



ISSN 1180-4319

Legislative Assembly
of Ontario
Second Session, 38th Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario
Deuxième session, 38^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 7 June 2006

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 7 juin 2006

**Standing committee on
regulations and private bills**

**Comité permanent des
règlements et des projets
de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair: Andrea Horwath
Clerk: Susan Sourial

Présidente : Andrea Horwath
Greffière : Susan Sourial

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Copies of Hansard

Copies of Hansard can be purchased from Publications Ontario: 880 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8. e-mail: webpubont@gov.on.ca

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Exemplaires du Journal

Des exemplaires du Journal sont en vente à Publications Ontario : 880, rue Bay Toronto (Ontario), M7A 1N8 courriel : webpubont@gov.on.ca

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE
ON REGULATIONS
AND PRIVATE BILLS**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
RÈGLEMENTS ET DES PROJETS DE LOI
D'INTÉRÊT PRIVÉ**

Wednesday 7 June 2006

Mercredi 7 juin 2006

The committee met at 1002 in committee room 1.

**RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE
(HAMILTON) ACT, 2006**

Consideration of Bill Pr18, An Act respecting Ronald McDonald House (Hamilton).

The Chair (Ms. Andrea Horwath): Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the standing committee on regulations and private bills. I'd like to call the meeting to order and get right down to the calling of the first order of business, which is Bill Pr18, An Act respecting Ronald McDonald House (Hamilton).

The sponsor of the bill is Mr. Craitor, subbing in for Ms. Marsales. Welcome. I'm wondering if the sponsor wants to introduce the applicant and begin the process.

Mr. Kim Craitor (Niagara Falls): Thank you very much, Chair. I just want it on the record that the sponsor, Judy Marsales, initially, was not able to attend because of an unexpected conflict, so I'm proud and more than pleased to sponsor the bill.

I have with me Russell Gibson. Russell is from the firm of Vincent Dagenais Gibson, and he'll be assisting with the presentation on this bill.

The Chair: Excellent. Then, as sponsor, do you have any comments you'd like to make yourself, Mr. Craitor?

Mr. Craitor: I'll just say, in a nutshell, what we've got is a situation. Everyone is familiar across Ontario, probably across Canada, with Ronald McDonald House. We have a situation here in Hamilton where this house is on land with a hospital, but for municipal assessment purposes it is taxed, so it's obligated to pay property taxes and education taxes. The purpose of this bill is to exempt them from doing so. The bill is asking not only for that, but that it would take effect from the beginning of January 2005. The bill says that the specific property would be exempt from taxation for municipal and school purposes. That's the request that's before this committee today.

The Chair: Did the applicant want to make any comments?

Mr. Russell Gibson: I would, Madam Chair. Thank you, Mr. Craitor, and thank you to the committee for considering this private bill.

I'd like to make a few comments about Ronald McDonald House, if I may. Ronald McDonald House in

Hamilton is a 15-room facility. It was opened in April 1993 and is located next to McMaster Children's Hospital. It is owned and operated by a registered charity called Kids Care Oncology, Central West Ontario.

It offers a safe and economical environment for families of critically ill children who are receiving care at the McMaster Children's Hospital. Each family enjoys a private, uniquely designed room with ensuite. They have access to a large, fully equipped kitchen and no-charge laundry facilities. Lounges and playrooms provide an environment where children and family are able to meet and share their concerns and feelings with others in similar situations.

It serves communities within a wide radius, including Brant, Niagara, Waterloo, Wellington, Dufferin and Halton, and it relies on more than 150 volunteers to perform the many services that the house offers to families.

It costs the charity about \$75 per night to accommodate one family. However, families are asked to contribute only \$10 per night.

Ronald McDonald House Charities, the charity associated with the McDonald's restaurant chain, is a long-term committed partner of the Ronald McDonald House in Hamilton. Ronald McDonald House Charities guarantees every Ronald McDonald House in Canada a minimum contribution of \$100,000 a year to assist in operating costs and funds 50% of major renovations and capital improvements.

