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Mercredi 25 octobre 2006

**Standing committee on
estimates**

Ministry of Training,
Colleges and Universities

**Comité permanent des
budgets des dépenses**

Ministère de la Formation et des
Collèges et Universités

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ESTIMATESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
BUDGETS DES DÉPENSES

Wednesday 25 October 2006

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The committee met at 1526 in room 228.

MINISTRY OF TRAINING,
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Garfield Dunlop): I'll call the meeting to order. We're here to resume consideration of the estimates of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. There's a total of three hours and 18 minutes remaining. When the committee was adjourned, the official opposition—that was myself last night—had completed the rotation, so now we will go to the third party for the next 20 minutes. Mr. Marchese, if you would proceed.

Mr. Rosario Marchese (Trinity–Spadina): Just before we start, Mr. Chair, I notice that the deputy minister is not here, nor are the others who are normally here, the corporate management service division.

The Vice-Chair: We can recess for four minutes. They're supposed to be here at 3:30. We just got a three- or four-minute jump on it, that's all. Would you rather wait?

Mr. Marchese: It's just that some of the questions I'm asking would be pertinent to them, I think, in terms of information they would have that the minister may or may not have.

The Vice-Chair: Let's give them a couple of minutes to be here, and then we won't have any dispute with it after that. If that's all right, we'll just—

Mr. Marchese: Well, we could start and see how it goes. If the minister thinks we need a bit of help, we could wait.

The Vice-Chair: It's up to you, Mr. Marchese. If that's all right with you, we're happy with that.

Mr. Marchese: Let's try it.

The Vice-Chair: Okay, go ahead.

Mr. Marchese: I'll ask a first question that doesn't need the deputy, I suppose.

As you know, Minister, I introduced Bill 13, An Act to amend the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act with respect to part-time staff. Under the present act, part-time workers are not included in the bargaining units and have no right to bargain collectively with employers. Bill 13 amends the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act to include part-time staff in staff bargaining units. The question I have is, what is the public policy rationale for

legally denying the right of part-time college instructors to unionize?

Hon. Christopher Bentley (Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities): It's interesting: It's been the rationale from the time colleges were set up many decades ago. It seems to have survived governments of all political stripes. I know the government of your party between 1990 and 1995 introduced a bill that had moved partway through the process and that bill never came to a vote. What we're concentrating on, with respect to the Reaching Higher plan, is making sure we invest in colleges to support all the staff to support the education of students, so they can hire new staff, hire new professors, hire new support staff and support the students. That's where our concentration is at the moment.

Mr. Marchese: I know that you make reference to everyone else, including yourselves, and that your focus is the Reaching Higher plan, but I've introduced Bill 13. It's pretty well laid out on the table for any government to simply pick up and make their own if they want, make some changes. Clearly, we're supporting this. When you have the support of at least one party—I don't know where the other party stands on this—you have an option to simply say, "Yes, we can take that and move it along." Do you have any interest in taking this bill, making it your own and moving it along, or are you saying that's not your focus, and that your focus is the Reaching Higher plan?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: That's right. The focus has been and is the Reaching Higher plan. I am struck by the fact that your party introduced legislation in, I think, 1991—although I don't have the date exactly correct—it proceeded through, I believe it got to second reading but then was never called for third reading by your party. So I am struck by that. But our focus at the moment has been the implementation of the Reaching Higher plan and the conclusion of the various agreements.

Mr. Marchese: You continue to be struck by past experiences. Do you not want to free yourself from being struck so as to be able to unstick yourself and do something different?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Thank you for that. I'll certainly take that under advisement.

Mr. Marchese: I'm trying to be helpful, because I'm worried about your being struck.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I really do appreciate that.

Mr. Bob Delaney (Mississauga West): Would being struck in that way be equivalent to a collision?

Mr. Marchese: I know we have a friendly member there, Mr. Delaney, who taught at Ryerson, I think, which is now a university. He would be a very strong supporter of this. I know that he is trying very hard to make sure that Bill 13, my bill, An Act to amend the Colleges Collective Bargaining Act with respect to part-time staff, which allows them to organize, gets passed. I've got support from Bob Delaney; I'm convinced of it.

Mr. Delaney: You may want to wait for a statement from the member on that one.

Mr. Marchese: Okay. So maybe we don't even have his own support.

I just continue to be worried about you, Minister, being stuck in the past and not being able to move forward, which is what you guys want to talk about all the time. With respect to this, just to let it die, you don't want to deal with this.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We're concentrating on the Reaching Higher investments. I am struck by the experience that all parties have had in the past in colleges, and the fact that it's been in existence for so long, and that even your party didn't move it forward when it had legislation. But as I say, I'm concentrating on the investments that we're making to support all in colleges.

Mr. Marchese: Okay, sure. I have to say I'm worried about you—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Thank you for that. I appreciate that.

Mr. Marchese: —because when you're stuck so much in the past and not able to move forward—I've seen that repeatedly through three questions I've asked. I'm going to stop now because repetition would be hurtful to you and to me, so we'll just leave it alone and move on.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Thank you.

Mr. Marchese: It's my pleasure to help you.

