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(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 23 October 2002**

**Mercredi 23 octobre 2002**

Speaker  
Honourable Gary Carr

Clerk  
Claude L. DesRosiers

Président  
L'honorable Gary Carr

Greffier  
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 23 October 2002

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

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*The House met at 1845.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT, 2002

LOI DE 2002 SUR  
L'EFFICIENCE DU GOUVERNEMENT

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 21, 2002, on the motion for second reading of Bill 179, An Act to promote government efficiency and to improve services to taxpayers by amending or repealing certain Acts and by enacting one new Act / Projet de loi 179, Loi visant à favoriser l'efficience du gouvernement et à améliorer les services aux contribuables en modifiant ou en abrogeant certaines lois et en édictant une nouvelle loi.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr Michael A. Brown):** Debate?

**Mr Ernie Hardeman (Oxford):** First of all, it's my pleasure to address this House but it's also my pleasure to speak to my constituents in the great riding of Oxford about this very important legislation that will benefit all Ontarians.

When my party was first elected in 1995 and earned re-election in 1999, we campaigned on creating efficient government, offering Ontarians the best delivery of service for their tax dollars. The Government Efficiency Act, 2002, is a continuation of this pledge. This is why I fully support this act. It's good for Ontario and it makes good sense.

The Ministry of Health possesses the largest budget of all of Ontario's ministries. This is why special attention must be paid to ensure that all spending goes directly to the delivery of health services. While this government is doing an outstanding job in reducing waste, we realize work still needs to be done.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has proposed amendments and repeals to existing legislation to improve access to the health care system, to improve administrative efficiency and to reduce costs to benefit all Ontarians. Some current acts this initiative will improve include the Health Care Accessibility Act, the Health Protection and Promotion Act, the Ministry of Health Appeal and Review Boards Act and the Trillium Gift of Life Networks Act.

While these are all noteworthy and relevant to the function of the ministry in our great province, I would like to place emphasis on the part of the act I believe will

be of interest to most Ontarians: the proposed changes to the Provincial Offences Act. Why? Because these proposed changes are good for Ontario and make good sense.

Currently, Ontario allows only for a six-month limitation period on prosecuting most health-related offences. Unfortunately, in many cases this is not enough time to identify and investigate fully possible violations. We need to protect law-abiding and taxpaying Ontarians from those who wish to steal from the system. They demand this from their government, and we have a duty to deliver.

Under the proposed changes, this government will ratify an unlimited limitation period. What this means is that those who choose to violate the norms of society will no longer be able to get away with their actions scot-free. Lawbreakers will no longer be able to look at a calendar and count down their days till freedom. This government is sending out a clear message: crooks who wish to steal from their fellow citizens will be prosecuted and brought to justice. This is good for Ontario and makes good sense.

Another proposed amendment will increase the maximum penalties applied to those convicted of transgressions to the Provincial Offences Act. This will allow the judiciary improved freedom to impose sentences that are currently not available. Those guilty of offences will face up to 12 months in jail and fines of up to \$50,000—stiff deterrents indeed.

Under this amendment, marked improvements will be made in ensuring the punishment fits the crime. Current penalties in some cases are too lenient and inadequate in proportion to the offences committed. By increasing punishment, this government is sending a clear message of zero tolerance for health care fraud and misuse. This again is good for Ontario and makes good sense.

Another amendment I would like to address deals with the subject of restitution. Under the current law, those convicted of transgressions are not required to pay restitution. This shocks me, as I am sure it does most of my colleagues. Stealing from the health care system not only robs taxpayers of their money, but also violates the sacred trust Canadians hold so dear to their hearts.

**Mr David Caplan (Don Valley East):** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: Do we have a quorum present?

**The Acting Speaker:** Is a quorum present?

**Acting Clerk at the Table (Mr Doug Arnott):** A quorum is not present, Speaker.

*The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.*

**Deputy Clerk (Ms Deborah Deller):** A quorum is now present, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker:** The member for Oxford.

1850

**Mr Hardeman:** As I was saying, I, along with many of my colleagues, was shocked to know that fraud in the health care system is not punishable by restitution. In fact, there is minimal punishment for defrauding the system.

Simple punishment is not enough. Those caught pilfering from the health care system must replace what they stole. Thanks to the Chrétien-Martin government reducing its contribution to funding, money to invest in the system is very scarce. This is why this government is so committed to recovering funds unlawfully taken from our health care system. That, again, is good for Ontario and makes good sense.

I would like to urge all my colleagues in this House to vote in favour of the Government Efficiency Act. As elected officials, we owe it to the citizens of Ontario that their tax dollars are accounted for and those who wish to steal from them are brought to justice and punished.

Health care is the number one priority of Ontarians. We need measures to protect this investment. I fully endorse this act. It is good for Ontario, and it makes sense.

Bill 179 demonstrates the government of Ontario's ongoing commitment to good, efficient, modern government. This bill will be the 15th government efficiency or, as it's commonly known, red tape reduction bill passed since 1995. This bill contains in excess of 400 house-keeping amendments that can help to clarify, streamline and modernize dozens of acts on behalf of 15 different ministries.

The bill allows Ontario to tune up its legislation and ensures that our statutes meet the needs of Ontarians today, that our laws accurately reflect the changing needs of society and are consistent with shifting economic circumstances and technological advances.

This bill, if passed, would make improvements to customer service possible in a number of ways in ministries other than health. For example, changes contained within this bill will enable the Ontario Securities Commission to formally disseminate information by modern electronic means. How can it be smart or efficient to have legislation on the books in Ontario that does not allow the use of electronic means for communication?

By making amendments to the Commodity Futures Act and the Securities Act, the Ontario Securities Commission will be able to legitimately communicate new or amended notices, rules and other information to businesses it regulates via electronic means, such as Web site postings and/or e-mail.

These amendments will help ensure that in the fast-paced financial services sector, the Ontario Securities Commission, in certain circumstances, can receive information electronically and get it into the hands of those who need it in a timely fashion.

Cleaning up old rules that no longer pertain to a modern Ontario is all part of good government. This bill is all about keeping Ontario a modern, streamlined and responsive province with a government to match.

I encourage all members on both sides of the House to support this government efficiency legislation. This bill allows Ontario to improve customer service and achieve regulatory excellence. This bill will help Ontario continue to be a great place to live, work and raise a family.

With that many improvements, that much reduction in redundant legislation and that many new initiatives to make communications more effective in government, I strongly support this legislation and am pleased to have been able to say a few words on why I support this legislation on behalf of the people of Oxford county. Thank you again for this opportunity.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions or comments.

**Mr Caplan:** I only have one question for the member from Oxford. The city strongly supports the act. On page 159, schedule I, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Independent Health Facilities Act, subsection 13(2) of the act is repealed and clause 18(1)(f) of the act is repealed.

Now, that doesn't really say what those sections are, but as I know, Speaker, and I know you know, those relate to the repeal of the cap on independent health facility licences. So, essentially, what the ministry is doing by removing the cap is they're creating a marketplace for these licences. You would know, Speaker, and the member from Oxford would know that in a previous act the government removed the Canadian non-profit restriction as far as independent health facilities. So essentially what's happening here is that the door has been opened for American for-profit clinics to be set up, and now the cap has been removed to create a marketplace for those licences.

The member has said he is strongly in support of this act. So my question to the member, and maybe I will get a straight answer, is: are you supportive of two-tier American health care? That's what this section will do.

**Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie):** I want to comment on the speech by the member from Oxford, however well-meaning. I must say I certainly don't read the bill in the same light that he does. If you hold up the template of this government's approach to how we organize the public affairs of the province, it certainly fits in this instance. This is an omnibus bill that covers a whole array of subjects.

It's also a bill driven by the Red Tape Commission that's about nothing short of reducing government's involvement in the public life of the province, turning over more and more of what we've traditionally done in this place on behalf of people in every community in Ontario and privatizing and deregulating all that is dear and sacred. In fact, if you look at this bill in any great detail, you'll find that even those pieces that present initially as having some value will, in the end, turn out to be of the same ilk as everything that we've seen come from this government so far.

When I spoke last week for the hour that I spoke, I suggested that this bill was less about reducing red tape for the many across the province and more about providing convenience for the few—those few who support, rather generously, this government as it wines and dines and has its big fundraisers and prepares for the next election.

There's a lot of stuff in this bill that it will be waving around as it goes to these friends and benefactors as signs that they have delivered. I daresay, just as the omnibus bill that put the megacity together, just as the omnibus bill that brought central control of education into the hands of the government at Queen's Park, this bill will, in many, many ways, do the very same thing.

**Hon John R. Baird (Minister of Energy, minister responsible for francophone affairs):** The member for Oxford, I know, and this is a comment, would want to know about the Independent Health Facilities Act. This was a piece of legislation you might have thought was brought in by Mike Harris back in the late 1990s, but in fact, if you check the records, the door was opened to this by the Liberal health minister in the late 1980s. Who was the Liberal health minister of that day, the member opposite will wonder? It was Elinor Caplan, mother of the member opposite. She's the one that said, let's open the door to independent health facilities, let's get the money out of accredited hospitals, and let's let independent health facilities do that job.

**1900**

It was an idea—I thought it was kind of amusing that the federal government was complaining about the Premier of Alberta, Ralph Klein, and his similar legislation. We've had that in Ontario since the mid-1980s and it was brought in by Elinor Caplan, mother of the member opposite.

I've give you an example of what this would allow. Elinor Caplan, when she was Minister of Health, spent billions of dollars on private, for-profit health care. You know what they are? They're called doctor's offices. A doctor's office is a for-profit operation. So the next time you go to see your doctor, I say to any member or anyone watching on television, you're visiting a for-profit health care facility that was done by all three parties. I think our doctors do a phenomenal job. What this act could allow to happen—the specific section that the member opposite talks about in the schedule he referenced would allow, for example, if three or four doctors wanted to buy a CT scanner to serve their patients, this legislation would allow them. I know the member for Oxford would be most interested to know that and want to give credit to the woman who opened the door to independent health facilities, Elinor Caplan, now the federal Liberal minister.

**Mr Sean G. Conway (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke):** I'm always pleased to hear my friend from Oxford speak in the Legislature. I was reading the Woodstock Sentinel-Review the other day and I noticed an interesting article about the Province of Ontario Savings Office. There does seem to be quite an interesting public activity around

Oxford county, as there is certainly in my part of Renfrew country, about the fate of the Province of Ontario Savings Office. Since Bill 179 relates to some of the activities of the Ministry of Finance and how, as part of this overall initiative, things are going to be streamlined to improve public services for taxpayers in the province, and since I've got a high regard for my friend from Oxford, I was wondering whether he might take this opportunity, under this particular legislation, to report to me, if to no one else, how, in the view of his good farm constituents down there in Durham and other such places, it's going these days trying to convince farm folk that services provided by the government of Ontario are going to be rendered more efficient by the privatization of the Province of Ontario Savings Office.

I'm sorry that time does not permit, but I will perhaps look for another opportunity to tell—I guess I can't use the expression “the truth” of the Independent Health Facilities Act, but I can tell you, the previous speaker gets much higher marks for energy than he does for factual accuracy on that particular subject.

**The Acting Speaker:** Response?

**Mr Hardeman:** I'd like to thank the members for Don Valley, Sault Ste Marie, Nepean-Carleton in particular, and Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke for their kind comments. I do want to suggest that I was intrigued by the comments from the member for Nepean-Carleton about the Independent Health Facilities Act and how it ended up being the legislation of Ontario. I didn't realize it was the mother of the member for Don Valley who initiated that piece of legislation.

I do want to say that providing better quality health care, fully accessible to everyone, is the intent of this legislation and this government. I think it's very important that we understand the importance of the words “red tape,” that we are removing red tape. Red tape is not things that are there to facilitate something positive to happen for the people; it is something that stands in the road of something positive happening for no good reason at all. That's what red tape is and that's what this piece of legislation is intended to remove.

I want to say to the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke concerning the Province of Ontario Savings Office in Woodstock that, yes, it was in the Sentinel-Review, and the people in my constituency are very concerned that, whatever happens or whatever we do with government facilities, services will be maintained of the quality and quantity that they require. A number of people in the city of Woodstock and the county of Oxford are very concerned that in anything we do in changing government services, we provide high-quality, cost-effective services for their needs. I support them in that quest to make sure we do not reduce services by having other people involved with it.

I appreciate his comments about how he reads the Sentinel-Review and that the good word of Oxford gets around all of the province.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Conway:** It's either Kormos or Bradley, so I guess it's Kormos.

**Mr Peter Kormos (Niagara Centre):** Mr Bradley may well be coming now that it's been—

**Mr Conway:** Is he allowed back in?

**Mr Kormos:** Of course Mr Bradley's allowed back in. If I had my way, he would have been in here yesterday afternoon and evening, but I tell Mr Bradley, that was a heck of a way to avoid House duty.

**Mr Conway:** Among other things.

**Mr Kormos:** Think about it. It was something I had perfected many years ago. Then, from time to time, the Speaker stopped accommodating me and I could heckle till the cows came home, I suppose, and still couldn't manage to get myself ousted.

The omnibus bill—we've heard about that. We've reflected back. Remember the first big mega-omnibus bill, the ominous omnibus bill, Bill 26, and the incredible things that were hidden between the pages of that volume?

Once again, in Bill 179, you're talking about a formidable piece of legislation, submissions from—what?—15, 16, 17 different ministries.