Ronald McDonald House Charities is a registered charity, and its objective is to help children in need. Approximately 40% of funds distributed by Ronald McDonald House Charities go to Ronald McDonald Houses throughout Canada, with the remaining funds going to other charities.

The amount provided to Ronald McDonald House in Hamilton by Ronald McDonald House Charities represents 20% of their operating costs. The remaining amount is raised through individual and corporate donations

Ronald McDonald House Hamilton finds itself in a difficult position with respect to municipal taxation. It operates facilities that are assessed significant values for the purposes of municipal taxation. The services they offer, in our view, are of such significance from a public policy perspective that they ought to be placed in a position analogous to public hospitals for municipal

taxation purposes. However, unlike hospitals, they are not exempt from taxation.

This bill authorizes the city of Hamilton to exempt specified property from taxes for municipal purposes, other than local improvement rates. If the city passes the tax exemption bylaw, the bill will provide that the property is also exempt from taxes for education purposes for as long as the bylaw is in effect. We also have a letter of support from the city of Hamilton.

I should mention that similar legislation was enacted last December for Ronald McDonald House in London and that other Ronald McDonald Houses across Ontario benefit from a similar tax exemption.

I urge the committee to approve this very important and worthwhile private bill.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Gibson. I'm wondering if there are any other parties that are interested in making comments on this bill from the public. No one here? Okay. Does the parliamentary assistant have any comments on the bill?

Mr. Mario Sergio (York West): Yes, Madam Chair. First of all, I would like to congratulate the local member, Judy Marsales, the member for Hamilton West, as well as Mr. Craitor for filling in for Ms. Marsales in support of the proposed bill.

As the applicant has said, similar legislation indeed already exists. As well, this went through the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and they both have shown no concern with the bill. Therefore, I'm very pleased to lend our support to the bill itself.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Sergio. Mr. Levac.

Mr. Dave Levac (Brant): As much as echoing the parliamentary assistant—and I thank him for the words on behalf of the government—on a personal note, it serves us very well in Brant and Brantford, and I want to comment in a very positive way on the support that our community has received from Ronald McDonald House in Hamilton. I deeply appreciate the efforts of all the staff and Ronald McDonald House itself. Thank you so much.

The Chair: Are there any other comments from committee members?

Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge): Yes, thanks, Chair. I don't have a copy of the bill and I'd like one; I came in late, and I apologize. In whose name is the property registered?

Mr. Gibson: The property is on hospital lands, I believe.

Mr. Martiniuk: Which hospital?

The Chair: Hamilton Health Sciences.

1010

Mr. Gibson: I would have to check the name of the specific corporation. Pardon me just for a moment. I can possibly check that here and determine who the owner is.

I would have to check to get the specific name of the corporation in my file I have here. However, there would be a liability for taxes under section 3 of the Assessment Act. The test turns not only on ownership but the use of

the lands and whether the party using the lands is one that qualifies for an exemption. In this particular case, it does not, and the corporation in question, which is the operator, which is Ronald McDonald House Hamilton, is known by its incorporated name as Kids Care Oncology, Central West Ontario Corp. It's an Ontario corporation incorporated on May 28, 1991, and it is a registered charity pursuant to the provisions of the federal Income Tax Act.

Mr. Martiniuk: I'm in favour of what you're trying to do. I'm just trying to understand it, if you'd bear with me for a moment. So we have a licensee or a tenant on property which would ordinarily be exempt because it's owned by a hospital, but because of this particular use it attracts—or at least the legal opinions are that it attracts the Assessment Act?

Mr. Gibson: Our first recourse was to discuss the matter, obviously, with the Municipal Property Assessment Corp., MPAC, and it was their position that the property, namely the operator of the facility on the property, did not qualify for an exemption under section 3 of the Assessment Act. The applicant has been paying municipal taxes on the property to date.