What is the total amount of government-guaranteed loan debt held by Ontario students currently?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We're just getting that number for you.

Mr. Marchese: It would be helpful to have a comparison.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Okay. I understand that we don't have that number right now but we can get that for you. And you were saying you'd like a comparison?

Mr. Marchese: Yes. If we could get numbers for 2000-01, 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06, that would be helpful. Can we get that?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We'll certainly check, and if it's available, and I would think it should be—it is. So we will get it.

Mr. Marchese: Thank you very much.

Do you know what it is projected to be on an annual basis with the new investments announced through the Reaching Higher plan?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I don't have that. I'm not aware whether we've done a projection.

Mr. Marchese: Deputy, do you do projections?

Mr. Philip Steenkamp: Ministry staff will have done a projection. We can get that information for you, member.

Mr. Marchese: Thank you very much.

How much does the Ontario government spend annually to pay the in-study interest on student loans? To the minister or deputy, whoever has the answer.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: In 2005-06, the number is \$20,460,131.

Mr. Marchese: And for 2006-07—we don't have that yet, do we?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, because we're still paying the interest.

Mr. Marchese: Of course.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: So it will depend on what the uptake is and how much of it is grants and the like.

Mr. Marchese: What is the total amount of tuition fees paid by Ontario university students in 2005-06?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We can give you that number.

Mr. Marchese: And if we have the number for what they're expected to pay in 2006-07, that would be helpful.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Okay.

Mr. Marchese: And if you could speak to what kind of data you're using to answer that question, that would be helpful too.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We're getting the 2005-06 number.

Mr. Marchese: Great. By the way, I'm looking for the same information for college students, as you're doing that.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sure. We'll find it.

Mr. Marchese: Should I wait or should we move on?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We can move on, and as soon as she finds it, then we'll provide it to you.

Mr. Marchese: How much is the government spending on the Ontario first-generation student bursaries?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: That's \$1 million a year.

Mr. Marchese: So \$1 million?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Yes. The bursaries are in addition, as you know, to the upfront tuition grants and in addition to any institutional aid that's provided.

Mr. Marchese: So how many of these bursaries have been given to students so far this year?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We just launched the program. I don't think we have the data yet for this year. My understanding is that they disbursed the full amount of the first-gen bursaries in 2005-06. I don't have the number of students that it assisted.

Mr. Marchese: So for this year, 2006-07, it's \$1 million?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Right.

Mr. Marchese: And last year?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It was \$1 million. I thought you meant the number of students.

Mr. Marchese: Yes, you're quite right. I did ask how much is the government spending on the Ontario first generation; you said \$1 million. How many of these

bursaries have been given to students so far this year? We don't have the number, right?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It's \$1 million disbursed to the institutions.

Mr. Marchese: But do we have a—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I don't have the information on how it's been disbursed or is being disbursed.

Mr. Marchese: Is that available? Could we get it?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think it's available for 2005-06. I suspect it won't be available for awhile for 2006-07, because we're in-year.

Mr. Marchese: If we could get that, Deputy, I'd appreciate it.

So the total amount of the Ontario first-generation student bursaries that is in the students' hands so far—it was \$1 million last year, but so far for this year we don't know because we have to wait, or do we have a number in terms of what it is this year?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The process is that we provide it to the student aid offices in the different institutions and they disburse it, though how they disburse it and in what way they disburse it may vary from institution to institution.

Mr. Marchese: I understand that. You told me that last year it was \$1 million—so you know that—for the Ontario first-generation students.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The amount is the same, but how many students it actually affects or is disbursed to will change. The amount is exactly the same.

Mr. Marchese: But in terms of the number for this year, we don't know. It's disbursed by the student aid services.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Yes. The number of individual students may vary, but the total amount is \$1 million, and that's in addition to the extra \$5 million for individual projects.

Mr. Marchese: Sure. I got that. The deputy is going to get us that information, he said. Thank you.

How much is the government spending—by the way, with respect to the other questions, should I go back to them?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: As soon as they get it, we're going to provide it to you.

Mr. Marchese: As they get them, okay.

How much is the government spending on programs run by colleges, universities and community organizations that will help potential first-generation students?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: That's the \$5 million for this year.

Mr. Marchese: So that's \$5 million going to the colleges and universities—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: That's the \$5 million for projects such as the SCOrE program at Seneca College, the Pathways program that we funded and made an announcement about several weeks ago. There are a number of different initiatives—some community-based, some institution-based—to encourage more first-generation students to come to college or university, or to assist their success when they're there.

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Mr. Marchese: So you don't know how many grants that \$5 million would fund, because it will vary, presumably, based on whatever they submit to you by way of proposals. Is that—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sorry, how many grants the \$5 million will fund?

Mr. Marchese: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Most of it has been disbursed, and we can provide you with a list of where it has been disbursed to.

Mr. Marchese: That's great. I would like to see that once you have it. That would be helpful. When do you think that might be available? Do you know? Does that end at some point, in terms of finality?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We've still got some money to disburse from that. We're still reviewing some potential projects. So I would think within a month or six weeks. That's for the 2006-07.

