



Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 37th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario
Deuxième session, 37^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Monday 19 November 2001

Lundi 19 novembre 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

Monday 19 November 2001

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 19 novembre 2001

The House met at 1330.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

KATELYN ABBOTT

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): I am most proud to share a story about a very thoughtful and generous little girl in my riding.

Katelyn Abbott is six years old and lives with her family in Sydenham, Ontario. Last spring, Katie's mother read her a story in the local newspaper about an urgent need for a handicap lift in the local seniors' residence. Katie immediately decided that she wanted to donate her entire savings of \$60.40 to this cause. The residents of the home were so touched by her generous heart that Katie was asked to make her donation at a fundraising barbecue in the summer.

This was not the end of her efforts for this worthy cause. On September 26, Katie held a fundraiser in the staff room at her school, Loughborough Public School. She baked treats and offered the staff a coffee break in return for a donation toward the handicap lift in the seniors' residence. She raised just over \$145 and donated it to the elevator fund.

Katie's care and generosity have both heartened and inspired her community of Sydenham. Her thoughtfulness and generosity are a stellar example of the hope and promise in the youth of our province, and I am sure that Katie would be the first to offer thanks as well to her family, teachers and the people of her community.

Congratulations, Katelyn Abbott. People like you make Ontario a great place to live.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARDS

Mr John O'Toole (Durham): I rise in the House today to pay tribute to the young people of my riding of Durham who have received Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. As the members of the House may know, the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards challenge youth between the ages of 14 and 25 to meet high standards of community service, expedition, skills development and physical fitness.

To receive a gold award, they must perform service to others. They must undertake an expedition of at least four

days and follow a skills development program in such areas as music, crafts, computers and collections. Finally, they must take part in a physical activity where they demonstrate participation, effort and improvement.

On Saturday, October 20, Prince Philip presented seven young people from Blackstock in my riding with gold-level certificates. They are: Rachel Bergerson, Amanda Bradburn, Monica Mason, Alex McLaughlin, Carla McLaughlin, Cameron Vernest and Miranda Wyllie. Greg Konderman, presently at the Royal Military College, also a constituent, received an award as well.

In addition, I would like to thank and congratulate Shirley Turner and Jessie Gunter for their 25 years of volunteer leadership in the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards program in the Blackstock area. They were also honoured with a special appreciation plaque from Prince Philip. Shirley Turner and Jessie Gunter have provided support and encouragement to more than 50 gold award winners and many other young people who have achieved the silver and bronze. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for providing such dedication and leadership to the young men and women who are the leaders of tomorrow.

EDUCATION

Mr Pat Hoy (Chatham-Kent Essex): Last Thursday, Gerard Kennedy and I met with students, teachers, parents and local representatives from the elementary and secondary school teachers' federations in Chatham-Kent Essex.

Students at the Leamington District Secondary School in the double cohort year are worried and they want answers today. Will there be enough places for all of them? Will a grade 13 graduate enter post-secondary school ahead of a grade 12 graduate even if the grade 12 student has a slightly higher average?

Lambton Kent District School Board's grades 3 and 6 testing results are unfair. Board officials say 29 of its 53 schools had missing or incomplete tests, but they were forwarded intact to the province's Education Quality and Accountability Office. How can the education minister allow incorrect data to be used?

As well, the government's one-size-fits-all funding formula does not provide for late busing services for students in rural Ontario who wish to participate in after-school activities.

The flawed formula is driving school closures across Ontario. Community and rural schools are tied to the

economic, cultural and social viability of the community. They must be kept open. For this government to be wasting another \$6 million on a phony survey campaign while students in overcrowded classrooms go without textbooks, education assistants and guidance counsellors is absolutely irresponsible. This money should be put back into the classrooms. Our students should and must come first.

CARLO CATTARELLO

Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay): I have the pleasure today to honour a local citizen from the riding of Timmins-James Bay, none other than Carlo Cattarello. Many people across the province would know Carlo because he's one of the individuals who worked for a number of years—since the 1930s, in fact—organizing minor hockey, organizing boxing matches, organizing all kinds of sports across the communities of Timmins and Kapuskasing, where he was involved for many years.

Back in October of this year he was awarded the Order of Canada by none other than the Governor General herself. We had in the city of Timmins on Saturday an event at 2 o'clock at the Shania Twain Centre where people from across the province, and in fact from across our country and across our communities, came together to honour Carlo for his many years of service. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend because I was at another event on the same day. Large ridings make it difficult to attend all events at all times.

I want to use this opportunity to congratulate Carlo and his family for the many years of service he's given to the communities across the Timmins-James Bay area, but as well to the many people who have benefited from the work of Carlo over the same number of years dating back to the 1930s. I think it's a rare occasion when we have an opportunity to honour somebody who has made so many contributions to the province of Ontario such as Carlo has for a number of years.

So on behalf of all of those here in the Legislature, I want to extend my congratulations to Carlo on receiving the Order of Canada and wish him well in the many years that I know he has in the future to work on many other projects for the citizens of the area.

MIKE WEIR

Mr Marcel Beaubien (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex): Today I would invite the members of the Legislature to join me in recognizing and extending our congratulations to Lambton county's very own Mike Weir.

On November 4, Mike claimed his third PGA tour event in dramatic fashion at the tour championship in Houston, Texas. It was his first win on US soil. He did so with a birdie in a four-man playoff over a field that featured the world's very best professional golfers. Mike's victory earned him \$900,000 and increased his winnings to more than \$2.7 million, but more important, Mike showed the world that Canadians, and especially

Ontarians, can compete at the highest levels of competition and win. Indeed, Mike's commitment to hard work, dedication and excellence have served him well, while bringing honour and distinction to himself, his family, the people of Ontario and his many friends in Lambton county.

Mike would probably say the key to his success is hitting the ball straight. As a member who sits on this side of the House, I would say the key to this government's success is telling it to the people of Ontario straight. Though we on this side of the House have been both praised and criticized for how we govern this province, we say that by staying the course of tax cuts, creating new jobs and investing in world-class health care and education systems, the people of Ontario will continue living in a land of peace, prosperity and purpose.

Finally, while Mike has enjoyed great success, he would probably tell you his best is yet to come. Likewise, for the people of Ontario and for this Progressive Conservative government, we too believe our best is yet to come.

THEATRE IN SARNIA-LAMBTON

Ms Caroline Di Cocco (Sarnia-Lambton): Sarnia-Lambton will be enjoying a special season in theatre in the spring. Theatre Sarnia and the Imperial Theatre will host the Western Ontario Drama League in March 2002. As well, Sarnia Imperial Theatre will proudly host Theatre Ontario, featuring the four best plays in all of Ontario, to take place in May 2002. This event is significant as it develops cultural tourism, provides economic benefits and gives the opportunity to people to be entertained and enjoy great theatre.

The Western Ontario Drama League was founded by D. Park Jamison in 1932. It plays a vital role in Ontario's theatre industry.

This annual event promotes the development of theatre arts and artists in Ontario. It provides for accessibility of western Ontario communities to theatre training and resources at a high level of excellence and professionalism.

Congratulations to Theatre Sarnia and the Imperial Theatre for hosting the Western Ontario Drama League and Theatre Ontario in May 2002. These premier festivals are a valuable venue for showcasing great talent from the region and around the province.

1340

RAMADAN

Mr Bob Wood (London West): As many members of this House will know, over one billion Muslims throughout the world will be observing a month of fasting during Ramadan, which started November 16 this year. Muslims regard Ramadan as a spiritual tune-up, as a time for inner reflection, devotion to God and self-control.

The third pillar or religious obligation of Islam, fasting has many benefits, the most important of which is that it teaches self-control. Ramadan is also a time of intensive worship, reading of the Koran, giving charity, purifying one's behaviour and doing good deeds. In fulfilling the teaching of their faith, they demonstrate to us a commitment to righteousness and a compassion for the needy, qualities to which we can all aspire.

Ramadan will end with the celebration of the feast of Eid Al-Fitr in about one month's time. At that time, Muslims will gather for prayers and then exchange presents and share alms with the needy so that all members of the community may be able to celebrate together.

Ramadan has been observed for many centuries, but the events of earlier this year remind us again of the importance of spiritual renewal for both Muslims and non-Muslims.

I know I speak on behalf of all members of this House in extending greetings to the Muslim community of Ontario and in wishing them "Ramadan Kareem and Eid Mubarak." These greetings, which in Arabic mean, "May you have a month of giving and a blessed feast," speak to the central meaning of Ramadan.

CONSERVATIVE LEADERSHIP

Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair): It was with great interest that we welcomed the former Treasurer, the Finance Minister, into the Tory leadership race. We were interested to see how he's distinguishing himself from Mr Flaherty on the question of education tax credits. He's going to make regulations apply to these private schools that Flaherty and his gang don't want.

But you know, if it walks like a duck and it quacks like a duck, it's a duck. This policy just isn't going to fly. The only real leadership on the education tax credit system is coming from Dalton McGuinty. We will scrap the private school voucher on education, and we will do that in about two years' time, when we come to office.

Why will we do that? Because it's just like everything else they're about: they do not have the interests of Ontario's working families at heart. They do not have their priorities straight. They'd rather give tax cuts to corporations when the economy is falling than legitimate help to working families whose parents are in hospitals, whose kids need textbooks. That's why they all look alike, they all sound alike, they all fly alike and, like the proverbial turkey, it's just not going to get off the ground.

HOME FOR AUTISTIC YOUTH

Mrs Tina R. Molinari (Thornhill): Yesterday I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the Heather and Martin Goose Home for Autistic Youth in my riding of Thornhill. The home is part of the Reena Foundation, a non-profit social service agency located in Thornhill that is dedicated to integrating individuals who have developmental disabilities into the mainstream of society.

Through the generosity of Heather and Martin Goose, Reena has opened a home for autistic youth. The Goose family charitably donated \$100,000 to Reena for this project. It was a great celebration yesterday, and the event was attended by many parents whose children will benefit from the home.

One of the parents described what a positive impact the home will have on her son and her family and thanked her MPP, Dave Tsubouchi, for all his support in their efforts to find a placement for their son.

Reena is able to do great work in the community of Thornhill, and it's through the generous donations of people like Heather and Martin Goose and the time of the volunteers who help out at Reena that the good work will continue.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Heather and Martin Goose for their contribution and the Reena Foundation for their tireless effort in consistently seeking partnerships to improve the lives of our precious special residents.

ESTIMATES

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): I beg to inform the House that pursuant to section 30 of the Members' Integrity Act, I have today laid upon the table a request from the member for Toronto Centre-Rosedale to the Honourable Coulter Osborne, Integrity Commission, for an opinion on whether the Honourable James Flaherty, Minister of Finance, has contravened the act or Ontario parliamentary convention.

Standing order 62(a) provides that "The standing committee on estimates shall present one report with respect to all of the estimates ... considered pursuant to standing orders 59 and 61 no later than the third Thursday in November of each calendar year."

The House not having received A report from the standing committee on estimates for certain ministries on Thursday, November 8, 2001, as required by the standing orders of this House, pursuant to standing order 62(b), the estimates before the committee of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs are deemed to be passed by the committee and are deemed to be reported to and received by the House.

Accordingly, the estimates for 2001-02 of the following ministries were deemed to be passed by the standing committee on estimates and were deemed to be reported to and received by the House:

Clerk at the Table (Ms Lisa Freedman): Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation: 3801, ministry administration program, \$4,563,100; 3802, tourism program, \$62,851,900; 3803, culture program, \$140,745,800; 3804, sport and recreation program, \$23,151,300; 3805, policy and agency partnerships program, \$101,564,100;

3806, tourism, culture and recreation capital program, \$64 million.

Ministry of Community and Social Services: 701, ministry administration program, \$27,930,800; 702, adults' and children's services program, \$7,834,067,200.

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities: 3001, ministry administration program, \$9,790,000; 3002, post-secondary education program, \$3,087,229,500—

Interjections: Dispense.

The Speaker: Dispense? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

TENANT PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (FAIRNESS IN RENT INCREASES), 2001 LOI DE 2001 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA PROTECTION DES LOCATAIRES (AUGMENTATIONS ÉQUITABLES DES LOYERS)

Mr Caplan moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 134, An Act to amend the Tenant Protection Act, 1997 to ensure fairness to Ontario's tenants / Projet de loi 134, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la protection des locataires en vue d'assurer un traitement équitable des locataires de l'Ontario.

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

The member for a short statement?

Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East): My bill, if passed, would amend the Tenant Protection Act in two major ways. First, it would ensure that rents are not increased beyond the guideline if there are outstanding work orders. Second, the bill would ensure that above-guideline rent increases are rolled back if the landlord either ceases to incur the costs that justify the increase, either capital repairs or utilities, for example, or if a mutually agreed-upon rent increase meets those conditions.

This bill would provide fairness and balance for tenants to ensure they do not have to pay capital improvements, increases in utility costs and other such increases in perpetuity.

My bill is the right step toward building some fairness back into the rental market for tenants in Ontario, who have been attacked on all sides by the government, and I look forward to debating it here in the Legislature.

HERITAGE HUNTING AND FISHING ACT, 2001 LOI DE 2001 SUR LA CHASSE ET LA PÊCHE PATRIMONIALES

Mr Snobelen moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 135, An Act to recognize Ontario's recreational hunting and fishing heritage and to establish the Fish and Wildlife Heritage Commission / Projet de loi 135, Loi visant à reconnaître le patrimoine de la chasse et de la pêche sportives en Ontario et à créer la Commission du patrimoine chasse et pêche.

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

The minister for a short statement?

Hon John Snobelen (Minister of Natural Resources): I know the opposition critics have already been briefed, so I will make a very brief statement.

The Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act was a Blueprint promise by our party in 1999 to legally recognize the right of all Ontarians to hunt and fish. The proposed new act does not change current laws that regulate hunting and fishing in Ontario and provide protection for fish and wildlife habitat.

We recognize that society values the principles of conservation, fair chase and humane dispatch, the consumption of harvest and safety. The government will continue to set standards and policy to help ensure that hunting and fishing are managed in a sound, sustainable manner and in accordance with ethical and humane practices.

There is strong support for this legislation. The act, if passed, will mean that the proud and established tradition of recreational hunting and fishing will be preserved in Ontario subject to law and regulations.

VISITORS

Hon David Young (Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs): On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I thought that you and the other members of this assembly might wish to know that we have two very special guests sitting in the members' gallery. We have with us today Steve and Jane Kerper. Jane is the current president of the Bayview Village Ratepayers' Association and Steve is a past president. I wanted to acknowledge their great work in the community and their presence here today.

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 Monday, November 19, Tuesday, November 20, and Wednesday, November 21, 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 1353 to 1358.

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	Gilchrist, Steve	O'Toole, John
Baird, John R.	Gill, Raminder	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Barrett, Toby	Gravelle, Michael	Parsons, Ernie
Beaubien, Marcel	Hardeman, Ernie	Peters, Steve
Bradley, James J.	Hastings, John	Phillips, Gerry
Bryant, Michael	Hoy, Pat	Ramsay, David
Caplan, David	Hudak, Tim	Runciman, Robert W.
Christopherson, David	Jackson, Cameron	Sampson, Rob
Clark, Brad	Johns, Helen	Sergio, Mario
Coburn, Brian	Kells, Morley	Snobelen, John
Colle, Mike	Klees, Frank	Spina, Joseph
Conway, Sean G.	Kwinter, Monte	Sterling, Norman W.
Cordiano, Joseph	Levac, David	Stewart, R. Gary
Crozier, Bruce	Maves, Bart	Stockwell, Chris
Cunningham, Dianne	Mazzilli, Frank	Tilson, David
Curling, Alvin	McLeod, Lyn	Tsubouchi, David H.
Di Cocco, Caroline	McMeekin, Ted	Turnbull, David
Dombrowsky, Leona	Miller, Norm	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Duncan, Dwight	Molinari, Tina R.	Wilson, Jim
Ecker, Janet	Munro, Julia	Wood, Bob
Elliott, Brenda	Murdoch, Bill	Young, David
Flaherty, Jim	Mushinski, Marilyn	

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

Nays

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

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 68; the nays are 7.

The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

ORAL QUESTIONS

FISCAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Gerry Phillips (Scarborough-Agincourt): To the Minister of Finance: in the past 24 hours, we've heard the troubling news. You're now saying that the fiscal situation is dramatically worse than you thought just two weeks ago. I understand there's a \$5-billion gap to close, according to the government, and you're looking at significant reductions in support for education, community services and other things. The one thing that is going ahead full speed is your corporate tax cut, designed to cut taxes by \$2.2 billion and, importantly, to get them 25% below our competitors in the US.

My question is this: now that you've acknowledged the seriousness of our fiscal situation with this \$5-billion gap, will you commit to at least review this decision to proceed with this \$2.2-billion corporate tax cut to get the corporate taxes 25% below the US?

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): Our concern remains economic growth and prosperity in Ontario. It is because of economic growth and prosperity in this province that we're able to fund the important social programs like health care, like education, at record levels in Ontario. The sine qua non is economic growth. We've seen that in the province of Ontario. We've seen that through tax cuts, not only personal income tax cuts but corporate tax cuts, which encourage investment in this province, thereby creating jobs.

Mr Phillips: You've indicated in the media that there clearly is enormous pressure on our support for public education. When you exclude health spending, public education spending is over 40% of our Ontario budget, so if you do in fact have a \$5-billion gap, public education is going to be under enormous pressure. At the same time, in just six weeks you're planning to provide private schools in the province with the beginning of at least \$300 million of public support.

My question is this: recognizing the seriousness of our fiscal situation, will you at least today agree to commit to review this decision to provide \$300 million of public support for private schools?

Hon Mr Flaherty: The equity-in-education tax credit during the first fiscal year is \$15 million. That's the cost in the first fiscal year in which it's applicable.

With respect to health care spending, I'm glad the member opposite recognizes that we are spending record sums of money on health care in the province, having moved from 38% of program spending in 1995 to 45% now, and moving forward year and year after that to a point where we may well be spending 60% of the program income on health care unless we get some support in the partnership that we're supposed to have with the federal government in Ottawa. That's the key.

I read in the papers this morning about the large surplus, the \$10-billion surplus, in Ottawa. I urge the member opposite to speak to his federal Liberal counterparts and say to them, "If you're going to mandate national health care in this country, then surely you have to partner with the provinces and the territories and use some of your surplus for that purpose."

Mr Phillips: Let me get this straight, Minister. You're prepared to take a hatchet to public education. You say you've got a \$5-billion gap, but you're not prepared to consider, to even look at, the possibility that you've made a mistake in getting corporate taxes 25% below the US and in providing at least \$300 million—and that's your figure—of public money to private schools.

I say this again, Minister: you've told us that the fiscal situation is dramatically worse than just two weeks ago. It is a significant problem, a \$5-billion gap. I say to you again, tell the people of Ontario why you're not even prepared to look at, to consider, the decision to cut corporate taxes 25% below the US and to proceed with a \$300-million plan to support private education when you already know public education is under the knife and under the gun. Why won't you commit to those reviews?

Hon Mr Flaherty: Tax reductions work to create jobs in the province of Ontario. That's been proven over the past six years, since the election of the Mike Harris government in 1995.

I'm not surprised the member opposite and some of his colleagues don't understand that by reducing taxes, you create more economic activity. They mismanaged the economy from 1985 to 1990, and we have to live with that mismanagement. Ask yourself opposite where we'd be today if we didn't have to spend \$9 billion this year serving the public debt. That's the problem with Liberal mismanagement and NDP mismanagement in the province from 1985 to 1995. We could use that \$9 billion for health care, for education, for social services, but no; you say, "Increase the public debt. Don't reduce taxes. Don't have that investment in the province. Don't have that increased revenue for Ontario." I tell you, it's been proven for the last six years that tax cuts create jobs and they create more revenue for Ontario.

CHILD CARE

Mrs Leona Dombrowsky (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): My question is to the Minister of Finance. Today in Ontario, the government provides subsidies to help 7,000 families pay for child care. Without this support, these working families would not be able to afford quality child care for their children. The government also provides wage subsidies for workers in child care facilities. This enables child care facilities to offer quality care at affordable rates.

Last week, Ontarians, particularly families with children, were shocked to read in a national paper about a leaked document where your government plans to slash \$200 million from the child care budget. That's a 37% cut in funding.

Minister, today in the gallery are many parents and caregivers who are concerned and worried about the support your government provides for child care. Will you stand in your place today and guarantee you will not cut child care in the province of Ontario?

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): To the Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for children, minister responsible for francophone affairs): We recognize that for many Ontario families, child care is an important resource that lets them balance the problems of work and family. It's tremendously important for them. We spend a terrific amount on child care, well in excess of the \$500-million-plus that we spend in the institution-based child care system. We also spend a considerable amount on the Ontario child care supplement for working families.

The member opposite talks about a document, one which I don't think she's read, from the substance of her question. It's a draft document with preliminary options, discussion, with potential options, and one that was

judged to be of such insignificant importance that it didn't reach my desk.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Minister, your government is no friend to child care in this province. Last year, you received \$114 million from the federal government in the early child development accord, and not one cent of it went to child care. Your government has funded child care at a rate 17% below what it was funded when you came to office. Your government has refused to pay more pay equity adjustments for child care workers beyond 1998. Now the prospect that you would cut 45% from the child care budget strikes panic in the hearts of families and their caregivers.

Will you guarantee today that you will not take one more cent away from the child care budget in this province?

1410

Hon Mr Baird: I can certainly guarantee the member opposite that we'll continue to show a lot of leadership and a lot of support to children, support and programs and services.

The member opposite talks about pay equity. This government spends more supporting pay equity than any government in Ontario's history. This government has been a leader in that regard. We spend more supporting parents in their child care options than any government in Ontario's history. We're spending more on child care, in fact, than the honourable member's party, in A Clear Vision for Ontario's Future, committed to spend.

The member opposite also talks about the federal support for early childhood development. The member opposite gave me some advice on what we should do with that federal money. On May 1, she wrote me and said we should spend the money on autistic children, not on child care. If she has been so strong on that issue, maybe she should have exercised some leadership before those decisions were made.

Mrs Dombrowsky: Minister, your priorities are crystal clear. Your ministry has initiated a plan to cut \$200 million from child care, yet your government has fast-tracked its plan to give corporations a \$2.2-billion tax cut. Working families and children in Ontario will be made to pay for your corporate tax cuts. My office has been deluged with letters, e-mails and phone calls from people who are indignant that this government would so callously consider pulling resources away from families and children to give to your corporate friends.

All I'm asking from you today is a commitment that you will not pull one more cent away from the very few that you're providing already for child care in Ontario.

Hon Mr Baird: The member opposite, the spokesman for her party, never lets the facts get in the way. This is another example of that today. We're spending a record amount supporting child care. In fact, in this year's budget we've budgeted to spend more money than we spent last year. The member opposite didn't mention that. The member opposite fails to look at the facts.

Interjection.

Hon Mr Baird: The member opposite doesn't want to hear the answer, so I won't bother.

FISCAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): My question is for the Minister of Finance. We learned today that your government is examining the details of cutting 5% from the health budget. But at the same time as you're cutting 5% from the health budget, you are reducing corporate taxes in this province by another \$2.4 billion.

Can you tell the people of the province why reducing taxes for your corporate friends by another \$2.4 billion is more important than the health care services that people across Ontario need?

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): Reducing taxes creates economic growth. Economic growth gives us additional revenue. Additional revenue gives us the opportunity to fund important social services such as health care and education.

Mr Hampton: After all of the corporate tax cuts, after all of the income tax cuts for the well-off, after all of your gifts to your corporate friends, one would think the economy would be incredibly buoyant; instead, it's headed in the other direction.

But I want to ask you about another element of this. At the same time that you're extending the \$2.4 billion in corporate tax reductions, you're also going to implement a further \$1-billion reduction in income taxes this year, most of which is going to the well-off. At the same time you're doing that, schools across Ontario are closing libraries, being forced to limit special education, closing community pools and generally telling children, "Sorry, we don't have money for more textbooks."

Can you tell us, please, why do your corporate friends and the well-off need another \$3.4 billion altogether while you now go about cutting yet again the schools and the education services our children need?

Hon Mr Flaherty: I'm so disappointed. It was only two or three weeks ago that the leader of the third party was advocating tax cuts. He was advocating a reduction in the retail sales tax in Ontario, and now he's against tax cuts. Now he's saying, "Don't reduce the personal income taxes of hard-working families in Ontario. Don't reduce the taxes on small and medium-sized business and, yes, larger business so they can invest more in the province and create more jobs in Ontario. Don't do that. Don't grow the economy in Ontario so that we have more jobs and more wealth and a higher standard of living. Don't do those things. Do what we did: mismanage the economy. Grow the public debt. Create a deficit. Push taxes on to our children and grandchildren."

That was the NDP and Liberal philosophy from 1985 to 1995. What a mess you left. Thank goodness Premier Harris and this party turned that around so that we have a solid foundation now in Ontario; and yes, tax cuts are a very important part of the progress we've made in Ontario. We will stay the course.

Mr Hampton: Here we are now, headed into recession, and what is the response from this government? "Cut the very services that people across this province need. Cut health care. Cut child care. Cut our schools and

education. Cut the Ministry of the Environment." Minister, the reality of this situation is that your corporate friends haven't had enough. Your well-off friends, in terms of income taxes, haven't had enough.

The priority ought to be for your government to fund the services that people need so that in these very difficult times they will not have to choose between using the money to put food on the table or to pay for textbooks and school supplies for their children. Minister, don't you get it? Your corporate friends have had enough. Your high-income friends have had enough. It's time now to look after the priorities of the average person across Ontario: their health care system, their schools, their libraries, the environment and the water they need to have protected, and the child care services that working people across this province need if they're going to be able to go to work. Do you recognize that? Will you finally recognize that?

Hon Mr Flaherty: I know that the prescription of the member opposite to solve the challenges in Ontario is big government, big spending, big taxes, big deficits—pushing taxes on to our children and their children. That's all running deficits is. It's just pushing taxation on to the next generation. It's shameful for governments to do that, quite frankly. It's not responsible for governments to do that. It's fiscal mismanagement. The Liberals did it from 1985 to 1990. You did it from 1990 to 1995. We were left with a mess in 1995, but thank goodness Premier Harris had the courage to make the difficult decisions to turn this province around so that we have a solid foundation now. I'll tell you, they were difficult decisions. If they had been easy decisions, the Liberals and the NDP would have made them, and they didn't.

CHILD CARE

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): I want to ask the Minister of Community and Social Services why he is prepared to sacrifice the health and well-being of our children on the altar of corporate taxes. Your own leaked document suggests that you were actually considering the absurd: huge cuts to Ontario's family resource centres and regulated child care. And this is after the 15% cuts that your government has made to child care since you came into office in 1995.

Child care advocates have responded to this news with outrage, and they are here today to express that outrage. I don't know if the minister knows, but in the city of Toronto alone there are up to 16,000 families on the waiting list for regulated child care. I am calling on you now to denounce this suggestion quickly and unequivocally. Reassure Ontario families who now fear that their child care is at risk and guarantee to them that Ontario's regulated child care budget will be protected.

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for children, minister responsible for francophone affairs): We recognize that child care is an important resource for families trying to balance off the needs of work and

family. The member opposite discusses a document that was labelled “draft,” that was labelled “preliminary for discussion purposes,” listing some potential options. The document in question did not even reach my desk because it was deemed that it wasn’t of enough merit to create a child benefit using those resources in question.

We’re proud of the significant investments we’ve made in supporting the range of children’s supports—Healthy Babies, Healthy Children—supporting young children with autism, supporting children’s treatment centres that provide services and supports to young children with diseases like spina bifida. We’re very proud of those investments.

1420

Ms Shelley Martel (Nickel Belt): Will you denounce the leaked document and will you assure parents that the child care budget and family resource budget in the province is protected? You know, Minister, that any further cuts to regulated child care or family resource programs will destroy these important services for children.

I have a package of letters from parents and staff who wrote to me this weekend to express their concerns. I’m going to send some to you. Let me read some of the comments:

“I am appalled that your ministry would even contemplate cuts to the province’s child care system.... Why are women and children always the first to suffer in an attempt by your government to squeeze yet more money out of the most vulnerable members of our society and the dedicated workers who care for and educate young children?” Lee Gold of Toronto.

A second one, from Debbie Babington of Toronto:

“Could this government be so driven by its commitment to corporate tax cuts that you would go to such extremes? Do you realize that when working mothers or fathers don’t have”—child care they—“have to quit their job?”

Your government has \$2.3 billion for your friends in the corporate sector. Where is the money to protect and enhance regulated child care and family resource programs in Ontario?

Hon Mr Baird: Let’s look at the facts. Last year we spent \$521 million supporting the very child care the member opposite talks about. What did we put in the budget to spend this year? Not \$521 million. Thank goodness we didn’t fight to protect what we spent last year, because the Minister of Finance gave us \$523 million. So when the member opposite talks about a cut, the member opposite doesn’t know what she talks about. That’s in addition to the Ontario child care supplement for working families, where we’re spending more than \$200 million to support parents in making their choices.

The NDP supports choice in child care as long as it’s their choice. We trust families, we trust parents to make their own decisions on how they can fund child care for their own children. The member opposite, when she was in government, chose to borrow tens of billions of dollars on the backs of the next generation. That led to less hope,

less opportunity and more despair in this province. We won’t allow her and her party to turn back the clock.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): On a point of order, the Minister of Finance. Stop the clock.

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): I sit in the row ahead of the minister and I couldn’t hear the answer to the question.

The Speaker: Thank you very much. New question?

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mrs Lyn McLeod (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): This is for the associate Minister of Health. Minister, your government has tried to deny the problems of emergency room overcrowding by simply burying the information about critical care bypasses. We now know that the situation is getting worse. Ambulances are being tied up even longer just trying to get people into emergency rooms. People are still lying on stretchers in hallways and they’re waiting even longer for a hospital bed. We learned this weekend that almost one quarter of ambulances serving the city of Toronto are waiting more than an hour just to transfer their patients into the hospital’s care. I’m sure you must understand that when paramedics are waiting in hospital corridors and parking lots, they are not available to answer the next emergency call.

Ron Kelusky, the manager of the city’s ambulance service, makes it absolutely clear once and for all. He says this is a capacity issue. That means hospital beds, Minister.

Ontario has the lowest number of acute-care beds per capita in this country. Will you finally stop closing hospital beds and start opening the 1,600 acute-care beds that Dalton McGuinty has been calling for?

Hon Helen Johns (Minister without Portfolio [Health and Long-Term Care]): Let me say that all of the health care partners are working together to ensure that we have the best emergency services across Canada. Let me also say that Toronto has been working very hard with the Ministry of Health to ensure that we have emergency services in the GTA. Our government has invested over \$750 million since 1995 on initiatives that would improve emergency room access, and we’ve equipped hospitals better. We’ve also made substantial commitments to ensuring that people move through the emergency rooms quickly and they have the ability to either move into acute-care beds or out into long-term-care facilities. This government has made quite a commitment to ensuring that we have the best health care system in Canada.

Mrs McLeod: Minister, I’m afraid that answer means absolutely nothing to the parents of Joshua Fleuelling, who were here at the Legislature today. They were here two years after their son died. They were here a year almost to the day, after the inquest into Joshua Fleuelling’s death called on your government to stop closing hospital beds.

The Fleuellings were here because they don’t believe that you or your government have paid any attention at

all to that inquest report; and they're right, because you haven't stopped closing beds—another 100 closed just last year. Hospitals in the Toronto area are operating at over 95% of their capacity.

Minister, you should know that Dr Michael Schull of Sunnybrook Hospital has done an intensive study into emergency room overcrowding, and his research puts the responsibility directly on your government and the chaos of hospital restructuring. His research shows that emergency room overcrowding intensified when your government started restructuring hospitals.

Minister, I say to you that the problem lies with the chaos of hospital restructuring. It lies with the 6,000 acute-care beds that your government has cut. It lies with your refusal to provide adequate funding for hospitals or for long-term care or for home care. Will you face the realities of the health care needs of the people of this province, or will you keep failing people like Joshua Fleuelling?

Hon Mrs Johns: Let me say that, of course, on the one-year anniversary of the inquest, we send our deepest sympathies out to the family. But let me say that the solution to this lies in a multifaceted plan which this government is implementing.

We have, as you know, opened 20,000 long-term-care beds to make sure that people who come into emergency rooms who need to get out to a long-term-care facility have that. We have opened 2,300 of those beds; 6,000 by the spring and 20,000 by 2004.

In addition, we have put \$570 million since 1995 into initiatives to improve hospital ERs. In December 1999, we announced a \$23-million, 10-point plan for Toronto and the GTA to ensure that there was emergency room capacity, and this included 200 flex beds—I don't know why it's not being recognized—12 flex ICU beds; enhancing discharge planning in Toronto. We've done a lot of work. Do we need to do more? Absolutely. We continue to. This health care system will be the best in the world.

YOUTH CRIME PREVENTION

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): My question is for the Solicitor General. Minister, as everyone knows, we here in Ontario have the best police around. In fact, everyone in this House will have a chance to thank them personally tomorrow when the Police Association of Ontario comes to Queen's Park to meet with MPPs.

It's often been said—in fact you yourself, Minister, have said it many times—that the police cannot do the job alone; they need the public's help. This past summer you gave Crime Stoppers \$200,000 for its after-hours operations. I'm wondering if you would tell this House how this morning you continued our government's commitment to helping the police and Crime Stoppers in the area of youth crime.

Hon David Turnbull (Solicitor General): I thank the member for Scarborough Centre for this question. Crime

prevention is indeed everybody's business, particularly the question of reducing youth crime.

Today I was pleased to announce \$200,000 of support for the expansion and enhancement of the student Crime Stoppers programs in schools all across Ontario. In this program students are encouraged to support police by providing information to solve crimes by using the hotline. Schools are addressing the very important issues of bullying, drug use and youth gangs.

Since 1997 our government has provided \$1.7 million in grants for youth programs. In September of this year I provided \$2 million for the youth crime and violence initiative to enhance community safety.

Ms Mushinski: Thank you for that response, Minister. I know that the Harris government believes that all people should respect the law. What other programs and initiatives are in place to help our police and to help young people avoid a life of crime?

Hon Mr Turnbull: This year adequacy standards were brought to bear so that every police service would have to have policies on the investigation of youth crime. The OPP, as well as municipal police services, sponsors a number of community-based programs aimed at reducing youth crime.

My ministry, together with the Ministry of Education, has developed a provincial model for local police and school board protocols. This identifies 23 elements which require effective police response in school-related incidents. These cover school reporting procedures, information-sharing and disclosure, policing interviews and reporting of suspected child abuse. Of course, the justice partners in our various ministries are still advocating on behalf of the people of Ontario to have meaningful federal changes to the youth justice legislation.

1430

GOVERNMENT CONTRACT

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): My question is to the Minister of Labour. On Friday we learned that Glen Wright, chair of WSIB, a government agency that reports to you, while serving as chair of the board also worked for over \$100,000 in untendered government contracts through the Ministry of Health of former Minister of Health Witmer.

Mr Wright was earning \$123,000 in a part-time position. The integrity of the chair of the board and what it means to injured workers is extremely important. It is not a political job. It cannot be defined by party politics; it cannot be partisan politics. We believe it is inappropriate for the chair of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board of Ontario to be doing political work on behalf of the government of the day. I think the integrity of the board is at stake.

I ask you today, in view of that, will you do the appropriate thing and either ask Mr Wright to resign or fire him as chair of WSIB?

Hon Chris Stockwell (Minister of Labour): I think it's a quantum leap to suggest that the work that was

being done was partisan political work. What Mr Wright was doing was arbitrating a case between the Canadian Medical Protective Association and the OMA with respect to malpractice insurance. Now, be fair. In your wildest dreams, how can somebody's arbitrating a case between the OMA and the medical protective association with respect to malpractice insurance be partisan political work? Give your head a shake. It's work that is done every day by arbitrators. We didn't appoint him without recommendation. The appointment was requested by the Canadian Medical Protective Association and the OMA. They requested Mr Wright. Mr Wright's contract to chair at the WSIB is done on a part-time basis. If anything you said in your question was accurate, you'd shock me. I'm not shocked.

Mr Agostino: I guess we're to believe that it's strictly a coincidence that a man who is a close friend of Premier Harris and a close confidant of the Minister of Health at that time, Elizabeth Witmer, someone who will be working on Mrs Witmer's leadership campaign, just happened to be chosen, tendered, as the individual to receive a \$100,000 contract.

The appointment became full-time on October 1, 2001, and the salary went from \$123,000 to \$250,000. Mr Wright's job and consultant contract continued till October 31. So for a one-month period, while being full-time chair of the board, he was still working as a consultant and, in this coincidence, happened to be chosen by the health ministry without the health minister's involvement? That is ludicrous, Minister. Give your head a shake, because you're trying to defend the indefensible here.

The WSIB has to be free of political interference. The fact that Mr Wright, your appointment as chair of that board, is also doing political work puts in question the integrity and the independence of the board. Again, Minister, will you do the right thing today? Will you fire Mr Wright as head of the WSIB and let him go on and do his free or paid political work on behalf of the government of Ontario?

Hon Mr Stockwell: Mr Speaker, I'll remember not to use my more provocative comments in the first question, because they were used in the supplementary by the member opposite.

The system is very clear. The two parties who were trying to negotiate an agreement agreed on Mr Wright. Mr Wright got appointed to a part-time job. What's political about that? I don't understand. He is in that business. That's what he does for a living. He said, "I'm appointed to the chair. It's a part-time appointment." The request was made by the two parties to put him in, and suddenly we've got another ORC brewing in Mr Agostino's mind.

There's nothing to this. It's another Agostino fantasy. It's another flight of fantasy on the member's part where he slams this place, he smears people who associate with the government and he slanders individuals. Nothing to it. Typical attack by the member for Hamilton East. The best we should do is just ignore it, because even responding lends credence to an absurd question.

GRAPE AND WINE INDUSTRY

Mr Bart Maves (Niagara Falls): My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Minister, as you know, the grape and wine industry is of vital importance to the province of Ontario and especially to the region of Niagara. We've done a lot as a government to help the grape and wine industry. We've brought in VQA legislation, and we've brought in changes for direct delivery. I'm wondering what you're doing since you've become Minister of Agriculture to ensure that this vital contributor continues to create jobs and economic growth in the future.

Hon Brian Coburn (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs): I'm pleased to report to you that our government has supported and will continue to strongly support the grape and wine industry; in fact, it's an industry that generates \$338 million in sales every year. With every \$10 million in sales, that generates \$14.8 million in economic activity, so certainly this industry is an economic boon to our overall provincial economy.

Actually, we're working very hard to keep it robust. Just last week I was with my colleague the member from Erie-Lincoln and announced a \$10-million investment in this industry's comprehensive strategy for the future. It's called Poised for Greatness. That's a partnership with the wine and grape industry, a \$20-million initiative and a strategy that will put them in good stead on the world stage so that the best of our wine and grape industry can be put on the world stage.

Mr Maves: That type of investment is definitely appreciated down in the Niagara area of the province, and I'm sure it's appreciated in other areas of the province that produce wine.

What kind of success and what kind of progress can we expect out of the industry now that this strategy is in place?

Hon Mr Coburn: Under that partnership with the Ontario Wine Council, the Vintners Quality Alliance Ontario and the Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board, that strategy in the industry, they've set some pretty specific and ambitious goals. By the year 2020, the industry will be a \$1.5-billion-a-year business, employing 13,500 people. By the year 2020, of course, Ontario wines, red and white, will account for fully 60% of all premium wine purchased by Ontario consumers. In addition to that, more than 90% of grapes grown in Ontario will be used to make premium Ontario wines deserving of the Vintners Quality Alliance designation.

These are ambitious goals. Our government has every confidence that this industry will achieve those goals.

ALGOMA STEEL

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I have a question for the Deputy Premier. Last week I met with steelworkers from Algoma Steel Inc and people from Sault Ste Marie, who were very concerned about the restructuring of Algoma Steel. They desperately want

both senior levels of government to come to the table and to get actively involved in the restructuring of Algoma Steel.

Will you join with me today in asking the Prime Minister and the Premier to go to the table and to show confidence and commitment on the part of both senior levels of government in Algoma Steel so that a successful restructuring can happen?

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): As I imagine the member opposite knows, Ontario has been at the table during the course of the discussions relating to Algoma Steel.

Our particular concern, which is quite rightly the concern of the province, relates to the pension liabilities and the ability of Algoma to fully fund the pensions not only of retired persons but of persons about to retire or persons who would retire in the normal course after years of service at Algoma.

The Ministry of Finance—and as minister, I have a direct concern with that issue—has been at the table. As I'm sure the member opposite knows, the matter is before the courts and many discussions have taken place. There has been, as I understand it, some significant progress, but we're not quite there yet in terms of all the necessary parties agreeing to terms that would satisfy everyone.

Mr Hampton: The Deputy Premier would know that the pension issue is one issue that is important, but what's important for the community of Sault Ste Marie and for the workers, and I might add for workers in other communities, is a successful restructuring of Algoma Steel. So far, the Liberals in Ottawa have been the invisible man on this project, and I may say that the bondholders and the note holders have not heard either level of government come to the table and say clearly, "Algoma Steel will not be allowed to fail. You, the bondholders and note holders, cannot put the company into bankruptcy and then pick up what is left." That's what is needed.

I'm asking you today to sign a letter with me asking the federal government to come directly to the restructuring table and for a commitment from your government to go directly to the restructuring table as well so that that message of confidence and commitment in Algoma Steel will be received. Will you do that?

1440

Hon Mr Flaherty: To be clear to the member opposite, the government of Ontario has been and remains at the table, particularly concerned with the pension issue, as the province should be concerned with the welfare of persons who have earned an entitlement to pensions.

The second part about the federal government and the federal government's involvement: I'm certainly prepared to work with the member opposite to encourage the federal government to be fully engaged in this process. It's very important for the people of Sault Ste Marie.

PAROLE SYSTEM

Mr Dave Levac (Brant): My question is for the Minister of Correctional Services. Minister, as you're aware, and we on this side are very aware, the management of provincial parole and probation in Ontario is your job and your responsibility. Last week, three-time convicted pedophile Peter Whitmore was released from a provincial correctional facility and placed on provincial parole. Why is it, then, that under your ministry and your watch Peter Whitmore managed to set up a temporary home only a few precious metres away from a schoolyard and a daycare centre, a few metres away from children whom he is forbidden to be near? Why did you allow this to happen?

Hon Rob Sampson (Minister of Correctional Services): The member opposite should know, and I believe he does know and I'm surprised he's asking the question, that the reason why we have very little control over offenders who are released from institutions in this province is because the federal Liberal legislation prohibits us from having any further control over them.

Many times I have encouraged my colleague across the floor to stand with us in this House, and outside, as we petition the federal Liberal government to change the rules that govern how inmates are treated once they're released from our institutions with their term not fully expired, and he has not been there. I've not heard one word of support from any member of the Ontario Liberal caucus to support this government's stand, to tell the federal Liberal government to get rid of the discount law. If you're prepared to stand in your place in this House right now today and say you're supporting that, please do so.

Mr Levac: I find it interesting that the minister does not want to take responsibility for it by saying that he does have an option, and that option would be the entry plan which I asked him to do before he released Whitmore, to announce to the schools, to announce to anybody near that this man is going to be taking up residence, and you didn't know that.

To make things even worse than they are, the Toronto Star today reported that parole officers are having a hard time doing their job. Your failure has resulted in officers having the highest caseloads in our country. Of the 165 new people you promised, only one half of them have been hired. Parole officers are being assaulted and threatened in unworkable conditions in their particular places of work and they're spending more than one-half hour a month on individuals they're supposed to be monitoring while they're in the communities. What's your answer to these problems? Blame the federal government, blame the staff themselves and do everything except take responsibility yourself.

Will you stand up in your place today and say that you do have a problem with the working conditions and the fact that parole officers are overworked and stressed? Will you pledge that you will never again, under your

watch, allow this kind of situation to happen in our province?

Hon Mr Sampson: I'll pledge to the people in this House and the people watching here that the Mike Harris government will do everything it possibly can to encourage the federal Liberal government to wake up and smell the coffee and change the laws of this country to allow us to have full control over individuals who are sentenced to institutions in this province so that they serve their full term here, instead of handcuffing us like they currently do with their legislation.

I'll remind the member opposite that he voted against the pedophile legislation that we brought forward in this House. I'll remind that member that he voted against any legislation that would have exposed pedophiles and their existence in this province. He voted against it, and now he has the audacity to stand in this House and say somehow he supports that legislation. You should be ashamed of yourself.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mrs Tina R. Molinari (Thornhill): My question is for the Minister of Consumer and Business Services. With the failure of Canada 3000 airlines, there has been a lot of concern about the people who have booked flights and paid for their flights. Some in fact are stranded around the world. Minister, could you tell me what protections are in place for Ontario consumers facing this situation?

Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Consumer and Business Services): Fortunately, Ontario residents who book their travel through a registered travel agent have great protections when they're travelling abroad. There are three lines that a traveller can look to.

First, he or she should look to their credit card company. Many credit card companies guarantee that a service will be delivered, and therefore there is a real chance of compensation directly from the credit card company for either a trip that has not been taken or a return trip that was not there to be taken.

The second line of defence is a travel agent. The travel agent is responsible compensating the traveller for any losses that they might have incurred as a result of the sale of the ticket to them.

The third is the compensation fund, which presently has \$22 million in it and is a backup to the aforementioned protections.

Mrs Molinari: Thank you, Minister, for that very informative response. I know the Travel Industry Council of Ontario is working very hard to make sure every Ontario consumer affected by the bankruptcy of Canada 3000 is taken care of.

Last week I noticed on CBC Radio that there is some confusion surrounding Canada 3000 Holidays and the wholesale vacation package arm of Canada 3000. Could you tell us what is happening with Canada 3000 Holidays?

Hon Mr Sterling: This is another arm or another business that was involved with offering holiday packages to many Canadians and many people in Ontario. This was a separate company which only filed for bankruptcy this morning. Fortunately, the travel industry had withheld as much as \$8 million as money in trust for many of the people who had not gone on their vacations, these holiday packages. Therefore, they are in a very good position to compensate people for their losses when they are not going to be able to go on those particular trips.

Our first priority was to get people back who were stranded abroad. Canada-wide, 240,000 of 290,000 people are back home. Now we must work on the other parts of the puzzle. It's a very complicated puzzle, but we're happy in Ontario that we have these great protections for our travellers who book through our travel agents.

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETIES

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services and it focuses on the growing funding crisis in child welfare. To cite just a few examples, the children's aid society of the district of Sudbury and Manitoulin will end the current year with a deficit of \$1.8 million. The Algoma CAS is projecting a budget deficit of \$1.5 million, and the deficit of the Thunder Bay Children's Aid Society will be in the range of \$400,000. Indeed, 40 of the province's 51 CAS branches are now running deficits, which may reach upwards of \$100 million this year.

This number reflects the fact that many CAS expenditures like group care, legal costs, travel and other related expenses are not adequately reflected in the minister's unworkable funding formula. Indeed, the plight of children's welfare in Ontario in light of today's sad but predictable news of across-the-board budget slashing makes me rather sick.

Minister, will you stand in your place today and assure this House that no children's aid society will be forced into debt this year and that you will cover all the actual costs incurred by children's aid societies, which are committed to protecting our province's most vulnerable children?

1450

Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Community and Social Services, minister responsible for children, minister responsible for francophone affairs): Child welfare and child protection have been a tremendous priority for this government. As my predecessor, Janet Ecker worked tremendously hard on this issue. We've seen funding increase by more than 115%. I am hard-pressed to look anywhere in the public sector, anywhere in Ontario, anywhere in Canada, which has seen a greater budget increase. It's an unprecedented commitment and an unprecedented support.

What the member opposite is asking is that we say to all children's aid societies, "Spend whatever you like and

send us the bill and we'll pay for it," which is something no minister in any province in Canada has ever been able to do on any issue. I can tell the member opposite that earlier this year I sought an in-year budget increase of \$123 million, and the cabinet said yes. We've also committed to spend additional resources in this year's budget after that. Child welfare and child protection will continue to be a priority, and we'll continue to devote the adequate and necessary resources to fulfill these important responsibilities to help children in need.

Mr Gravelle: Let me tell you the actual costs, Minister. Three years ago, your government promised a comprehensive review of the funding formula to reflect new standards for front-line workers. This is not being done. This review is vital, and you know it is, as it will reveal that you're not covering the actual costs of care that are mandated by legislation.

In my own riding, the children's aid society has three satellite offices: one in Nipigon, one in Geraldton and one in Marathon. In a district as large as ours, I doubt that even you would argue against the need for these satellite operations. Yet you don't fund their operation, nor the operation of satellite offices across the province.

Minister, will you at least commit today to provide the needed and totally appropriate funds to cover these satellite offices, which are just so vital for our large areas?

Hon Mr Baird: We're certainly prepared to look at any issue in terms of improving our child welfare and child protection system. We have made unprecedented funding commitments to ensure that we do more to help young children, whether they're victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse or neglect. We've lowered the bar to give children's aid societies across Ontario more powers and more ability to ensure that they can step in and intervene and help young children in need of protection.

The member opposite has some suggestions. I'd be very happy to look at them and to weigh them in the context of all the other tremendous priorities we have in the children's services sector.

PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

Mr Doug Galt (Northumberland): My question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Science and Technology. The pharmaceutical industry has played a very important role in research, development and innovation. Research and development products coming from that industry have been saving lives, enhancing our quality of life and extending our life expectancy—for example, the discovery of insulin not far from here; later, the discovery of penicillin and other antibiotics.

These discoveries have also assisted our farmers, improved the liveability of our livestock and increased production. But, Minister, what has their contribution been to the economy of the province of Ontario?

Hon Jim Wilson (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): In the next 10 years there'll be a huge increase in demographics as well as incredible advances in medical research, particularly pharmaceutical research.

Pharmaceutical products are often the most cost-effective and humane ways of treating many illnesses.

Ontario needs to strive to be a global leader in drug discovery and development because this will lead to two important results. One is leading-edge jobs for our people, and two, a healthier economy and healthier people in Ontario.

As part of that commitment, the Ontario government needs to reaffirm its commitment to patent rights in this province. I know that all of the Premiers in Canada are working on a paper toward that. Premier Harris will present that to his colleagues in January. I certainly hope, as the minister responsible for R&D in the pharmaceutical sector, along with my colleague Mr Runciman and others, that Ontario reaffirms its historic position with respect to patent rights, protecting high-quality jobs in this province.

Mr Galt: Thank you very much, Minister. There's no question that the pharmaceutical industry plays a very vital role for the people of Ontario and particularly for livestock producers. Minister, it's extremely important that the pharmaceutical industry thrives and prospers in Ontario. As we look to the future, research and development in the area of biotechnology is of the utmost importance.

Minister, how is Ontario ensuring that the pharmaceutical industry will continue to play an important role in health research and development and innovation?

Hon Mr Wilson: In the year 2000 alone, the innovative pharmaceutical industry invested some \$396.2 million in research and development in Ontario, employed more than 9,000 people and injected \$1.4 billion into Ontario's economy as a whole.

The Ontario government partners with the pharmaceutical industry in the areas of research and development through our Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund. We've partnered with universities, hospitals and the pharmaceutical sector in 24 different projects. Also, I recently created the Ontario BioCouncil, which is headed by Mr Joe Rotman. That council will seek further ways to partner with the pharmaceutical industry so we can get our share of the worldwide research and development monies that are available and, second, continue to create a strong economy in Ontario, particularly during this time of recession in the province. The R&D that's injected by the pharmaceutical industry will help recession-proof this economy.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I have a question for the minister responsible for long-term care. This morning, nursing home workers, represented by the Service Employees International Union, came to hold a press conference here to point out the deterioration in long-term care for Ontario's seniors. One of the issues they pointed to was that in 1996 your government abandoned the minimum requirement for two and a quarter hours of nursing care per day for long-term-care patients in nursing homes. As a result of that reduction in nursing

care, frequently our seniors are suffering indignities such as lying for hours in their own urine or excrement and not being able to get the bath they need.

These workers asked a specific question: will you restore an acceptable minimum requirement of nursing care for seniors in nursing homes in Ontario?

Hon Helen Johns (Minister without Portfolio [Health and Long-Term Care]): Let me say that the commitment of this Mike Harris government to long-term-care facilities and to long-term care is unprecedented. In the last number of years we have strengthened community care access centres by doubling the money that we spend on community care access centres, giving a 72% increase in community funding. For the first time in some 10 or 15 years, this government has made a commitment to long-term-care beds in Ontario, promising that 20,000 beds be ready and available to seniors in this province by 2004; by 2006, another 16,000 beds.

We're doing everything to ensure that our communities have the services they need so that our seniors can get the best possible care, both in their community and in the long-term-care facility that they choose, because those services are important to us, the Mike Harris government.

Mr Hampton: Minister, the reality out there is that you are cutting home care, and seniors across Ontario know it. You have announced new long-term-care beds, but seniors aren't seeing them; there have simply been announcements.

But your own government-funded study done by PricewaterhouseCoopers earlier this year told you in no uncertain terms that Ontario is providing fewer hours of nursing care in our nursing homes and homes for the aged than 10 comparable jurisdictions: Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Michigan, Maine, South Dakota—even Mississippi provides more hours of nursing care per patient than Ontario does. Studies in the United States have recommended as much as four and a half hours of nursing care per patient per day. These workers are asking you merely to restore an acceptable level in Ontario. They suggest three and a half hours a day.

Do you want to be last, Minister, in all of the comparators, or are you prepared to give our seniors the hours of nursing care they need and deserve and that all of the studies indicate they should have?

Hon Mrs Johns: I'm almost speechless, I have to tell you. What's happened here is that they had a \$50-billion deficit and they didn't build one new long-term-care bed in Ontario. They froze the per diem rate for community care and it was frozen under the NDP government in 1993. We increased the per diem from \$79 to \$84 in 1996. Where were they?

In 10 years of the Liberal and NDP governments almost 10,000 hospital beds were taken out of this province, and yet there was no increase in services.

Why are you talking about seniors like this? This government has made commitments for 36,000 new beds for the people of the province of Ontario. We've also

made commitments for community services in the province. Let's get a reality check here. He says there are no long-term-care beds built: 2,800 are up and running. I've seen them. If you want to come with me, come and see them: 6,000 by the spring; 20,000 by 2004; 36,000 by 2006. Mr Speaker, have him come with me, please.

1500

OAK RIDGES MORAINÉ

Mr Mike Colle (Eglinton-Lawrence): I have a question for the Acting Premier, the Minister of Finance. Your government has given assurances to various developers who own lands on the Oak Ridges moraine that they will be compensated with lands that are part of your provincially held Seaton lands, the north Pickering lands. This land swap that you've committed to as a government is worth hundreds of millions of dollars in public land.

The question I have for you on behalf of the people of Ontario is, what are the criteria that you're using to swap this land, what are the principles, what assurances do we have that the taxpayers will get value for money, and will you agree to having full public disclosure of all the terms and details of the most massive land swap in Ontario history? Will you agree to the public disclosure of the land swap terms, details and criteria?

Hon Jim Flaherty (Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance): Municipalities, in making decisions on applications outside the moraine, are required to conform with the provincial policy statement. The provincial policy statement directs development to existing settlement areas while protecting rural areas for uses such as agriculture.

The PPS is currently being reviewed as part of this government's Smart Growth initiative. This government's Smart Growth initiative, as you know, emphasizes infilling, intensification and brownfield redevelopment—in our view, the best strategy for encouraging and managing growth in the GTA and elsewhere in Ontario.

There were substantial discussions, as I'm sure the member opposite knows, between people involved in the development industry and the minister responsible relating to the lands in the moraine that were potentially developable, and the lands in particular in the Seaton area around what may well be a future airport site. As a result of those negotiations, an accord was reached, which is tremendous progress showing the willingness, I would think, on the part of all parties to work together toward a resolution of the issue in the best interests of the environment.

PETITIONS

MUNICIPAL RESTRUCTURING

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the citizens of Victoria county had no direct say in the creation of the new city of Kawartha Lakes; and

“Whereas the government by regulation and legislation forced the recent amalgamation, against the will of the obvious majority of the people; and

“Whereas the government has not delivered the promised streamlined, more efficient and accountable local government, nor the provision of better services at reduced costs; and

“Whereas the promise of tax decreases has not been met, based on current assessments; and

“Whereas the expected transition costs to area taxpayers of this forced amalgamation have already exceeded the promised amount by over three times,

“Be it resolved that we, the undersigned, demand that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario immediately rescind this forced amalgamation order and return our local municipal government back to the local citizens and their democratically elected officials in Victoria county and remove the bureaucratic, dictatorial, single-tier governance it has coerced on all local citizens.”

I affix my signature. I'm in complete agreement.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr Howard Hampton (Kenora-Rainy River): I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government abandoned the minimum requirement for 2.25 hours per day of nursing care for seniors in nursing homes; and

“Whereas the Ontario government's own study in January 2001 showed Ontario's long-term-care residents receive less nursing, bathing and general care than elderly people in comparable jurisdictions in Canada, the United States and Europe; and

“Whereas poor management of residents leads to excessive acute care hospital stays and added strain on staffing levels in long-term-care facilities; and

“Whereas Ontario long-term-care residents now receive an average of only 2.04 hours of care per day, well below the level of care of 4.2 hours even the state of Mississippi provides; and

“Whereas US studies have indicated that total nursing care hours for long-term-care residents should be in the range of 4.55 total hours of care per resident per day;

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

“We call on the government of Ontario to regulate a minimum requirement of at least 3.5 hours of nursing care per resident per day.”

I have affixed my signature to this petition as well.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“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'm pleased to affix my signature to this petition.

EDUCATION

Mr Tony Ruprecht (Davenport): I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the Ontario government wants to take an additional billion dollars out of the education system this year and every year; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has decided to hire uncertified teachers in kindergartens, libraries, for guidance, physical education, the arts, and technology; and

“Whereas the Ontario government wishes to remove the right to negotiate working conditions; and

“Whereas the Ontario government will remove at least 10,000 teachers from classrooms across the province; and

“Whereas the Ontario government has become the sole decision-maker on class size, preparation time and the length of the school day; and

“Whereas the Ontario government proposes to take decision-making powers out of the hands of locally-elected community-minded trustees;

“We, the undersigned Ontario residents, strongly urge the government to repeal Bill 160 and create an accessible public consultative process for students, parents, teachers and school board administrators to study alternate solutions that have universal appeal and will lead to an improved educational system.”

Since I agree, I'm delighted to affix my signature to this petition.

ADOPTION DISCLOSURE

Ms Marilyn Churley (Toronto-Danforth): I have more petitions supporting adoption disclosure reform in Ontario. This reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas in Ontario, adopted adults are denied a right available to all non-adoptees, that is, the unrestricted right to identifying information concerning their family of origin;

“Whereas Canada has ratified standards of civil and human rights in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the

UN Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;

“Whereas these rights are denied to persons affected by the secrecy provisions in the adoption sections of the Child and Family Services Act and other acts of the province of Ontario;

“Whereas research in other jurisdictions has demonstrated that disclosure does not cause harm, that access to such information is beneficial to adult adoptees, adoptive parents and birth parents, and that birth parents rarely requested or were promised anonymity;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario to enact revision of the Child and Family Services Act and other acts to permit adult adoptees unrestricted access to full personal identifying birth information; permit birth parents, grandparents and siblings access to the adopted person’s amended birth certificate when the adopted person reaches age 18; permit adoptive parents unrestricted access to identifying birth information of their minor children; allow adopted persons and birth relatives to file a contact veto restricting contact by the searching party; and replace mandatory reunion counselling with optional counselling.”

1510

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr John O’Toole (Durham): I was very privileged last week to have the Honourable Cam Jackson, minister responsible for seniors, in my riding. This petition was presented to me while he was there.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville wish to continue to rent our apartments and are not interested in purchasing condominium units; and

“Whereas we the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville have invested considerable amounts of money in decorating, upgrading their apartments; and

“Whereas we the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville were of the understanding that this was a rental property, not a condominium;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to review this matter and request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing or any other relevant ministry investigate these concerns to ensure that the residents of 145 Liberty Street South can continue to rent their apartments.”

I’m pleased to sign this on behalf of the residents as well as Wilma Paul, who presented the petition that day in Bowmanville.

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 con-

ditions for patients and have increased the risk of injury to nurses; and

“Whereas there is a chronic nursing shortage in Ontario;

“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 petition contains an additional 334 signatures of concerned individuals. That brings the total number of signatures on this particular petition to 14,174. In full agreement with their concerns, I again affix my signature to the petition.

BRAIN TUMOURS

Mr Bob Wood (London West): I have a petition signed by 685 people.

“Whereas early detection and treatment of brain tumours are vital to survive from this devastating disease;

“Whereas brain tumours strike people of all ages, from newborns to seniors, crossing all economic, social and ethnic boundaries and all walks of life;

“Whereas brain tumours are the most common cause of solid cancer in children; and

“Whereas brain tumour research, patient and family support services and awareness among the general public are essential to promote early detection and treatment of brain tumours;

“We, the undersigned, therefore respectfully petition the Parliament of Ontario to pass a law proclaiming the month of October in each year as Brain Tumour Awareness Month.”

I will inform the petitioners that this petition has been granted by the Legislature.

CHILDREN’S MEDICAL SERVICES

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

“Whereas the recent events at the London Health Sciences Centre, where 18 programs have been lost due to funding shortages, and in particular, the Children’s Hospital of Western Ontario, cause us to be concerned that we may lose medical and surgical subspecialty pediatric services for ourselves and our children;

“Whereas southwestern Ontario is a vital region of the province of Ontario that requires urgent access to pediatric subspecialty services and to travel to other children’s health facilities in Ontario would result in serious personal hardship and risk to our children; further, that families would not be eligible for travel grants similar to those provided in northern communities;

“Whereas we have greatly benefited from the expertise in pediatric care provided by Children’s Hospital of Western Ontario over the years and we appreciate that we may not be apprised of all the reasons for these physician losses; however, our children deserve to continue to receive the pediatric subspecialty care from the London Health Sciences Centre and Children’s Hospital of Western Ontario that our region has depended on for decades;

“Whereas the loss of these services will result in great hardship to the families and seriously endanger the health of our children, we look to you as leaders to address this issue immediately and thoroughly. These times of great uncertainty about children’s access to health care is a significant stress to ourselves and our families;

“Therefore, we the undersigned petition the Legislature of Ontario to demand that our government respond immediately to restore these critical services to the citizens of southwestern Ontario.”

This petition is signed by persons from Ridgetown, Merlin, Chatham, Tilbury and Thamesville, and I affix my name to it.

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr John O’Toole (Durham): To put on the record again the petition from the residents of 145 Liberty Street:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville wish to continue to rent our apartments and are not interested in purchasing condominium units; and

“Whereas we the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville have invested considerable amounts of money in decorating, upgrading their apartments; and

“Whereas we the residents of 145 Liberty Street South in Bowmanville were of the understanding that this was a rental property, not a condominium;

“We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to review this matter and request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing or any other relevant ministry investigate these concerns to ensure that the residents of 145 Liberty Street South can continue to rent their apartments.”

I’m pleased to sign this and support my constituents. By the way, these are all apartment tenants here, Wilma Paul and a number of others. I’m pleased to sign on their behalf.

KIDNEY DISEASE

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): I have a petition here which is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas we the undersigned residents of Ontario draw the attention of the Legislature to the following:

“Whereas kidney disease is a huge and growing problem in Canada; and

“Whereas real progress is being made in various ways of preventing and coping with kidney disease;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to encourage the Canadian Institutes of Health Research to explicitly include kidney research as one of the institutes in its system, to be named the Institute of Kidney and Urinary Tract Diseases.”

I agree with the petition and have signed it accordingly.

MEDICAL SCHOOL TUITION

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

“Whereas medical school tuition was deregulated by the Ontario government in 1998; and medical school tuition has and continues to increase in excess of 300% such that at some universities tuition is now \$14,000;

“Whereas the combination of excessive tuition and frozen student assistance have impaired students’ accessibility to a medical education;

“Whereas the physicians most likely to practise in a rural area are originally from rural areas themselves; and

“Whereas unaffordable tuition disproportionately excludes medical students from rural communities;

“Be it resolved that Thunder Bay calls upon the Ontario government and the universities of Ontario to ensure that medical education be made financially accessible to all qualified students; and

“Be it further resolved that Thunder Bay requests that medical tuition be capped and re-regulated at a level accessible to all Ontarians and that the Ontario student assistance plan/Canada student loan program be adjusted in order to ensure that Ontarians from all communities are able to afford a medical school education.”

This petition is signed by a number of residents from Leamington, and I, too, sign this petition.

HOMELESSNESS

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): Here is a petition to end homelessness in Ontario.

“To the Legislature of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario provincial government has totally withdrawn itself from building new social housing projects in this province, therefore endangering the lives of the less fortunate and residents who can’t afford paying the high-cost rent;

“Whereas the Ontario government should recognize that there is a serious shortage of affordable housing in this province;

“Whereas the Ontario government should recognize that the homeless situation in this province has reached a crisis proportion and that some measures have to be taken to remedy the situation;

“Whereas the Ontario government should recognize that the hostel system wasn’t meant to be for permanent housing but is for temporary shelters;

“Whereas the Ontario government should implement the 1% solution promoted by the Toronto disaster relief committee and restore the Rent Control Act which was taken away by the current government;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

“We are asking that the Legislature see that the government take actions to end the homeless situation in Ontario with any means that are at its disposition.”

I agree with it and have signed it accordingly.

1520

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon Janet Ecker (Minister of Education, Government House Leader): I move that pursuant to standing order 46 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 110, An Act to promote quality in the classroom, when Bill 110 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment, and at such time, the bill shall be ordered referred to the standing committee on general government; and

That, notwithstanding standing order 28(h), no deferral of the second reading vote may be permitted; and

That the standing committee on general government shall be authorized to meet during its regularly scheduled meeting time, for one day in Toronto for public hearings and for one day in Toronto for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That, at 4:30 pm on the day the committee is scheduled for clause-by-clause consideration, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. The committee shall be authorized to meet beyond its normal hour of adjournment until completion of clause-by-clause consideration. Any division required shall be deferred until all remaining questions have been put and taken in succession, with one 20-minute waiting period allowed, pursuant to standing order 127(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House on the first sessional day that reports from committees may be received following the completion of clause-by-clause consideration and not later than December 6, 2001. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the date provided, the bill shall be deemed to have been passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the standing committee on general government, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading; and

That, when the order for third reading is called, 90 minutes shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, to be divided equally among all recognized parties, and at the end of that time the Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That the vote on third reading may, pursuant to standing order 28(h), be deferred until the next sessional day during the routine proceeding “deferred votes”; and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon Gary Carr): Mrs Ecker has moved government motion 77.

Mr Frank Mazzilli (London-Fanshawe): I will be sharing my time with the member from Simcoe and the member for Oak Ridges.

It’s a pleasure to speak on the motion for Bill 110, the Quality in the Classroom Act, 2001. The purpose of our education reform is obviously to set higher standards for achievement in Ontario and to provide the tools and resources for student success.

Excellence in education starts in the classroom, with the best possible teachers. It’s essential that they instill a love for lifelong learning in our students as well as providing them with the tools to meet the challenges of changing jobs and new careers.

Ontario has many excellent teachers, and many of them recognize the need to keep their knowledge and skills current. They are actively involved in professional development activities to build their qualifications and to develop new knowledge and skills. That is why our government has introduced a comprehensive teacher testing program to ensure that all teachers, both new and experienced, have the capabilities to help our students succeed and achieve higher standards.

We continue to build on that commitment with Bill 110. It has two purposes. The first is, subject to the approval of Bill 110, that all new graduates of an Ontario faculty of education and all teachers new to Ontario would be required to take the Ontario teacher qualifying test. Passing the test would be a requirement for becoming a member of the Ontario College of Teachers and receiving a certificate of qualification from the college. The qualifying test would assess the readiness of teachers to start their professional lives and to ensure that

they have a minimum level of knowledge and skills to begin teaching in our schools. Its purpose and form would be similar to exams administered by other professional regulatory bodies, such as the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board, and for other groups such as nurses and occupational therapists.

The ministry is taking a number of steps to ensure that the Ontario teacher qualifying test will be unique to Ontario as well as being fair, valid and reliable. The development of the test is being supported by consultations with a broad range of educational stakeholders. We consulted with parents, students, principals, vice-principals, teachers, trustees, deans of faculties of education and the Ontario College of Teachers. The ministry has established the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test Advisory Committee to advise on test program issues. It will provide the ministry with advice on test development and validation as well as the written materials to assist those teachers taking the tests. For example, there would be a brochure describing the test program that would also include an application package with registration information, sample test questions and preparation test items.

It is important to note that Ontario is not the only jurisdiction to be moving in the direction of spelling out entrance-to-the-profession tests. In fact, the ministry is drawing from the best experience of what other professions and jurisdictions are doing in this area. For example, the United Kingdom recently introduced a test for new applicants to the teaching profession. In addition, France, Belgium and Switzerland use civil service exams to evaluate those who wish to teach. Most American states require their teacher candidates to pass one or more certification exams before they become licensed to teach.

The proposed qualifying test in Bill 110 would have questions based on areas of knowledge and skills derived from the standards of practice from the teaching profession established by the Ontario College of Teachers. The college is mandated by statute to establish standards of practice for all teachers in Ontario.

Once aspiring teachers have completed the qualifying test, the results would be available in four to six weeks. All test takers would be advised of their personal score. The test provider would also advise the Ontario College of Teachers of a pass or fail result of each participant. Candidate teachers who meet all the requirements for certification, including passing the qualifying test, would be placed on the college's register, which lists its members, their qualification and their status in the college. Finally, for 2002 and 2003 the ministry will cover all costs associated with these tests.

In addition, Bill 110 provides for an appeal process to be available to all teachers who take the qualifying test. All appeals on test scores would be reviewed individually on a case-by-case basis.

The qualifying test proposed by Bill 110 is an additional step being taken by this government to improve the quality of education in Ontario. In a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive world, the need for quality assurance among all professionals, especially teachers, is imperative.

The second purpose of Bill 110 is to create a comprehensive personal appraisal system to evaluate teachers on their performance in the classroom. The new provincial standards outlined in the legislation would ensure that principals and school boards regularly and consistently evaluate teachers' knowledge and skills.

Bill 80, which was passed in this Legislature last June, established a comprehensive framework for professional learning by Ontario teachers. Bill 80 requires all teachers to participate in a series of professional development activities and courses in five-year cycles throughout their careers. Bill 110 would now establish the regulatory authority necessary for the establishment of teachers' learning plans. These plans would be developed by teachers in consultation with their principals and would map out an action plan for professional growth. Mandatory professional learning ensures that teachers' knowledge and skills are up to date.

Performance appraisals provide the necessary quality assurance that professionals' learning has become effective and that teachers in our classrooms are the best that they can be. Equally important is the way Bill 110 would bring consistency to our teacher appraisals in reference to their frequency, timing, standards and methods. While many boards have been developing excellent performance review practices, few school boards have policies and programs in place to help weak teachers meet the standards they need to achieve.

In addition, few boards currently have evaluation policies that recognize teacher excellence and identify possible mentors or exemplary teachers. These findings reconfirm the value of Bill 110 and the need to provide consistent province-wide standards for teacher evaluation. The creation of such standards would clearly be a major factor in ensuring that our teacher appraisal system is fair to all members of the profession no matter where they teach in Ontario.

1530

These are the reasons that the bill would provide for every experienced teacher to have an evaluation year every three years, with at least two evaluations of their classroom performance during that year.

Our government strongly believes in the involvement of parents in our children's education. Another important milestone in Bill 110 is that parents and students will have input and be an integral part of a teacher's performance appraisal. Bill 110 would also provide regulatory authority for parent and pupil input; however, parental and pupil comment would not be the sole factor in an unsatisfactory rating of a teacher.

The important aspect of a teacher appraisal system is to provide support and facilitate teacher improvement. The point of Bill 110 is not to dismiss teachers but to ensure their teaching excellence. Bill 110 provides a very detailed and fair approach to teachers receiving a less than satisfactory rating, with a real emphasis on opportunities to help strengthen a teacher's classroom skills. I believe that performance appraisal in Bill 110 is consistent and fair to teachers.

In closing my remarks, I would like to summarize the key features of the performance appraisal system that would be established by this legislation: regular evaluation for all teachers; consistent standards for teachers' appraisals, including an objective rating system that will be used throughout the province; parental and student input into the appraisal process; support for teachers who need to improve their performance; and the removal of low-performance teachers from the classroom.

Bill 110 is win-win legislation. With the passage of the Quality in the Classroom Act, 2001, parents will know that their children are being taught by teachers who can be called upon to be the best they can be in the classroom. Taxpayers will know that they are achieving value for their education dollars, and all Ontarians will know that we are moving closer to an education system that is firmly focused on quality, accountability and improved student achievement.

I just want to say that I have met in my constituency with members representing teachers and their unions and have listened to their concerns. I will say, as you've heard through the speech, that there are many other professions that write exams of some sort. I can tell you that during my time as a police officer, on what is known as the breathalyser testing program in Ontario, I had to write a yearly exam to requalify year after year. That test was administered by the Centre of Forensic Sciences attached to the Solicitor General's ministry. Every year people came down from that ministry to ensure that your credentials were kept up for the purpose of providing breath samples.

I will tell you that I would have been the first one to say, "I don't want to do this." The reason is that every year it made you take out your notes and go over some of the basic theories that you once learned. In summary, you never had difficulty with the exam, but it did make you go over some of the theories that you were once taught, to the benefit of the end user, the people you are trying to help. I think we all need to keep on top of our skills in today's environment, and I think the teacher testing program is not much different.

I do share the belief, as some of the representatives from the union pointed out, that there are individuals who will be made to do things that are mundane. For example, if you are trying to teach someone high skills with computers and so on, there will be a few people way beyond whatever testing abilities anyone might be trying to achieve. But certainly I think if you are going to err in making someone do something they know they can do, perhaps if it can be avoided, it would be best to do that. If it can't be done, I think that if 99% of people taking that test benefit, that's a positive step also.

With that, I'll pass it on to the member for Oak Ridges.

The Speaker: It actually goes in rotation. The member for Hamilton East.

Mr Dominic Agostino (Hamilton East): Although Oak Ridges is a great riding, I'm certainly not the member for that riding.

Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. You'll have to pardon my voice. It's probably a pleasure to most members on the opposite side of the House that I'm not really able to speak very loudly, as a result, I think, of a little bit too much yelling at the Tiger-Cats game in Winnipeg yesterday that unfortunately didn't go quite as well as I would have liked it to go. But certainly it was an interesting experience spending an afternoon in Winnipeg Stadium with about 10 of us cheering for one team and about 29,500 cheering for the other. But I want to congratulate the Tiger-Cats on a great season. They made us all proud in the city of Hamilton. I have no regret about losing my voice by cheering too loudly for the Cats yesterday.

Just a few minutes on what is in front of us today. What is in front of us, first of all—let's understand so that the public knows—is a time allocation motion. What this means is that once again this government has decided they're going to cut off debate on a particular bill. This is Bill 110, the teacher testing bill. It has become unfortunately much too common in this Legislature, on almost every bill, for this government to decide that after a few hours we've had enough debate and it's time to cut off debate and bring in something called closure.

Just to understand that it is not the normal procedure in Legislatures across this country, I want to compare it, as an example, to the federal House, where closure is hardly ever invoked. I met with the federal whip a couple of weeks ago and she mentioned to me that generally they come to an understanding. There's a sense of co-operation on bills and the government does give the opposition plenty of opportunity for debate, and therefore the opposition uses that time and the government does not bring in closure.

That is not the case here. I think it is an affront to democracy when we continue to have bills in front of us that this government rams through with what we call closure motions, which means essentially, "We've had a few hours. We don't really care what you have to say any more." We hardly bring the bills to committee. We just ram them through because, "We have a majority government and we can do what we want." I think that is the arrogance of governing, the arrogance of a government that after six years in power believes they can do what they want whenever they want and to heck with the public, to heck with the opposition. So certainly we will oppose this motion here today.

This bill itself, as we have mentioned, is a flawed piece of legislation to some degree. Much of what is in the bill has already been done.

What is interesting is that it excludes teachers in the private school system. Again, we understand that this government has decided they're going to give funding to private schools in the province of Ontario, that they're going to extend at least \$300 million a year that will come out of the public school system to private schools. But they have not determined that they are going to apply the same standards to those teachers in those school systems. We think that is inappropriate, that is wrong,

and again the double standard here is astonishing in what this government has said.

When you look generally at education, they're putting a great deal of effort into this bill. I wish they would put as much effort into ensuring there is adequate funding for our classrooms and for our kids.

I know in my own community, schools are being closed everywhere across the city of Hamilton. The Catholic board is now going through the process. The public board recently closed Scott Park high school in my riding, again as a result of this flawed funding formula that you've implemented to force boards to close particularly schools in the inner city: bigger, older schools. Because of the nature of those neighbourhoods, they're now no longer at 70% or 80% capacity; they may be at 50% capacity. Because of your funding formula, these schools are being forced to be closed by the school boards. You are ripping the heart out of those communities by closing these schools, by forcing the boards to close these schools because of your flawed funding formula, a formula that for the city of Hamilton now gives \$1,100 less per student than when this government came to office in 1995.

I have schools in my riding where on days like today, where it's raining outside, it rains into the classroom because the roofs are so bad. The teachers have to move the kids' desks so the kids don't get wet while they are sitting there in the classroom because of the fact that the roofs are leaking. That is the reality today of schools in my riding in the city of Hamilton as a result of the neglect of this government.

I wish they would put more effort into those types of deals. I wish they would put more money as is necessary into infrastructure, to make sure that at least we can fix roofs in schools, that at least it doesn't rain in the classroom when the kids are sitting there on a day like today.

1540

As shocking as that is, that is the reality of what's happening. We have kids in basements of schools in some conditions that you wouldn't dare walk around in; those kids are there because of the condition of those schools. That is the reality of what we see in Ontario today as a result of what this government has done to public education, and now they're going to fund \$300 million more toward private schools. I would suggest to the government that instead of wasting all your efforts on trying to fund private schools in Ontario, you put that \$300 million toward public education in this province and put more emphasis on more textbooks, more computers, more teachers, small classrooms, more resources where it really helps the kids.

This bill in front of us feels good and sounds good in what this government is trying to do. It has loopholes; it has weaknesses in it. Frankly, it's already been done to a great degree. Entry level testing we've proposed and we've supported and that is not something we have a problem with, but the rest of the bill to a great degree is flawed. We will simply oppose this motion here today

again, because this government is once again trying to ram legislation down the throats of Ontarians and the opposition here in the Legislature.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr David Christopherson): Further debate?

Mr Michael Prue (Beaches-East York): This is a closure motion as the previous speaker talked about. It's an effort to stop the debate. I guess the government doesn't want to hear a lot of debate about teacher testing. That may be in part because people on this side won't be talking so much about teacher testing but more about the abysmal state of education in Ontario. Maybe we'll be talking about what this bill includes and what it doesn't include. What it doesn't include is private school teachers. It only includes public school teachers. This government will be spending \$300 million a year giving money to people who choose to send their children to private schools. Those teachers will not be subject to this bill. They can have any qualifications or no qualifications at all. They will not be subject to the bill, and they will not be tested.

They're doing it at the same time that the Minister of Education is spending about \$700,000—at least that's the figure I remember—on a survey to send to all of the people in Ontario, asking them about schools, asking them all kinds of questions, but never coming right down to the nub of the questions: are the schools being adequately run, are there sufficient textbooks, is there enough money in the system and are the schools open in the evening for people to make use of them? The questions that are really important to the community will not be on that survey.

Instead, we are spending some time here debating whether or not teachers should be tested. One of the previous speakers said that as a policeman he was tested once a year. I'm sure there are professions that do a little bit of testing from time to time: in his case, the Breathalyzer law or whether you knew the newest court precedents or the newest chemicals that were added to the Breathalyzer to make sure it worked and whether you remembered it or didn't remember it. But I will tell you that education and teachers have a far greater range in scope than a Breathalyzer test. They should be equated with the equivalent of lawyers. They should be equivalent to other professions where, once you've passed the examination and once you're there and once you've proved you are competent to do the job, you are left to your own devices to do it. They should not be subject to testing, unless other professions are, and I include all of those professions. If the government is very serious about testing teachers, they should also be serious about testing police officers, firefighters, politicians, plumbers and every other person you are not passing bills to test.

One of the previous speakers started off his statement, "Education starts in the classroom with excellent teachers," and that's absolutely true. How do we get excellent teachers? Do we get them by testing them? I think not. A good teacher is born to the profession, is trained into the profession. A good teacher is not someone who suddenly

becomes good because he or she must study every year or every three years to be teacher tested.

The problem with the education system in Ontario is that it has gone through tumultuous, traumatic times. It has gone through times that have made it difficult, if not impossible, for teachers to do the kind of work they once did. You know, there was a time in this province—I'll go back to the time of a good Conservative government; back to the time, I guess, of Bill Davis—when education was of paramount importance, was absolutely essential to the province of Ontario.

Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina): Better.

Mr Prue: Better, OK. It was a time when money was spent on education, when universities were built; it was a time when teachers had respect in the community; it was a time when there were adequate funds for libraries. It was a time when all of those things happened. I don't know what has happened with this government and that goal that we had as a society to make sure that every child received the maximum benefit of an education; whatever he or she was best capable of doing, the educational programs were there for them. They were there if you needed special education, they were there if you needed English as a second language, they were there if you had the capability of going to university, and they were there with the building of the community colleges to make sure that every child had that opportunity. In all of that were teachers who cared, in all of that.

Suddenly, miraculously and unfortunately, in just the space of a generation, all that seems to have been eclipsed in some fervour of trying to save money and trying to streamline and trying to do, I guess, the same with less money. Quite frankly, I don't believe it can be done. What we need instead of teacher testing—instead of this program that will do very little or nothing to help students in the classroom—is smaller classes. We need classes where the teacher can have a better ratio between the teacher in the classroom and the number of students they're supposed to teach. In kindergarten, grade 1, in early school, that should be no more than 15. Later on, it may be as high as 20. Right now, we have 24, 25 or 26 children per classroom. It is simply too large to be effectively managed. That is the problem, not testing the teachers, but the fact that there are too many children in the classroom for them to give the kind of individual attention that they need to give.

We have the whole problem of the school environments: you have a school environment which is not a happy place. I would not put all the blame on anyone, but I went to a school commencement in East York last week and the valedictorian gave a very good speech. She was absolutely quite brilliant for an 18-year-old young woman. She talked about her school environment and the environment she had for the five years of her going to high school. She talked about having lived through two strikes. She talked about work slowdowns. She talked about, in the last year of her schooling, having no after-school activities. She talked about all the difficulties that she and her fellow students had in being able to get the

kind of education that the children only three, four or five years before had simply taken for granted. The school environment is poisoned, and it is not going to be helped by teacher testing.

You have the problem of the teachers and you want them to be tested. Well, 85% of all teachers that we're aware of take the courses now, the mandatory courses that you're going to talk about. They take them now. For the 15% who don't take them, perhaps you have a small case, but I would suggest that 85% of them are already complying with what you are trying to do by this legislation. What is more important to me is the commitment that teachers have to the students already, the students whom they teach. Seeing the cutbacks, seeing the lack of supplies, seeing that there is no longer money for field trips and everything else, the average teacher in Ontario today from their own pocket spends \$545 to make sure that the children in his or her care are able to do things that they would want them to do were it not for the cutbacks. That's what the teachers are committed to, and at the same time, we are going to tell them, "You need to be tested. You have to be tested because we want to say that you are a special group in that we won't do this to doctors or lawyers or nurses or plumbers or electricians."

This legislation proposes that they take courses, and the courses are quite limited, actually. They're five hours each, and seven of them are mandatory and seven of them are elective. Almost 85% of the teachers are already taking them anyway, and I'm sure that they're going to do these. But what's really important in this argument is that this same government has taken away the nine PA days that teachers used to have, the nine PA days which would easily accommodate all of these courses; they have taken them away, making it much more difficult for the elective and the obligatory courses to be taken.

1550

What is better? I'm going to suggest something that is far better than this bill. What is better is for the government to make a commitment to restore the nine PA days. It would be better for the government to take the 200 minutes per week that teachers used to get for preparation time and give it back to them, paid time to do the preparation so that when they stand up and try to teach the children, they can be sure that what they're teaching is absolutely factually correct, but more importantly, that it can be done in such a way to stimulate the interest of young children.

The government needs to get back to the funding of specialists. There aren't enough people who specialize in courses in our schools any more. This runs the whole range from people who do phys ed to pathologists, psychologists, speech therapists, librarians, all of those people who used to be in schools in the time of Bill Davis, in the time of an earlier, more enlightened Conservative government, all of those people who were considered absolutely essential to the young people and to the hope that Ontario once had. They're not there any more and it's time to look at re-funding them.

This government needs to look back at the authority for local initiatives. That is, at one time there were local

school boards across this province that used to raise taxes to look after their local schools. I'm not suggesting we go back to that, but what I am suggesting is that those local school boards be given some kind of authority and some kind of instrument to raise some form of taxes in those schools and in those jurisdictions where they are needed.

I will tell you, in some places they don't do everything by a formula and they never have. In the city of Toronto, the schools used to have swimming pools in them. They're not going to have swimming pools in them much longer because the 81 pools are all going to be shut down. They're going to be filled in with sand. As one person told me the other day, they were wondering what to call these new sandboxes and they thought they might call them the Ecker sandboxes, because that's where the kids are going to be playing. They're not going to be learning how to swim. They're going to be stuck in the sand, because you cannot leave the pools empty.

Then you've got other things. You need to go back to the local initiatives. If you're in northern Ontario, you may have to look at special programs and more monies to help our native peoples. If anyone has not benefited by the school system of this province or of Canada, it must surely be them. If it's Toronto, you may have to go back to programs—and we do need some more money for English as a second language. Those programs have suffered enormously. If you are in other parts of Ontario, I'm sure that the school boards there know their circumstances far better. They need to have the authority to make local initiatives that the people in those municipalities agree with and politicians and school board people who are willing to fight for them and to raise the funds for them. If we are going to have a base formula, there are places where more monies are needed and better opportunities are needed.

We need to go back to a time when the schools were safe. I want to tell you, all of the legislation in the world will not make the schools as safe as they once were. There was a stabbing in East York about 10 days ago and it was very sad to see. It was in one of the local schools in my riding, where children, because of circumstances I'm sure well beyond their control—family circumstances, school circumstances, the whole problem of growing up. One young fellow did some real damage. We need to get back to safer schools and we need some funds to do that.

In those schools not only is it the children who may be unsafe, but the schools themselves are getting very old. They are getting in quite decrepit condition and they need to be fixed up. They need janitors, they need caretakers, and there's nothing in this legislation that's providing that.

We need to go back to a school that actually has a library. I hope some of the members opposite remember those libraries. All schools used to have a library and a librarian. It didn't matter where you were from and it didn't matter how small the school was, it was considered a priority that the children would go in there and learn how to read, it was considered a priority that the

librarian would teach them about books and that they would have a fascination with learning that would last their whole lives. Unfortunately, the libraries in many schools are only open part-time now or not at all. We need to go back to that time. This legislation will not do anything to help us with libraries.

We need to go back to a time when schools remained open and were a focal part of the community. I have to tell you that there have been 138 school closures in the province of Ontario in this session of government—138 schools shut down. Just two weeks ago, I went to a very heated discussion from people in what was district 6 and 7 of the city of Toronto, which includes the greater part of Beaches-East York. I went there and there were at least 200 very angry parents in the audience. Seven Catholic schools that are located in district 6 and 7 are on the chopping block. They are about to be closed. We don't know which of the seven, because the discussion was that we have to close two and possibly three of these seven schools and which one should it be. Of course, everybody stood up and said, "Don't close the school in my neighbourhood."

Why should those schools be closed? Not one of them fails on safety standards. Not one of them does not have children. Surely, there has to be an alternative to what has been proposed. Even if the government were to allow them to sell the schools and put the money back into the other ones, that would be a better compromise than simply not being able to do anything with them at all.

I will tell you that the communities are extremely upset at what is happening with the school closings. You can add at least two schools to those 138, both of which will be in my riding and both of which have made an awful lot of people very angry with what is happening in their schools and to their children, and with the mandatory bussing that's going to ensue of a great many children.

We have the whole problem of schools being used after hours. There used to be a time when the school was the community focal point, where people came together for everything from ratepayers' meetings to Boy Scouts to Girl Guides, where people went after school for special courses or played in the gym. Those days are over. Children, adults and parents no longer make use of a community facility. They've been priced out of the market because the formula will not allow the caretakers to be there in the evening and will not allow cleanups of the schools.

There is nothing in this legislation that says a word about it. All it says is, "Test the teachers." How is that going to solve those problems? You have the whole problem of special education. There are 37,000 children on the special education waiting list, 37,000 who require something, from help with learning disabilities to psychologists to speech therapists and speech pathologists. They are there, 14,000 of them alone waiting just to be tested, and if parents cannot wait or if they have sufficient money, they are paying up to \$1,500 just to have them tested, just to find out that there's no money in the system to look after those children.

I will tell you that even when this is found out, the only alternative is, quite frankly, to get the speech pathologist, the psychologist, the special trainers and smaller class sizes. Testing the teachers isn't going to do any of this. Testing them isn't going to do a darned thing. Whatever money is spent on testing the teachers would be better spent on any of the other programs.

If the government was serious about looking after the small percentage of teachers who may not be up to snuff, it would be far better for the teachers to recognize them themselves. It would be far better for the principals in the local schools to be able to make that assessment and recommendation. It would be far better for the school boards, school trustees and superintendents of schools to make those assessments and to go in and look. That's the way it was always done and the way it always worked. It did not need the heavy hand of the province to come crashing down on the teachers. It did not need anything of the sort.

Quite frankly, that's where it can be done; and it can be done for a fraction of the cost, if any cost at all. It should be in the job mandate of the teachers, the principals and even the parents and the parent councils. It should be there for them to do it, not the heavy hand of government and not the testing that is being proposed.

1600

We need to have the schools profiled as well. We need the schools to show what they have, to continue to outline what programs they have and the success they have in teaching children. They need to have the community access that is so important, of parents coming in to see teachers, of parents coming in for after-school programs, of being able to document what they're doing. None of that is in this bill.

Last but not least, we need a full review of the funding formula, because if there is a culprit in all of the mess that's found in the schools in this province, it is the funding formula. It is a formula that simply does not work. It is a formula that does not take into account the children, the teachers or the aging infrastructure of our schools. It does not take into account anything except a square-foot basis at \$5.20, which quite frankly does not make any sense whatsoever. The local communities are all very different, the costs of the buildings are all very different, the costs of doing education are all very different and the children they serve are all very different. We have to get away from a funding formula that treats everybody the same. One size simply does not fit all.

This bill literally does nothing. It will test teachers, it will have a unified teacher plan, but in the end it will not produce one better teacher, it will not make one student better able to learn. It will create another government bureaucracy and, in the end, our school system will suffer and our children will suffer and the teachers who try very hard to deliver the program will become even more embittered than they already are. That's the sad reality of trying to push through this kind of legislation. It is far better, I would submit, to work with the teachers, their unions and the parents to come up with a formula that

will make sure that every teacher is the best he or she can possibly be.

I believe that the overwhelming majority—maybe 99%—are already that way. I remember teachers from my own day—and I'm sure that all of you who are parents and have kids in schools right now will say that the teachers are doing a phenomenal job. They deserve to be lauded for the work they do, not tested—and not tested in a way that is unfair and unlike every other group in our society. The government should not be ramming this through. We should take a lot of time, and perhaps the government should consider some better ways to spend the money than to force teacher testing.

Mr Frank Klees (Oak Ridges): I'm pleased to enter this debate on Bill 110, the Quality in the Classroom Act, 2001. I'm always happy to listen to members opposite on this subject particularly. I was interested, and I must say right off from the get-go here that while I agree with many things that the member for Beaches-East York had to say about the importance of teachers and their role in helping to train, educate and develop, not only in knowledge but certainly in character as well, the young people in our province, I must say I disagree with him on one point he made, and that is the suggestion that teachers are born. I'm sure that he misspoke on that; he surely didn't mean that. I agree that teaching is very much a special calling, because not everyone can do this job, not everyone can dedicate their lives to this important profession, not everyone has what it takes to be a teacher. But certainly teachers are not born. I believe that they are trained, they are taught and they dedicate themselves to many years of learning.

So Bill 110, the Quality in the Classroom Act, speaks precisely to that. The intention is that we come alongside teachers and we help them to be the best they can possibly be.

Since 1995, our goal has remained constant: to ensure student success and build an education system that supports achievement and excellence through high standards and accountability. We've already implemented a whole series of measures: a more rigorous curriculum for students from kindergarten through to the end of our new high school program; a new province-wide code of conduct to make our classrooms safe and respectful learning environments; and new school council regulations to provide parents with a stronger voice in their children's education. Over the last number of years I have heard from parents, and I've heard from teachers as well, that they have appreciated those reforms, those steps to make the classroom a much better place.

I believe the evidence is there and will continue to be there that the degree to which we are prepared to shore up the resources of the classroom, to support the professionals in the classroom, to help parents become more involved in the education of their children—the degree to which we advance that agenda—will in fact result in more quality of education, in much better prepared, all-rounded students as they graduate from our system.

Another element of those reforms was standardized testing to enable parents to know how their children are

doing. Speaker, I can tell you, and I'm sure you experienced the same, that in 1995, as we were campaigning in that election, there wasn't a door that I knocked on where the subject of education came up where either parents or teachers alike didn't talk about the need for some form of standardized curriculum, some form of standardized testing so that we would in fact know how well our students are doing.

Finally, this government has increased overall resources for education significantly. For example, with the additional \$360 million we're providing for the current school year, education spending has actually increased from \$12.9 billion in 1995 to \$13.8 billion today, a growth rate, I might add, well above that of enrolment.

The most important foundation of quality education is excellence in teaching, and that's what brings us back to this bill. Excellent teachers are vital in helping students succeed and achieve higher standards. Parents and taxpayers require the assurance that Ontario's children are being taught by the best-qualified and the most highly skilled professionals in Canada. This means we must have a clear and fair standard for measuring how well our teachers are in fact doing in the classroom.

These concerns led us last year to announce the Ontario teacher testing program. It's a comprehensive plan that has several key elements, and I want to just review some of those with you: a language proficiency test for new applicants to the teaching profession who took their training outside Ontario in a language other than English or French; a qualifying test for all new teachers in Ontario's classrooms; an induction or mentoring program for all new teachers; a mandatory professional learning program; an Ontario teacher recognition program; and a consistent province-wide performance appraisal system for teachers.

In looking at the existing professional development system in Ontario, we found that teacher training, upgrading and assessment were not as consistent, effective or rigorous as they could be. As the member from Beaches-East York indicated—and I don't disagree with him—the vast majority of our teachers are in fact in that category of excellence and take it upon themselves to further their educational program through professional development. The reality is, however, that not all of our teachers take that initiative. It is inconsistent across the province, and we're simply saying through this bill that we want all teachers to have the same standard of excellence across the province.

1610

This situation led us to create the Ontario teacher testing program, to ensure that professional development and assessment would be comprehensive across the province and fair for all Ontario teachers. We have implemented teacher testing in a phased-in, logical fashion. The language proficiency test requirement has been in place since September 2000.

We introduced Bill 80, the Stability and Excellence in Education Act, 2001, which this Legislature passed last June. Bill 80 established the foundation for mandatory

professional learning requirements for all teachers in the province. The professional learning program mandated by the Stability and Excellence in Education Act is both detailed and comprehensive. That is precisely what has been missing in the province to date. It requires teachers to take part in a series of professional development courses and activities over five-year cycles throughout their careers.

Bill 80 requires that the College of Teachers begin the professional learning program this fall: 40,000 randomly selected practising teachers, as well as 6,500 new teachers, began their five-year program this September. All other members of the college will begin their five-year program next year.

Bill 110 now moves us forward with the next steps in our plan to ensure that all teachers are teaching to the best of their ability. The Quality in the Classroom Act, 2001, proposes additional initiatives to support quality and excellence in teaching in two key areas. First, the legislation would establish a qualifying test for all new entrants to the profession, to ensure that all teachers begin their careers in this province with the knowledge and skills expected of a teacher in Ontario. I don't think there would be too many people who could object to that type of entrance examination. It only makes good common sense. Second, it will establish a comprehensive performance appraisal for the regular and consistent evaluation of teacher skills and classroom performance.

I'd like to address first the proposed requirements for a teacher qualifying test. Bill 110 proposes that new teachers be required to pass the Ontario teacher qualifying test in order to receive a certificate of qualification to teach in Ontario schools. That test would assess the readiness of candidates to effectively enter the classroom. Its purpose is to ensure that teachers have the necessary level of knowledge and skills that they need to begin teaching in Ontario schools. The test would be administered to all new graduates from Ontario's faculties of education and to teachers new to Ontario. It would be similar to entrance-to-the-profession tests used by professional bodies in other areas within the province today: nurses, dental hygienists and therapists, for example. So this is not something that is being imposed on this profession that isn't being asked of other professions.

As I indicated earlier, Bill 80 established a comprehensive system of professional learning for Ontario's teachers. We also need a province-wide approach to measuring how they apply what they have learned. The need for a comprehensive approach, then, to teacher evaluation in Ontario to improve and enhance teacher performance has already been established. We need a province-wide performance review that applies to all school boards and that is regular, consistent and fair to all teachers right across the province. That is precisely what Bill 110 is proposing.

Under the proposed teacher appraisal program, teachers would be expected to develop an annual learning plan, and this would be in consultation with their principals. The frequency and timing of teacher evaluations

would then be standardized. School principals and vice-principals would evaluate the classroom performance of current teachers every three years. I recall that when I attended school some time ago periodically someone would come into the classroom. At the time I didn't know who they were; apparently they were superintendents who would come to the classroom, and their purpose there was to evaluate how that teacher was doing. That's appropriate. It's not simply a matter of knowing what academic knowledge a teacher has, but how well are they actually able to translate that to their students, how effective are they in the classroom?

New teachers would be evaluated twice a year during their first two years of teaching. A teacher's knowledge of the curriculum and the way they impart it to students, as I indicated, would be reviewed, as well as their classroom management skills. Any low-performing teacher would be given the time and the support necessary to improve.

Parents and students will also have input into that performance appraisal process, and this is important, because at the end of the day it is the student who is on the receiving end of that teaching that's taking place. Parents will have a front-row seat in terms of knowing how well the teacher is doing relative to their children's performance. So this process that is being proposed under this legislation would actually engage the student as well as the parent in that appraisal process.

The three-year phase-in of the performance appraisal process would be established so that by September 1, 2004, all boards across the province, all teachers across the province would be covered.

Although Bill 110 focuses on providing support to teachers who need to improve their classroom performance, there are measures that could lead to school boards actually dismissing teachers who fail to show improvement. I think that's an important part of this legislation, that there actually be consequences, that there be some mechanism for school boards to deal with teachers who simply are not willing or are for some reason perhaps incapable of meeting the standards that are being set out. Given that circumstance, Bill 110 does set out clear and fair procedures to be followed if in fact a teacher receives repeated unsatisfactory performance appraisals and is then dismissed by a school board.

Bill 110 also provides safeguards to prevent low-performing teachers from simply moving from school to school to avoid the accountability that is intended in this legislation.

The final innovation provided by this legislation relates to parent and pupil involvement in the teacher appraisal process. Bill 110 provides for their input, as I indicated, to be obtained annually, and this would be by the principal or the vice-principal through a standard survey instrument.

Teachers play a critical role in influencing our young people in this province, in shaping their lives, in shaping their attitudes and ultimately in shaping their character. It's essential, therefore, that the evaluation of a teacher's

training and learning be continuous, that it be consistent, that it be effective and rigorous to the degree that is possible.

We want to ensure through this legislation and through the other reforms that we've introduced that all teachers have the up-to-date skills that are necessary, the knowledge and the training that they require to provide Ontario students with the best possible education. The proposed Quality in the Classroom Act is the latest step along the path toward a system where higher student achievement is the common goal of all education partners.

I've said this before, that regardless of how good the curriculum might be, regardless of how good the testing system might be that we introduce in this province, regardless of the legislation that we introduce to reform and improve education, at the end of the day, if we do not have highly qualified and skilled teachers who are motivated—and ultimately, this is more important—to bring those skills into the classroom and teach enthusiastically, then all of our initiatives and all of our efforts will at the end of the day not achieve the goals that are intended.

So I ask all members to join with me in supporting this important legislation, to set the pace, to demonstrate that in fact the intention of all of these education reforms is to ensure that Ontario's education system is the best not only in Canada but around the world, and through that, that our teachers as well will have the reputation of being the best in the world. I believe that this legislation can in fact be one further step to helping us achieve that. I trust that all members of the House will join us in supporting this.

1620

Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines): I always deplore the fact that I have to speak on a time allocation motion. I would prefer to be talking about several important issues that could come before the House, whether it's in the field of education or health care. There are people in my community who are getting treatment for macular degeneration. It's Visudyne treatment. They have to pay \$2,600 per treatment. That's OK if you're rich. If you're not rich, that's very difficult. We have our community care access centres in trouble because of government underfunding and now taking control. So we have all these things happening that we could be debating, discussing and trying to improve, and here we are discussing another time allocation motion.

People should know why we have a time allocation motion before us. It's because this government wants out well before Christmas, if they can get out, so they can run their own show, their leadership dog-and-pony show, across the province. So you don't have one minister contradicting another minister. I went at noon to hear one of the ministers speak. It was on the subject of education, which she dwelt on with some interest. That was the Honourable Elizabeth Witmer. What she talked about was the fact that the teaching profession is demoralized. It's been demoralized because of the way this government has treated members of the teaching profession. She proposed that she was going to change that. When I

mentioned that in an interjection in the House, the Minister of Education said, "Well, Mrs Witmer voted for all the bills that the teachers had objected to." Perhaps she's right in that regard. But we should know why we're rushing all the legislation through.

We could sit close to Christmas. We can sit in the new year. I would prefer to see us come back in January and February and debate and discuss and try to improve upon legislation that is brought forward. That won't happen, because these people want out. Their trick is to bring them to the House at the last possible date, rush them out at the earliest possible date, and sit both day and night so they can rush the legislation through and face as little scrutiny as possible, as few media scrums as possible, and that's most unfortunate.

On this bill, again, it's a case where we're talking about education. The member from Oak Ridges mentioned the whole idea of having enthusiastic teachers who want to go into the classroom, who want to teach. Well, I have not seen the profession as demoralized as I've seen it today. I was discussing with a number of teachers the other day the problem of that demoralization: how people today retire not two or three years after they're eligible, not at the end of the year, not at the end of the term; they retire the day they can retire. These are people who have dedicated their lives to teaching. These aren't just people who floated in and floated out and never had an interest. When you see that kind of teacher getting out as soon as possible, you know what this government has done to education.

I don't think there is anybody in this House or in this province who says that everything any government has done in education is wrong, and that includes this government. But I think they look at the motivation, the way things are implemented and what we actually see, and they make a judgment on that basis.

One of the problems we're confronting in education is that of closing schools now. In my own community we have three elementary schools, among others, that recently have been placed under considerable scrutiny: Lakebreeze, Maplewood and Dalewood. There is a battle royal going on at the present time. The government sits and smirks—not the members who are here today—because the people who are objecting to the closing of those schools go to the local board and blame the local members of the board of education.

Unfortunately, the members of the board of education are in a straitjacket. That straitjacket has been manufactured here in Toronto by the Ministry of Education and by the Premier's office, essentially, with a new formula which really militates in favour of closing some of the neighbourhood schools that have been so important to those neighbourhoods over the years.

I can sympathize and agree with all of the parents who are fighting to keep those schools open at the present time. They are neighbourhood facilities; they're community centres. It means an awful lot in terms of the neighbourhood. It means people with children will move into a neighbourhood if they realize there's a school

there. What's happening is that schools are closing. Some have already closed—some secondary schools, some elementary schools—and kids have to be bused. My estimation today would be that there are far more children who are now on buses than there ever were before, and I'm not just talking about the rural kids who are devastated by the fact that in a small town or village a school is closed and people are sent a couple of hours on a bus somewhere else.

To the people who are trying to defend Maplewood school, Dalewood school and certainly Lakebreeze school and all of the other schools in our community from being closed, I am clearly and personally on the side of keeping those schools open as community schools. That cannot be accomplished easily unless the provincial government, through the Minister of Education and the Premier, is prepared to change that formula to allow those kinds of schools to stay open and continue to play a significant role in their neighbourhoods. I call upon the minister at the provincial level to do that so that the local boards of education are not placed in an unenviable position of having to slam the door shut on any particular school and force children either to move or to travel some considerable distance to a school, and to have that property and that building lost for community use, although we do know, again because of the funding formula, that the cost of utilizing the property and the building is now much more than it ever was before, because this government has decided that user fees are going to have to be imposed because they won't cover the use of those buildings in their funding formula.

I notice the government is now advertising once again. One thing you can always count on: turn on the television set and the government is advertising, squandering millions upon millions of dollars—it's going to be up over \$240 million now—on self-serving, blatantly partisan government advertising. The irony today is that they are advertising the advertising that's coming. They're having advertising saying, "Now, we have this survey out there. And by the way, you can read ON magazine which is coming out," which is another propaganda sheet this government puts out.

I wonder where the taxpayers' coalition is. I'm going to phone Frank Sheehan. He used to be the head of the taxpayers' coalition in our area. I'm going to phone Frank up and complain to him that indeed there is a squandering of money taking place, taxpayers' dollars, on clearly self-serving advertising. That should be discontinued. The money should be applied to the classroom, to amending the formula. That would be, I think, welcomed by people in this province.

We had the word from the Treasurer today. He's now saying, as is the Chair of Management Board, "Well, we're going to have to make some cuts." The economic nonsense they've tried to peddle to the people of this province for the last six years is now of course being exposed. I'm one who says that the booming Ontario economy was as a result of the booming American economy. I don't blame the government today. I'm consistent.

I don't say when there's a downturn today that it's this government's fault, because it wasn't their doing when we were booming.

What I do object to is the government choosing to give away \$3.5 billion in tax cuts. We have a huge \$2.2-billion tax present to the corporations of this province. We have at least a \$300-million voucher system that some of the right-wing members of the caucus would like to see for private schools, and we have more income tax cuts coming. The people I'm talking to are saying, "Look, would you please invest that in Ontario?" The jig is up. At first, they were kind of attracted to these tax cuts, and now they're seeing the consequences. Oh, the rich people are for it and the people in the private schools are going to be for it. The corporations are roundly applauding, as well as going to the fundraising dinners in great numbers. They're all happy with it, but now people are beginning to see the consequences, because when there's a downturn in the economy, these people are now panicking. They don't know what to do.

I know what's going to happen. There are going to be further cuts to education and health care and environment—not the Ministry of the Solicitor General, because he's got a crisis, but there are going to be all kinds of cuts. Maybe the Ministry of Transportation as well—all kinds of cuts. Why is that going to happen? Because these people are foolishly giving away \$3.5 billion in tax cuts which will largely benefit the wealthiest and most influential people in this province.

I'm checking with my members to see how many speakers we have so that I know how long I can take.

1630

Mr Marchese: Two more minutes.

Mr Bradley: We have two more minutes. The member says two more minutes. I'm delighted with that.

Interjection.

Mr Marchese: You're strangulated.

Mr Bradley: I'm delighted with that. I am strangulated by this, but I have to go to a committee, so that's another problem.

What we could see in education, and I think what people are looking for, are services for those in need. People are calling constituency offices virtually in tears, saying their special-needs children are unable to get the services they need in our schools. That's most unfortunate, because if they don't get them, there are some real problems created. Very often those children end up, unfortunately, as adults in the correctional services system or end up on social services. Why? Because they didn't have that early intervention on the part of the provincial government. We've got all kinds of money for tax cuts for corporations but not the money to service the legitimate needs of children within our system, students within our system who have special circumstances that require addressing by this government.

We'd like to see smaller classes taking place. We'd like to see an infrastructure improvement to our schools. While they are closing some, they have portables all over in other places. There are many problems to be identified,

and this government is fiddling around with a number of things they think are politically popular.

I would say that if you went to members of the teaching profession and said, "Look, would you come up with a model for teacher evaluation, because people want to see that," they would do so. This is simply all about once again pandering to people who don't like teachers or members of the teaching profession, because we know principals evaluate them, superintendents, when they have time, evaluate them, and others evaluate teachers within the system. I think we want to make sure the teachers who come in are well qualified. We want to encourage and ensure that there is professional development taking place.

What I would recommend to the government is that they sit down, as I think Elizabeth Witmer was proposing today—I don't think I'm misquoting her—with members of the teaching profession, bring them together and try to find a formula that will be supported by all in this province. That would be something useful, instead of ramming through yet another bill using time allocation or closing off the debate.

Mr Marchese: It's a pleasure to speak to this bill, Bill 110, and it's a pleasure to welcome you, Ontarians, to this political program. I've got to tell you, you're special people; you are, because those of you who watch this political program are engaged in what is happening in this place. You're part of the debate. By watching this debate, you are part of it, and you're very special, because there are a whole lot of other people who just don't want anything to do with politics. So you have a special burden as well and a responsibility in terms of listening to what the members of this assembly have to say, listening to what the government and the opposition have to say, and at the end of the day deciding which side of the fence you're on. You have a special responsibility, because at the end of it, when you discover that the government may not be telling you what you think is going on in your schools and in your community, the obligation on your part is to go out and tell those who do not watch this political program about what this government is doing to you. That's the obligation you've got.

Our obligation is to speak against motions of this sort, which strangle debate in this place and are intended to choke off discussion. Why? Because, as the member from Beaches-East York said earlier, this government doesn't want to hear about what they're not debating but only what they want to put forth to make it appear to you, good citizens, that they're actually doing something about education—in fact, making it better.

The real issue, good citizens, is the following: "Everyone likes to focus on numbers and on measurements," says the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. They've got it right. Why? Because they're easy to understand. But they just deflect our attention away from other issues, and what are those other issues? They are funding cuts, fewer resources, more central control and more rules. That's what the debate is all about, except that they don't want you to focus on what this govern-

ment has done; they want you to focus on another agenda so your attention is not cast on the real things that matter to them, which is how you centralize education control. Remember, this is the government that never wanted to centralize anything, because this government is, of course, against centralization generally, à la Communist model.

The former Communist bloc liked centralized control. I know, and you're opposed to that. So it puzzles me that you take on a model that you reject from other places that have other ideologies, but you exercise the same kind of control over education. Control over money and over the educational system is now in your hands—in the Premier's hands, by and large, and now the Minister of Finance is controlling the educational system, and the Minister of Education to some extent. So it's organized centrally by you, the government. No one has any local control any longer. It's centralized planning.

Why don't you talk about why you believe that the centralized model is the way to go? Why don't you ever speak about that? You don't because you don't want to tell the public that the reason you centralized control is to take control of the finances in order to make the \$2.3-billion cut. That's what it's about. But good Lord, no, you wouldn't want to talk about that. As the member from Oak Ridges said, "Oh, no, we increased funding to education." How it is that you can take \$2.3 billion out and say, at the same time—which is curious. I don't know how you do it, but the magicians on the other side can. They take out \$2.3 billion and they say, "No, no, we put in more." They're good magicians, good Ontarians, good citizens all and good taxpayers. Aren't they good? You take out money and you say, "Oh, no, we put more money in. We wouldn't want to talk about cuts, of course, because, no, we have improved the educational system since we Tories have come into power."

So it's to deflect attention from the real issues that are affecting rather negatively the educational system that we're talking about teacher testing. Teacher testing is the politicization of the educational system that these people said they never wanted to do. They said they don't want politics in education, and that's why they beat up on trustees and teachers, but particularly trustees. So it's not good for trustees to be politically engaged in the educational system, but it is all right for this government to introduce politics in the educational system. How can you have two standards? Citizens, do you understand what I'm saying? They said that trustees are too political, but it's OK for Mike Harris to be political and to centralize control so as to, presumably in the words of the Oak Ridges moraine, improve the educational system.

Teacher testing is punitive; it is intended to be so. It is intended to say to you, Ontarians, "The system is broken," as Mr Snobelen said six years ago or so. "The system is broken," and they need to fix it. The system was never broken. But they had to create a crisis to make it appear to you citizens that they need to correct the problem. The correction of the problem is to take \$2.3 billion out. That's what it's about. It's punitive in its intent, and they know it.

You have Frank Klees, the member from Oak Ridges, constantly saying with that nice, calm, oily—no, not oily but rather honey—voice that they're trying to improve the system. They're not improving the system. He thinks that by adding that nice, oily voice of his it's going to make it sound nice and acceptable to the parents, but it's nothing of the kind. It's not honey; it's oil that is oozing out of the words of these members when they talk about measures intended to improve the educational system, because it isn't. I know it, teachers know it and parents involved in the educational system know it as well. The people who do not know it are the ones who are outside of the educational system. They are the ones these people are appealing to. It is for that reason they are putting out the Ontario Parent Survey on Education. This survey, member for Oak Ridges, told me, when I went to the press conference, that you guys ran out of ideas. You've exhausted your supply of beating up on teachers. So they came up with this survey.

1640

The first line, to read it to you—listen to how, I wouldn't say illiterate but how almost elaborate it is in style, and I don't know whom it is intended to reach. But listen to this: "Please tell us about the child whose experience will provide the basis of your responses in this survey." It's very academic, I've got to tell you. If you want to speak to the majority of people, you don't write this way. I don't know whom they hired. It could be some good American, but I'm sure it's not an American. Do you understand what I'm saying? Whom are they talking to? If you really want to reach ordinary people, that's not the way to write, first of all. Second, the Minister of Education announced at that press conference, "We want to talk to the parents, but also we want to talk to all Ontarians." So she contradicted what she really intended to do when she said, "We want parental input," and then she said, "We want thoughtful input," which was curious.

The problem is twofold: one, it's intended for Ontarians, non-parents, to comment on the school system even if they don't have any children in the system. How they can comment on the system and not be connected to the system is not beyond my imagination, but it is a bit difficult to ask people who are not connected. If you've got children, by and large you're probably connected to the education system. If you're not—so what are they really doing with the survey? They want feedback from the Ontario population to have a sense of political positioning in the next year, when they might be calling this election, the next one. "Political positioning" means, "What is it that we can glean from this survey that people answer that we can use for our platform the next time around? Because we ran out of ideas." Citizens, they ran out of ideas.

Then the minister said, "We want thoughtful responses." "Thoughtful responses" means, good Tories, the few of you who are in this place—it says, "Please indicate the grade of the child," and then you indicate the grade. "Assessing the quality of education ... how would

you describe the overall quality of the education your child personally received in his or her last full school year? Would you say it is excellent, good, satisfactory, fair”—the minister said she wants thoughtful. The answers to these questions are “excellent, good ... fair, poor.” Presumably that’s thoughtful as a response.

If you don’t have children in the system, there is no line saying, if you’re not a parent, how you answer these questions. Yet they will be able to answer that, and it will be done thoughtfully because they will be able to tick it off, saying, “Excellent, good, fair or poor.” That’s the survey they’re doing. The minister said she thinks they’re spending \$700,000 for this piece of work.

I was fascinated by it. Here is a woman, the Minister of Education, who has got, as we say in Spanish—and I won’t say it—who’s got something, right? What she’s doing publicly is what normally governments do privately, through polling. She wasn’t ashamed of being attacked about the television ads that she’s already put into the networks as a way of proselytizing, as a way of advertising what this government has been doing. It wasn’t good enough to have been shamed into spending money so publicly, so politically. She then, instead of hiding this piece of work and doing it on the sly, publicly has the fortitude to come and say, “We’re going to spend money and do a survey,” and the survey is nothing but political work. I thought, this minister’s got a lot of strong stuff about her. They are not ashamed.

Anyway, I wanted to comment on the survey, good citizens, as a way for you to understand the fact that this government will waste no effort and will waste a lot of your taxpayers’ money to get from you something from here that they can use for the next election, because they ran out of ideas. They have nothing more to say. Thank God they have nothing more to say, because they have already assaulted the system more than is their due, more than they can take.

The member from Oak Ridges makes the point that, “We’re working with them”—teachers, presumably—“as education partners.” How can you assault people day in and day out and call them partners? Then he argues that the teachers are not motivated, which presumably this teacher testing and also the teacher performance reviews are doing: motivating teachers. He says, “If teachers are not motivated, they will lose the initiative toward accomplishing the goals that they set out.” I say, how can you—to give an example, if you treat your own children with such disdain, where you tell them they’re moronic, where you tell them that they are not up to snuff on a daily basis, where you tell them they’ve got to pull up the straps and start teaching better because they’re just not good enough, where you tell them day in and day out, “We’ve got to help you out because you’re not doing a very good job, son”—imagine treating your son in that way. Is that going to motivate the kid to perform better? That kid is going to become, at the end of the day, one beat-up young man, one young man who’s going to have a hell of a time surviving later on, because you have not given him the kind of support that he needs to grow up in

a healthy manner. I liken it to an example of how you can abuse your own children to the extent that they won’t be motivated to do what they ought to be doing as healthy children, and that is to grow up with a parent or parents who, in a healthy way, raise them so that they feel dignified of their own abilities.

Do you understand that, member from Oak Ridges moraine? What you have done is to assault the teachers to such an extent that they are not motivated to do the job they want to do. Many of them are so disillusioned and dispirited that they have quit the system, both teachers and principals.

Principals are in charge of making sure they provide performance reviews, which is what this bill is all about. I told the member the last time that Principal Griffin from Toronto-Danforth told us about operating a snow blower on a snowy day, cleaning up when the toilets overflow, moving furniture. These are the activities that he’s engaged in that take much of his time day in and day out. It occupies his time in a way that is not part of the leadership that he’s asked to provide. The leadership of a principal is to provide help to those teachers so they can provide a better way to deliver that curriculum that you have so generously given them. Principals are there to help them, to make sure they are able to master the new curriculum you’ve given them so that all kids are able to operate to the maximum of their abilities. But Principal Griffin tells us he’s spending time cleaning schools, cleaning toilets, clearing snow.

How, good citizens, can you expect teachers to do a good job when they’re assaulted all the time? How can you expect that of the principal, who’s busy doing things that he ought not be doing, when presumably he’s going to have the job—he always had it and she always had it—of appraising and evaluating a teacher’s work? How can they find the time to do that while at the same time they’re being asked to do the job of caretakers? How can we do that? We’ve done that because the funding model that these Tories have introduced is simply inadequate. It’s not people-based; it’s not children-based.

We know from the surveys that have been done by People for Education—and, by the way, People for Education have devoted enormous amounts of time tracking what the schools are missing ever since this government came into power. They were the only ones in the system tracking the shortage of textbooks; I’ll go through the list in a second. They’ve asked the minister for the last two years for a meeting. The Minister of Education has not been able to find the time to meet with People for Education. For two years they have not been able to get a meeting. They are the ones who have tabulated, very diligently and with a great deal of care, all the interesting highlights of the cuts that this government has made.

1650

Here are some of the discoveries they have made in the tracking: province-wide parent fundraisers fundraised a total of \$30 million. What does it mean to me when they say that? It means they’re so short of money that

they are raising more money than ever before. They are fundraising for basic things in the schools. Is that right to you, citizens? It's wrong, I argue, and I know you feel like we and People for Education do, that raising \$30 million to make up for the cuts of this government isn't something parents should be doing on top of paying taxes.

They have shown that 42% of schools reported fundraising for classroom supplies; 58% of classes have 25 students or fewer, a 14% improvement since 1998, which is interesting; 66% of schools report students are still sharing textbooks; 65% of schools report worn out or out-of-date textbooks; only 68% of schools have a library staffed by a teacher-librarian compared to 80% in 1998; only 18% of schools have a full-time teacher-librarian. The number of schools with a full-time principal is down 10% since 1998. Only 37% of Ontario schools have a specialist physical education teacher, down 10% since 1998. The number of schools with English-as-a-second language programs is down 24% since 1998. The number of schools with design and technology specialist teachers is down 48% since 1998. The litany goes on and on in terms of the cuts this government has made in waging a needless war against our school system.

In Toronto our pools are threatened with closure because the Minister of Education said in answer to a question from the member for Beaches-East York, "We don't fund pools." She said it in a very haughty manner, in a very dismissive manner. We argue on this side, "We know you don't fund the pools, because boards of education in the past were able to raise the money on their own through the control of the property tax that they had, and they decided it was important to have the pools in our schools a long time ago. They were able to pay for it because they had access to the property tax base." When you centralized funding and you took that away, it meant that the boards had no more control. It meant that they're on their own in terms of paying for those pools. So we understand, Minister of Education, that in Durham you don't have any pools and you know that you don't have any. You may not have known that Toronto has pools—I'm not quite sure—but once you discovered that Toronto has pools and they're threatened with closure because they don't have any money to keep them open any more, surely, given that you took centrally, bureaucratically, control of education financing, given that you've done that, could you not have restored sufficient funding so that school boards that have pools could keep them open? I say yes, that's what you should be doing; that's your job.

But you centralized funding for a reason: to take money out of school boards, not to put money in. That's what we should be talking about. We should be talking about what's missing in the educational system and not what it is that you think ought to be there for political reasons. We are engaged in this political debate so that you can win the hearts of 40% or 50% of the population who, in your mind, hopefully will believe that you're improving the educational system.

If those improvements indeed were happening, they would show themselves in educational outcomes. The fact is the educational outcomes of children, through the rigorous test that you have waged against students and against teachers, are showing that the improvement is not there to be seen. There is no better educational outcome than in the past. So what it tells me is that it's a political game, similar to the income tax cuts that you have given to wealthy Ontarians and the corporate sector in this province.

I remember the Premier saying that tax cuts were going to make economies recession-proof. But we have a recession now, and if tax cuts were to have been successful, as the Premier had indicated, we would have—

Mr Mazzilli: It's just a slowdown.

Mr Marchese: Frank Mazzilli says it's just a slowdown at the moment. It could deepen, but—hold it—income tax cuts should have forestalled even a slowdown let alone an economic recession. If the politics are, as our illustrious finance minister states all the time, that these tax cuts are good for us, then presumably they should have forestalled even, Mr Mazzilli, a minor slowdown of the economy. But it's not showing that. So, Frank, I say to you, what's happening? What are you guys doing? You say that your initiatives will save all Ontarians and create the jobs we need so they'll never be as unemployed as they were in the past, and yet we're seeing a slowdown.

Mr Mazzilli: Short-term.

Mr Marchese: Oh, short-term, we hope? And yet the Management Board Chair announced today—he didn't announce quite yet—that there will be \$5 billion in cuts. Brace yourselves.

Hold it. The income tax cuts were supposed to have saved Ontario, created jobs ad infinitum. What's happening? And all of this money that these income taxes are generating, where is it going that we should—Management Board Chair says we possibly need to make cuts in the order of \$5 billion?

Good citizens, I bring this issue to your attention because when the member from Oak Ridges moraine says, "We are introducing these initiatives to improve education," I say to you it's not achieving the desired effect. It's achieving the political effect that you wanted but not educational outcomes, similar to the income tax cuts that you have frittered away. You've wasted billions and billions of dollars to no avail.

Not only that, the Minister of Finance in his wisdom—not in the wisdom of the Minister of Education, because she wasn't consulted, poor woman, *la pauvre*—has decided on her behalf that private schools were going to get money. And it's not \$300 million; it will be more. Because the Premier indicated it would be \$500 million; \$500 million taken out of our meagre budgets, because we're broke. We don't have any money, we're going to have to cut five more billion, yet the Minister of Finance in his wisdom was able to find 300 million to 500 million bucks for private schools.

Now, Mr Ernie Eves, who's coming back as a leadership contender, said, "Hold on." He wasn't quite certain

about this private-school funding, but he argued, unlike the illustrious Minister of Finance, that if money should go to private schools, then they need to follow our Ontario curriculum. Oops. Because the Christian schools, the religious schools say, "Uh-uh. That's not good." They're going to have to go to Mr Flaherty, the finance minister, and say, "Jimmy, what's going on? I hope he's not going to win, because if he wins, we're going to have to follow that curriculum, and you know how we feel about the curriculum. We feel, as religions, we should have our own curriculum and not something imposed by the centralized government." It's going to be fun. It's going to be fun watching this debate.

Mr Clement, the Minister of Health, said, "Oh, no, we need more tax cuts, not less." The other illustrious member, the Minister of Health, says, "We need more tax cuts. It may not be enough to cut \$5 billion." If Clement gets into power, we're going to have to cut, who knows, \$10 billion more from our ministries, eh, David? I know you're enjoying this discussion. He's enjoying it so much he's leaving.

If Mr Clement, the Minister of Health, gets elected, who knows how much we're going to have to cut from our ministries.

Good citizens, we have been doing performance reviews for teachers for a long, long time. Teachers are likely—as much as they don't like what you people are doing to them—to be accepting this because they've been doing it. It's not new to them.

They know you're doing it for political reasons. I know you're doing it for political reasons. I want the watchers, the citizens, to know it's all politics and nothing else. As long as you know and you work with us to make sure we share this knowledge with the other Ontarians these people are trying to reach, we're going to be able to throw these guys out. We're going to be able to throw this crowd out whenever they call the election, which might be earlier than we suspect.

1700

I tell you, on the issue of teacher testing it's all peer politics. They know that as soon as you say you're going to test teachers, 60% of the people out there are saying, "Yes, that's good," and it's politics. Is it effective in terms of educational outcome? No. There is no study in the world that says testing teachers, in the old form they thought of or the new form, is going to make anything better. You've got to work with teachers, you have to work with parents and it's got to be collaborative. You can't beat them up. Otherwise, Frank Klees from Oak Ridges, they won't collaborate with you, they won't be motivated and they won't be able to teach our children very, very well, which is what we really want, member from Oak Ridges moraine. Work with me, Ontarians; work with us in opposition to defeat this government.

Mr Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): It's always a pleasure to follow the member from Trinity-Spadina and it's a pleasure to speak on this bill this evening, this motion for Bill 110, the Quality in the Classroom Act, 2001.

It's the member from Oak Ridges, not the moraine. I know you're so happy with that bill, that piece of legislation we put through, that you can't get rid of it in your mind and you just keep talking about the moraine bill. It was great that you acknowledged him as the member from the Oak Ridges moraine. He is a great member from there.

It is an honour to stand here this afternoon to speak on Bill 110. It's the latest step in our government's comprehensive plan to reform publicly funded education in our province. As parliamentary assistant to Minister Ecker, I have had an opportunity to visit a number of schools across our province. In fact, I was happy to be in Halton last week, in Mr Chudleigh's riding, to visit the Halton Catholic District School Board. It was a pleasure to be there. I think it was around the 260th major addition we've done in the province of Ontario.

Interjections.

Mr Dunlop: I heard the heckling going on over there from the member from Kingston talking about the penitentiary. Of course, you're a specialist on penitentiaries, coming from Kingston. I'm so proud that just a week ago we opened the new prison in Penetanguishene, a \$90-million government of Ontario investment in my riding. I'm so pleased. The spinoff has been phenomenal. We've had 330 new jobs created out of that facility and \$25 million invested just in the local economy and construction. It's phenomenal. Yes, I've talked to the local residents and they're very happy to have those jobs. I'm very pleased with that.

I want to let you know that the purpose of our education reform—

Interjections.

Mr Dunlop: You see, isn't it amazing how it sets them off when you tell the truth here, when you actually mention how many jobs have been created and how much money has been invested? They don't like to hear those types of things. What's wrong with that? We've hardly had any federal dollars invested in our riding and I don't hear anything about that, but when we have a \$90-million investment in something like a superjail, it bothers people to hear that. We're proud to have that in Simcoe North and we're proud of that \$90-million investment and those 300 new jobs.

Excellence in education starts in the classroom with the best possible teachers. Every one of us carries with us memories of teachers who made a difference, who inspired us to dream dreams and meet challenges we were not sure we could accomplish. Good teachers prepare today's students for lives of success and fulfillment tomorrow, but in our changing world they must do something else as well. It is essential that they instill a love of lifelong learning in our students, as well as providing them with the tools to meet the challenges of changing jobs and new careers. For teachers to be able to get students ready for tomorrow's world, teachers themselves must be continually enhancing their skills, adapting to new technologies and keeping their skills up to date.

Of course, teachers are not alone in facing these challenges. Many other professions are faced with challenges of meeting tough expectations for quality and excellence from clients, consumers and the public. Professions other than teaching are embracing these new realities of a competitive world where comparisons and appraisals of professional performance are constant. Many professionals today have a variety of entry requirements, standards for professional development, ongoing assessments and accountability practices. For example, regulatory bodies for dental hygienists, nurses, occupational therapists and lawyers all require candidates to pass exams that test basic knowledge and skills to become fully licensed or registered to practise in Ontario.

The Law Society of Upper Canada requires its members to provide information on their continuing legal educational activities. The Ontario Association of Architects has a mandatory continuing education requirement for all licensed members. The Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario requires its members to complete a mandatory program of professional development over a specified time period.

Ontario has many excellent teachers, and many of them recognize the need to keep their knowledge and skills current. They are actively involved in professional development activities to build their qualifications and develop new knowledge and skills. That is why our government has introduced a comprehensive teacher-testing program to ensure that all teachers, both new and experienced, have the capability to help our students succeed and achieve higher standards.

Bill 110 would establish a qualifying test for all entrants to the profession, whether trained in Ontario or elsewhere, to ensure they have the basic knowledge and skills expected of an Ontario teacher. New teachers would be required to pass the qualifying test to be certified by the Ontario College of Teachers and to be able to teach in the province of Ontario.

The second purpose of Bill 110 is to create a comprehensive performance appraisal system to evaluate teachers on their performance in the classroom. The new provincial standards outlined in the legislation would ensure that principals and school boards regularly and consistently evaluate teachers' knowledge and skills. In addition, the legislation would provide for parents and students to have input into the appraisals process, and low-performing teachers would be given the time and support they need to improve.

In the time I have today, I would like to focus on the details of the performance appraisal system proposed by Bill 110. Bill 80, which the Legislature passed last June, established a comprehensive framework for professional learning by Ontario teachers. Bill 80 requires all teachers to participate in a series of professional development activities. Bill 110 builds on the provisions of Bill 80 in several ways. The bill would establish the regulatory authority necessary for the establishment of teacher learning plans. These plans would be developed by teachers in consultation with their principals, and would map out the action plan for their professional growth.

There is an essential and necessary link between professional learning and evaluating performance. Mandatory professional learning ensures that teachers' knowledge and skills are up to date. Performance appraisals provide the necessary quality assurance that professional learning has been effective and that the teachers in our classrooms are the best they can be.

Equally important is the way Bill 110 would bring consistency to teacher appraisals in reference to their frequency, timing, standards and methods. This is a critical need that was drawn to our attention by a number of education partners, especially the council of the directors of education. As we developed this legislation, we asked the Council of Ontario Directors of Education to conduct a survey of teacher appraisal practices across the province. What the directors' survey found confirmed the need for taking a much more comprehensive approach to evaluating teacher classroom performance. While boards have been developing tighter practices in this area, few boards today have policies and programs in place to help weak teachers meet the standards they need to achieve. In addition, few boards currently have evaluation policies that recognize teacher excellence or identify possible mentors or exemplary teachers. These findings reconfirm the value of Bill 110 and the need to provide consistent, across-the-province standards for teacher evaluation. The creation of such standards would clearly be a major factor in ensuring that our teacher appraisal system is fair to all members of the profession no matter where they teach in our province.

1710

These are the reasons that the bill would provide for every experienced teacher to have an evaluation year every three years and for there to be at least two evaluations during that year. In addition, Bill 110 would also do the following:

It provides for all beginning teachers to receive two evaluations during each of their first two years in the classroom and for all teachers new to a board to be evaluated two times in their two years with a new employer.

It provides that if a principal has concerns about a teacher's performance, he or she may do an appraisal of the teacher more frequently. It also provides that teachers can be evaluated by principals or vice-principals.

It provides for provincial regulations to set standards and methods for performance appraisals. These can spell out the competency to be evaluated, the rating scales to be used and the standards, methods and timelines to be taken into account in conducting performance appraisals.

Finally, it provides for the minister to be able to issue guidelines relating to the knowledge and practices that evaluators should look for in conducting performance appraisals.

Our government strongly believes in the involvement of all parents in their children's education. That's the reason we created school councils, to ensure that parents have a stronger voice in what's going on in their children's schools. Bill 110, therefore, would also provide the regulatory authority for parent and pupil input to be

taken into account when teachers are being appraised. However, parental and pupil comments would not be the sole factor in an unsatisfactory rating of a teacher.

Teacher appraisal is designed to ensure that the teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to ensure student achievement and excellence. The appraisal system has another important purpose as well, and that is to support and facilitate teacher improvement. That's the reason Bill 110 places significant emphasis on what happens when teachers receive a less-than-satisfactory rating.

Bill 110 provides a very detailed and fair approach to teachers receiving a less-than-satisfactory rating with a real emphasis on opportunities to turn an undesirable situation around to a teacher's advantage. Let me detail for members how the proposed system would work. An unsatisfactory rating would require the teacher to receive written notice detailing what is lacking in their performance and what changes are expected. The principal would also be required to provide the teacher with an improvement plan specifically outlining the steps to be taken in order to improve.

Within 60 days of the first unsatisfactory rating, the principal would conduct a second appraisal to see if improvements have been made. If the rating remains unsatisfactory, the same process that applied after the first rating would be followed. In addition, a second unsatisfactory rating would result in a teacher being placed on review. During the on-review period, intensive remediation and supports would be available to a teacher based on a plan jointly developed by the teacher, the principal and the superintendent. The on-review status would also require the principal to monitor the teacher's performance, consult on necessary improvement steps and provide feedback to the teacher.

A third appraisal would be required within 120 school days of the teacher having been placed on the on-review period. If the teacher is still found to be unsatisfactory after the third appraisal or after it has been determined that the best interests of the students require removal of the teacher from the classroom, a recommendation for dismissal would be required to be submitted by the principal to the local school board.

Pending the board's decision on whether to terminate the teacher's employment, the teacher would be removed from the classroom and either suspended with pay or assigned to other duties. Under Bill 110, if the board determined the teacher was not performing satisfactorily, the board would be required to terminate the teacher's employment. As is currently the case, boards would continue to be required to prove that due process has been followed when dismissing a teacher.

I believe members will agree with me that the performance appraisal system I have described is consistent and fair to teachers. It is also essential that the interests of students be protected as well. For that reason, the legislation we are considering contains a number of protections to ensure that teachers fired for unsatisfactory performance will not be able to teach elsewhere in the

province. Any board that fires a teacher for incompetence must advise the Ontario College of Teachers, which will then investigate the matter. If school boards wish to hire a teacher who has taught elsewhere in the province, they would be required to check with the teacher's previous employer on the teacher's performance. In these ways, Bill 110 would remove the possibility of low-performing teachers escaping accountability by moving under the radar from board to board.

In closing my remarks, I would like to summarize the key features of the performance appraisal system that would be established by this legislation. The most important foundation of quality education is excellence in teaching. Excellent teachers are vital in helping students succeed and achieve higher standards. Excellent teachers motivate, inspire and challenge students to achieve in ways they never thought possible. Bill 110 would help bring this promise of teacher excellence to every corner of Ontario.

I think it's safe to say that when we're talking about province-wide standards in anything, even the members opposite would agree that we like to see the standards across the province. That's why people are so happy with the provincial report cards. I heard the member from Trinity-Spadina talk earlier about his disappointment in the parent survey. I can't imagine for a minute why anybody would not want to consult with the parents across our province when it's their children who are at stake here. They want to know what the results are. Whether it's advertised on TV that a parent survey across the province is coming in the mail, whether it's advertised in the papers or on the radio, I think it's important that we recognize the fact that the government needs to know what the parents are thinking. I don't think we can always depend on what the president of the local teachers' union is thinking or what they're saying in the media. I'd like to hear what the parents are saying, because when I go from house to house or when I go from school to school and I talk to teachers, parents or students, I get a wide variety of concerns. They're not all the same in any particular school.

I was out at the Halton Catholic District School Board last week in Mr Chudleigh's riding, at the official opening of a beautiful new school in Georgetown. I talked to a number of the members of the board there and a principal named Miss Cynthia Tobin, a person with a great deal of experience in the teaching profession. When I talked to her and the directors of education, they told me how they had worked with five new schools out there, five brand new facilities in the Halton Catholic District School Board, and each time they built a new school they improved on the one before. I think it's important that we do those types of things. They didn't build five identical schools. For each school they found small changes that they made. Today the people in Georgetown who are attending this brand new state-of-the-art school are very pleased that they've got probably one of the nicest schools in the province today. In fact, I think they believe it is the nicest school in the province today.

In closing, I hope that all members of this Legislature will support this piece of legislation, Bill 110. As I said earlier, it's part of our plan to improve education reform in Ontario. We're very satisfied with most of those changes. We know they haven't been easy changes. They've been difficult decisions, many times. We acknowledge the fact that these decisions are not always controversial, but the fact of the matter is that we think the changes are needed. We think the people of the province of Ontario feel that education reform is needed, and we're happy to see this Bill 110 as another step in that way.

I want to thank all the speakers I've heard here this afternoon. They made some very good points. I'm always happy to hear the member for Trinity-Spadina speak. He's a very colourful gentleman. I wonder why he didn't win an Emmy award in the awards that were presented recently, but he gets his point across well. I'm pleased to follow him and the other speakers here today in bringing forth this legislation. I thank you for the opportunity to make a few comments.

1720

Mr John Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands): I too am pleased to join the debate for a few minutes this afternoon. I found it very interesting this afternoon to hear all of the government speakers speak on the merits of the bill. You would wonder, if they want to speak about the merits of the bill, why they are once again invoking closure. If you want to speak on it, why are you basically saying, "We want this debate to end, we want closure, we want time allocation"?—call it what you like.

Speaker, you and I know that this government in the last six years, since it was elected in 1995, has invoked closure more often than all the other governments before it, going right back to 1867. For 128 years, the number of times that closure was used in this House equates to the number of times they have used it in the last six years. But it's even worse than that, because the few times when closure was invoked before 1995, it was done under rules that allowed a member to get up, particularly back in the 1980s and 1970s and well before that, and speak for as long as that member wanted on a particular bill.

You and I know that the rules of this House have been changed so drastically by this government, whereby debate is limited to no more than 20 minutes per member, and no more than 10 minutes per member if the debate goes for more than seven hours in totality, that the ability to speak on any bill by any member has already been severely limited, much more so than what existed prior to 1995. So I say to this government, what do you have against a democratic process whereby elected members speak on what you regard as a very important bill? What we've had here this afternoon is every government member totally ignoring the fact that this is a time allocation bill and speaking on the merits of the bill. I know there are some people who will say, "You know, nobody really cares. Nobody cares any more about closure. At one time this was a big thing, where democracy in effect

was shut down by a government, but nobody cares any more."

If that's so, and it may very well be, it's a sad state of our democracy in this province if people really don't care about that.

If it's really such an important bill, I say let the debate go on, even under the limited rules that we now have. I know there are many members in my own caucus who wanted to talk about this bill. We think there are many things you should be doing in the classroom that are more important than invoking this kind of thing. Just look at the name of the act. It's An Act to promote quality in the classroom. That's what this act is all about, allegedly. If you really want to do something that will promote quality in the classroom, how about limiting class sizes or reducing class sizes? That's where you can really have an impact. I've been in grades 4, 5 and 6 in some very good schools in my own riding and elsewhere where quite often you'll see 35 children, or more than 30 children, in one classroom. The minister can look at me and say, "It ain't so." I've been there and I know there are—

Hon Mrs Ecker: How big were they when you were in school, John?

Mr Gerretsen: When I was in school they were probably no bigger than that; they were no bigger than that. So in other words, you think it's all right. Now we have the Minister of Education on record and she thinks there's absolutely nothing wrong with having between 30 and 35 children in a class. I would say that the parents of this province, Minister, think you are totally wrong about that. If you were really concerned about the quality of education, you would take some of the \$2.2-billion corporate tax cut and put it back into the classroom so that we can have smaller classes. That's when you would be really doing something about the quality of education. Or how about hiring back some of those education assistants who were unilaterally fired by the boards across this province because there was no money to employ them any longer? We've all heard horror stories of children who were in one way or another disadvantaged having special education assistants for a number of years and then all of a sudden being shut out from that process because the boards couldn't afford them any more because you didn't give them enough money. Or how about making sure they have adequate resources?

Interjection.

Mr Gerretsen: How about just textbooks?

Hon Mrs Ecker: How much money is the Liberal government going to give them?

The Deputy Speaker: Stop the clock, please. Take your seat. I've asked the Minister of Education to please not interject. Things were relatively quiet before the honourable minister entered the chamber. I would ask her to please show the same respect that the opposition members have shown the government members when they had the floor.

Thank you. Start the clock. The member for Kingston and the Islands has the floor again.

Mr Gerretsen: Thank you very much, Speaker. Thank you for your excellent ruling. I always find it amazing with this government, when a minister of the crown in this government doesn't know what to say, they always say, "What are you going to do?" I told you what we're going to do. We wouldn't have implemented the \$2.2-billion corporate tax cut. Just think of what you could do in health care and education if you only had a portion of that money to do some of the things that we all care about, and that is to improve the quality of education in the classroom.

But there's something even much more important than that—much more important—and that is the morale of the teachers. I have spoken, over the last few years, with people who agree with me politically, people who don't agree with me politically, who are on the left or on the right, and they all agree about one thing: if you want to implement changes, the only way you can do it is to make sure that the people you rely on to implement those changes are onside. It is the very first principle of getting things done. If you want to make sure that what you want to do is going to be done in a productive and effective way, you want to make sure that those individuals, whether they're in the health care system or in the education system, believe in what you're doing and want to work with you. You don't beat them over the head.

For five to six years on a continual basis—whether you're for teachers or against teachers, everyone will agree—this government has beat up on the teachers continually during that period of time. I quote no better authority than the Minister of Health, Ms Elizabeth Witmer herself. What did she say today, or at least in a prepared statement what was she going to say today, to the Canadian Club in Toronto? This is a quote, according to the National Post. She says, "Because a new hospital with unhappy nurses isn't good health care and a new school with dissatisfied teachers will never allow us to achieve excellence in education.... I am also concerned that in the process we have neglected"—the process of all these changes that they've brought in in education—"to nurture the pride and enthusiasm of teachers that I know exists."

That is from your own cabinet colleague, and I totally agree with that. I'd ask Ms Witmer, if she were here: how could you possibly, as an influential member in the cabinet, have allowed this to happen? You've put your finger on the problem, all right, but how could you, as an influential member sitting there around the cabinet table for six years, allow this to happen?

I know why it was allowed to happen: because of the greed of the corporate sector. It was a heck of a lot more important to give \$2.2 billion in tax cuts, or even personal tax cuts, from which we've all benefited, than to ensure that we had quality of education and quality in our health care system. That is fundamentally what this is all about. We have choices, and the choice that you made is that it was a heck of a lot more important for people to pay less taxes rather than have good, quality health care and education.

If you want to talk about quality of education, then let's go right back to the real source. Let's go back to what really needs to be done.

Finally, in the last minute that I have, in this time allocation motion—it gets worse and worse all the time—it states that on this so-called important bill, according to you, you are going to allow one day of debate here in Toronto and then one day for clause-by-clause. It goes even further than that. If, for some reason, the committee doesn't report the bill back at the end of the day, then it shall be deemed to have been passed.

Tell me, what can be more inconsistent with the democratic process than where a committee is basically told, "If you don't report it back to us and you don't pass the whole bill, then it will be deemed to have been passed"? That's about as undemocratic as I can think of any situation being. That's why we need a democratic charter in this province whereby we look at this institution and say, "Look, we've got to make changes." That's why I would recommend to the people of Ontario that they take a look at the democratic charter that Dalton McGuinty came up with last week, because that sets out some fundamental principles about the role of the private member being able to disagree within their own caucus and the role of the committee system, which will make the system around here a heck of a lot more democratic than it currently is.

1730

Mr Mario Sergio (York West): I'd like to join the debate, even though for a few short minutes, on this important legislation which the province has introduced and again has said, "Enough talk on this bill. We are going to bring closure, therefore hurry up," and they're going to move on. As they did in previous bills, yes, they enjoy the majority of the House and they will probably go ahead and approve this legislation as well.

What is it exactly that's for debate here today? It is the so-called Bill 110, quality in the classroom. We have heard this euphemism on many occasions in the House coming from the government side, saying, "Whatever we are doing to the education system is because of the education in the classroom." I think we had previous bills calling for excellence in the classroom and excellence in the education system as well.

This legislation does two major things: one is to set out the requirements for entrance into the profession, testing or tests for teachers, and the other one is to set out standard requirements for the performance appraisal again of teachers. These are the two major components, and I do not intend or profess that I will go through each particular item of the bill, because I only have a few minutes. The other one of course is to give power as well to the Ontario College of Teachers, which in turn will establish rules regarding learning requirements. On top of that, as usual, the government is giving to the minister and the minister is retaining powers to do a number of other things with respect to the education system, such as delegating power. Again, when that happens, they don't come to the House, they don't go to the teachers, they

don't go to the parents; they say, "This is what we've decided to do," and they're going to go ahead and do it by regulation and not by legislation.

One point I want to mention with respect to this bill is that we are dealing with public education and public funding. There's nothing in the bill that says the government is putting on itself the responsibility or accountability for public funding. We have seen very recently the taking away of another \$300 million from public education, going to private schools. I don't have to tell you that there was a poll very recently condemning the government very highly for the way they have been handling education funding and the education funding formula. If the government truly intends to have quality education in the classroom, expecting quality education from our teachers as well, we should expect the same thing from parents, students, educators and, yes, of course, why not politicians?

Why are we debating this legislation? Because the government is trying—but they are not correcting—to correct their own mistakes that they have imposed on the people of Ontario, on the parents, teachers, students and unions for the past six years. They started with crisis after crisis. They have created a period of chaos and severe confrontations as well with those educators, with those whom we expect would provide excellence in the classroom, excellence in education for our kids. But unfortunately the more they do, they more it tends to aggravate the situation and create less of a positive situation within the classroom.

Part of this big problem has been the funding, let alone the hundreds of millions of dollars that the government has cut from the school system. It is that they went ahead and created this arbitrary funding formula which is not helping the kids in the classroom, the education system or the teachers themselves.

When we say that this bill is going to require new teachers coming into the profession to pass this qualifying test, because according to the government they want to create the best of education, the best system in Ontario, then why, when we are giving public money, why don't we have the same requirements from that sector of education that is the private schools? They are still our kids. They are still Ontario's kids. So if we are providing in the beginning \$300 million, why aren't we requiring that those private schools, as well, fall within the guidelines, the testing requirements imposed by this government on the public school system? I think it's another of those inequities that the public will resent, is resenting, and we will see the consequences of that for the government of today at election time, because what they are doing is totally against the interests of providing the best education for our kids in our public school system.

The funding formula has caused a number of problems. It has affected a number of areas, practically every single area pertaining to the education system. I believe that when we say the "classroom," I contend that every time a teacher or a student walks into that particular school, it is a part of their learning process. This goes

from kindergarten to elementary to secondary school, to college and university, adult education, post-secondary education. This is the result of their funding formula.

On top of that, it is creating a horrendous situation for the various boards and parents and teachers, because now they've got to deal with a number of school closings. Have they taken into consideration how this is affecting the education or the so-called excellence in the classroom? I don't think they have. If they have, then they should be having good second thoughts about how they are proceeding with this particular situation.

Very recently I attended a number of meetings in my own area where they have to close some of the schools because of the funding formula. I have attended a school where they have an after-school program, an absolutely wonderful program. They have 48 kids. I think they have another group of students of about 40 also waiting to get in on another program. They can't provide that wonderful environment because of the funding formula.

As I said at the outset, I can't debate on every aspect of the bill, but I think those are the most important. They are the important parts of the bill that I believe are really touching what the government intends to do, and that is to provide excellence in the classroom, and I would say to the government, do not continue in this crisis, do not continue to create more chaos. Pay attention to what the teachers are saying, the parents, the students, to us in this House. I think it's most important. Instead of invoking closure here today, I hope that the government, before they introduce voting and final closure, will take that into consideration.

1740

The Deputy Speaker: Before I call on the next speaker, could I ask members to please keep the noise level down. There are four conversations going on that can be taken outside.

The floor is now open for further debate.

Mr Bruce Crozier (Essex): As I have on too many occasions with this government since 1995, I find myself standing again, once more, to point out my disgust, and I hope the disgust of the public in the province of Ontario, at a government which limits debate, which chokes off democratic debate on this piece of legislation that we're dealing with today, which is Bill 110, An Act to promote quality in the classroom.

As I've said on many occasions during this type of motion, I'm surprised that many of the government members don't want the opportunity to stand up and comment on legislation that's being brought forward by their government. And then to add insult to injury, we find that, as my colleague from Kingston and the Islands pointed out and others have no doubt mentioned, even after this debate is finished, there's only going to be two days of public hearings, held in the city of Toronto, and then one day for clause-by-clause, and then we're finished till third reading debate, at which time we'll have 90 minutes for 103 members, less 20 or so ministers, to comment on what, again, the government members have said is a very important piece of legislation. I just can't understand it. I

may never understand why this government continually has to choke off democratic debate.

You know, this bill reminds me a bit of the amalgamation bills that were brought in, where this government says it's not government, that it wants to make way for others to govern, and yet it steps in and tells municipalities what to do.

Recently there was a bill introduced that we're hopefully going to have the opportunity to debate, and I suspect—in fact, not being a gambling person, I'd even be willing to bet—there will be closure brought in on Bill 130, that bill which involves the community care access centres in this province. There's a case again where this government is putting its huge fist into the operation of community care access centres in this province, for no other reason I can see than to stifle public input when it comes to the care of our elderly and our frail in this province.

And what have they done here? Again, the government is dictating what's going to be done rather than—which I think would be a better idea—giving the Ontario College of Teachers the responsibility and the authority to govern in these matters. With that, we would get input from teachers, yes; we could get input from parents; and we could get input from taxpayers, those who aren't parents of children in school. But does this government want to do that? No, no. They want to tell everybody exactly what should be done.

Part of this bill is that there will be an exam that new teachers will have to take prior to getting their certificate, which will be given to them by the Ontario College of Teachers. I suspect that the exam will be passed by those new teachers because, let's face it, they're examined and given exams and go through a thorough examination by those teachers' colleges that they graduate from. So to me it's just duplication. This government talks about red tape and bureaucratic roadblocks. Well, I think that the teacher education in our universities is second to none and that when they graduate from our universities they're ready, willing and able to teach and are well qualified. I'm only sorry that we don't have more time for each of us to have a little bit to say. I'm prepared to sit down at this time, and my colleague from Thunder Bay would like to make a few comments.

Mr Michael Gravelle (Thunder Bay-Superior North): Once again, like my colleagues have said so many times, it's just stunning how often this government has chosen to invoke closure on legislation that's before this House. We've seen it time and time again, and again with legislation such as this which is ultimately nothing more than part of a campaign this government has waged basically against the teaching profession in this province and an attack on the education system where they've systematically demoralized the system, systematically taken money out of the system. It's just stunning that the way they choose to deal with it at the end of the day is to put time allocation on debate. It's wrong, I think everybody knows it's wrong and I think even the government members themselves know that it's the wrong way to

approach it. It's certainly something we resist and that we'll argue against, but I guess as long as they have the power to do so, they'll continue to do it that way.

It's a real shame. We've seen it. I've recently had numerous conversations with a number of teachers in my riding. That goes for people who are working from the smaller boards, the large Superior-Greenstone public board and catholic boards. They're under extraordinary pressures in those smaller communities related to a number of things besides the profession itself, such as school busing issues which are major in those smaller communities, and also the fact that the system itself, even in the city of Thunder Bay, is under attack. It really is upsetting and does make you think of the other measures this government is taking. My colleague Mr Crozier made reference to the community care access centres. We have seen the government bring forward legislation—I think it's called the Community Care Access Corporation Act—which to me is nothing more than a hostile takeover by the government.

Interjection: Sledgehammer.

Mr Gravelle: A sledgehammer, very much so. It seems to me that we will probably end up with a similar situation. The government is determined to put legislation through which in essence does not deal with the problem at hand in our community care access centres in the home care sector, which is that the demand for funding is absolutely—the evidence is overwhelmingly there: we're seeing the cutbacks affecting people in the most horrendous way. What is the government's response? "We'll put together a piece of legislation that will actually muzzle the boards that are in place right now."

I could almost guarantee that when that legislation comes forward, we will see time allocation and we will see closure invoked once again.

Mr Ted McMeekin (Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Aldershot): No public hearings.

Mr Gravelle: There will be no public hearings at all, and that is disgraceful. This is unbelievable. Once again we're seeing this kind of behaviour, and I suspect we'll see it again. As we move closer to the end of this session and as the leadership race heats up, while we're watching the jockeying among the leadership candidates, it would be very nice if at least one of those leadership candidates spoke up and said, "We think this is the wrong way to go." In fact, the Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal today made new reference to the horrendous situation with the home care funding in certainly Thunder Bay and district, which is happening all across the province. It said, and I will quote them as accurately as I can, "Health Minister Clement should turn his attention to the home care crisis before he works so hard on succeeding Mr Harris as Premier."

That is an issue that we have been bringing up since June. The cuts first started happening at that time and we have been bringing it up since June. We've been dealing with the issue of the education crisis in this province and the chaos this government has brought forward almost

from the moment this government came into power. It continues to stun me that their approach is still confrontational, as opposed to actually trying to recognize the extraordinary value that teachers bring to the system. My memories of school—high school, and lower school, for that matter—are all based on these wonderful memories of teachers who influenced my life in a very special way and have continued to inspire me. I wish I had time to mention some of their names, which I have done before.

Instead we have a government that, rather than praising and thanking our teachers for working so hard—and yes, they want to prove it to the system as well—continues to take this confrontational attack mode in terms of that profession. It's a real tragedy. Indeed, it's a tragedy as well that we're once again being forced by the government by closure to push a piece of legislation forward that we think is a bad piece of legislation.

The Deputy Speaker: The time for debate has expired. Mrs Ecker has moved government notice of motion number 77.

All those in favour of the motion, please indicate by saying "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members; this will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1750 to 1800.

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

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hastings, John	O'Toole, John
Baird, John R.	Hudak, Tim	Ouellette, Jerry J.
Barrett, Toby	Jackson, Cameron	Runciman, Robert W.

Beaubien, Marcel	Johns, Helen	Sampson, Rob
Chudleigh, Ted	Johnson, Bert	Snobelen, John
Clark, Brad	Kells, Morley	Spina, Joseph
Clement, Tony	Klees, Frank	Sterling, Norman W.
Coburn, Brian	Marland, Margaret	Stewart, R. Gary
Cunningham, Dianne	Martiniuk, Gerry	Stockwell, Chris
Dunlop, Garfield	Maves, Bart	Tilson, David
Ecker, Janet	Mazzilli, Frank	Tsubouchi, David H.
Elliott, Brenda	Miller, Norm	Turnbull, David
Flaherty, Jim	Molinari, Tina R.	Wettlaufer, Wayne
Galt, Doug	Munro, Julia	Wilson, Jim
Gilchrist, Steve	Murdoch, Bill	Witmer, Elizabeth
Gill, Raminder	Mushinski, Marilyn	Young, David
Hardeman, Ernie	Newman, Dan	

The Deputy Speaker: Those opposed to the motion will please stand one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Agostino, Dominic	Crozier, Bruce	Martin, Tony
Bisson, Gilles	Di Cocco, Caroline	McLeod, Lyn
Bradley, James J.	Dombrowsky, Leona	McMeekin, Ted
Churley, Marilyn	Gravelle, Michael	Parsons, Ernie
Colle, Mike	Kormos, Peter	Prue, Michael
Conway, Sean G.	Levac, David	Ruprecht, Tony
Cordiano, Joseph	Marchese, Rosario	Sergio, Mario

Clerk of the House (Mr Claude L. DesRosiers): The ayes are 50; the nays are 21.

The Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

It is now after 6 of the clock. This House stands adjourned until 6:45 this evening.

The House adjourned at 1803.

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	Johns, Hon / L'hon Helen (PC) Minister without Portfolio (Health and Long-Term Care) / ministre sans portefeuille (Santé et Soins de longue durée)
Brampton West-Mississauga / Brampton-Ouest-Mississauga	Clement, Hon / L'hon Tony (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	Jackson, Hon / L'hon Cameron (PC) Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées	Kitchener-Waterloo	Witmer, Hon / L'hon Elizabeth (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	Sterling, Hon / L'hon Norman W. (PC) Minister of Consumer and Business Services / ministre des Services aux consommateurs et aux entreprises
Davenport	Ruprecht, Tony (L)	Leeds-Grenville	Runciman, Hon / L'hon Robert W. (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	Cunningham, Hon / L'hon Dianne (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	Turnbull, Hon / L'hon David (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	Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H. (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement
Eglinton-Lawrence	Colle, Mike (L)	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Hon / L'hon Rob (PC) Minister of Correctional Services / ministre des Services correctionnels
Elgin-Middlesex-London	Peters, Steve (L)	Mississauga East / -Est	DeFaria, Carl (PC)
Erie-Lincoln	Hudak, Hon / L'hon Tim (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	Snobelen, Hon / L'hon John (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles
Etobicoke Centre / -Centre	Stockwell, Hon / L'hon Chris (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	Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda (PC) Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales		
Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant	Barrett, Toby (PC)		
Haliburton-Victoria-Brock	Hodgson, Hon / L'hon Chris (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	Baird, Hon / L'hon John R. (PC) 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	Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan (PC) 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	Harris, Hon / L'hon Michael D. (PC) Premier and President of the Executive Council / premier ministre et président du Conseil exécutif	Simcoe-Grey	Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) 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	Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary (PC) Speaker / Président	Stoney Creek	Clark, Hon / L'hon Brad (PC) 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	Coburn, Hon / L'hon Brian (PC) 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	Stewart, Hon / L'hon R. Gary (PC) 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	Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet (PC) 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	Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim (PC) Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance / vice-premier ministre, ministre des Finances
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke	Conway, Sean G. (L)	Willowdale	Young, Hon / L'hon David (PC) 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.

CONTENTS

Monday 19 November 2001

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Katelyn Abbott	
Mrs Dombrowsky	3587
Duke of Edinburgh's Awards	
Mr O'Toole	3587
Education	
Mr Hoy	3587
Carlo Cattarelo	
Mr Bisson	3588
Mike Weir	
Mr Beaubien	3588
Theatre in Sarnia-Lambton	
Ms Di Cocco	3588
Ramadan	
Mr Wood	3588
Conservative leadership	
Mr Duncan	3589
Home for autistic youth	
Mrs Molinari	3589

FIRST READINGS

Tenant Protection Amendment Act (Fairness in Rent Increases), 2001, Bill 134, Mr Caplan	
Agreed to	3590
Mr Caplan	3590
Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act, 2001, Bill 135, Mr Snobelen	
Agreed to	3590
Mr Snobelen	3590

MOTIONS

House sittings	
Mrs Ecker	3590
Agreed to	3591

ORAL QUESTIONS

Fiscal and economic policy	
Mr Phillips	3591
Mr Flaherty	3591, 3593
Mr Hampton	3593
Child care	
Mrs Dombrowsky	3592
Mr Baird	3592, 3593, 3594
Ms Churley	3593
Ms Martel	3594
Emergency services	
Mrs McLeod	3594
Mrs Johns	3594
Youth crime prevention	
Ms Mushinski	3595
Mr Turnbull	3595

Government contract

Mr Agostino	3595
Mr Stockwell	3595

Grape and wine industry

Mr Maves	3596
Mr Coburn	3596

Algoma Steel

Mr Hampton	3596
Mr Flaherty	3597

Parole system

Mr Levac	3597
Mr Sampson	3597

Consumer protection

Mrs Molinari	3598
Mr Sterling	3598

Children's aid societies

Mr Gravelle	3598
Mr Baird	3598

Pharmaceutical industry

Mr Galt	3599
Mr Wilson	3599

Long-term care

Mr Hampton	3599
Mrs Johns	3600

Oak Ridges moraine

Mr Colle	3600
Mr Flaherty	3600

PETITIONS

Municipal restructuring

Mr Bradley	3600
------------------	------

Long-term care

Mr Hampton	3601
------------------	------

Cruelty to animals

Ms Mushinski	3601
--------------------	------

Education

Mr Ruprecht	3601
-------------------	------

Adoption disclosure

Ms Churley	3601
------------------	------

Tenant protection

Mr O'Toole	3602, 3603
------------------	------------

Nurses

Mrs McLeod	3602
------------------	------

Brain tumours

Mr Wood	3602
---------------	------

Children's medical services

Mr Hoy	3602
--------------	------

Kidney disease

Mr Gerretsen	3603
--------------------	------

Medical school tuition

Mr Hoy	3603
--------------	------

Homelessness

Mr Gerretsen	3603
--------------------	------

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Time allocation, government notice of motion number 77, Mrs Ecker	
Mrs Ecker	3604
Mr Mazzilli	3604
Mr Agostino	3606
Mr Prue	3607
Mr Klees	3610
Mr Bradley	3612
Mr Marchese	3614
Mr Dunlop	3618
Mr Gerretsen	3621
Mr Sergio	3622
Mr Crozier	3623
Mr Gravelle	3624
Agreed to	3625

OTHER BUSINESS

Estimates

The Speaker	3589
-------------------	------

Visitors

Mr Young	3590
----------------	------

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Lundi 19 novembre 2001

PREMIÈRE LECTURE

Loi de 2001 modifiant la Loi sur la protection des locataires (augmentations équitables des loyers), projet de loi 134, M. Caplan	
Adoptée	3590
Loi de 2001 sur la chasse et la pêche patrimoniales, projet de loi 135, M. Snobelen	
Adoptée	3590