The Chair: Mr. Craitor, you had some clarification?

Mr. Craitor: Yes. Let me just read in for the record, and this may assist the member in respect to his question. This is in the information that was provided to the committee. It says, "And whereas the applicant represents that the corporation was incorporated on or about the 28th day of May, 1991, pursuant to the Corporations Act (Ontario) and is registered as a charity pursuant to the Income Tax Act (Canada). The applicant also represents that it has a freehold interest in lands and premises described in the first schedule attached hereto, which is known municipally as 1510 Main Street West, Hamilton...." That's just to clarify that the applicant has a freehold interest in the land and so is obligated to pay, in relation to your question, the municipal and education taxes.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Craitor. Are there any other questions or comments that committee members might have?

Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe): I believe, just also for the record, we passed a similar bill last December. I think, Mr. Martiniuk, we were here. It was a bill sponsored on behalf of my colleague Deb Matthews. I think they served a similar cause. They serve a great cause and there's no doubt about their intention and their service to the community. That's why I'm supporting the bill.

The Chair: Any further comments? Are the members ready to vote then on this bill?

Shall section 1 carry? Carried.

Shall section 2 carry? Carried.

Shall section 3 carry? Carried.

Shall section 4 carry? Carried.

Shall section 5 carry? Carried.

Shall the preamble carry? Carried.

Shall the title carry? Carried.

Shall the bill carry? Carried.

Shall I report the bill to the House? Carried.

Thank you very much. The bill will be reported to the House and the matter will be dealt with.

Mr. Gibson: Thank you very much.

TALPIOT COLLEGE ACT, 2006

Consideration of Bill Pr26, An Act respecting Talpiot College.

The Chair: Our second order of business is Bill Pr26, An Act respecting Talpiot College. I believe we have some guests here for this bill as well. The sponsor of the bill is Mr. Zimmer. Welcome, Mr. Zimmer. I don't know if you have some initial comments to make. With you, I believe you have Rabbi Dr. Yosef Posen?

Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale): Yes. Rabbi Dr. Yosef Posen is the academic dean of the college.

The Chair: Excellent. Welcome. Mr. Zimmer, if you want to make a few initial comments, you're welcome to do so.

Mr. Zimmer: You have a copy of the bill before you. The college has been operating since 1973 as a women's Jewish college. The degrees that they have been granting are found in schedule 1 of the bill: bachelors' degrees, masters' degrees and doctorates in various Jewish religious studies and Judaic law studies.

The Talpiot College Act, 2000, set it up as an institution, but it was just set up for women. Essentially, there's a need, and they've demonstrated a capacity, for studies to include men now, so the college wants to move from a women's college to a coed college. The only changes in this bill from the 2000 act are in the preamble, where there's a reference to "post-secondary education in Jewish and general studies to women and men," and then in clause 8(c) it adds "and courses of study offered to women and to men," and again in (g), "academic achievement to women and men." Other than that, the bill mirrors the legislation of 2000.

I'm going to ask Rabbi Dr. Yosef Posen just to give you some background information on the college from his perspective.

Rabbi Yosef Posen: Thank you very much. Just a few words to explain the historical background to the college to understand why we're coming to this new piece of legislation or this amendment to the existing legislation.

Really, the starting point of this whole story is that in 1960 Beth Jacob High School for Girls was founded for the postwar Jewish community in Toronto. In 1973, as Mr. Zimmer mentioned, a post-high-school seminary branch was opened for religious studies. Eventually in 1996, this expanded into programming in secular subjects as well as religious subjects, providing specifically, at that point in time, for religious Jewish women of Toronto.

In 1977, an application was made to the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, universities branch, for a charter for Talpiot College. As Mr. Zimmer

mentioned, the charter was approved and royal assent was given in June 2000.

In the last number of years we've been offering programming to Jewish women, and there's been a demand now for some of this programming, specifically a bachelor's in Jewish education, a bachelor's in Jewish family and community services and Judaic studies, to be available to the Jewish men of the community. That's why this application is being made, simply to take the same powers and degrees we offered in the past and offer them to the Jewish male community of Toronto.

The Chair: Thank you very much. Are there any members of the public here, any other interested parties who wanted to make any comments?

Seeing none, I turn to the parliamentary assistant and ask if there are any comments from the government.

Mr. Sergio: Indeed, the bill has been reviewed very thoroughly by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and they have shown no concern with respect to the bill.

I would like to compliment the member from Willowdale, because I know he was very deeply involved with making sure that this bill was coming to us in the proper way so that no time would be wasted. I would compliment the member for following through with this bill. Therefore, I would like to offer my support and that of the ministry as well.

The Chair: Are there any questions or comments?

Mr. Levac: Just a simple question: As an educator, I'm curious about curriculum. Will you see any changes in the curriculum as a result of going coed? Is there an idea of what the studies are that will be offered to men as well?

Rabbi Posen: Essentially the same curriculum will be offered, but there will be some courses that will specifically have been available to men in yeshiva environments, which has been a male Jewish studies environment at the post-secondary level, that we now would cover within our curriculum, but within the degree structures we have existing at the present time.

Mr. Levac: That's exciting.

Mr. Tony C. Wong (Markham): To the Rabbi, out of curiosity, I just want to know whether there would be any difference in terms of qualifications of admission that you may be anticipating?

Rabbi Posen: Qualifications with respect to—I'm sorry?

Mr. Wong: Admission.

Rabbi Posen: No. Really the same admission as exists now would apply in the future.

Mr. Wong: And what proportions of men and women will you be expecting in a few years' time? Is it going to be roughly 50-50?

Rabbi Posen: It's hard to predict at the present time. I don't know, but I would anticipate 50-50 in the future, yes.

Mr. Wong: And that's the experience of other similar colleges in Ontario?

Rabbi Posen: Yes, that is. In Ontario, there are no other colleges which offer this type of programming, but in the States, in New York City, there are other programs of this sort.

The Chair: All right, then. Any further comments or questions from the committee members? Are the committee members ready to vote?

You'll see this is a lengthy bill. It's about 16 sections. I'm wondering if, with the permission of committee, we can collapse those into one? Agreed.

Shall all 16 sections carry? Carried.

Shall schedule 1 carry? Carried.

Shall the preamble carry? Carried.

Shall the title carry? Carried.

Shall the bill carry? Carried.

Shall I report the bill to the House? Carried.

Thank you very much, Mr. Zimmer and Rabbi, for coming. We'll proceed then with taking the bill to the House for approval.

Mr. Zimmer: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, members.

The Chair: Members, seeing no other business for the committee, I would call the meeting adjourned until next time. Thank you very much. It was a very successful meeting.

The committee adjourned at 1022.

CONTENTS

Wednesday 7 June 2006

Ronald McDonald House (Hamilton) Act, 2006 , Bill Pr18, <i>Ms. Marsales</i>	T-49
Mr. Russell Gibson	
Talpiot College Act, 2006 , Bill Pr26, <i>Mr. Zimmer</i>	T-51
Rabbi Yosef Posen	

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Chair / Présidente

Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est ND)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

Mr. Tony C. Wong (Markham L)

Mr. Gilles Bisson (Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James ND)

 Mr. Kim Craiton (Niagara Falls L)

 Ms. Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East / Hamilton-Est ND)

 Mr. Dave Levac (Brant L)

 Mr. Gerry Martiniuk (Cambridge PC)

 Mr. Bill Murdoch (Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound PC)

 Mr. Khalil Ramal (London–Fanshawe L)

 Mr. Mario Sergio (York West / York-Ouest L)

 Mr. Tony C. Wong (Markham L)

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes

 Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale L)

Clerk / Greffière

 Ms. Susan Sourial

Staff / Personnel

 Ms. Susan Klein, legislative counsel