Mr. Marchese: Okay. Thank you.

How much money is being granted to Ontario students by the Canada Millennium Scholarships Foundation this year?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: For 2006-07?

Mr. Marchese: This year and last year. That would be helpful.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It's \$130 million for 2006-07. Do we have the 2005-06 number? The same.

Mr. Marchese: We would have the number since it was established, wouldn't we? I don't need it now, so if you could just send me that information as soon as you can, that would be helpful.

What arrangements, if any, has the Ontario government made with the foundation for future spending?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Can you clarify the question?

Mr. Marchese: Is the future spending going to be \$130 million? Is it going to be different?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It will be \$130 million for the program.

Mr. Marchese: Until 2009?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: That's my understanding, yes.

Mr. Marchese: So \$130 million until 2009.

I'm assuming there are no detailed reports that I need to consider or worry about. There are no detailed reports. Is that correct, Deputy? There are none.

Minister, this program is going to end in 2009. Are you worried?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I'm hoping it's not going to end. I'm hoping the federal government is going to continue their obligation to ensure that they participate in the support of students who need support for post-secondary institutions, not only anticipating, but the government of Ontario is joining other governments in making sure that the federal government is aware of how important this program really is.

Mr. Marchese: Have you corresponded with them to this effect, or are we waiting until 2009 to come about?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, we've let the federal government know how important this is in a number of different ways.

Mr. Marchese: Letters—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: CMEC has let the federal government know. There have been contacts between officials.

Mr. Marchese: It is a worrisome thing, I would imagine.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Absolutely. We have a number of financial issues with the federal government.

Mr. Marchese: We always have, haven't we? With all governments.

There has been a lot of government effort to promote the student access guarantee. Some students who cannot afford high tuition fees, especially tuition fees that are also going up in the next four years, have been calling us as well, because they worry about how to continue to pay for their studies. In what way can these students avail themselves of the student access guarantee?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The first thing that we're going to encourage all students to do is apply through the Ontario student assistance program. We would like that to be the first entry point, to make sure that if they qualify for even a dollar of government assistance, they use that. As you probably know, many institutions use OSAP as an entry point. From there, they will be able to either go through OSAP or, of course, go directly to the financial assistance offices at a college or university. Then, at the end of that process, if there are still issues, that's when we have to make sure that no student is being denied access because they have some financial barriers that don't allow them to access money for their tuition, books and mandatory fees.

Mr. Marchese: How much money do you plan to spend to fund the student access guarantee this year to ensure that no student has to leave university for financial reasons?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We're making substantial investments in student assistance. The point of increasing the number of upfront tuition grants, the point of increasing student financial assistance and doubling the budget over five years is to make sure that the government of Ontario is very firmly there to support students who need access to funds. Of course that goes beyond just tuition, books and mandatory fees. What we're doing this year, which is substantially different than in the past, is requiring the institutions to directly link issues such as tuition increases to access by participating in the student access guarantee. We essentially say to an institution that it's not enough just to have assistance programs; we've got to make sure that the decision to increase tuition does not, in and of itself, deny access to students who would heretofore have been able to access post-secondary education.

So it is an evolutionary process, and we're putting this together.

The Vice-Chair: You have a couple of minutes on this round.

Mr. Marchese: Thank you. So we really can't pinpoint a number in terms of what this fund will be to

make sure that the student access guarantee—is there a number attached to this or are you saying institutions are going to have to do this? We're also giving loans and grants and so on. Is it just a general thing or is there something specific that you can talk about?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, no, it's a combination of the resources that the government of Ontario is devoting to student assistance and the resources that institutions need to devote to student—

Mr. Marchese: Is there a number or do we just simply say they need to commit resources? Is there a fund?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Well, it's a combination of the OSAP assistance, including grants and interest-free loans, a combination of the money set aside that the institutions have traditionally had and additional obligations that they will incur if they increase tuition and that, by itself, denies students access.

Mr. Marchese: So there is no number? Deputy, are you aware of any number or it's just very—I see, no number.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, we don't have a number. I think one of the things we're trying to achieve is a sense of how tuition increases affect access for students above and beyond anything that exists, because we're determined to make sure they get in.

Mr. Marchese: Do you have any report, detailed or otherwise, on spending for the student access guarantee?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No. As I say, the student access guarantee is an obligation that institutions have when they make the decision to increase tuition. It's an obligation to ensure that their act of increasing tuition doesn't deny access to students.

Mr. Marchese: I understand. Thank you.

The Vice-Chair: That finishes up the round with Mr. Marchese. We'll now go to the government.

Mr. Wayne Arthurs (Pickering–Ajax–Uxbridge): Mr. Chairman, we're going to stand down our 20 minutes. I think the scheduling is such that with some cooperation we can stay on schedule for our estimates committee. So we'll stand down this 20-minute round in the interest of the opposition.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much. To the official opposition. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Jim Wilson (Simcoe–Grey): Thank you, Minister, for appearing. I'm having a problem following on what Mr. Marchese was talking about in terms of the student access guarantee and following on our exchange last week at estimates. You keep correcting me, but I'm pretty sure that your program isn't substantially different than the previous government in that when we deregulated tuition fees, we also told colleges and universities that they have to set aside—I think it was up to 25% of that new money—25% of the increase in tuition fees to make sure that students were guaranteed access, and we put it that every qualified student be guaranteed access.

First of all, is this the first year of the student access guarantee and, secondly, how is it substantially different than what was supposed to be the practice in the past?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: This is the first year of the guarantee. What happened in the past—you're quite right—is that there was a set-aside obligation for institutions. Students who were in need of financial resources would be able to go to the institution and access what was available, but there was no direct relationship between the decision to increase tuition and the access obligations of the institution beyond the amount of the set-aside. What we've done is taken the next step. We have said, "Against the backdrop of government assistance, you obviously have institutional assistance available. By your decision to increase tuition, you may be going beyond the assistance that's available at the institution. You may create need beyond the assistance available at the institution. That's an obligation that you're taking onto yourself."

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So we're directly tying the decision to increase tuition to the access issue through this guarantee. We're saying we're going to make sure that the institutions and government stand behind that guarantee. Obviously, we don't know its amount or how it will come to fruition in the first year, because we're developing it, but we're determined that decisions to increase tuition will not deny students access to programs they would have been able to access otherwise.

Mr. Wilson: Mr. Marchese tried to get the figure, but you must have some guesstimate on how many additional dollars you might have to put into this so-called new program. It's had several press releases. They're about that thick, an inch thick when you pile them all up, the last one I read being September 6 of this year.

Other than being better communicators perhaps than the previous government with respect to access, how many students do you expect will be falling under a student access guarantee or needing the additional support of the state beyond what the school can provide?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It may well be that, through the government assistance programs and the institutional assistance programs, there won't be students falling through the cracks, and that's the whole point of it. It creates an obligation on the institution, which may well go beyond the amount they have put aside or set aside for institutional assistance, and that's the point.

Mr. Wilson: But then if they do that, this really isn't a program. What do they do? They then must have to turn down the student if there's not enough money. Say, hypothetically, they exhaust all their bursaries and the student doesn't qualify for OSAP because it's largely based on parental income—take your worst-case scenario. How do you actually guarantee that? Do they then write you at the end of the day and say, "The university says it has no money for me, and yet I'm qualified academically"?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think the central point is that when decisions are made to increase tuition, what they've generated under previous programs—and you made reference to some under the previous government—is an obligation to set aside a certain amount of money, and

out of that money, students would access funds to improve their ability to fund post-secondary education. What we're saying is that you may well have an obligation beyond that, depending on how and in what way you increase tuition fees. So the decision to increase tuition fees directly creates an obligation which may well be beyond a percentage of the tuition fee revenue.

Mr. Wilson: Where does the institution get the money if it's beyond the tuition fee revenue, which makes up about 44%, I guess, of universities and colleges now?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, that doesn't net out—

Mr. Wilson: Then I'll ask you later about it.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The institution has to take that into consideration in the decision to increase tuition fees. Is it able to support the access issues it will be creating through increasing tuition fees? In other words, all of the obligation cannot come back onto the government through institutional decisions to increase tuition fees. We have to directly measure how that's going to affect access.

Mr. Wilson: Have you lowered tuition fees since coming to office?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We froze them for two years for the first time that I could find in the record books.

Mr. Wilson: As I said last week, I thought that was kind of unfair; perhaps, for a couple of classes, but then the rest have to pick up the tab. What has been the average since the freeze came off and what are your projections in the future for increases in tuition fees?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Just to be clear, we funded the tuition freeze not only for the two years but for the future, so the issue you raise actually won't happen. We're funding, I think, to the tune of \$110 million a year, every year, from now till eternity, to make sure that there wouldn't be a catch-up by institutions by its coming off.

The question that you asked—just give it to me again—what is the average increase? I think the average they were allowed to increase, the maximum institutional average, was 5%. I don't think the institutions have taken up their maximum amount of room on the average, so they wouldn't be hitting the 5% institutional average; somewhat less than that. I don't have the exact number in front of me.

Mr. Wilson: Is that the rule overall? That includes all programs?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: That's right. The institutional average can't be—

Mr. Wilson: You capped it at 5%.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: —more than 5%. As you know, for most first-year programs it's 4.5%; for undergrad programs in the continuing years it's 4%; for what were formerly the deregulated, more high-fee programs, the first-year maximum is 8%; and for every subsequent year it's a maximum of 4%. The bottom line is that 90% of college students will see an increase of about \$100 or less this year and about 70% of university students an increase of less than \$200.

Mr. Wilson: Were you able to do anything in terms of the—I had medical students come to see me again

recently, and they're very concerned. They want to be doctors. We did deregulate it, and that sent tuition fees quite high. Have you been able to do anything special for some of those higher-end programs that are costing students very high tuition fees?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I'll get to that question, because I just found the number: 4.6% was the average increase for Ontario universities, according to a StatsCan annual report published in September 2006.

With respect to medical school or other high-cost program increases, I think there are a couple of things. First of all, the increase in the maximum amount of OSAP that is available for students, as I said just the other day, is going from \$9,300 to \$11,900 a year. We'll certainly assist the funding of the Ontario Trust for Student Support to the extent of \$50 million a year. Specifically for med students, the substantial financial support that we provided to the operating side of the new med spaces—all of the spaces that have been created since I believe 2000-01—we increased the operating support from I think \$21 million or \$22 million to \$49 million in two stages. That took a substantial pressure off med schools. So I think you'll find across the province that their increases this year were, for the most part, relatively small. There might have been one or two that were zero; there were one or two others that were 2%.

Mr. Wilson: But they were complaining for a long time that they were just too high. I was reading this morning that some of these young people will have up to \$100,000 worth of debt by the time they get to their clerk year.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think that's something we have to be mindful of and continue to watch through the access guarantee and the continued integration or better working of the government and institutional assistance programs. I expect that through the research that the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario will conduct, we'll get a better sense of how high fees in certain programs are really affecting access to those programs by persons in different groups. I think that's something we need to watch, and watch very closely.

Mr. Wilson: How many students are denied OSAP each year? Do we have a statistic on that? We must.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think we probably will. There are approximately 200,000 students who actually receive OSAP of some description every year. We'll just come up with the denial rate for you.

Mr. Wilson: While you're looking for that, how many students would be denied access to college or university in a given year?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think that's one of the things we need to get a better handle on. In the past, what happened was that some students applied for OSAP and had that processed, some students applied directly to institutions, and some went back and forth. But some didn't make it back and forth, in part because they weren't entirely sure what was available out there. One of the things that we're trying to get a hold of is, where do students end up if they receive a no at one of the doors, and what are their

specific financial circumstances? We need to make sure that we have a handle on that number—if you can get a handle on the number—so we can then better direct the aid programs to the specific students.

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Can I just give you one example? I don't want to take up your time, but let me just give you one example. We found, with the participation rate generally in university and college programs, the participation increased with income but it flattened out in the \$60,000, \$65,000 area and then it went up again by about \$70,000. That's why we extended the access grants to families with incomes up to \$75,000, because we wanted to make sure there was more assistance and more of it in grants for those students from families where the participation rate was actually flattening out, so that they had the income so they wouldn't be denied access. If we can come up with those numbers—and we expect to; student assistance and access issues are part of the reporting—I think we'll be able to better target the programs.

Mr. Wilson: I ask because I'm serious about it, but also because for years in opposition, you guys accused us of denying students access to college or university. Mr. Harris on several occasions in the Legislature said, "Bring me the student who's being denied access." Now you tell me you don't even have any statistics, so how in the world did you make that up in opposition, then? Where are all these students we denied access to over the years, that we used to get blamed for? We had you guys supporting them on the front lawn of the Legislature.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I could simply say I wasn't there, but I won't say that. I think it would be fair to say that we should always be concerned about the cost of university and college programs and whether students are being denied access. When the upfront tuition grants were eliminated in 1993, it was said by many that that was an access issue, and that to ensure that the lowest-income students or students from the lowest-income families actually had access, you needed to restore those, so we did.

We've seen some reports over the years which have suggested, depending on the methodology, that we need to be concerned about the high-cost programs and whether students from modest or middle-income families are getting full access. I think that's something we're determined to continue to monitor—and do more than monitor—to make sure that when we identify an access issue, we can move proactively. Behind the student access guarantee, that's the theory. You have a government program and an institutional program. They should work together. At the end of the day, we should make sure that just that very issue you've alluded to does not happen, that there aren't students out there wanting for admission because they can't find the money for their tuition books and mandatory fees.

Can I just correct—you indicated the denial rate. We have the number—

Mr. Wilson: I don't know what the denial rate is.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, you were asking me, I think. We have, hot off the press: in 2005-06, 188,359 students received OSAP; 20,169 did not qualify for OSAP. A total of 208,528 applied, so 90.3% of the applicants actually qualified.

Mr. Wilson: You alluded to this recently in your comments, but of the 20,169 who didn't qualify, is there any way of tracking those to see whether they actually did eventually get into school through some other financial means?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Not to my knowledge at the moment. We don't know how many of those students ended up at the student financial aid offices in the different institutions to benefit from institutional programs, because there hasn't been a tie between the governmental program and the institutional program. I think the tie will be much better in the future.

Mr. Wilson: Well, that's the problem I have. How is the tie much better? In the past, we've asked schools to tell us their stories. Are you taking new statistics of people who are—you accused us in the past of denying students access but nobody has any statistics on who was denied access. When we asked in the Legislature to bring forward the names of students who were denied financial access in the past—of course, you weren't here but I was—nobody came forward. In my 16 years, I've only had a handful of students come to me who needed financial assistance that they couldn't find otherwise. It's mainly because they couldn't navigate their way through the programs very well, but I always managed to find them something, even if it took a call to the bursary department or to the registrar's office to get them a bursary.

I just wonder, how are you going to know that your student access guarantee is working any better than in the past, when we didn't really know who was denied or how many were denied in the past? I can't find any stats on it.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think that's one of the big challenges on what happened in the past. Decisions were made, for a number of reasons, to increase tuition fees. The student aid programs that the government provided did not increase the amount of assistance available—

Mr. Wilson: But they did. They had to set aside 25%, I think it was, of the increase—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No. The institutions had to set aside an amount of money, but the government—

Mr. Wilson: —to make that money available to students for financial aid.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Right. But the government aid programs—the OSAP programs; they weren't grants—did not increase the amount of assistance available. We didn't have a sense of how many students, as you say, would apply to OSAP and then not get any money or not have enough money and make the decision to go on. We do, I think, all agree—I would hope so—that as you increase the price of something, fewer people are going to be able to access it, depending on what the item is, depending on what the price is, depending on what other sources of income there might be. What you have to

make sure of is that as you're increasing the price, you have the type of assistance that's available for the students from low and modest incomes to actually get in. That's why we've increased the budget.

One of the things the access guarantee will do—and I'll just quickly finish this—and our tying of the aid programs between the government and the institutions will do is, we'll be able to quantify the number of students that are going from one to the other. We'll be able to quantify the number of students who end up at the end of the process and say, "I don't have the money." Then we should be able to quantify the issues which are presented. And if, as you have suggested in the past, there weren't issues, that's a good news story for all of us. But if there are issues, then we'll be able to quickly deal with them.

Mr. Wilson: I certainly agree with you that you'll get diminishing returns if prices are too high, tuitions are too high, but did we not see an increase of applicants to our professional schools—for instance, medical school—even as tuition rose over the last five years?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think that's a fair point. The number of applicants to professional schools seems to continually go up—you've mentioned medicine, or law. It seems to continually go up. There are some suggestions that the income level of the applicants—and I'm not making this suggestion myself—has also gone up, that the income level of the applicants who are able to get in has also gone up. There are others that refute that. And there are a number of different institutional programs, let's be fair, that have increased substantially over the years to support students from low and modest incomes. What we're determined to make sure of is that students from whatever income—and I know you would share this position; I anticipate you will—

Mr. Wilson: I was one of those students you're about to refer to; I didn't have any money.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: —from whatever income should be able to get in. And we want to make sure that they're properly supported with financial resources if they don't have them themselves. That's the goal of this whole process. We don't want to miss anybody.

The Vice-Chair: Okay, that rounds up this 20 minutes for the official opposition. To the third party now.

Mr. Marchese: I just wondered whether we have the answers to the previous questions.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Okay. With respect to the first-generation bursary question—

Mr. Marchese: What is the total amount of tuition fees paid by Ontario university students in 2005-06?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We'll get you that one in two seconds. Do you want me to answer the first-generation bursary question or do you want me to just give that to you?

Mr. Marchese: I'm just trying to find where that question is. Give it to me anyway; I'll write it down.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Or I can report it to you after. Thirty-six of 47 institutions have reported their 2005-06 first-gen bursary results. These institutions reported that

417 bursaries have been given out. These institutions had \$700,000 of the \$1 million that was allocated. They apparently also added \$265,000 of institutional aid for the students. We expect that over the next month or two the rest of the institutions will report their 2005-06 bursary results.

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With respect to the tuition revenue anticipated by universities in 2005-06—

Mr. Marchese: Yes. What is the total amount of tuition fees paid by Ontario university students in 2005-06 and the total amount that Ontario university students are expected to pay in 2006-07?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I don't have 2006-07; I have 2005-06. It's \$1.961 billion. Is that right?

Mr. Marchese: Of tuition fees? It's billion.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: That's right, yes: \$1.961 billion, thank you. And college tuition fees—and these exclude the ancillary fees—are \$558.4 million. That's not net of student aid.

Mr. Marchese: Not?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: That's not net of student assistance.

Mr. Marchese: For next year, as soon as you get that number, can you just send it to us, please?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sure.

Mr. Marchese: What data are you using to get this information? How do you get it?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: How do we get it?

Mr. Marchese: Yes.

Mr. Steenkamp: The institutions.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The institutions provide the information to us.

Mr. Marchese: Is that information audited, by any chance?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Do you know what? My assumption would be yes, because as you read out the other day, there are so many reports that the institutions are required to provide—

Mr. Marchese: You remember that, eh?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: —and many of them are required to have them prepared, if not by—they're either fully audited or they are the next stage to audited reports. If I come up with any information that's different, I'll let you know.

Mr. Marchese: That's exactly what I was going to say.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I thought you might.

Mr. Marchese: Because either they are or they aren't, and if they aren't, you'll know, and then you'll tell us.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Absolutely. I'm told that they are audited statements.

Mr. Marchese: Then that's all we need to know. So that's the case: They're audited.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The answer is that the statements are audited each year. This number is pending audit, but they will be audited.

Mr. Marchese: Very good. Okay.

You claimed that 60,000 students qualified for student grants this year, although I think that the number varies, possibly. It is 60,000, or is it more, less?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We have 60,000 students—

Mr. Marchese: This year.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: —who will qualify; or there are enough grants for 60,000 students to qualify for this year, yes.

Mr. Marchese: Okay. Do we know the average amount of the grant?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We do. It will probably be based on prior years' results, because we're still in the process of the grant system at the moment.

Mr. Marchese: Sure. We've got 2005-06, obviously, and we're looking for that. Okay. While you look for that, what was the smallest amount disbursed to an applicant?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: These are the up-front tuition grants you're talking about, not the grants that cancel any repayable assistance from \$7,000 up to \$11,900?

Mr. Marchese: That's right: The up-front. Exactly.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Another 60,000 separate students qualify for those. Some qualify for both.

Mr. Marchese: Okay. So if you have the smallest amount disbursed to an applicant, that would be helpful.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I suspect we're going to have 2005-06 numbers, but when we come up with it, we'll let you know. If not today, we'll make sure you get it.

Mr. Marchese: Of the 60,000 students who received grants, how many received less than \$1,000, and how many received grants less than \$500?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The 60,000 grants that are available to students this September won't finally be disbursed, I suspect, for some period of time.

Mr. Marchese: But you'll have last year's.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We'll have last year's, and last year there were 32,000 that we made available.

Mr. Marchese: Sorry. The question was: Of 60,000 students who received grants, how many received less than 1,000?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I gotcha.

Mr. Marchese: So that's 32,000?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, no.

Mr. Marchese: Ah.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: At one point, you were talking about the number of students receiving grants, and you made reference to last year. Last year, there were only 32,000 grants available in total. This year, we've increased that to 60,000.

Mr. Marchese: Right. So in 2005-06, 32,000—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: —in total were available.

Mr. Marchese: Right. Okay.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Do you want to know from last year?

Mr. Marchese: Well, obviously, you only have that. You only have last year's, is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Yes. You want to know how many were less than \$1,000?

Mr. Marchese: That's right. What was the smallest amount disbursed to an applicant—was it \$100, \$150?—and of the 60,000 students who received grants, how many received less than \$1,000—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Okay. We'll get the information.

Mr. Marchese: —and received less than 500 bucks as well.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I'll provide you with what we have. Why don't I do that?

Mr. Marchese: Well, what you have might be that you don't have the numbers, based on what I'm asking, so that would be complicated. See, I think you would have access to these figures, and I don't.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: If we have access to the figures, I'll give them to you. I know we'd have the total money that was expended. I'm not sure what we have by way of breakdown of individuals. Whatever we have, you're going to have.

Mr. Marchese: Sure, and I appreciate that. Here's my sense, Minister: I am anticipating that I will get just the large number, and we're not going to get too much of a breakdown. I anticipate that happening. I am interested in knowing this because, you see, I suspect a whole lot of students are not getting a whole lot. You have those numbers; you must.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It looks like we can get it broken down, so we're going to do our best for you.

Mr. Marchese: Okay. Thank you. How many students applied for and received some form of loan under OSAP?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: You might have just been away. There were 208,000 students who applied for OSAP. Last year, 188,000 qualified.

Mr. Marchese: How many, sorry?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Last year, 208,000 applied; 188,000 received, so 20,000 did not. There were some—I rounded them off.

Mr. Marchese: Okay. You're right: I was at the back, talking to my assistant. What's the percentage of the students receiving grants with their loans compared to the number of students just receiving loans?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We'll find that for you. It will be based on 2005-06 or the most recent year that we have the information on. I'm assuming that's 2005-06.

Mr. Marchese: Yeah. I'm always interested to know the 2006-07 numbers, because at some point soon you will have that too. So if I make a request for 2005-06, it's good to get it for 2006-07 as well.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: If I have it; my experience, limited though it is, is that that takes longer to come in, because you usually wait until the January term has begun. But if we have it, you can have it.

Mr. Marchese: If we get it before the election, that would be great—or before the next budget announcement. That would be helpful.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Very good.

Mr. Marchese: The big one in March or April.

OSAP expects a parental contribution to post-secondary costs, which is deducted from the OSAP loan.

What percentage of OSAP applicants had some form of parental contribution deducted in 2005-06?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We'll check if we've got that information. I was very pleased that we had reduced the amount of the parental contribution as one of our OSAP improvements last year. I think for a family of about \$75,000 in income, the amount of expected parental contribution went from approximately \$4,400 down to \$2,200. But you were asking about the percentage, so we'll go back and check and see if we've got that information.

Mr. Marchese: Thank you. What percentage of OSAP applicants had a parental contribution deduction of more than \$10,000?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: If we've got it, we'll provide it.

Mr. Marchese: Thank you. Are you keeping any statistics on whether these OSAP applicants are actually receiving the amounts OSAP decides are appropriate parental contributions?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Not to my knowledge. In other words, do we track, go and ask the parents?

Mr. Marchese: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Not to my knowledge.

Mr. Marchese: There would have to be a way of our knowing, though. You would want to know that or need to know that, wouldn't you?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think it would be interesting information to have. I'm not sure how you would figure it out without actually speaking to everyone.

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Mr. Marchese: It's just that my sense is that you would be keeping track of that as part of your commitment to ensure accessibility, right? So that tracking would be—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: What we would like to do is make sure that the students get in. I think there are some things that you can keep track of and some things that you can't. The system has developed over many years. It was in existence—you would know—when the NDP were in power, it was in existence when the Liberals were in in the 1980s, and for decades the parents have always been expected to make a contribution for students—

Mr. Marchese: Yes, I understand that.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: —and up to a certain number of years. We actually reduced the number of years it took before you became independent, from five to four, and decreased the amount of expected parental contribution. To my knowledge, we don't have the information that you were asking about.

Mr. Marchese: So if you don't keep stats, are you going to decide whether tracking is useful or not, or are you not going to do any tracking in this regard? That's what I want to know.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Our tracking is based on trying to make sure that students get in.

Mr. Marchese: I know, but on this specific question, are you keeping any stats of—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I'll take your suggestion under advisement. I think what you want to track are the

results: Are students actually getting in? They may have many different sources of income. The OSAP has used some calculations of parental contribution over the years, and if the advice from you and others is that that's not what OSAP should be taking into consideration, I'll certainly take your advice on that.

Mr. Marchese: No. My point was that OSAP applicants—do they actually receive the amount that OSAP decides is an appropriate parental contribution? We don't know whether that happens or not, so I would think that you would be interested in making sure that that is happening, and if it's not happening, you would want to know. That's all.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I certainly want to make sure that students who are qualified get in and are not denied access by reason of financial barriers. As you'd know, the OSAP calculation is both a federal and a provincial program.

Mr. Marchese: Yes, I understand that. I wasn't asking that. This is very specific, actually. But obviously you're not going to track.

Just to talk about some public accounts numbers from public accounts in 2005 and 2006: The budget in 2006 from the Ministry of TCU was \$4.819 billion, the actual in 2006 for TCU is \$4.714 billion, and the difference is \$105 million. The question is, why was \$105 million less than what was budgeted actually spent on post-secondary education and training?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sorry—from public accounts in what year? In 2005-06?

Mr. Marchese: Yes, from public accounts 2005-06, the budget in 2006 is listed as \$4.819 billion and the actual in 2006 is \$4.714 billion, which says there's a discrepancy of \$105 million. So the question is, why was \$105 million less than what was budgeted actually spent?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think that was a combination number of training and post-secondary expenditures. I think there were a number of different line items within the training area in which the amount of money expended was less than anticipated; for example, the money the federal government spends for seat purchases for apprenticeship training. I know there have traditionally been the Canada study grants that they've allocated \$60 million for over the years, and the expenditure on Canada study grants has traditionally been about \$18 million less. That's a federally mandated program, and you can't qualify for those grants unless you comply with the terms of the program. So we can't just hand the money out. It's not a straight transfer; it's program-directed. Those would be two areas that—

Mr. Marchese: Sorry, the Canada study grants is how much again?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Traditionally, they've expended about \$18 million less—these are federally provided grants—than they have budgeted for.

Mr. Marchese: And the other major one was what, again?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I'm anticipating within that number that training seat purchases—that's the money

the federal government provides to provide different levels of apprenticeship in-class training. It tends to be less than they allocate. For example, in a hot construction market, the apprentices may not get release time to go and do their in-class training—

Mr. Marchese: Okay. So—

Hon. Mr. Bentley:—and the money is directly for that. And, if I could, the anticipated funding requirement for the student support branch for bad debt provision was less than anticipated—and then TVO was transferred to education, as well.

Mr. Marchese: Could I just request, Deputy, that you send me that information? I would be very happy to just have it.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sure.

Mr. Marchese: I'm trying to take notes here. It would just be helpful to get that information. Thank you so much.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think I got most of them, though.

Mr. Marchese: It sounds like it, but once I get it in my two little hands, I'll be able to add it all up.

There are some discrepancies in spending for student financial support as well. I'm sure you'll have an explanation, but—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Can you just direct me to the page?

Mr. Marchese: I don't have the page. I just have the numbers.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Is this 2005-06—

Mr. Marchese: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Bentley:—or 2006-07?

Mr. Marchese: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It's 2005-06?

Mr. Marchese: Let me just read them for you. Your government committed to a \$192-million increase in student financial assistance funding in 2005-06. The estimates for 2005-06 demonstrate only a \$109-million change in student support from the previous year. What happened to the other \$83 million that was promised to students?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Thirty million dollars was not expended because the bad debt provision was much lower than anticipated, and—

Mr. Marchese: So what you're about to give me is part of this answer as well as the previous one?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No. The actual increase in expenditure between 2004-05 and 2005-06 was \$166.1 million. That was \$26.2 million less than expected. The variance was due to the bad debt expense being \$9.2 million less than budgeted and then the \$18-million reduction in the Canada study grant allocation.

Mr. Marchese: So this fits into the other areas you were talking about earlier. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: You were asking—

Mr. Marchese: The discrepancy in spending in student financial support.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Yes. That's part of the total. You were talking about the total.

Mr. Marchese: Again, if you wouldn't mind just giving us a breakdown in that regard, as it relates to the student financial support.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: In 2005-06? Sure.

Mr. Marchese: Yes—based on the numbers I've given you.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I've read it into the record, but we'll put it down on a piece of paper for you.

Mr. Marchese: Please, yes.

Mr. