't it interesting that one of the most

important modern-day issues is the entire question of genetically engineered foods, also called, by some folks, genetically modified organisms, also called by some people “Frankenfood.” That debate will go on for some time, as to whether or not, ultimately, genetically modifying food—and given the climate change that’s taking place and if we take a look at where we’ve been in history, I think there’s a legitimate debate to be had.

But the debate is not concluded, and that’s the important point. That debate is not conclusive as to whether or not genetically engineered foods will in the long term be dangerous to human beings. There’s no conclusive evidence. Now, the regulation of that, I grant you—I grant to the government—the fact that that’s federal. But there are things that can be done by a provincial government if you really cared about doing something and if you truly wanted to modernize the legislation.

I reference a news release that went out on April 4 of this year from the British Columbia Attorney, General Graeme Bowbrick, the then-Attorney General of the then-NDP government in British Columbia. The Attorney General from British Columbia said this on April 4: “British Columbians have a right to know what they’re eating. That’s why we’re introducing legislation that will ultimately require all genetically engineered food sold in the province to be labelled.”

**Mr Johnson:** How’d they do in the election?

**Mr Christopherson:** It’s interesting. My friend from Perth-Middlesex says, “How’d they do in the election?” Not so good. I’m sure you might have heard the rumblings that we didn’t do quite so well.

The reason I’m prepared to respond to that is that ever since the Liberal government—which actually, as the member would know, Speaker, and so would you, is the new term for everybody who’s not a New Democrat. So you’ve got the old Socreds, you’ve got Liberals, you’ve got Conservatives, you’ve got people who just don’t like New Democrats—everybody sort of fits under the current rubric in BC as their own special politics, but in BC, all of those folks come under “Liberal.” What’s interesting is that the legislation I’m referring to here today has stalled under the new Liberal government, meaning they don’t see it as a priority. One has to ask the question: what is it about the right wing in Canada that makes them so fearful about stepping in and protecting citizens from potentially harmful foods, given that that debate has not yet concluded?

Back to April 4: Professor David Suzuki said at the time, “Genetically engineered food involves a revolutionary kind of technology, and it is far too early to know whether there are any health hazards from eating it. People have a right to choose whether or not to be part of this experiment, and labelling gives them the choice. The government’s action today puts the rights of consumers first—where they belong.”

We don’t have any reference whatsoever in this new, state-of-the-art, modern bill.

I’ll close this issue with this quote from a food analyst and an author in British Columbia named Brewster Kneen. He said, “Canadians are becoming increasingly concerned about what is in their food and how it got there. By moving today to bring in mandatory labelling, the BC government is taking the lead in responding to those concerns.”

That was back in April. You still haven’t caught up. This is already old news. So I say to the government backbenchers, when you’re responding, I would like to hear why you think it’s OK for your government not to deal with the issue of genetically engineered food in any way, shape or form, that it’s OK to totally ignore the subject and yet still stand on your hind legs and pronounce this as modern, state-of-the-art legislation. I’d like to hear how you square that circle.

**1710**

Third, parts V and VI of Bill 87 include most of the legislation that allows for the potential privatization of these inspections. I mentioned earlier, within the last hour, that I supported other colleagues who had spoken to this issue and had some concerns. I mentioned the fact that there are some things that it just makes sense to keep in the public sector.

It’s interesting to watch what’s happening currently vis-à-vis the issue of privatization and public safety when there’s a crisis. Currently, and I expect it will change soon, the security inspections that are done at the airport for airport security are done by the airlines. When you’re operating an airline, the security portion of the work you do generates zero in income. There’s absolutely no revenue generated. In fact, it’s a cost factor, it’s a drain, it’s an expense solely, totally. It is obvious and it makes perfectly good sense when you look at it to understand why an airline would not necessarily make that the absolute top priority. I’m not suggesting for a second that they have been careless, I’m certainly not suggesting they haven’t followed the regulations; I am, however, saying that it is not the most important part of their entire operation. Neither is baggage handling. As the population and various governments across the land realize that there’s no money to be made doing this business and given the importance to Canadians after September 11, I suspect that very quickly we’re going to see that part of the airport and airline operation return or at least become a part of the government’s responsibility to all Canadians in the managing and regulating of the airline industry in Canada. They’re going to do that because no matter how much money it costs, Canadians are prepared to see that money spent to make sure our airlines and air traffic travel are as safe as they can humanly be.

I don’t imagine there’s going to be too much screaming and hollering about that move of going from something that’s currently private to something that will become public. Under any other circumstance, the likes of the Tory government backbenchers would be doing back handsprings at the thought. They go crazy enough when things that are in the public domain can’t be privatized. The whole notion that something that’s

already in the private sector would be brought into the public is enough to give some of them potential coronaries. But in this instance, because it's public safety, because there have been seen to be weaknesses in the systems we have and because they affect the health and safety, in fact the very lives of Canadians, I don't expect we're going to hear a peep. I expect that whatever money it takes to fully operate airport security in the way it needs to be done, we'll see the money spent, and we aren't going to hear a peep from anybody, because it just makes common sense.

We see this as very much the same thing. Food inspection ought not to be put out to the marketplace for money to be made. In my opinion and the opinion of the NDP caucus, it's no different than airport security, which should not be out in the private marketplace. It is so important—like fire safety, like police, like running our hospitals—that it ought to be kept in the public sector so there's total, 100% accountability and that corners aren't cut in the interests of the bottom line.

Yet that's exactly what this government is proposing. If it weren't what they were planning to do, it wouldn't be in the legislation. So to anybody who pops up and says, "Well, we might or we might not," as we've heard them on these kinds of things before, and, "The regulations may or may not say that," the fact of the matter is, if they put it in here, given their track record, you can bet there are probably already some folks out there salivating at the prospect of getting hold of this service and turning that into some kind of profit-making entity. In the case of inspecting our food, that's wrong. If you do it, the fact that it's wrong may show itself in six months; it may not show itself for six years. But if it does show itself to be wrong, look at the price that will have been paid to get us to the point where we are today. I think the vast majority of Ontarians, if you ask them point blank, "Should food inspection be parceled out to the private sector?" would say, "No, keep it in the public domain. I want full accountability, I want answerability, I want the food inspected and I want that to be not only the top priority, but the only priority. I don't want profit in this equation." When someone is inspecting our food, profit ought not to be part of that particular equation.

Lastly, I want to talk about the fact that this is being touted as great enabling legislation. In fact, my friend from Northumberland was earlier accusing members on this side of the House of playing politics with this issue. I say to him that on something this important, and I made reference to this last week, that is so motherhood—at least it ought to be motherhood—I would have thought it would be in the interest of the government to try to have the opposition parties support this unanimously. That is absolutely inconceivable without a better sense of where the regulations are going to take us, simply because of the importance of the issue we're dealing with, that there's so much room in this bill—you leave a lot of things to regulations as it is, taking it out of this place, in front of the cameras and the public, and moving it into the cabinet room. Far, far too much, quite frankly, has

already gone that way. But this bill is designed to be totally that; it's enabling legislation which will enable the minister and the ministry to do all kinds of things as per the details outlined in the regulations. "What do the regulations say?" the public might then ask. We don't know, because we don't have the regulations.

So I would say to the member from Northumberland that the last thing I would want to do—and, I suspect, a lot of colleagues over here—is play politics with this. It's just too damned important. But without all the information in front of us, how can one expect us to have a comfort level that says, "Go ahead and just sign a blank cheque for us"? It doesn't work that way.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions, comments?

**Mr Jerry J. Ouellette (Oshawa):** First of all, I'd like to compliment the speaker. As always, he speaks so well on behalf of his party in the House. He brought up some interesting areas of concern. First of all, about the genetically modified foods: as expressed in the alternative fuels committee—we brought up the issue there—yes, I have some concerns about it, and I think it should be brought up for a little bit more debate on the issue. There are a lot of areas where we don't know what's going to happen. What happens if you feed this genetically modified food to animals? What's the process involved there? But then again, you have other issues like broccoli, for example. That's genetically modified food. Do we need to do labelling in those areas and other areas as well?

The McIntosh apple, for example, is another one. It's one that can't be reproduced from seed; it's only through grafting that that apple comes about. So there are a lot of areas that need to be discussed. How do you come out about it? Should we be labelling the genetically modified foods such as broccoli and apples?

Those are some of the things we need debate on, because we need to discuss all the implications, where it's going and what's next on the list. Here we have these things, and who knows what effect they may have on a person's immune system and other areas.

**1720**

The other area I'd like to talk about is, he mentioned the economy. He constantly mentions the economy and how this government takes credit for fuelling the economy, how it's all because of the American states and everywhere else is responsible for us being as prosperous as we are. But you know something? It had to start somewhere.

A friend of mine, Dan Hooper, was in Florida with the governor of Florida. The governor told him in 1995, "You want to see some change and some things happening around North America? You watch what's happening in Ontario." The same thing with Paul Mackie. He was with the governor in Michigan, and the governor there said to him, "You know, Paul, I'm a bit concerned about what's going on. Once upon a time, you used to be our biggest employer; you used to send us all your people. Now you're our biggest competitor." It has to start somewhere. Here's where it started.

**Mr Richard Patten (Ottawa Centre):** As has been alluded to, there couldn't be a more important issue than food safety, other than perhaps air safety or water safety: what we put inside our bodies every day.

The member from Hamilton West identified a number of issues. I haven't got time to respond to all of them, but one is certainly the genetically modified food issue. The member from Oshawa likewise identified that as being extremely important. I would say to him that if our friends at the federal level are not paying enough attention to this, then I would certainly be one to raise this with great force as being something of basic, substantive importance to our population, not only in terms of the activities of genetically modified foods, but the whole issue of labelling. I, like some of you, heard an independent federal advisory group advise the federal government, "Well, it should continue to be a voluntary thing." I find that totally, totally abhorrent, to be so presumptuous as to think that the people of Canada and the people of Ontario would not want to know what is happening to the food that they assume is grown in good faith, in good will, and one thing or another.

There are a whole variety of other issues around this. The government, in fact, does have time. I don't know what the timing is around committee, whether that has already been identified in terms of time allocation, but my hope is that we will have a full range of debate and an opportunity for people to raise the issues of the utilization of nutrients when we grow some of these foods and the impact of organic food versus foods that are instilled with various things that are supposed to be good for us, and then years later we find out that some of these pesticides or certain things that are there to help grow this particular food end up being harmful to us.

My time is up.

**Mr Kormos:** The government's attitude is somehow that the opposition shouldn't speak to this bill; they shouldn't speak to the issue of safety of food in the province or the nature of food.

The issue of genetically modified food has been raised today by the member from Hamilton West. It was raised by Howard Hampton, leader of the NDP, as a very serious and important consideration in this whole broader discussion about ensuring the provision of safe food from across the agricultural spectrum to food consumers, folks here in the province of Ontario.

I'm sorry. It's not our job to simply rubber-stamp your legislation. In fact, it's our job—as has been done today and has been done in the past, and will be in the future—to make sure that some of the gaps, some of the glaring deficiencies, some of the obvious omissions in your legislation are brought out here in this chamber and to the people of Ontario.

It's not enough, as the minister's announcement said when the bill was introduced with great fanfare, to say "state-of-the-art." State-of-the-art what? There is no indication whatsoever of the type of regulation. There is no reference to what the standard will be or to any other precedent in any other jurisdiction to give the people here

in this chamber or folks out there any idea of what you're going to introduce or propose by way of regulation, and hence the standards or the standard, or the standard for inspection.

Yes, there is legitimate fear about the prospect of privatization of food inspection services. The fact is, as has been stated so very clearly by the member from Hamilton West, that privatized food inspection services driven by profit run the risk, a serious enough risk for all of us to hesitate and reconsider, of compromising the very inspection that those people are being called upon to do.

**Mr Galt:** I was interested in the comments made by the member for Hamilton West. He talked about the number of inspectors. He's back to the same yardstick. I keep hearing various numbers bandied around here, but in fact there are 132 inspectors currently with the ministry. They seem to think that the numbers matter, when in fact once upon a time with meat inspection, if one animal was killed in the morning and processed and there was nothing else for the day, they went home and were paid for the whole day. We've certainly looked at a lot of those areas and improved the efficiency.

The other comment he was making was about the slowdown in the economy. I've never seen the member for Hamilton West happier than to talk about a slowdown in the economy. I think that's a little unfortunate.

He was also talking about GMOs. The debate is not conclusive. Well, the federal government thinks the debate is conclusive, because they are allowing it to grow. It's a federal issue. Maybe he doesn't quite understand and hasn't just kept up with the media, but the Honourable Allan Rock is suggesting and calling on his government to do the labeling of GMO foods. So that very obviously is a federal issue and should be recognized as such.

I hear a lot of talk about the importance of this bill and how the regulations are not with it. They talk about how important the bill is and they're all for food safety, but I don't remember hearing a question from the opposition about food safety in the past. I don't remember them promoting and pushing the idea of having a food safety bill. But now that the government has pulled together a lot of bills and presented it to them, "Oh yes, it's a great idea, but we'll protest because the regulations are not here." It is a play on politics. It's a partisan game. They recognize it's a good bill, "But we'll have to protest something." But they're not protesting anything that is in the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Response?

**Mr Christopherson:** I want to thank all the members who spoke, the members for Oshawa, Ottawa Centre and my colleague from Niagara Centre.

Let me say first of all to the member for Northumberland that I don't think I'm the one who made any reference to inspectors. I talked about dollars. You might want to check the Hansard. I know you like to split hairs.

Let me just say, on the other issue, that I really am surprised. I really thought you believed in the issue of

being an honourable member and I would never—and I'm surprised you would—suggest that anybody in this House is glad to see anybody lose their job. That's beneath you and it's beneath this place.

Let me say to your colleague from Oshawa that I appreciate his remarks. They were clearly very well thought out, and I appreciate the time you took in presenting them. I would just say to you that I understand that some business friends and some American friends may say that this is a great way to go. Certainly the things you did weren't harmful to business per se, but part of the bargain for the pain that Ontarians endured over the last few years was supposedly inoculating us from future recessions. I suggest that you now talk to some of the laid-off autoworkers in Oshawa and other parts of Ontario and see what they have to say about it, because that trade-off that you were so proud of, we always said it won't work. In fact, a lot of the things you're cutting are the very things that make this the best place in the world to live. When there is the downturn in the economy, we have systems in place that prevent people from hitting the pavement. You've pulled a lot of those out, certainly damaged a lot of those, and we're having the recession no matter what. There's a lot of harm that's going to happen to a lot of people that otherwise wouldn't have and shouldn't have and that wasn't necessary to have a booming economy that would still give the majority of people an improvement in their standard of living.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Further debate? The member for Brampton—

**Mr Joseph Spina (Brampton Centre):** Centre; it's like being from Kagawong, I know.

I appreciate the opportunity to make some summary comments on Bill 87, and as it is described, the proposed Food Safety and Quality Act. Just as a bit of a background on Ontario's food safety, we know it underwent a full review in 1999, and the overall goal of that review was to ensure that Ontario maintains its safe and high-quality food supply, not just now but also into the future, for all our children and for those of us, of course, who are the so-called aging baby boomers.

**1730**

Updating and consolidating this provincial legislative framework is a key component to the food safety system review that was conducted. The ministry's current food safety system was established in the 1950s and 1960s, so it has clearly not been able to keep pace with the change in technology, the change in science, the change in food practices, and not only that but just as importantly, the changes in the uses of cultural foods or foods that have been processed and developed from other cultures which we welcome as part of our North American and Canadian society.

We want to ensure that the practices are there for us to maintain the safety level and the safety system that we all want to be able to enjoy. It includes legislation, standards and programs that are fixed in scope and that are also based on the concerns and the science at the time they

were created. That's where those standards were. The global food trade, the emerging food safety hazards and the public's changing preferences for types of food—as I mentioned earlier, the influx of various cultures to Canada over the past century has brought a wonderful variety of foods to the Canadian environment—also present governments around the world with a challenge to take a critical look at public and private sector efforts to ensure the continued safety of our food supply.

On a global level, food safety systems are being modernized using a consistent approach, both risk- and science-based, as opposed to the centuries-old method of visual inspection. As we know, items that very little was known about at the turn of the century are now well known in terms of bacteriological studies and various kinds of microbes and viruses that can be contained in the processing or developed and entered into the food processing system. That sort of microbiological activity and bacteriological activity is not something that is usually obvious to the human eye until much later stages. The easiest example—the simplest example, I guess—that we think of is when you buy a chicken and you take it home. If it's left out for too long, you can't tell that it has developed bacteria, but after you eat it, whether it has been cooked or not, it can present a problem to us. When it becomes really visible to the eye is if you ever have some chicken scraps, for example, and you toss them in the garbage, as many of us will do in the cooking process. Suddenly, you find these little beasties crawling around in your garbage pail and out on the driveway and so on. That's what materializes after the bacteria begins to take on a more visible form. That is why we cannot rely on a purely visual inspection method in the approach to inspecting foods.

Many competing jurisdictions, including the UK, Belgium, Australia and the US, have already adopted some science-based approaches to food safety that are founded on risk analysis. Within Canada, Quebec has adopted the Food Products Act and several other provinces are updating their legislation and consulting with stakeholders on some of their food safety initiatives. I think these can be very, very productive.

Canada and its major trading partners are now using international standards to guide them in the development of modern food safety standards. In the national picture, we've got some modern comprehensive food safety and quality legislation that is essential for Ontario, not only to ensure the safety for the people but also to ensure the economic vitality of the agri-food industry. That's the framework that Bill 87 provides.

The government of Canada has over the past few years been moving its food safety system to a science-based one and is assisting industry in moving to what they call the HACCP or HACCP-like systems. That's stands for "hazard analysis critical control points." The HACCP programs are internationally recognized as a means of identifying the critical points along a process where the hazard might occur. An essential component of that system is to monitor the control processes to prevent or

minimize the hazard, and that's a critical element. The demand for documented food safety practices is being pushed back along the supply chain from consumers and retailers right back to the farm. Many commodity sectors are already in the process of developing voluntary HACCP-like food safety programs for use on the farm, and the industry is investing heavily in these food safety approaches because they create opportunities for new markets.

I want to stress at this point that this is a bill from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and not a consumer affairs bill—and that's a key element. Because we are pushing this back through to the farm system and the agri-industry, it is important that it start right at the beginning of the food development processing system. Ontario products can displace imported ones that are produced without meeting the demands for documented food safety systems, and product displacement would result in economic growth for a competitive Ontario agri-food sector.

There are some risks that can be brought into this process and they are obviously brought up at various times. During some of the stakeholder consultations, the minister heard that producers know there are costs around ensuring a safe food supply, but they look at them as realistic costs of doing business.

In looking at some of the benefits of Bill 87, the updating of our province's food safety system is part of business as usual for OMAFRA. The ministry is constantly striving to improve the safety and quality of Ontario's agri-food products, and we want to ensure that it has the most current methods available to do so.

Ontario must seize the opportunity offered by new technology and modern science and keep pace with our domestic and international trading partners who have already begun improving standards and modernizing their food safety systems.

Food safety from the field to the fork, which is kind of an interesting phrase—I rather like that. It doesn't matter whether it's a vegetable or a meat product, whatever, I think that's a marvelous phrase and I wonder if the parliamentary assistant to that ministry was the one who coined the phrase. If he didn't, I think he should take credit for it. From the field to the fork, that food safety chain is a high priority for this government. Our concerted effort to keep Ontario's food safety system is among the best in the world and we want to make sure that it is evident in that commitment.

In the end, a consolidated, modernized and enhanced Food Safety and Quality Act would, together with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's Health Protection and Promotion Act, form a solid foundation for the continued protection of public health in Ontario in this new millennium. Creating a single, modern and comprehensive Food Safety and Quality Act rather than just updating a whole series of statutes with a bunch of amendments lays the groundwork for integrating that existing web of legislation, providing the flexibility that the industry needs to remain competitive and to enhance

food safety throughout that food chain, from the field to the fork. It will provide the tools to consistently and effectively manage the range of foods available here in Ontario.

#### 1740

This legislation will clearly establish industry's primary role in ensuring the food it produces is safe, and it will define government's roles in standard setting and in the oversight of the entire system.

The proposed legislation would also ease the incorporation of national standards now being developed to provide equivalent or common requirements for food safety across this country. The proposed new Food Safety and Quality Act would provide for the establishment of safety standards as well as the relevant existing provisions related to food quality, labelling, packaging and advertising.

Since all players along the food supply chain have responsibility for the safety of food by ensuring that industry practices and facilities do not contaminate the food we eat, the proposed legislation recognizes all the players in this chain. The proposed legislation provides the powers to set standards and deal with identified food safety risks from the farm through to food distribution.

Currently, the compliance and enforcement tools vary with each piece of legislation. A single Food Safety and Quality Act would provide a common set of tools—a common fork, if you will, and a common knife—necessary for establishing, implementing and enforcing a comprehensive, efficient and effective food safety system.

Consumers have a right to know that the food products they purchase are safe, and they want to know that every possible step has been taken along the entire food continuum to ensure this safety, from the field to the fork.

Ensuring the safety and quality of food products is a critical issue for everyone, not just us as fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, but as parents—more particularly, also for our children. Everyone has a role and a responsibility in ensuring food safety: the consumer, the retailer, the processor and the producer.

Ensuring the safety and quality of food products is a critical issue for everyone. What this government has is a leadership role to ensure that all of this is in place, and we are taking that role seriously.

In the end, the overall goals of Bill 87 are to move in a stepwise fashion to a modernized, science-based food safety system founded on the principles of risk analysis and risk management, a seamless system that covers the food chain from field to fork and a market-friendly system consistent with Ontario's trade responsibilities and industry needs.

After first reading of Bill 87 this past June, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs held five information sessions around the province, and those sessions were held to answer questions about this bill. In general, the stakeholders are supportive and agree that

modern, consolidated food safety legislation would be good for consumers and good for business.

Speaker, you and I know, coming from northern and rural parts of this province, that there are many people who practise various methods of food processing in this province. Most, I would say, are good, solid, legitimate food processors. However, there are others who try to skirt the laws, skirt the regulations, and they do it perhaps for various reasons. Some may be cultural in nature. Some may be money-oriented. What we want to ensure is that the consuming public, all of us who enjoy eating the organic products, the meat products of our province, the vegetable products of our province and all the other kinds of products in our province, are assured that we have the safest quality, the highest quality, the best quality of food that we can have probably anywhere in this world.

It's important that we go right back to the very source of the production of the food chain to ensure that if the quality begins at the source that you and I are familiar with, Speaker, in much of the rural and northern parts of our province, it continues from that person who has the farm animal or who grows the wheat and the barley and the vegetables on their farms. It's important that that process continues in a safe manner to the next stage—the wholesale distributor, the slaughtering house, the canning factory, the fresh-vegetable distributor—so that when our people go to the marketplace we can be assured that the handling of those food processes, the handling of those food products, is as safe as it possibly could be. When our retailers go to the food terminal in downtown Toronto and buy their products for use either in their restaurants or in their grocery stores or in their outlets for resale, we want to be assured that no one will incur any problems with the food that has been created, processed and produced in this province.

This is the best province in this country for the agricultural industry in terms of processing food products, not just vegetable but also meat products. We want to also maintain this to be the highest quality producer and processor of food products, and we can deliver that.

Bill 87 will allow us not just to be the leader but to maintain that leadership and make us the absolute best place in the entire country, if not the North American environment, for producing high-quality products for you, your husband, your wife, but, most importantly, for our children.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Questions or comments?

**Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North):** There's no doubt in anybody's mind of the importance of food safety in our province. One of the things that concerns us the most about this particular piece of legislation is the fact the government has a very bad history in terms of their support for the food inspection policies in this province. We know they have cut the budget for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs by a substantial portion over the last five years. We know they've cut the number of inspectors by a substantial margin as well. We also know—it's very

clear—that indeed all the regulations will be the source by which they'll make the changes in terms of this legislation, which concerns us greatly.

All members have spoken about the importance of food inspection. My colleague from Ottawa Centre was extremely passionate about it. When one thinks about the importance of air quality and water quality, we all know how much importance that has in our world right now, and certainly food safety inspection is very much the same.

But I think what bothers us most of all, ultimately, is that this is a government that has also tended to move toward privatizing almost anything that moves. They make reference to alternative ways of doing these food inspections, and the reality is that what we're going to be seeing is another move toward privatization.

**1750**

If I had more time I would like to give some examples of decisions this government has made in terms of privatization where I think the safety of the public has been extremely compromised. This is one area where I think we want to watch that very carefully. It would be extremely dangerous to move the safety inspection of our food products out of the government's hands and into this one body that could ultimately be privatized. It's a concern we have and a concern we want to express to the member opposite, and I hope we will be listened to.

**Mr Kormos:** Nothing in this debate has anything to do in any way with denigrating food producers out there. Again, I'll speak very specifically about the folks I know in Niagara, who I have contact with certainly on a weekly basis, whether it's the chicken producers, the folks raising livestock, or whether you drive along Highway 20 through Pelham, with any number of fresh vegetables and fruits, depending on what time it is, spring, summer or fall. I know these people. I trust them, and obviously most of the consumers down there do.

First, any imposition of standards for food safety isn't about the scrupulous providers of food; it's about the unscrupulous ones. Second, it's about giving those people, especially the smaller operators, the resources to ensure they meet standards that ensure public health and public safety. Third, it's about ensuring that the standards imposed are not ones that create an unfair scenario for those small producers. Those small producers are under incredible pressure and have been for a good chunk of time. The big corporate operators are putting family farmer after family farmer out of business. That's why it's critical.

It's naive to suggest that anybody in this assembly can come close to approving this bill on behalf of their constituents without knowing what its substance is. How can we properly speak for the folks in our communities without knowing what we're going to pass should this bill pass? I am disinclined to do that. It's unsafe, it's simply wrong and it's unfair, and I'm going to do a far better job than that for my constituents.

**Mr John O'Toole (Durham):** There are those who would prefer I didn't stand in my place to enunciate my

points, but it's my duty and indeed my privilege to speak on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham and to make it clear that food safety, not just in Durham but for all people in Ontario and indeed Canada, is of top importance.

I immediately go to my constituents and ask them for their advice on important issues in agriculture, and names immediately flash to mind. I think of the Braggs, who live just down the road from me, one of the top seed producers of corn and oilseeds. I also think of Watson's farm, with fresh strawberries and other market-ready commodities. I think of Price's, a very popular fruit and vegetable stand that's grown over the years, with their son Mark and others getting involved. Then, just north of my riding, Archibald Orchards, a very innovative, value-added—they've taken a normal apple operation to a higher order of growing wines and other kinds of fruits that are enjoyed.

But when it comes to food safety, it isn't just a matter of field crops. I commend Minister Coburn and his assistant, Mr Galt, for consulting broadly with all the commodity stakeholders in this important issue. I would like to consider that I was consulted on this. I'm on the ag advisory committee, and when we meet they're very interested in what my constituents have to say.

Again, without listing names, although I probably should for the record—I'll add a few more. I think of people like the Zoelmans, who have farmed in our area for years. They've changed commodities to suit the marketplace, but they've never once faltered on the importance of food safety and food quality.

If I could just summarize, the federal government, when it comes to bio-issues, has a job to do and they're not up to the job.

**Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington):** I'm very pleased to offer my comments to this debate on food safety. I would suggest that next to or beside water safety in the province of Ontario, food safety is the most important issue. I know that many people in my riding have brought issues to my attention that are related to the Dead Animal Disposal Act. There are great concerns about the lack of resources that have come to that industry from this government. The Livestock and Livestock Products Act is another area where constituents of mine have brought concerns to my attention, as well as with the Meat Inspection Act.

Now we have a piece of legislation that's intended to streamline much of the work that's managed by these acts, and it's done how? It's suggested in the body of the

legislation that "alternative delivery mechanisms will be considered." I have to tell you that for me and for people in my riding, when we read that, that really is a very disturbing phrase. When we consider the performance of this government and how the government manages services for the people in the province, we see this as a way of their saying to us that there is an intention to privatize the services that inspect food and ensure the safety of food products in the province, to download or to dump the responsibility onto the commodity groups. That is certainly our very real fear. If we are wrong, then I challenge the members of the government to say, "Absolutely not. We will be providing the resources. We will not privatize. We will not download. We will not dump the responsibility on to the commodity groups." I would love to hear that from the government.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Response?

**Mr Spina:** I thank the members from Thunder Bay-Superior North, Niagara Centre, Durham and Hastings-Frontenac and whatever other county is over there. I apologize. That's like Bramalea-Gore-Malton-Springdale—we call it Brampton East.

Anyway, I appreciate the comments. There's a particular element in society that's really been heightened in our attention in the last three weeks, and that is the threat of bacteriological warfare. I think it's important that a clear-cut, highly defined process be in place, not just for the normal, everyday processing of food but also to ensure that we are protected from any threat of some kind of warfare.

The member from Niagara Centre thinks that the only people who can regulate properly are governments. I want to remind the member that their government was the one that allowed private-sector labs to test water with only a loose set of guidelines, with a whole bunch of grandfathering clauses. Bill 87 specifically deals with the safety and quality of food, agricultural and aquatic commodities and agricultural inputs. Food is defined; the process is defined; the inspectors are defined. The rules under which the inspectors will be expected to do that work are clearly defined. The reporting process is clearly defined. It is all in the legislation. So it doesn't matter if it's a government employee or a private-sector individual who is doing the job; there are very clear rules.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until 6:45 of the clock.

*The House adjourned at 1759.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

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

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon / L'hon Hilary M. Weston

Speaker / Président: Hon / L'hon Gary Carr

Clerk / Greffier: Claude L. DesRosiers

Clerk Assistant / Greffière adjointe: Deborah Deller

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

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

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Algoma-Manitoulin	Brown, Michael A. (L)	Halton	Chudleigh, Ted (PC)
Ancaster-Dundas- Flamborough-Aldershot	McMeekin, Ted (L)	Hamilton East / -Est	Agostino, Dominic (L)
Barrie-Simcoe-Bradford	Tascona, Joseph N. (PC)	Hamilton Mountain	Bountrogianni, Marie (L)
Beaches-East York	Prue, Michael (ND)	Hamilton West / -Ouest	Christopherson, David (ND)
Bramalea-Gore-Malton- Springdale	Gill, Raminder (PC)	Hastings-Frontenac- Lennox and Addington	Dombrowsky, Leona (L)
Brampton Centre / -Centre	Spina, Joseph (PC)	Huron-Bruce	<b>Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen</b> (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Health and Long-Term Care) / ministre sans portefeuille (Santé et Soins de longue durée)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	<b>Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony</b> (PC) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée	Kenora-Rainy River	Hampton, Howard (ND) Leader of the New Democratic Party / chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Brant	Levac, Dave (L)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	Gerretsen, John (L)
Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound	Murdoch, Bill (PC)	Kitchener Centre / -Centre	Wettlaufer, Wayne (PC)
Burlington	<b>Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron</b> (PC) Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées	Kitchener-Waterloo	<b>Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth</b> (PC) Minister of the Environment / ministre de l'Environnement
Cambridge	Martiniuk, Gerry (PC)	Lambton-Kent-Middlesex	Beaubien, Marcel (PC)
Chatham-Kent Essex	Hoy, Pat (L)	Lanark-Carleton	<b>Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W.</b> (PC) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Leeds-Grenville	<b>Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W.</b> (PC) Minister of Economic Development and Trade / ministre du Développement économique et du Commerce
Don Valley East / -Est	Caplan, David (L)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	<b>Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne</b> (PC) Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities, minister responsible for women's issues / ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités, ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Don Valley West / -Ouest	<b>Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David</b> (PC) Solicitor General / solliciteur général	London West / -Ouest	Wood, Bob (PC)
Dufferin-Peel- Wellington-Grey	Tilson, David (PC)	London-Fanshawe	Mazzilli, Frank (PC)
Durham	O'Toole, John R. (PC)	Markham	<b>Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H.</b> (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	<b>Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob</b> (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Carl (PC)
Erie-Lincoln	<b>Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim</b> (PC) Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et des Loisirs	Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Margaret (PC)
Essex	Crozier, Bruce (L)	Mississauga West / -Ouest	<b>Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John</b> (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	<b>Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris</b> (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail		
Etobicoke North / -Nord	Hastings, John (PC)		
Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)		
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	<b>Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda</b> (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)		
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	<b>Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris</b> (PC) Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement		

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Nepean-Carleton	<b>Baird, Hon / L'hon John R. (PC)</b> Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for children, minister responsible for francophone affairs / ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires, ministre délégué au dossier de l'Enfance, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	<b>Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC)</b> Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Nipissing	<b>Harris, Hon / L'hon Michael D. (PC)</b> Premier and President of the Executive Council / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif	Simcoe-Grey	<b>Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC)</b> Minister of Energy, Science and Technology / ministre de l'Énergie, des Sciences et de la Technologie
Northumberland	Galt, Doug (PC)	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Oak Ridges	Klees, Frank (PC)	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oakville	<b>Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC)</b> Speaker / Président	Stoney Creek	<b>Clark, Hon / L'hon Brad (PC)</b> Minister of Transportation / ministre des Transports
Oshawa	Ouellette, Jerry J. (PC)	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa-Orléans	<b>Coburn, Hon / L'hon Brian (PC)</b> Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales	Thornhill	Molinari, Tina R. (PC)
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (Ind)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Ramsay, David (L)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Smitherman, George (L)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Johnson, Bert (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Peterborough	<b>Stewart, Hon / L'hon R. Gary (PC)</b> Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip, deputy government House leader / ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement, leader parlementaire adjoint	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	<b>Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC)</b> Minister of Education, government House leader / ministre de l'Éducation, leader parlementaire du gouvernement	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Whitby-Ajax	<b>Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC)</b> Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Willowdale	<b>Young, Hon / L'hon David (PC)</b> Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
Sarnia-Lambton	Di Cocco, Caroline (L)	Windsor West / -Ouest	Pupatello, Sandra (L)
Sault Ste Marie	Martin, Tony (ND)	Windsor-St Clair	Duncan, Dwight (L)
Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)	York Centre / -Centre	Kwinter, Monte (L)
Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)	York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Cordiano, Joseph (L)
		York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)

A list arranged by members' surnames and including all responsibilities of each member appears in the first and last issues of each session and on the first Monday of each month.

Une liste alphabétique des noms des députés, comprenant toutes les responsabilités de chaque député, figure dans les premier et dernier numéros de chaque session et le premier lundi de chaque mois.

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