One I've seized on, most interestingly, is as a matter of fact in the very first schedule, schedule A. It's the amendments to the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000. When I read the amendments, I said, "Of course I recall the Domestic Violence Protection Act." I recall the Attorney General of the day—and for the life of me that goes back enough Attorneys General that I can't remember which one it happened to be, but the library is sending up the Hansard from the introduction of the bill and we're going to be able to identify that Attorney General. But I do remember the incredible fanfare—do you remember, Mr Martin?—that accompanied the introduction of the Domestic Violence Protection Act, and the urgency this government insisted surrounded it, to the point where the government wanted it passed with the briefest of all possible committee hearings and enacted into law. Already the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, is being amended, but interestingly, the act still hasn't been proclaimed. Do you find that bizarre, Mr Martin? I suspect you do, because I certainly find it interesting.

Remember what this act was all about? It was all about purportedly protecting women, as we should be, from violent partners/spouses/others, giving those women access to a justice of the peace or other justice or judges, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to obtain, among other things, exclusive possession orders so that they could compel the removal of a threatening or dangerous spouse, partner, whatever, from the domestic residence.

Nobody in this Legislature quarrelled with the proposition, but once we finally did compel the government to take it to committee hearings, we in the opposition, along with any number of commentators from the public, including a whole lot of people who have an incredibly strong interest and commitment to making sure women are safe in our society, pointed out that the act was fine and good—and of course Mr Bradley is here—but that

without adequate resources it's worth nothing more than the paper it's written on.

**1910**

It reminds one very much of the Victims' Bill of Rights, which, once again, this government and the Attorney General antecedent to the one we have now passed with such great fanfare. We discover, of course, that the Victims' Bill of Rights, although it was proclaimed—unlike the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, which is being amended by this omnibus bill, even though the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, still hasn't been proclaimed into law, notwithstanding the urgency that the government said compelled its speedy passage—we discover that the Victims' Bill of Rights was not worth the paper it's written on. Judge Day said that.

You'll recall, I'm sure, the now infamous and notorious judgment by Judge Day that was brought as a result of litigation entered into by two very brave women from down in Niagara region, one Linda Even, one Karen Vanscoy. Ms Vanscoy, whose daughter was robbed from her in a brutal murder, was denied not only any participation in the shameful plea-bargaining process that flowed but was not even given an opportunity to consent to the plea bargain—the deal that was arrived at. Ms Linda Even, a young woman from Welland, was brutally stabbed as she huddled under a blanket and stabbed viciously by her partner, not just once, not just twice, but over and over and over again till her blood stained that blanket and soaked the ground around her.

There's not a person in this chamber or a person listening who would doubt that that was the framework, the foundation, for an attempted murder prosecution. I just can't think of anybody in this province, anybody who is listening, anybody who would look at that situation and not understand that those were the facts that would inevitably give rise to a prosecution for attempted murder—it is nothing less, couldn't be anything less—that blood-soaked blanket, pierced so many times by Ms Even's assailant, in and of itself, even with no other evidence, and there was plenty of other evidence: there was eyewitness evidence of Ms Even, who miraculously survived that attempt on her life, this attempted-murder.

Well, once again, just as Ms Vanscoy was denied any rights that she had thought she had pursuant to the Victims' Bill of Rights, Ms Even was similarly denied rights when a sweetheart deal was struck with her former partner so that he was released from prison and any sentence long before she had ever fully recovered.

Ms Vanscoy and Ms Even had the courage and the commitment to the interests of victims to retain counsel, one professor Alan Young from Osgoode law school, and sued the government of Ontario for having had their victims' rights denied them—both of them victims, both of them led to believe, oh so clearly, if not by the legislation, by the statements made by the Attorney General to the Conservative government here in this Legislature, that the Victims' Bill of Rights was according rights to women. Both of them were denied those rights, but when

they had their day in court, this government, which purported to give victims a bill of rights, and surprisingly and astoundingly has continued to wave its Victims' Bill of Rights as some sort of hallmark in the history of this government when it comes to victim's rights—well, I suppose it is a hallmark, not one to boast about—the government's own lawyers, in response to the litigation commenced by Ms Vanscoy and Ms Even, both of them very brave women for whom I have incredible regard—the government's own lawyers went to court and pleaded with the judge, saying, "The Victims' Bill of Rights doesn't accord anybody any rights. You can't find in your judgment for these women." The Victims' Bill of Rights that the Attorney General of the day insisted provided rights to victims, and the Attorney General of today still continues, still persists, in maintaining it provides rights to victims, provides nothing, and Judge Day so found. Judge Day, for all intents and purposes, said that this government's Victims' Bill of Rights wasn't worth the paper it's written on.

Which takes me back to the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, which is amended by this omnibus bill, which once again isn't worth the paper it's written on, because it hasn't been proclaimed, notwithstanding all the flurry around the announcement of this bill and the urgency with which it had to be passed.

In September 2000, over two years ago, the Conservative Attorney General, one failed leadership candidate, Mr Flaherty, then Attorney General, in a ministerial statement which followed his introduction for first reading of this Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, said, and I'm referring to Hansard of that same date on page 4205, "The proposed legislation is intended to reform and improve the effectiveness of restraining orders to better protect victims of domestic violence." Further on in the same page, the then Attorney General for this Conservative government said, "The Domestic Violence Protection Act would also help families at risk and victims of domestic violence to get a court order at any time of the day or night. It would make intervention orders faster to obtain and easier to enforce."

He then concludes his ministerial statement that followed his introduction for first reading of the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, by saying, "Our reforms"—that is, the Conservative government's reforms; I assume he was talking about the Victims' Bill of Rights as well—"clearly show that the province of Ontario stands on the side of victims of crime."

"Restraining order reform"—that's this bill, the Domestic Violence Protection Act 2000, that's amended by this omnibus bill—"is yet another action our government is taking so that the people of Ontario can be safe and feel safe on their streets, in their neighbourhoods and, above all, in their homes." The bill indeed was passed relatively speedily but never proclaimed. Was this government so calloused and indifferent toward the interests of victims, especially women, so as to merely go through the exercise of introducing the bill and effecting passage so that it could brag about this government's

commitment to victims of crime? One is led to that irresistible conclusion. There's just no other way to look at it, is there? Because for darn near two years now, since the bill's passage, it's simply never been proclaimed.

The government backbenchers were herded into the committee room, those little trained seals—I can say that because earlier this week a Speaker ruled that one can call these guys trained seals.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Kormos:** The Speaker did, and as you know, I abide by the Speaker's rulings. Sometimes I skate close to the edge, but I try to avoid falling over.

So these trained seals marched, were herded into the committee room. You see, this is one of the sad, pathetic, tragic things about this Legislature. Committees are probably the most important stage in the process of the passage of a bill. It's where the real work ought to be done. That's where government members, as well as opposition members, can play a critical role in doing the right thing, in doing what's good, what's fair, what's just, and indeed, yes, in making this a better place, a better province, for its residents. Opposition members—I was on that committee, and I recall doing it myself, along with and certainly supported and reinforced by any number of submissions from members of the public, including women, advocates for women and advocates for the interests of victims, pointed out to this government that passage of the bill in and of itself, the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, meant zip without adequate resources being available, including availability of justices of the peace. And we're talking about real justices of the peace, not some of the dogs that have been walked through the process in the most recent round of JP patronage. Take a look and quote me if you feel like it. The Attorney General has the report in his office that the Toronto Star revealed—what was it?—a week ago. Police forces across this province talking about—and look, I want to tell you, I know some very good justices of the peace—Mr Bradley will say the same thing—but I also know some patronage clowns.

**1920**

When I was confronted with the leaked report out of the Ministry of the Attorney General regarding concerns that were being expressed about some justices of the peace across the province—and again, I make it quite clear, not all, because I know some incredibly competent, hard-working, dedicated, professional, capable justices of the peace, and there are a whole lot more that I don't know—when I read the leaked report from the Ministry of the Attorney General that was intended to be secret, expressing concerns about the quality of the work of justices of the peace, I had no hesitation. Again, as the guy says on television, it was not rocket science to connect that directly to the patronage appointments, so similar to some of the most recent ones that we've suffered here in this province.

As an aside, let me say I understand patronage. I remember a federal politician of whom I was a big fan, Judy LaMarsh, many years ago. I remember one of her

observations in an interview. She was from down Niagara way, and when I was a kid she did a couple of things for me. But I remember Judy LaMarsh in an interview saying that patronage is the grease of the political wheel. It's the grease that makes the political wheel turn. I understand patronage. Fundamentally, patronage in and of itself—one understands it. It's not quarrelsome when it's patronage accompanied by competence. But that has increasingly become oxymoronic once again, hasn't it? When you have patronage just for the sake of patronage, you invite some awfully dangerous scenarios.

I was downstairs in the committee with Mr Martin this morning. I just briefly stuck my head in. Mr Martin has the dubious and unenviable task of having to screen some of the patronage appointments—sorry, some of the appointments—being processed in the agencies, boards and commissions committee; BAC, as it's called. I think Mr Bradley chairs it. I'm sure he did. When I see the dogs that are paraded through there, I feel like I'm obliged to lend Mr Martin, my colleague who sits on that committee for the NDP, a couple of muzzles and a training leash, one of those training collars that choke you up if you give a good yank on them so the dog doesn't get out of line. An untrained, undisciplined dog is inclined to do that.

Obviously one of the questions around this omnibus bill is, what the heck is this government doing? It's spinning its wheels, amending a bill that it passed almost two years ago but still hasn't proclaimed, a bill that it said was a feather in its huge cap of pro-victim, anti-violence legislation and policies; or more phoniness and outright hypocrisy to proclaim protection for victims, to proclaim that this government acts in the interests of victims, yet to betray them over and over again, as if the Victims' Bill of Rights and Judge Day's ruling wasn't enough of a lesson for this government.

Once again in this bill, you've got to dig deep, you've got to go through the minutiae. That's the problem with omnibus bills. This bill, in the very first schedule, already starts to expose this government and its betrayal of victims and women, and the goal of protecting women and kids against violence, because here we see the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, being amended yet still not having been proclaimed.

Oh, it was so important and, oh, it was a hallmark piece of this government's law and safety, public security agenda. Oh, it had such urgency attached to it. There were press conferences coming out of your ears. There were backdrops and photo ops and entourages for the minister, makeup artists, scriptwriters and people handing him little packages, things to open up and read to this direction and telling the minister, "No, look there. Look there. The camera's over there." What have we got once again? Just like the Victims' Bill of Rights, when it comes to the Domestic Violence Protection Act, we still have zero, nada, zip from these guys.

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

**Mr James J. Bradley (St Catharines):** The member is quite correct in talking about press conferences and

press availabilities and so on, a lot of fanfare to do with announcements and then finding out the announcements do not come into effect.

A good example related to this bill—I think he made reference to it—was that James Flaherty as, I think, Attorney General of the province made this statement, "Victims of domestic abuse will be able to get emergency intervention orders 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The new law sends a clear message that domestic violence will not be tolerated in Ontario." This was back when Jim Flaherty was Attorney General. He made those comments two days before the government's Domestic Violence Protection Act was given royal assent on December 21, 2000. What the member recognizes is that nearly two years later the legislation has yet to be proclaimed into law.

It's another example—and he and I have attended or heard of various announcements that are made, particularly in the field of justice and getting tough with criminals and helping out with violence against victims and so on. We have been to the announcements. We have received the glossy materials. We have read in our local newspapers and heard on our local radio stations about these programs, and when it comes down to if they've been implemented, has the money flowed, are the services in effect to protect people who are victims of violence, we find out that indeed that is not the case.

The member has made that case in this House time and time again. I think he's hopeful that some day someone is going to listen to that and that when announcements are made, there's actually some follow-through which is meaningful for victims in this province.

**Mr Gilles Bisson (Timmins-James Bay):** The member from Niagara Centre, in a colourful and very interesting way, brought to light a number of issues in this bill.

What we're saying from here is that the government comes forward with an omnibus bill that amends a great number of pieces of legislation, some of which are probably OK. They're innocuous enough and probably changes we can support, but buried inside this legislation is a whole bunch of things—and the member from Niagara Centre pointed out but just a couple of them—that really are problematic for the opposition.

He's 100% right when he talks about a government that tries to hide behind its law-and-order agenda and then when you take a look at the teeth of what they do in legislation, there's a great big press conference, the cameras are on, the minister's standing, smiling, has used the Brylcreem, the whole bit and when they make the announcement, you find out days later it's meaningless. He referred to Judge Day's decision that related to the Victims' Bill of Rights that basically said the Victims' Bill of Rights did no such thing as infer rights on to victims. All it was was basically another photo op for the then Attorney General and the then Premier to make it look as if they were the law-and-order guys.

Then he talked about—I think this is important to mention—this whole issue of patronage. All of us can

agree here that no matter who the government is, there are going to be some appointments from the government side. You've got to do that. I don't argue that the Tories shouldn't appoint any Tories, as I wouldn't argue that an NDP government or Liberal government shouldn't appoint some of theirs, but when you look at the quality of some of the appointments, you say to yourself, we understand you have to be partisan to a certain extent. You have to have some of your people on those boards to make sure your agenda's carried out. I understand that. But, God, some of those dogs, they bark pretty bad. I think that's what the member from Niagara Centre was trying to say when he talked about it being oxymoronic. We know there are some good-quality Tory candidates out there. Put those names forward. But some of the ones we've seen, quite frankly, aren't barking on all cylinders.

1930

**Hon Norman W. Sterling (Minister of Transportation):** This government made a tremendous step forward in bringing forward the Domestic Violence Protection Act. Perhaps we were too ambitious in bringing forward the act as it was in its original words, because essentially what the act does is provide, anywhere in Ontario, protection on a 24-hour basis, a goal I think every member of this Legislature, and more importantly the government, would support. However, when it came time to implement the legislation, it was found that it was not quite as easy as perhaps some people had thought it might be originally. Therefore, this legislation is simply an effort to change the legislation to allow the government to bring forward the legislation step by step, to do a pilot project in certain areas and then be able to measure what the need and what the resources will be for us to carry this out to its original intention, and that is to protect every woman—primarily women are involved with domestic violence—in every corner of our province on a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week basis.

For members opposite to portray this as a backing away from the original commitment is just wrong. We remain dedicated to putting a domestic violence protection system in place for battered women across this province on a 24/7 basis. But in order to implement this in a practical and responsible way, we need to do it through a pilot project, through a more gradual implementation schedule.

**Mr Alvin Curling (Scarborough-Rouge River):** Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on the excellent presentation made by my colleague from Niagara Centre. I just want to follow up on what our good colleague on the other side, from Lanark-Carleton, just mentioned. He used words like “dedication” and “committed,” but he has never executed all of this.

Two years ago, I understand, this was before the House and nothing was done. If you're listening to him today, you'd feel they are ready to move on some efficiency. Their efficiency is to just say, not do. It is pathetic to realize that they have the majority government and they could move on this legislation, yet they do nothing.

When it comes to victims, they are the best, most eloquent people to speak about what they may do and

what they could do and what they will do. But do they do it? No.

I would like to see a government, I would like to see the member over there, move on these acts that he talks about. It's pathetic. The only thing they're efficient at doing is putting closures and time allocation on bills to get it off the scene as quickly as possible. If they'd work as efficiently as they've done on time allocation, I think we may have something around.

I would like to say to them that the member from Niagara Centre more or less put more sense to what they were saying. If they could go back and revisit his comments, it may be quite helpful to maybe see a bit more efficient government.

We're very generous, especially the Liberals on our side, in offering you alternatives daily. My leader, Dalton McGuinty, each day offers alternatives to this government. Of course they're taking some, and we don't mind. The fact is, of course, that we are the only alternative. We hope you move on these things, stop talking about things and do something about them.

**The Acting Speaker:** Response?

**Mr Kormos:** I feel compelled to hearken back to the whole issue around victims and women as victims of violence. Jim Bradley and I were over at a dinner for the 25th anniversary of Women's Place St Catharines but a week and a half ago. While we were there gladly joining other people in saluting the history of that organization, its founding members and its succession of presidents, board members, volunteers and hard-working staff—both of us—we also decried the fact that there was oh so little to celebrate. After 25 years of this movement of shelters, women are still getting murdered and their kids are getting murdered and they're being maimed.

If you were really serious about protecting women against violence, never mind futzing around with your phony Victims' Bill of Rights or futzing around with your Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000, which hasn't been proclaimed after two years. Get real. Start investing some real money to adequately fund women's shelters like Women's Place in St Catharines and Women's Place in south Niagara. Get real. Start restoring the investment in second-stage housing so that women aren't forced, as economic refugees, back into dangerous households.

My colleague this afternoon asked the Premier, “How does somebody live on \$520 a month?” While the Premier declined to answer the question, the point wasn't lost, because that's what a single woman on welfare gets. That's what a single woman who is down and out gets, who could be suffering from any number of mental diseases, mental illnesses, depression, who could have been beaten up and battered and knocked around—\$520 a month. Resolve that injustice.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge):** I'm pleased to speak in support of Bill 179, the Government Efficiency Act, 2002. If passed, this bill would clarify, streamline and update dozens of statutes affecting over 15 different

ministries. The bill would repeal 15 outdated acts and amend nearly 90 others. This government has already repealed more than 57 outdated acts, amended more than 200 acts and eliminated more than 1,900 unnecessary regulations since 1995. That's a lot, isn't it? That is a record to be proud of.

It just makes sense to have our statutes and regulations conform to the realities of the day. This bill would provide uniformity and clarification in numerous areas that are currently inconsistent and unclear. There are a multitude of housekeeping amendments that would clear up many of these inconsistencies.

For instance, the Ministry of Citizenship would amend the Human Rights Code to change the name of the Board of Inquiry to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal. The intent of this change is to clarify the nature and role of the Board of Inquiry. As it stands, the board not only undertakes inquiries, it also renders decisions. The new name would give the public a clearer picture of its purpose.

Another example of the type of housekeeping matters this bill would carry forward can be found in amendments by the Ministry of Culture. The ministry would amend the Public Libraries Act to delete references to improvement districts that no longer exist. It would also delete distinctions in the act between library boards in large and small municipalities. Each board would now be composed of at least five persons, and no upper limit on board size will be stipulated by the act.

It would also harmonize the privacy provisions of the Public Libraries Act to make them consistent with the privacy provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. These amendments would clarify that the right of a person to inspect a library board's records under the Public Libraries Act is subject to the same exceptions set out in the Municipal Act.

Bill 179 would also afford the Ministry of Finance the opportunity to make changes in the 1994 Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Act. The ministry would amend the act to establish a consistent definition of the term "special resolution" and the consequential use of that definition in various sections of the act. It would standardize the requirements for special votes.

The ministry would also amend the Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Act to modernize the way in which notice of meetings considering the expulsion of members is given.

#### 1940

Another amendment that the Ministry of Finance would make to the Credit Unions and Caisses Populaires Act would be to clarify the confidentiality expectations to which directors, officers, members and staff of the credit unions are expected to adhere.

Clarification and consistency: these are two issues that are firmly addressed in Bill 179. The Ministry of Consumer and Business Services would also make amendments to the Land Registration Reform Act. These amendments would facilitate the filing of standard terms of agreement, which would be referenced in subsequent

registrations. This will result in reduced paperwork and the streamlining of procedures for registering interests in land registry offices in Ontario.

If the Government Efficiency Act, Bill 179, is passed, amendments to the Land Titles Act will similarly streamline procedures for registering interests such as deeds or mortgages by allowing the electronic filing of statements. This proposed amendment supports the general movement under the act away from the filing of affidavit evidence to statements in the registration of instruments such as mortgages or easements.

The people of Ontario deserve legislation that is relevant, current and up to date. Bill 179 would help bring our legislation in line with modern technological developments.

For example, the Provincial Offences Act would be amended to allow bail hearings in certain circumstances to be held by means of audio or video technology and to allow search warrants to be issued by fax. Not only would these changes help modernize our justice system, but they would have the added benefit of bringing them in line with the amendments made to the Criminal Code of Canada.

A modern, accessible and efficient justice system helps to make Ontario one of the best places to live, work and raise a family. As our government continues the task of building a justice system for the 21st century, this bill proposes to change 20 statutes and add one new act to streamline the administrative processes, improve clarity and update legislative requirements through the proposed Government Efficiency Act.

Some key items in this act are designed to protect vulnerable people, improve access and modernize our justice system. Ontario's reputation as one of the best jurisdictions in the world to do business would be strengthened by the new act, the uniform International Interests in Mobile Equipment Act.

The Domestic Violence Protection Act strengthens this government's commitment to address domestic violence, support victims and hold abusers accountable. To best protect victims, the Domestic Violence Protection Act would be amended to help ensure this complex piece of legislation is implemented as quickly and effectively as possible. If passed, these amendments would allow the necessary support to be built in to make sure the act makes a real difference in protecting victims of domestic violence.

The office of the public guardian and trustee protects the interest of some of the most vulnerable members of our society. Proposed amendments to the Public Guardian and Trustee Act would make it easier for the accountant of the Superior Court of Justice to locate and reimburse people who are properly entitled to funds that have been collected by the court through court orders. Currently, adults who had money paid into court on their behalf as children and who have become entitled to their trust funds may not be applying for these funds—perhaps because they or their parents have forgotten or because the person never knew the money was paid into court to

start with. If passed, the amendment would allow the accountant to locate and reimburse these people quickly and cost-effectively.

As the government of Ontario works toward becoming a world leader in developing government services electronically, proposed changes to the Evidence Act would authorize the conferral of official status on documents downloaded from the e-Laws Web site in accordance with the requirements set out in regulation.

Proposed amendments to the Courts of Justice Act would eliminate civil jury trials under the simplified procedure rule. The rule was designed to lower costs and expedite the hearing of cases at the lower end of the monetary spectrum in the Superior Court of Justice.

As I have already mentioned, the Government Efficiency Act also proposes a new statute for the Ministry of the Attorney General. The uniform International Interests in Mobile Equipment Act (Aircraft Equipment) would allow Ontario to ratify an international agreement among 58 participating countries. This agreement would provide for the uniform application of private commercial law for valuable mobile equipment. The proposed legislation is designed to protect the interests of Ontario-based credit-granting institutions when they lend money to companies that post highly mobile, unsecured collateral such as airplanes. The convention would also aid Ontario companies involved in the sale of aircraft and associated equipment.

The components of the proposed Government Efficiency Act that relate to the Ministry of the Attorney General would help protect some of the most vulnerable people in our province and would modernize and make Ontario's justice system more accessible. I urge all members to support this bill. Ontarians deserve legislation that is clear and concise. They deserve legislation that makes their life easier, not more difficult. Bill 179 would help Ontarians in their daily lives. It would remove much uncertainty, confusion and indecision about the mounds of paperwork that government has demanded from them in the past. For all these reasons, I urge you all to support the passage of Bill 179.

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

**Mr Bradley:** One of the concerns I have about the bill revolves around a greater opportunity for the privatization of health care in Ontario. There is provision for changes to the Independent Health Facilities Act which I think militate in favour of moving even more toward a two-tier health care system.

We saw this first in Bill 26, the massive omnibus budget bill. One former Speaker called it an "ominous" bill as well as an "omnibus" bill, and he was right. Whether he meant it or not, he was right. At that time, it started to make the rules more lax.

If the government is going to embark upon a policy which will provide more magnetic resonance imagers—MRIs, as we know them—or CT scan machines for diagnostic purposes, my preference would be to see those located in public hospitals, in public facilities in the province, as opposed to heading out to the private sector and putting them in the private sector.

Why? Well, first of all, you have the expertise within the hospital system. Second, you have a willingness of the hospital system to assume responsibility for these machines. Third, you have patients who may be involved in the hospital in any event who would find it convenient to have access to these imaging machines right while they're in the hospital. Fourth, I think the public feels more comfortable when they're in public hands and when they believe there isn't one group who can reach into their pockets and buy their way to the front of the line. That's a great concern. Everyone recognizes that there should be a priority based on how desperately the person requires that diagnostic service. If it opens the door at all to somebody paying privately and getting to the front of the line, that's unacceptable to me.

**1950**

**Mr Bisson:** I listened to the comments from the honourable member from the government side. It's a little bit like what we were saying here a while ago, that much of what's in this bill—first of all, let's be clear: it's an omnibus bill that amends a number of pieces of legislation. I want to say again for the record, because the member's going to say, "Oh, you oppose everything in here," that no, there's a number of things we can support. The problem we have with your approach as a government is that you put inside the omnibus bill a whole bunch of items that you know darn well you couldn't support as an opposition party.

You've got one particular amendment in here—this one blows my mind. It's an amendment to the Employment Standards Act in which you're basically saying you're going to keep in place a provision that allows employers to block off the amount of holidays people can take, how they organize their holidays. For example, I get two weeks' holidays with my employer. It used to be that under the old Employment Standards Act, an employee could ask for that two weeks in a block of two. You're basically allowing the employer to block off that individual employee's holiday time into blocks of three days. So if I want to go on holidays with my wife and it's a two-day drive there and a two-day drive back, if my employer says no, even if I've got holiday time coming to me, there's nothing I can do about it. And you're saying to me, "New Democrats, why don't you vote in favour of this?"

The one that's really bizarre under the Employment Standards Act is that you're putting in a provision that says an employer only has to, once per year, tell an employee how many holidays he or she's got coming. Imagine this. It's the beginning of the year and I go to my employer and say, "Hey boss, how many holidays do I have coming?" The boss says, "Gilles, you've got three weeks," and I go, "Great." So I go out and I take a week—well, I can't take a week; I have to take three days, because the employer can refuse me my week—and halfway through the year I go to my employer because it's springtime and I want to go fishing and say, "Hey boss, I want to go on holidays. How many more holidays do I have coming?" He says, "I don't have to tell you.

The legislation says I don't have to tell you, and I'm not telling you."

Well, how can you vote for something as silly as that? Take this stuff and carve it out of the bill and maybe then we can support some of it.

**Mr Hardeman:** I'd like to commend the member for Cambridge for the very well-thought-out and well-researched presentation he made on Bill 179, pointing out the many changes required to reduce the amount of troublesome red tape that prevents good service from getting to people. I think he pointed out quite explicitly the improvements being made to the justice system to make sure that people who are involved in the system get justice delivered the way it should be.

An area that I thought was rather interesting was the issue of using technology for communications. I've had the opportunity a number of times in my riding office where people will call and have to communicate from the south end of the riding into the city of Woodstock to a government agency, but the government agency will not accept photocopies or fax copies of a document because it's not legal to administrate that way. It becomes very important, as this act will do, to allow more use of technology in communications to make services more available to people.

Another issue that I thought was very important—I've met a number of times with people representing credit unions who had great concerns that when they need to have a board meeting of all their shareholders to conduct business, with the cost of notification to people who would be eligible to attend these meetings, in the way it's prescribed, becomes almost impossible for them to do that. This allows that to be simplified in a way that they can conduct meetings in a cost-effective and efficient manner to serve their membership.

I think it's a very good bill and I very much appreciate the positive response of the member for Cambridge.

**Mr Curling:** I hear my colleagues talking about Bill 179, this thick omnibus bill, and that they're going to change everything. They're going to make sure they promote government efficiency and improve services to taxpayers by amending and repealing certain acts and by enacting a new act.

It was on September 25, I understand, that this was introduced here for the first time. Following the pattern of this government, you know they're going to put closure on this very soon or they won't go into public hearings so people can have a better understanding and read it properly, because they don't want them to know that they're changing all that.

As a matter of fact, my good friend the honourable Flaherty, of course, the Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation, they've been trying very, very much to make sure that he has a job. So the first thing they're going to do is go around and change every little thing they can find in some form of bill and then say, "OK, we're going to frame it in a way that he can have some job description." But there are so many things.

There's the Human Rights Commission, for instance: I don't know if there's anything in here that's going to

make it any more efficient so that people are able to get justice. I don't know if they're going to do that. I don't know if there's any word on that. I don't know if the good Minister of Culture is responsible for human rights—I don't know which minister is responsible for that. I hope they are advocating that they make some amendments there, because I'm telling you, that Human Rights Commission has no teeth, so justice is not being delivered to those who have been subjected to abuses and what have you.

Someone mentions that violence to women had not been addressed. Women's Health in Women's Hands is a terrific organization that lacks funds. There is a need to address some of the great concerns of women and the limited resources they have. So with all these amendments of acts to make the government efficient, I hope they get to that and address that.

**Mr Martiniuk:** I would like to take the opportunity to thank the member from St Catharines, the member from Timmins-James Bay, my colleague the member from Oxford and also the member from Scarborough-Rouge River.

Many times in this chamber things seem a little cut and dried, and sometimes dull, because we're dealing with regulation and laws and—what's it all about? But one thing that stuck out in my mind as I read this was just the innovation of new technology; we're finally starting to apply that to the courts. One of the amendments would permit bail hearings using audio or video in certain circumstances, and one can readily perceive those circumstances as distance. A person has been charged with a crime or arrested, they have not been convicted, they could be innocent, they could be guilty, they are presumed innocent, and society has the obligation to provide them with a bail hearing to determine whether they can be permitted back into our society safely. It's important that that be done expeditiously, and fortunately modern technology permits us to do just that.

I'm pleased to see that, as just one of the things that could affect human freedom, included in this bill.

**Mr Bradley:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on this bill. There are a lot of important issues that are before us tonight other than the contents of this bill, but I want to try to concentrate as much as I can on the precise contents of this bill.

People in St Catharines used to be able to watch this on channel 15, which was very convenient for them, particularly those who had an older television set, because they could get the lower channels. It's now been relegated to channel 67 by Cogeco TV, and therefore a lot of people, particularly people of a modest or lower income, but just a few people who have an older television set, do not have access to it and cannot hear the pearls of wisdom of the Minister of Transportation or others in the House from time to time.

So I wanted to encourage, through this speech, Cogeco TV to bring the parliamentary channel, the legislative channel in this case, back to channel 15 or to a lower-level channel, instead of perhaps one of those channels

where they're simply selling things and they don't have to be that low on the pecking order, shall we call it.

**2000**

Tonight people said to me, "You're talking about a government efficiency bill. You know where we need some efficiency is with our hydro bills," because the hydro bills are skyrocketing at this time. There isn't a member of this Legislature, including, I happen to know, you, Mr Speaker, who hasn't had all kinds of telephone calls, e-mails, faxes and letters, and just personal conversations about the huge increase in hydroelectric power prices for people of this province. This bill—

**Mr Garry J. Guzzo (Ottawa West-Nepean):** Even in Toronto?

**Mr Bradley:** That is coming up in Toronto, I should tell the member. I'm glad he mentioned that, because this month we'll begin to see that happen in Toronto. I wasn't aware of that before, but the Toronto member said, "Watch the next bill. That's where you'll begin to see it."

Now, unfortunately, an efficiency bill of this kind doesn't deal with something like the hydro bills, nor does it deal with Highway—well, it does, because there is a provision buried somewhere in here dealing with Highway 407, giving more clout—someone will correct me if I'm wrong—to the Highway 407 Corp to collect from people. Apparently, if a cheque bounces, the government of Ontario now will go to bat for the Highway 407 Corp and inflict penalties upon the person who wrote the cheque.

Normally you're going to say, "Well, you can't protect people who write cheques that bounce." I agree with that, except sometimes it takes the Highway 407 Corp so long to deal with these matters that sometimes the person who had the money in the bank for that cheque may no longer have it in the bank. That's another matter. I'm glad I could tie it into this bill, because it's part of this bill.

I get all kinds of complaints about Highway 407, the gouging of people who use it. The cost of using it is phenomenal. I'm told that if you're an American travelling from, say, a border area like Niagara Falls, New York, to New York City, it would be cheaper to go to New York City using their toll system than it would to go across the top of Toronto on Highway 407. I've been told that by people who are frequent 407 users.

I was talking to a gentleman who was in my office the other day, who told me that he had an old vehicle that had never been out of a garage, had not been out of a garage in 10 years, that was being billed for using Highway 407. He was, needless to say, furious. So this bill does deal with that.

The member for Timmins-James Bay alluded to another small provision, perhaps not easily found in this bill, and that is that under the provisions of this bill, your employer need not tell you how many holidays you have. Well, I have staff who seldom take holidays, but occasionally they will take their holidays, and if they come up to me a second time and say, "Can you remember how many holidays I have left," apparently under this legislation I don't have to tell them. That's what I've

been told, under this legislation. I find that astounding. Nevertheless, I'm told that's within this legislation.

I wish the bill would deal with the doctor shortage in the Niagara region, particularly in St Catharines where people are beside themselves trying to get a family physician or general practitioner—indeed, in some cases, the services of a specialist. When a doctor retires now, the huge practice that doctor might have consists of hundreds or perhaps into the thousands of people who must then find another doctor. To this point in time, this government has not come up with a solution that is helping people in my community of St Catharines, or generally of Niagara, to secure the services of physicians, and indeed to persuade present physicians to stay in our area.

It's easier for those of us who have resided in the area a long time. We can go to one of our relatives or friends or neighbours or somebody we meet and say, "Is your doctor taking on patients? Would you check to see?" Someone who is new to a city or does not have a wide circle of friends or acquaintances has a much more difficult time obtaining the services of a doctor, particularly if that person has multiple medical problems and may be an elderly patient.

So I wish this government efficiency bill would deal with a very chronic and at the same time acute problem in my area, and that is the problem of people trying to obtain the services of a general practitioner instead of having simply to go to walk-in clinics, which provide a service but in the long term are not the solution to these individuals' medical problems.

I looked through the bill as well, because it's a thick bill, to see if it dealt with the issue of the double cohort, because I'm having people phone my office—you would have this in northern Ontario, people phoning your office now—saying, "What on earth is going to happen to my son or daughter next year?" Is she or he going to be able to attend the community college or university of that person's choice? Well, there were a lot of assurances from the government that this was the case. Sometimes even some of the university or college presidents said, "It's likely to be fine." Now we're finding out, under new figures, that's not going to be the case and we'll see yet another crisis upon us. Is that found in this bill? Unfortunately not. We can't deal with that.

But what is found is an easing of an opportunity, as I mentioned in one of my two-minute responses, for the privatization or the two-tiering of our health care system.

I believe in a health care system which is publicly funded, which is universally accessible, which meets the five requirements of the Canada Health Act. That requires a very significant infusion of public funds. That means we can't constantly be going through the procedure of giving countless tax cuts. We now have, for instance, on the books, ready to go, a \$2.2-billion corporation tax cut scheduled by this government. Second, the government is going to proceed, despite a lot of advice within the government and outside of the government, with its tax credit for students in private schools.

Not always, by any means, but very often these are wealthy families with wealthy students who are going to use this funding.

What has happened is that the government has created a crisis in the public education system which is compelling people to look at alternatives. In desperation, those people are looking to the alternative called a private school. This erodes the public school system to which most of us went and which at one time was, under the Robarts plan and Minister of Education Bill Davis, then Premier Davis, a very strong education system. It continued that way until relatively recently, where we see a very significant movement of students out of the system into the private system, aided and abetted by this government.

We see the government having spent over \$250 million on self-serving government advertising. The latest was on the education system. They have little Johnny, or whatever the child's name is in this case, who's having trouble reading. You see the caption on that: they say, "Phone the government of Ontario. We'll tell you how we're solving this problem." Well, if the Minister of Education wants to have a press conference in every community in this province to explain that, I have no objection to that. That's her prerogative. But when the same Minister of Education is spending hard-earned taxpayers' dollars on what most objective people would consider to be self-serving government advertising, that is not acceptable.

I wish this bill dealt with the issue of global warming. What happened this afternoon as we were speaking—and I didn't have that information available—was that a report came out. Quentin Chiotti of Pollution Probe was one of the authors of the study. This report deals with my part of the province as well as Toronto.

#### 2010

"People in the Toronto-Niagara region can expect increased exposure to malaria, dengue fever and hantavirus in coming years due to climate change, says a major new report." That was released late this afternoon.

"The diseases are projected to spread because climate change favours the northward movement of disease-carrying birds, insects and rodents, says the study obtained by the Canadian Press" late this afternoon.

"The sudden spread of West Nile virus is an example of what to expect, suggests the study done by Pollution Probe in partnership with Health Canada and Environment Canada.

"It's the first comprehensive examination of the likely effects of climate change on an urban area in Canada.

"The health implications (of climate change) are pretty severe,' Quentin Chiotti of Pollution Probe, one of the authors of the study, said in an interview" today.

"How prepared are we to deal with these kinds of risks? We need to develop a very co-ordinated, comprehensive strategy involving national, provincial and municipal players to effectively respond.'

"Some of the study's findings:

"By 2020, excessive heat could kill over 400 elderly residents in the Toronto-Niagara region every year" and "more than 800 Toronto residents annually by 2080, a 40-fold increase over the current toll."

"The number of days with temperatures above 30 degrees Celsius could double to 30 days each summer by the 2030s.

"Ground-level ozone, a lung-damaging component in smog, is projected to double by 2080 across the region.

"The frequency of extreme weather events such as heat waves, wind storms and rain storms is projected to increase with associated increases in injuries, illnesses and deaths.

"The incidence of water-borne diseases could rise in communities that depend on wells, or in cities where sewer and storm-water drainage systems are combined.

"That's because heavy rains would increase the risk of contamination of drinking water. Water-borne disease outbreaks in the United States have been linked to heavy rain storms.

"Scientists have long predicted global warming will result in the northward spread of diseases now confined to hot countries, but the arrival of West Nile virus has made the risk more tangible.

"In the past, severely cold winters could be counted on to kill many disease vectors, but there has been a trend to mild winters," very probably except in your part of the country, Mr Speaker.

"Experts such as Paul Epstein of the Harvard Medical School have said the spread of West Nile virus to the western hemisphere is probably due to climate change, notably milder winters.

"What's scary to me is that there are now 69 (suspected cases of West Nile virus), 20 confirmed, in Canada,' said Chiotti. 'That's a fairly quick and rapid spread.'"

You ask, is this in the bill? Precisely: it's not in the bill. A Government Efficiency Act comprehensive omnibus bill would deal with a problem that's obviously growing. I know the government will want to address that problem.

But let me get to the bill itself, because that is what we're talking about this evening. I've already made some references to problems in it. What it does in a couple of specific cases is that it starts to exempt the government from FOI. For those who are watching at home, that's freedom-of-information provisions.

**Mr Guzzo:** Who's watching? It's on channel 77.

**Mr Bradley:** Channel 67, I say to the member.

I can say this: Bill 179 makes specific amendments to both the Securities Act and the Commodity Futures Act that will keep important information out of the hands of the public and will remove legislative oversight of certain government appointments. That is a backward step. At a time when people are looking for more insight, more oversight, more accountability, we find that the government is withdrawing those provisions, trying to keep this information secret from the public. It reminds me of the 107 pages of material that the Minister of the Environ-

ment is keeping secret from me, the news media and the people of the province concerning the Kyoto accord.

The Securities Act is amended to add a new level of exemption from freedom of information for the Ontario Securities Commission. According to the amendment, in addition to other exemptions the OSC will not be required to disclose any information that they receive from “any person or entity other than an employee of the commission, who provides services to the commission.” Most of us in this House would say that’s a major backwards step, particularly with all the corporate scandals we have seen.

Ontario Liberals believe that more transparency in government is required, not less. That is why we oppose further freedom-of-information exemptions such as this one. Earlier this year, for instance, we heard that the Eves government had allowed extravagant spending and serious mismanagement to occur at Hydro One. The government of Ontario is in charge of Hydro One. Because Hydro One was exempt from freedom of information, the public learned about what was happening only after Ontario Liberals uncovered information contained in IPO documents.

**Mr Caplan:** Thank you, Gerry Phillips.

**Mr Bradley:** IPO documents, and that’s thanks to Gerry Phillips.

But what I’m saying is that it wasn’t because of freedom of information, because you people had exempted Hydro One from freedom of information. So the public who are getting their bills now, opening them up and seeing huge increases are saying, “My gosh, this is terrible.”

*Interjection.*

**Mr Dwight Duncan (Windsor-St Clair):** I thought the GST was a Conservative tax.

**Hon Chris Hodgson (Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing):** Another Conservative government.

**Mr Bradley:** I’m glad the Minister of Municipal Affairs has raised the issue of another Conservative tax, the GST, being applied. But I don’t want to be distracted.

There’s an amendment to the legislation contained in here that means appointments to those important boards—that’s the Securities Act, the Commodity Futures Act—will no longer receive the scrutiny of the very assiduous government agencies committee of the Legislature. We believe that the legislative process for public appointments should be respected. The government has a responsibility to make their decisions open to public scrutiny. Instead, they continuously try to circumvent the rules, making decisions behind closed doors and keeping them secret.

The member for Sault Ste Marie sits on the committee. He would like to see and all of us who sit on the government agencies committee—I’m neutral and above all this—would like to see the careful scrutiny of those who are being appointed. You would know that when you’re the Chair of the committee, you’re totally objective so you cannot necessarily draw these conclusions, but I am told by others that we’re seeing a continuous stream of

former Conservative candidates and former Conservative members and all kinds of friends of the government being appointed to agencies, boards and commissions.

**Mr Guzzo:** Senator MacAulay.

**Mr Bradley:** I know that the former member from the bench, the judge himself, my good friend Garry Guzzo, would be concerned when he sees some of the judicial appointments being made now. They may not be the highest-echelon appointments, but they are nevertheless important. As a judge of great capability in years gone by and of wonderful judgment, he would recognize how important it is to have as much public scrutiny of these kinds of appointments as possible. This bill starts to remove that.

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

**Mr Bisson:** I just want to agree with some of the comments made by my good friend from St Catharines. I’ve got to say—most members may not have picked this up—we all know that Mr Bradley was turfed out of here the other day.

**Mr Caplan:** Welcome back.

**Mr Bisson:** Welcome back, number one. Most members won’t remember—that’s the first time since I’ve been here that I’ve ever seen him thrown out, and I was very surprised the other day. It’s nice to see him back. That’s an interesting thing in itself, because I’ve had the occasion of being turfed a couple of times in my 12 years here.

I just want to say, along with the member from St Catharines, that there are a lot of things inside this bill that really are kind of strange. One of the provisions you have in this bill is that you’re saying to the Highway 407 Corp that in terms of all those people they deem to be deadbeats, not having paid their fines, you’re going to give a private corporation the ability to suspend somebody’s driver’s licence. I think there are some issues here from the perspective of why we should give a private sector operator that kind of power, because it can be abused. We already know there are all kinds of problems on 407, how they administer—

**Mr Rosario Marchese (Trinity-Spadina):** The rates.

**Mr Bisson:** Never mind the rates; it’s a question of—

**Mr Marchese:** But that is a big one.

**Mr Bisson:** That’s a big issue, but the other thing is what’s happening with people when they try to deal with the Highway 407 Corp. People have transponders and the battery dies; they end up going through the electronic toll and they don’t know the battery’s dead, so they’re getting fined. People say, “I’m not paying the fine. I had no way of knowing the battery was dead.” So they call 407 and they can’t get a hold of anybody. They go to the kiosk, and they say, “We can’t give you a new battery without a little slip you get from 407. And by the way, you’ve got to call to get it.” And there’s no phone at the booth to get it. How do these people pay their fine? So at the end of the day, you’ve got a whole bunch of people who are mad, who don’t want to pay these things but have to, but they can’t get hold of Highway 407 Corp. And you’re going to give these guys the ability to withhold and with-

draw somebody's licence? I think that's a little bit over the edge, and I would think my good friend the judge is going to have something to say about that.

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**Mr Guzzo:** I'm always eager to respond to the member from St Catharines. I want to deal with the first point he made, and that was the move by the television authority in his hometown to take this program to channel 67 from channel 15. I have to suggest to him that I commend them for it if the educational value of the debate we just heard continues to plummet. We always had the argument that we could at least maintain the level of channel 15 because of the entertainment value. I'm afraid to suggest that even that is in decline, and I think he has to take a good share of the responsibility for it.

One of the serious points he made with regard to the bill was the judicial appointments. I think that's a very valuable comment. I go back to when I was appointed. All appointments were vetted through the Judicial Council. The chief justice of all the courts in Ontario had to vet and approve the appointment before the Attorney General of the day was allowed to make that appointment and announce it. And then we got to a more common situation, and that was taken out of the hands of the senior justices of the superior court, county court etc and turned over to a citizens' committee. This was supposed to improve the situation, was supposed to be an improvement on that basis. Indeed if it was a question of recruitment and recommendation, it was, but as far as the approval process, it was a step backwards, and some day it should be recorrected.

**Mr Tony Ruprecht (Davenport):** The Minister of Citizenship just walked in. I'm delighted that he's here so I can address him and say a few words.

First, let me point out very quickly that the member from St Catharines is saying something very significant in terms of the freedom of information disclosure. We didn't know, we didn't have the right, in fact, to find out about Hydro. That was kept away from the public and consequently we didn't know. Now, when they get the new bill, how is a person on a fixed income, whose rate is going to almost double—in fact, sometimes it's more than double—to be expected to pay their bill? When these bills hit Toronto, all your phones are going to be ringing. Whether it's Mississauga or Oakville or whatever, they're going to ring off the hook.

But what I really want to address, since the minister's here—I'm delighted he came. Let's talk about citizenship. What's really strange about this is that on the one hand we're saying to people that we are in a global competitive situation and we need skilled immigrants: "Let them come. We want them to come over here because we want to be competitive." What happens, when they finally arrive, is that the doors are closed and our professional associations are saying, "No, sorry. I'm glad you came, but you can't practise." Now what the heck is that? Then what happens? All these people in the meantime are driving taxis and cleaning restaurants. They're then forced to look around and make a living,

and what do they do? They're highly skilled. They're leaving. They're going to the United States, to other countries, because there the system is more open and they get jobs and they can make a living. But they come to Canada first; this is their preferred country.

**Mr Marchese:** They can go to Newfoundland.

**Mr Ruprecht:** That's a different story. Don't interrupt me here.

The point simply is this: that the minister's here and he's got the power to do something about it. The government can open its doors. Let's do it, because these people have the right to produce, the right to—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you.

**Mr Martin:** It's my great pleasure to stand and comment on the comments of the member from St Catharines. I know that right from the start, the member for St Catharines has been quite upset that he only had 10 minutes tonight to speak to this very important subject.

**Mr Bisson:** Ten?

**Mr Martin:** Did you do 20? Oh, he got 20. It's going to 10 next. He'd be quite upset about that, because I know he doesn't like the way the rules have changed around here. We're bringing in these huge omnibus bills—you can hardly carry them into the House, they're so big—and then we're expected to dig through those bills, deal with the detail and carry out our responsibility here in the very short period of time we get. Twenty minutes—imagine. There used to be a time in this House when you could talk all night. The member from Niagara Centre was a master at that. I think he went for two or three nights here at one point when he was talking.

But the member for St Catharines is always ready to talk about, in these big bills, there being things that are supportable but that there are always hostages. I call them Trojan Horses. There are pieces in these bills that kind of jump out at you. They don't come out at you all at once, but if you take the time to go through them—we don't get the time here, actually, to go through these bills—you begin to understand that bill after bill after bill, they're all pretty much the same.

I know the member for St Catharines, if he had had the time, would have wanted to talk about the gas-busters. Did they show up in St Catharines? I was wondering the other night where they went. They were there one day, out in front of the gas pumps for a photo op, and then boom, they're gone. I was saying that it's too bad the Red Tape Commission didn't go the same way, because none of the stuff they deliver here is in the interest of the common good or the broader population. It's all convenience for those who are well placed and the small majority of people—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. Response?

**Mr Bradley:** I thank the members for Timmins-James Bay, Ottawa West-Nepean, Davenport, and Sault Ste Marie for their wonderful contribution this evening.

I want to take up something the member for Sault Ste Marie just mentioned, and that is the existence of the gas-busters. Now that I see gas prices at the pump soaring out of sight, the last thing I can see are any of the gas-

busters—that is, Conservative members of the caucus who had nothing else to do and were assigned to go out to pretend they were going to have some influence on gas prices. Actually, the only answer they ever gave over the years was to point in the direction of somebody else, Ottawa or the United States or somewhere else. But they did take this challenge on, and the prices have gone up since we had the gas-busters instead of down.

**Hon Mr Hodgson:** Should we roll back the prices?

**Mr Bradley:** I must say to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who interjects, that the briefing notes found in the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations' book and the Minister of Energy's book have not changed in the 25 years I've been in this House. They all give the same answer. They get up and say, "We are monitoring the situation, and we're going to have meetings with officials from the oil companies." Meanwhile, I often hear these people—and you up north really feel this. You always have the representative of the association—if he's watching now, or monitoring, I'll get a letter from him—saying, "We don't fix the gas prices. They just all go up to 75.6 cents at the same time." You drive around the city and you see they're all at 74.6 or whatever they happen to be. There isn't anybody who believes that. The gas-busters must have found that out. What's unfortunate is that the gas-busters themselves appear to have run out of gas and the gas prices are soaring in the Eves Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Duncan:** I'm pleased to join the debate tonight on Bill 179, the so-called Government Efficiency Act, a Trojan Horse bill, an omnibus bill, a bill that again, in two specific cases, is going to attempt to do things that I think the government really didn't want the public to find out about and things that really don't deal with efficiency at all but rather deal with the government's desire to keep information from the public in some very specific areas, number one, and number two, move Ontario closer to a two-tier health care system.

So I'll spend the first few moments of the 10 minutes I have dealing with the issues that are in the bill, and I'd like to address a few things that should have been in the bill that have been omitted by the government.

The first point I'll deal with is the question about moving Ontario closer to two-tier health care. We're dealing here with the Independent Health Facilities Act. In the Independent Health Facilities Act, a facility of such a nature is defined as one which one or more members of the public receive services for which facility fees are charged or paid. There are approximately 1,000 of these facilities in Ontario. Most provide imaging and other diagnostic tests. Others provide treatment and surgical services that were historically performed in hospitals.

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The so-called IHFA, the Independent Health Facilities Act, was brought in in 1989 by the Peterson government. It specified licensing, funding and quality assurance requirements for these facilities providing medical procedures traditionally performed in public hospitals. The

main purpose of the bill at the time was to ensure that these clinics were properly regulated to ensure that the public good was served as their roles expanded in Ontario. For instance, the act clearly stated a preference in law for non-profit Canadian companies to provide health care in independent health facilities. When one reviews the debates, the Hansard of the day, it was designed specifically to prevent a US-style takeover of the provision of health care services in Ontario.

Another way it set out to protect the public good was by creating a cap on the price that an independent health facility owner could offer for the sale of their licence. Under the former cap, operators could only offer to sell their licences for an amount equivalent to 104% of the income arising from services rendered in a one-year period. The cap was put in place to prevent a commodity market for these licences—that is, to prevent speculation on price, to prevent owners from profiting in effect on health care in this province. If a licence was transferred, the owner of the licence would receive only what was considered fair compensation for the value of the licence itself.

This government, the Harris-Eves government, moved quickly to dismantle key protective sections of that act, and again we refer back to the first omnibus bill, the ominous bill, the so-called bully bill, Bill 26, which was introduced shortly after their 1995 election victory. The then Harris-Eves government amended the act to remove the non-profit Canadian preference. So that was the first step, tucked again into a bill with hundreds of pages and dozens of statutes being amended, a step toward two-tier health care in this province.

The amendment contained in this bill could reasonably be characterized as the next step toward a system of IHF regulation that clearly favours the for-profit sector and moves Ontario closer to two-tier health care. The government is removing the section of the Independent Health Facilities Act that was created to prevent a market developing around the licensed nature of a facility—that is, it's allowing speculation on the price of a licence; it's allowing the market to come in and influence how much it costs to become an operator of these facilities. Put in another way, obviously an owner's going to sell to the highest bidder, which will lead eventually to the two-tier dilemma we fear.

Earlier this spring, before this bill was introduced, the Eves Tories announced that they would grant these licences to for-profit companies so these for-profit companies could provide MRI and CT diagnostic services that people could pay for. This means that an IHF clinic, an independent health facility clinic, once regulated to perform medical services paid for by the public health system, can now be a lucrative business where diagnostic services are sold to the wealthy. This development, combined with the removal of the licence cap, could greatly inflate the value of an independent health facility licence. The cost of obtaining such a licence could become a barrier for non-profit companies wanting to provide important medical services in Ontario.

My colleague from St Catharines earlier addressed provisions in the bill which amend the Securities Act and the Commodity Futures Act which effectively, at a time when we ought to be looking at greater transparency, greater freedom of information, greater ability for this Legislature to hold to account this government or for that matter any government, at precisely the time these issues should be more clear, more transparent, more accessible, this government's moving in precisely the opposite direction, which we regret.

The restrictions on freedom of information in this province are already too great. Again, my colleague from St Catharines referenced our inability to get documents related to the Kyoto accord from the Ministry of the Environment. Seven months have passed since we asked for those documents. Four months have passed since we were advised that the documents are together and in one place, yet we still don't have them. What, for goodness' sake, is the government hiding?

We believe there should be an expansion of freedom-of-information coverage in this province. We have made proposals that would allow for greater access. By the way, one of the greatest barriers to true access in the question of freedom of information is the cost associated with getting that information.

We have seen in this bill a whole range of statutes dealt with. Let me see. It impacts 15 ministries and over 100 pieces of legislation. Yet in this bill the government does not attempt to deal with the Ontario Energy Board and what's going on with Union Gas, the retroactive increase that was granted to Union Gas that's going to affect over a million customers throughout this province. Imagine. A large, American-owned multinational can go back, with the blessing of Floyd Laughren and Ernie Eves, and charge people for gas they consumed two years ago. It is ridiculous.

**Mr Ruprecht:** Floyd Laughren did that?

**Mr Duncan:** Floyd Laughren did that. He was the chair. He signed the decision, did the hearings and obeyed and did the duty that he swore to the government he would do. The government has said they're going to review it, review the OEB. Well, we say get on with it. Maybe something should have been in here.

There's nothing to deal with the skyrocketing hydro bills my constituents are receiving, and I am told consumers in Toronto will soon be feeling the effect of these increases. I talked to two constituents this week, both of whom have had a more than 150% increase in their bills, even though there's a decrease in their actual consumption as measured on their bills. It's terrible whom that's affecting.

The physician shortage crisis that's been present for years now in this province: there is nothing in this bill that deals with physician shortage. In my community alone we've estimated we need a total of 59 new family doctors, yet there's nothing here, there's nothing anywhere to show that this government is dealing with that problem in an effective and efficient way—and this is all about government efficiency. It is not efficient that my

constituents have to go to Detroit to access medical services. That's not efficient at all. It costs our public health insurance system more than it should have to bear.

It's sad that it doesn't deal with tuition in our universities and community colleges. It's sad that it doesn't deal with the double cohort. Those are all issues this government chooses to ignore—ignore because the Eves government is not on the side of the people but on the side of its friends and the big-business interests that have put it into power.

2040

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

**Mr Martin:** It was interesting to listen to the member from Windsor.

**Mr Marchese:** For a while.

**Mr Martin:** For a while, yes. He kind of went over the line there and made it not interesting for a few minutes as he talked about my colleague Floyd Laughren, who is doing a job the best he can in the interests of the public.

I was wishing the member had talked about what's in the bill, the more than 400 items and 15 ministerial statutes and the repeal of 15 acts, and perhaps give a little insight into why it is that this government, no matter what it tables in this place, finds a way to make it in the best interests of the elite few at the expense of the many. We have that here again, a bill that purports to reduce red tape and bring in what the minister who introduced the bill suggests is smart tape when in fact anybody who has looked at the bill and spent any time with it knows it's making it more convenient for the corporate sector in this province to make ever more profit at the expense of the delivery of public services.

One example is the fact that, if you can imagine this, they're now going to assist the multinational corporation that has taken over Highway 407 and is making just a truckload of money every day that goes by to collect the fines. Why wouldn't they think it in their purview to help the disabled in the province? Take the money they're going to spend going after people who owe fines to the corporation that runs the 407 and give to the people on disability a modest increase similar to the one I called for with my private member's bill in June of this year. If they'd done that, we might be able to support at least some part of it.

**Mr Steve Peters (Elgin-Middlesex-London):** I want to commend my colleague from Windsor-St Clair because he raised a number of important issues facing Ontarians today. Hydro: I just got off the phone with an individual whose bill is up \$1,700.

I want to talk about some other aspects of this bill as well in my two minutes. On schedule F, dealing with the Ministry of Culture, I had an opportunity last week in my two minutes to raise some of these issues. I want to take advantage of it again this evening, because there are changes in this legislation dealing with archaeological sites and dealing with, hopefully, trying to strengthen and preserve Ontario's heritage. My concern with this bill is that it's one thing to put in the legislation that you're

going to license activity on archaeological sites. It's another thing to talk about artifacts being held in trust, and that for anybody who contravenes this act, the province can seize items.

It's good to see it put in words, but the sad thing is that we've seen so much of our archaeological heritage pirated, whether it be our archaeological heritage or our marine heritage. We're losing it day by day. The onus and the responsibility should be with this government to ensure that doesn't happen. They're trying to say they're going to make sure it doesn't happen by putting it in words in the legislation, but what this government has failed to do and has failed to recognize since they came to office in 1995 is that instead of strengthening heritage and offering resources to the Ministry of Culture and to those individuals charged with the responsibility for preserving the heritage in this province, they've done the opposite; they've cut those budgets. I think it's a shame, because this heritage needs to be preserved for future generations.

**Mr Ruprecht:** The member from Windsor-St Clair obviously made sense. I'm just hoping that the general public out there listened very carefully to his comments.

He raised the idea about Ontario Hydro because so much is not being accomplished when the government would have the time to do it. This bill is called the omnibus bill; it's really the ominous bill, because it doesn't address some of the major crises we have in Ontario today.

One of the major crises is obvious, that we were simply not told about the expenses incurred by Ontario Hydro. GST: once the bills came in and were itemized, for the first time we saw there was GST piled on GST. It was the Liberals who pointed it out to the government, but no.

Is the government consequently addressing the crises we have in Ontario today? That's what the member's pointing out. He's saying there are so many crises that should be addressed. You've got the chance, you've got the power, and I would think you'd have the ability, but you don't do it. We're asking here, why? There is a crisis today in education. There is a crisis that Mr Paul Christie is being appointed right across the street, and he tonight is going to make a decision of how the Toronto school board is going to be acting and what is going to be cut from there—whether the swimming pools are going to be on next year or not; whether the kids are going to have swimming pools next year. He's going to make that decision tonight. You've got a crisis, but what are you doing about the crisis? Are you addressing it? No. Is this bill addressing it? No.

It is pathetic. It is pathetic to sit here and to think that you could do something about it and you're not.

**The Acting Speaker:** Response.

**Mr Duncan:** I want to thank my colleagues from Sault Ste Marie, Elgin-Middlesex and Davenport for their comments.

Let me begin by re-emphasizing, first of all, the nature of the bill itself. It's an omnibus bill that affects 100

statutes. There are two key problems in the bill: number one, the further encroachment of private health care into Ontario; it's tucked in there in the way it amends the Independent Health Facilities Act. The second salient most offensive part of the act deals again with the notion of what is withheld under the freedom of information act as it relates to the Securities Act and the commodities act.

We find those two particular parts of the bill most offensive. There are others—my colleague from Elgin-Middlesex referenced the archaeological provisions of the bill, and again what's not addressed in it. Not addressed in it are issues that are very important to the people: how the OEB functions in terms of retroactive price increases, whether, as in this case, they're granted by Floyd Laughren or whoever's in the chair of that particular organization; the government's failure to address in a meaningful fashion the physician shortage issue; the government's inability to deal with the hydro question, the skyrocketing hydro rates that this government promised would not happen in a deregulated privatized market. That's what they promised; that's what they said. That's not what's happening today in my community and communities across the province. It's affecting individual consumers. It's affecting business consumers. It's affecting everyone. Some of them are seeing increases triple over what they had with the same or even less usage. This bill should be defeated and this government should deal with issues of pressing importance to the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate?

**Mr Marchese:** It's interesting to see that the member from Windsor-St Clair is so afraid of the NDP that he has to attack our little friend Floyd Laughren. Isn't that amazing?

**Interjection:** Who are you calling "little"?

**Mr Marchese:** From one little guy to another. He's shorter than I am and we're both short, although on television I appear taller, I'm told. But it's true, member from Windsor-St Clair: I do look taller on television.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Marchese:** You're not telling the truth.

**Mr Caplan:** There's Nellie Pedro.

**Mr Marchese:** Nellie is much shorter than I am.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Marchese:** He's got hair, but some people have more hair than they need.

*Interjection.*

**Mr Marchese:** Me too. To the subject matter, because we only have nine minutes—but I like to talk the Liberals too. I often enjoy talking to Tories but I like talking to Liberals too.

But I want to talk to this bill, a bill that says An Act to promote government efficiency and to improve services to taxpayers by amending or repealing certain Acts and by enacting one new Act. Nine minutes left to say so much on a very, very thick bill, so I'm not going to talk about the bill; I'm going to talk about what's not in the bill.

**Interjection:** Just like the member from Windsor-St Clair.

**Mr Marchese:** The member from Windsor-St Clair made reference to the bill and then made reference to other parts of the bill.

**Mr George Smitherman (Toronto Centre-Rosedale):** You're not very focused today.

**Mr Marchese:** But I am. If this government wanted to cut red tape, where they should be cutting red tape would be to reduce those 40,000 students who are in need of special education and are in limbo waiting for special education services that they desperately need and are not getting.

**2050**

Where the taxpayers really need you, Marilyn Mushinski, you're not there. Where the taxpayers who are most in need could use Marilyn Mushinski and others to cut the red tape, they're not there.

The Speaker is waving with his hand, "Please don't look at Marilyn; look at me." I don't want to look at the Speaker; I want to look at the camera and the taxpayers, through the Speaker, directly to the camera, as I talk to Marilyn Mushinski.

Red tape is making it impossible for 40,000 students to get the help they need, and it isn't a matter of simply saying that these students—Tony Ruprecht, it's good to have you here—are simply waiting for help. It's not adequate description to speak about the suffering these kids are in as they wait for the service that they need.

**Ms Marilyn Mushinski (Scarborough Centre):** Speak about the substance of the bill.

**Mr Marchese:** I'm speaking about the substance of the bill that speaks to red tape and doesn't speak to where it should really cut red tape—

**Mr Ruprecht:** What substance is there in that bill?

**Mr Marchese:** —speak about Tony Ruprecht—the intensive support amount—getting assistance for special students continues to be a gruelling task. The provincial government will not provide any support for a student unless the administration has filled out an intensive support amount report.

In the greater Essex board, they told us it takes 14 hours of staff time to fill out that report so a special education student can get the help he or she needs—14 hours per report. We are told by that board that they produced 380 reports for this school year alone and that there are still many more that needed to be filled, all special education kids waiting in line to get the help they need. Where were the scissors to cut that red tape? Where were your long scissors, Marilyn, to cut that red tape for those students? No big scissors for them, oh no. In fact, you Tories created the intensive support amount bureaucracy that has teachers wasting their time filling out forms that take thousands and thousands of hours that then need to be reviewed by the ministry staff again, as all these students wait for the service they need.

We're talking, Speaker, as I look at you—well then, I won't look at you; I'll look at the people watching this program—we're talking about kids who bite, kids who

kick, kids who scratch, kids who throw objects. These are kids who are in need, thrown into the classroom because now you demand, Marilyn, that kids be integrated into the classroom. So we have special education kids in the regular classroom as we throw out educational assistants because you people don't have the money, you say, to keep them in. Kids who need the help, thrown into large classes without educational assistants to help the regular teacher, as they wait in line for help.

You people have \$11 billion a year that you're giving to people who don't need income tax cuts, but you don't have enough money to get rid of this red tape that would permit these young kids to get the help they need. You go figure that, Speaker. Talking about priorities, why is there no priority to help kids in need but there are a lot of big scissors to cut the red tape to help the Highway 407 Corp? Imagine: we, the government, help a private corporation to say, "If you don't pay the bills, we take your"—what?

**Mr Bisson:** Their licence.

**Mr Marchese:** —"licence away." What kind of prostitution role is the government playing to help the corporate sector collect money from the taxpayers who, for whatever reason, might not have paid their bills? You understand, you're prostituting yourself as a government to help the corporations. You have the big scissors to help them out, but you have no little ones to help the little kids who are desperately waiting, appealing to you, or the parents who appeal to you day in and day out for money.

Some \$11 million for tax cuts, yet they don't have enough money to help kids who desperately need it, to help teachers, to help parents who suffer day in and day out with the kid in need. But as they appeal to you, they can't get hold of you to get some money and throw it into those classrooms.

In the greater Essex board, we were told of a case by the trustees. They told us about a young boy born severely mentally and physically disabled—listen to this. You're going to like this story. It's a very human story.

**Mr Bisson:** I'm listening.

**Mr Marchese:** He had no legs—ministers, there are two of you, three of you, four of you; listen to this story—and only one arm and the mental capacity of a two-year-old. School administrators still had to struggle to receive the funding they would need to help this boy. Teachers who worked with the student spent the day teaching him how to feed himself. Ministers, listen. The most realistic educational goal they could get, given the lack of support, was to help him to feed himself.

On hearing this, the auditor assigned by the ministry saw a cost-cutting opportunity. He informed the board that if the child was feeding himself, then they had erred in requesting an aide for the student during that lunch hour. Do you understand what I'm talking about? We're talking about a government that has no feelings. We're talking about a government that has no veins. We're talking about a government that has a heart of stone. We're talking about a government that said, through this auditor, they were going to take the funding away from

this child because they were able to teach this boy, who had no legs and only one arm, to feed himself. The auditor said, "We erred. We're going to take the aide away from you." Do you understand the stupidity of that?

The ministers still left in this room, you have to listen to the story. It's pitiful. It speaks so badly of you. That's the red tape you have to deal with; not the red tape that deals with the corporate sector that desperately genuflects in front of you saying, "Please help us. We're in desperate need of more, more, more help from you, the government." Some \$11 billion goes out of our government pockets every year—\$11 billion—and we have no money to help special-education kids. It's a shameful act by a shameful government. That's the kind of red tape we have to talk about. But we have no time to speak more on this. Time has run out.

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

**Ms Mushinski:** It really doesn't surprise me that the rather melodramatic member from Trinity-Spadina didn't speak to the content or substance of the Government Efficiency Act, 2002, Bill 179. It doesn't surprise me, because he really doesn't appreciate what five years of NDP misrule did to drive out jobs from this province and to drive down the quality of life for so many of the kids of whom he speaks now. He doesn't appreciate that—I think there were 33 tax increases during his rule, his reign of terror, I should add, that increased proportionately the amount of red tape that drove away jobs, that actually drove 10,000 jobs out of this province, that drove up the deficit to over \$11 billion, not to mention the debt, of course. For him to stand and espouse against this government's legacy with respect to protecting the rights of the taxpayer—who for the first time in history have been able to generate wealth for all of those kids whom you speak about—I am ashamed of you, Mr Marchese.

2100

**Mr Martin:** I want to commend my colleague here from Trinity-Spadina, who always speaks passionately about the things that concern him the most, and in particular this bill which amends more than 400 items and 15 ministerial statutes and repeals 15 acts.

The minister, Mr Flaherty himself, said in the Legislature that we'll see outdated, outmoded and unnecessary regulations eliminated or replaced with "thoughtful, needful, smart tape," he calls it. But it's more far-reaching than that. When the minister talks about efficiency, one has to ask the question, as the member just did: efficient for whom? Who's it helping?

When considering this government's track record, one has to be concerned. There's not a single item among the 600 pages that in any way inconveniences those friends and benefactors of the government, who make millions from selling off public assets and loosening government control.

This legislation shows that this government is indeed an activist government: it's actively protecting the rights and privileges of the wealthy few. As the member just said, it actively avoids sticking up for citizens in this

province who need their help, like the students he spoke of, like the one student he spoke of. When the minister says he's cutting red tape, we have to look closely at what he's cutting and whom he's cutting, because our experience has not been very positive.

I was this past Monday in Sudbury, sitting in on an inquest of a woman who had been confined to her home under house arrest because she had the temerity to be on social assistance to look after her housing and food needs, expecting a baby, and then to take out a student loan so that she could go to school and better herself and get a job. I mean, if you want to talk about red tape, cut that red tape, get rid of that piece of legislation and help somebody, please.

**Mr Bisson:** To the member from Trinity-Spadina, I agree. I think exactly the point he was making is that this government has made some choices, and clearly this government has decided to choose what side to be on when it comes to a number of very public debates that we've had in this province when it comes to setting public policy. The member was right that when it comes to the issue of public education and specifically the kids with special needs, this government chose to be on the side of giving tax cuts to those people in our society who probably least need it instead of making sure that we take the dollars we take from taxation—because taxation in itself is not a bad thing if we're utilizing the money in order to be able to assist people in our society who need help—and he spoke of this particular case of this young child who is basically at a very low functional rate, who needs to get the very basic issues dealt with in teaching this young boy how to eat and how to be able to do some of the basic things that we take for granted. The appointed person this government sent in by way of their red tape, as they talk about it, when trying to cut out inefficiency in school boards, makes a decision that you're not going to have special-needs teachers in some cases, or teachers' assistants, to assist people in the school system who need these very basic supports in order to be able to do some of the things we take as very basic in life.

The member of Trinity-Spadina is right. It's a question of choices. Yes, we as New Democrats would choose to help that child, because we believe that using taxation dollars to assist that child is a good thing, not a bad thing. This government wants to wear as a badge of honour the idea that somehow to give people like me and others who make 100,000 bucks a year a tax cut—

**Mr Caplan:** You make \$100,000?

**Mr Bisson:** Well, we make pretty darn close to 100,000 bucks, if you look at your T4s.

But when they turn around and they give people like us tax breaks, how good is that when it comes to the benefit of society? I'd rather pay my taxes and know that young child has some basic help in our education system.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions or comments? Response.

**Mr Marchese:** This bill here amends the Domestic Violence Protection Act, 2000. This is a two-year-old

bill. It still hasn't been proclaimed. It amends a bill that has yet to be proclaimed. A bill that was supposed to be so important to these people two years ago is being amended, but it was so important at the time that it be moved and passed and proclaimed right away, but they're amending it two years later.

This is the kind of incompetence we're dealing with with this government.

This bill supports Highway 407, a private corporation, and does so in the prostitution of itself as a government to remove the licence of individuals who ride their highways and who for one reason or another haven't paid their bill. The government says, "Don't you worry, private sector. As you make your billions of dollars, we will do the dirty work for you." Can you believe that? That's the kind of crap we're dealing with in this bill.

What we're not dealing with is the fact that we have so much red tape. With all the generation of wealth that the member from Scarborough Centre speaks about, all this generation of wealth this government has given Ontarians, it doesn't have the money to deal with 40,000 special education students waiting desperately, pleading for help. What wealth are we talking about that she can't find the money to help those students?

That's the red tape we're talking about. They'd rather not talk about that, about students who are thrown into the classroom where the regular teacher has to deal with them as they tragically wait and suffer. Teachers suffer, students suffer, the whole class suffers, everybody suffers. There's so much generation of wealth and they have no money to cut the red tape.

**The Acting Speaker:** Further debate.

**Ms Mushinski:** Good. I generated some murmurs and moans from the other side of the House. Obviously, my presence here impacts on some people in this House, which is kind of nice to see.

I had to spend some time in England this summer attending the funeral of my brother-in-law, who unfortunately died far too young. My brother-in-law was a prison officer. He and I were very close, notwithstanding the miles that separated us. We often used to talk about his life in the prison service and the job he did for public safety in Great Britain. We agreed a lot on public policy, I think because our government is so committed to enhancing public safety, which most Conservative governments in the western hemisphere truly believe in.

Were he here tonight, he would definitely agree with this bill that enhances public safety, especially with respect to changes needed in the Ministry of Correctional Services Act. That is what the Government Efficiency Act, 2002, speaks to, and I'd like to address those amendments this evening.

Even amendments as simple as updating language and clarifying procedures, we believe on this side of the House, are necessary if you want to ensure that legislation is kept up to date and current. We appreciate that's something members on the other side of the House don't understand.

Some of the key amendments are the definition of "correctional service," which will include the operation and maintenance of places of custody for young offenders; the amendments will avoid unnecessary, repetitive reference to these places; security terms such as "maximum security" or "medium security" will now be referred to collectively as "youth facilities." If you think about that in terms of what language does and is intended to portray, you can understand why it is important that we occasionally review some of these rather burdensome misuses of language to ensure everybody understands the same language.

**2110**

As well, this bill will allow us to make minor amendments to the Ministry of Correctional Services Act that will allow us to provide more effective and efficient service to young offenders. I think that is something everyone in this House should strive to do. For example, subject to discretionary exemptions, the ministry will no longer be required to incarcerate a young offender in a medium security place of secure custody or in a place of open temporary detention. Instead, the ministry will now identify the place of custody and level of security that most appropriately meets the needs of the young offender and society.

I think that's common sense. The safety of our institutions and the communities that house them has always been a top priority for this government, as it should be for every government. That's why we've made minor amendments to the Ministry of Correctional Services Act that will not only enhance the security of institutions, but will enhance the safety of the neighbouring communities. That's something, again, that we have always been committed to.

Because of this bill, superintendents will be authorized to conduct searches of correctional institutions and persons found within the institution and they will be authorized to dispose of contraband if it is found. The amendment will also clarify the definition of "contraband." As well, all releases will now be made through temporary absence or parole, both of which have strict standards and guidelines that must be met for an inmate to be granted leave from the institution.

The Ontario Parole and Earned Remission Board will have the authority to reconsider a parole decision where it receives new information before an inmate has been released from custody. The board will also be allowed to suspend parole where there is a reasonable apprehension that the inmate is about to breach a term and condition of his or her parole, or to protect persons or property.

These amendments, we believe, are consistent with current board policy and the board's responsibility for public safety. Again, this bill really does address the needs of the community.

Our government is not only serious about the safety and security of our correctional institutions, but we're also very serious about fire safety. That's why we've also amended the Fire Protection and Prevention Act to ensure that fire safety is kept up to date and in the best interests of protecting Ontario's citizens.

Amendments include allowing the fire marshal, an assistant to the fire marshal or a fire chief not only to remove but to dispose of combustible or explosive material or anything that may constitute a fire in circumstances of an immediate threat to life. There's also a provision that gives authority to the Fire Safety Commission to order the disposal of any combustible or explosive material or anything that may constitute a fire hazard.

Our government is proud of the work that is done by the office of the fire marshal and we believe his office plays an important role in communicating safety initiatives on a variety of levels. That's what this bill is all about: responding to the issues that have been communicated by the people who protect our citizens on a daily basis.

To prevent misinterpretation in the types of communications issued by the fire marshal, amendments have also been made regarding the use of the terms "directives" and "instructions." Where the term "directives" is used, strict compliance is required. Where the term "instructions" is used, some flexibility in compliance is allowed.

Our government is proud of the front-line police officers who keep our communities safe and secure. We believe that part of that respect comes from knowing that our police services are held to a standard of professionalism. In keeping with recent legislative changes and current operational practices, the Police Services Act has been amended to include clarification that auxiliary members of a police force and civilian employees of the OPP are not considered members of the public for the purposes of using the public complaint process to make a complaint about another member of the police force. Complaints about a police force and its staff must be made to the chief of police or to the OPP commissioner.

Time doesn't permit me to tell you of the numerous other red-tape initiatives that help to improve the safety of the citizens of Ontario, but I will tell you that we believe this bill clearly demonstrates the government of Ontario's ongoing commitment to sound legislation in the best interests of the people of this province.

**The Acting Speaker:** Questions or comments? Further debate?

**Mr Jean-Marc Lalonde (Glengarry-Prescott-Russell):** I'm delighted to be able to speak on this bill tonight. Rarely would I criticize in this House, but tonight I have the chance to say what I hear from my constituents and also from the people of this province.

I'm going to go immediately to the hydro fiasco that we are going through. I'm going to tell you about this poor 80-year-old lady from St-Isidore, Madame Henri Longtin. This lady was paying \$106 a month for her hydro bill, and today she received a bill of \$500.13—an 80-year-old lady.

I want to refer to Mrs—

**The Acting Speaker:** The member will know that we are speaking to an omnibus bill and, while the Speaker is not entirely sure of every act that is involved, I am not aware that it actually directly impacts on hydro bills. So would you like to—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker:** Show some connection to the Chair is, I guess, what I'm telling you.

**Mr Lalonde:** Mr Speaker, this bill is an act to promote government efficiency and improve services. Bill 179 is a massive omnibus bill that impacts 15 ministries, including energy. It also involves over 100 pieces of legislation. So we're talking about energy.

I'm going to go immediately to health care, then. Health care at the present time—you cannot say that we have improved the services. It's impossible. There's only one section in there that I agree with. It's on page 10—

**Hon David Turnbull (Associate Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation):** Did you read the bill, Jean-Marc?

**Mr Lalonde:** Definitely, I've read it. Probably you people on the other side haven't read it, because this is the bill here. I could tell you that I have been reading it. I had the chance to read it.

If I look at page 7, a technical amendment made to the Health Insurance Act, I do believe in that one because the people will have 30 days to appeal a decision instead of 15 days. That is the only part that I would say will be an improvement.

Let's go back again to the health care services in our region, especially the francophone services. I look at the city of Ottawa, which includes Cumberland, Sarsfield and Navan. Can you get someone to go to their homes to do home care services for people in French? Impossible. They are saying to the people, "If you cannot accept an anglophone, you won't have any service, because we don't have them." The francophones don't get paid for their mileage to go outside the central core. If I go to St Eugene, 20% of the people don't speak a word of English, but they just can't get the services in French.

I'm looking at the Minister of Transportation. You're probably not aware of this one, Minister: you cannot find a single book of the driving testing manual at any of the government transportation services counters at the present time. There aren't any available. Two weeks ago, everyone in the Ottawa area told me there were no manuals available any more. What are we going to do to give services to the francophones in eastern Ontario?

**2120**

When we're talking about improving efficiency in service, what have we done to the construction people? On the mobility bill that we passed way back in 1999 the government spent over \$1 million on publicity, television and newspaper advertising. You know what you people did? You amended the Municipal Act without the municipality being notified. Minister Hodgson approved it. He amended the act to give access to all Quebec electricians, plumbers and contractors to do work in Ottawa. But the people of Smiths Falls, Cornwall, Hawkesbury and Rockland are not allowed to work in Ottawa. You have given the right only to the Quebec people. Is that fair? You have taken all powers away from the city of Ottawa.

Let's go back to electricity. I've been getting about 12 calls a day, even today from your own riding, Nepean—I told them to call your office. The other day I got one for the member from Carleton—I told him to call Norm Sterling. I'm getting calls from the 905 area. You people, when you're crying that the increase is about \$40 or \$50 a month, let me speak about this lady, Jocelyne Séguin. Last month she was paying \$644; this month, \$960.15. She has used 150 kilowatt hours less than the previous month, and her bill is \$316 more. I'm sure every one of you on the other side is getting calls about those hydro bills. Probably the city of Toronto hasn't received them yet. If Norm Sterling, the member for Lanark, is not getting any calls, I just can't believe it.

Yesterday the Premier said—and really, I'm not retarded and I'm not blind.

**Hon Mr Baird:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: The standing orders are very clear that you have to discuss the bill before us, and thus far the member opposite hasn't mentioned one single part of the bill.

**The Acting Speaker:** He has talked about the bill, but he needs to relate his comments directly to the bill.

**Mr Lalonde:** I'm going to go back to the senior home care services, the services in the long-term-care facilities. This government is saying it's going to improve the services. What's going to happen with that 15% increase that they'll be facing? They have faced, since September 1 of this year, \$100 more; by the year 2004, they will be facing \$213 more per month. Those seniors are getting very little at the present time, and the children and friends who are taking care of those people don't know what to do right now; they just can't meet the demand.

Let's go back to energy at the present time. We know the member for Scarborough East said at one time, "You people don't want us to sell Hydro One." The reason we want to get rid of it is because it is mismanaged. Is that the way to operate? If we don't have the proper management in there, we sell our equity, we get rid of it because we haven't got the right management. Can we make a decision? Right now, the cost to operate, to manage Hydro-Québec, is \$484,000 a year. That's what Mr Caillé is getting. Eleanor was getting \$2.2 million; Mr Osborne, with his bonus, \$1,577,813. And then we turn around and we hire this American guy, Mr Preston, at a cost of \$1,000,423.69, including his bonus.

**Hon Mr Turnbull:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: You will know that it is the job of the Speaker to reinforce the rules of this House, and that is that when debating a bill of this nature, it has to address the actual bill. The Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker:** Thank you. Just stop the clock for a moment. If you had been here, you would have known that members had spoken about electrical parts of the bill.

**Interjection:** There's no electricity part in here.

**The Acting Speaker:** Talking about freedom of information, which is in this bill. I don't find it to be a tremendous stretch to go where the member is going.

The member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

**Mr Lalonde:** Just to please them, I'm going to go back to health care. This government is saying, "We are going to improve the services." We turn around, and at CHEO in Ottawa we're saying, "We are going to close the cardiac surgery clinic." Does that improve the service? We will transfer this to Toronto, and at the present time a lot of doctors have decided to resign from there. We just can't get the doctors over at CHEO, one, and the other has gone to England at the present time. He's looking for another job because there's no security for them, and right now we just can't get the proper service that we used to get. That is an example of the types of services that we say we are going to improve.

If we look at the municipalities, we have downloaded all the services to the municipalities. The roads are getting into a condition that we won't be able to take them in two years from now. This is what they call improved services.

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

**L'hon M. Baird :** Je veux dire que mon collègue n'a pas parlé du tout du projet de loi. Il dit qu'il est contre toutes les parties de la loi sauf une, mais il n'a pas dit une chose contre aucune mesure dans le projet de loi. Je suis certain qu'il n'a pas lu le projet de loi, et je suis vraiment choqué qu'il n'a pas parlé du tout en français. C'est juste terriblement dommage.

**Mr Peters:** I'd like very much to congratulate my colleague. He's raising issues, though, that truly affect citizens of Ontario today.

I want to raise an issue dealing with the Ministry of Culture in section 7 of this legislation, this omnibus bill, that's in front of us here. Again, it's dealing with heritage and the preservation of heritage in this province. I think if the province really wanted to do something to help strengthen heritage, they would amend this bill under section 28 of part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, and not just say to a municipality, "You may establish a heritage committee." I think it should be strengthened to say, "You shall establish a heritage committee."

We've witnessed all over this province valuable pieces of heritage being demolished by reckless developers. We've seen archaeological sites devastated across this province. Put some strength into the Ontario Heritage Act. The Ontario Heritage Act has not undergone any serious review since 1974. Why don't you go beyond what is being proposed in this legislation and change it to "shall"? We should be doing everything in our power, and it doesn't matter—the preservation of our heritage should be a non-partisan issue. But we've seen, unfortunately, too many buildings and too many pieces of our heritage lost.

If this government truly wants to do something—and I spoke earlier about the amendments dealing with archaeologists and archaeological sites in this province—put some teeth into this bill. Put it in, and give municipalities true strength. Support the archaeologists in this province. Don't continue to cut and cut like you've done across this province. We've seen the system of regional archaeologists destroyed in this province.

You are contributing to the piracy and the looting of heritage and archaeological sites in this province.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Peters:** This is in the bill; I'm speaking to the bill. If you really want to do something to preserve heritage, strengthen the Ontario Heritage Act.

2130

**Mr Bradley:** I found the member's speech extremely enlightening and certainly relevant to everything contained within this legislation that I could see, particularly as it related to hydro bills.

I don't know what the members on the government side don't see in terms of the connection to outrageously high hydro bills that he has encountered. As well as that, he has encountered some severe problems with the community care access centre and home care being available to people in his area. That's something that we can share in the Niagara region where people are asking for and requiring even more home care than it is possible at the present time to obtain. So many people have to reach into their own pockets or the pockets of their children to obtain that care.

This isn't simply for elderly people—that's where we see the most people who are affected by it—but also people who have special needs and are at home. So I think the member by raising this in this House is raising an issue that is not only pertinent to his own constituency, not only pertinent to the legislation before us tonight but also pertinent to those problems and challenges which confront the entire province.

I know he's passionate about the size of the hydro bills that he has been receiving, the amount of deceit that has been taking place by people selling certain packages to people, even outright forgery that's taking place by those who are advancing the cause of special arrangements for paying for their electricity.

All of this could have been avoided if this government had kept the regulation, the true regulation on the electrical market in this province, had strengthened the Ontario Energy Board, given it the teeth that it needed, and had established a select committee of the Ontario Legislature to deal exclusively with the issue of Hydro affairs.

**Hon Mr Sterling:** I'd like to welcome the member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell back from Beirut and his most recent trip over there at the taxpayers' expense, while his fellow members criticized this government for buying the odd glass of wine for some of their guests and stakeholders.

I don't know whether this trip cost the taxpayer—

**Mr Caplan:** Mr Speaker, on a point of order: It was not a glass of wine; it was a vat of wine.

**The Acting Speaker:** That's not a point of order.

**Hon Mr Sterling:** Only the member opposite would drink a vat of wine.

*Interjections.*

**Mr Smitherman:** On a point of order, Mr Speaker: I think that's an offensive comment that he made.

**The Acting Speaker:** I'm sorry, I didn't hear an offensive comment. I just didn't hear anything.

**Hon Mr Sterling:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. They can give it, but they can't take it. That's basically it.

While the member was off in Lebanon I was hearing from the member from Ottawa West-Nepean, the member from Nepean-Carleton and the other eastern Ontario members about needs in eastern Ontario for our highways. Quite frankly, we have fulfilled a lot of those needs, even in this member's riding. I didn't hear about those in his speeches. He didn't thank the Minister of Transportation for fixing up Highway 417 down in his area. We're rebuilding a major part of it.

We're widening the Queensway in Ottawa. We're building four lanes all the way to Arnprior in eastern Ontario. We spent over—

*Interjections.*

**Mr Guzzo:** A new ring road.

**Hon Mr Sterling:** A new ring road to connect my riding to his riding, because I'd like to see him more often. We really believe we're doing a—

**The Acting Speaker:** Response?

**Mr Lalonde:** It's true. I was in Lebanon. It's true, I had one glass of wine. I was invited by the president of the Lebanon Bank over there, Mr Tiberge, and I really enjoyed that glass of wine, and it's going to benefit this province that we went there.

I want to thank the member from St Catherines and also the member from Elgin-Middlesex-London. The member from St Catherines referred to Hydro One. Definitely I've said it many times in this House before. The residential contractors in Ontario have been hit with a 332% increase in the connection charge: from \$224 to \$968, without being notified after the house was sold. Bernard Sanscartier, who is a well-known contractor, wants to know how they ever justified that increase. We don't know. Hydro doesn't even know.

We referred to health care. We had a company called DiagnostiCare, and DiagnostiCare really got some help from this government, over \$9 million, to upgrade their equipment. They got the \$9 million, they sold their company, then replaced the equipment. I have this X-ray clinic in Embrun operated by Lynda Lapalme. To be able to continue the service, she had to pay over \$10,000 to get a licence to continue.

This is what we call efficiency and improved service from this government. If you call it that, I don't know what we could expect next.

**The Acting Speaker:** Although I know members will be disappointed, it is past 9:30 of the clock. This House will stand adjourned until 10 of the clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 2136.*

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Etobicoke-Lakeshore	Kells, Morley (PC)	Markham	<b>Tsubouchi, Hon / L'hon David H.</b> (PC) Chair of the Management Board of Cabinet, Minister of Culture / président du Conseil de gestion du gouvernement, ministre de la Culture
Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	Lalonde, Jean-Marc (L)		
Guelph-Wellington	<b>Elliott, Hon / L'hon Brenda</b> (PC) Minister of Community, Family and Children's Services / ministre des Services à la collectivité, à la famille et à l'enfance	Mississauga Centre / -Centre	Sampson, Rob (PC)

Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti	Constituency Circonscription	Member/Party Député(e) / Parti
Mississauga East / -Est	<b>DeFaria, Hon / L'hon Carl</b> (PC) Minister of Citizenship, minister responsible for seniors / ministre des Affaires civiques, ministre délégué aux Affaires des personnes âgées	Scarborough Centre / -Centre	Mushinski, Marilyn (PC)
Mississauga South / -Sud	Marland, Margaret (PC)	Scarborough East / -Est	Gilchrist, Steve (PC)
Mississauga West / -Ouest	Snobelen, John (PC)	Scarborough Southwest / -Sud-Ouest	<b>Newman, Hon / L'hon Dan</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / ministre associé de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Nepean-Carleton	<b>Baird, Hon / L'hon John R.</b> (PC) Minister of Energy, Minister responsible for francophone affairs, deputy House leader / ministre de l'Énergie, ministre délégué aux Affaires francophones, leader parlementaire adjoint	Scarborough-Agincourt	Phillips, Gerry (L)
Niagara Centre / -Centre	Kormos, Peter (ND)	Scarborough-Rouge River	Curling, Alvin (L)
Niagara Falls	Maves, Bart (PC)	Simcoe North / -Nord	Dunlop, Garfield (PC)
Nickel Belt	Martel, Shelley (ND)	Simcoe-Grey	<b>Wilson, Hon / L'hon Jim</b> (PC) Minister of Northern Development and Mines / ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Nipissing	McDonald, AL (PC)	St Catharines	Bradley, James J. (L)
Northumberland	<b>Galt, Hon / L'hon Doug</b> (PC) Minister without Portfolio, chief government whip / Ministre sans portefeuille, whip en chef du gouvernement	St Paul's	Bryant, Michael (L)
Oak Ridges	<b>Klees, Hon / L'hon Frank</b> (PC) Minister of Tourism and Recreation / ministre du Tourisme et des Loisirs	Stoney Creek	<b>Clark, Hon / L'hon Brad</b> (PC) Minister of Labour / ministre du Travail
Oakville	<b>Carr, Hon / L'hon Gary</b> (PC) Speaker / Président	Stormont-Dundas-Charlottenburgh	Cleary, John C. (L)
Oshawa	<b>Ouellette, Hon / L'hon Jerry J.</b> (PC) Minister of Natural Resources / ministre des Richesses naturelles	Sudbury	Bartolucci, Rick (L)
Ottawa Centre / -Centre	Patten, Richard (L)	Thornhill	<b>Molinari, Hon / L'hon Tina R.</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associée des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ottawa-Orléans	<b>Coburn, Hon / L'hon Brian</b> (PC) Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement	Thunder Bay-Atikokan	McLeod, Lyn (L)
Ottawa South / -Sud	McGuinty, Dalton (L) Leader of the Opposition / chef de l'opposition	Thunder Bay-Superior North / -Nord	Gravelle, Michael (L)
Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest-Nepean	Guzzo, Garry J. (PC)	Timiskaming-Cochrane	Ramsay, David (L)
Ottawa-Vanier	Boyer, Claudette (Ind)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	Bisson, Gilles (ND)
Oxford	Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Toronto Centre-Rosedale / Toronto-Centre-Rosedale	Smitherman, George (L)
Parkdale-High Park	Kennedy, Gerard (L)	Toronto-Danforth	Churley, Marilyn (ND)
Parry Sound-Muskoka	Miller, Norm (PC)	Trinity-Spadina	Marchese, Rosario (ND)
Perth-Middlesex	Johnson, Bert (PC)	Vaughan-King-Aurora	Sorbara, Greg (L)
Peterborough	Stewart, R. Gary (PC)	Waterloo-Wellington	Arnott, Ted (PC)
Pickering-Ajax-Uxbridge	<b>Ecker, Hon / L'hon Janet</b> (PC) Minister of Finance / ministre des Finances	Whitby-Ajax	<b>Flaherty, Hon / L'hon Jim</b> (PC) Minister of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation / ministre de l'Entreprise, des Débouchés et de l'Innovation
Prince Edward-Hastings	Parsons, Ernie (L)	Willowdale	<b>Young, Hon / L'hon David</b> (PC) Attorney General, minister responsible for native affairs / procureur général, ministre délégué aux Affaires autochtones
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		York North / -Nord	Munro, Julia (PC)
		York South-Weston / York-Sud-Weston	Cordiano, Joseph (L)
		York West / -Ouest	Sergio, Mario (L)

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

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

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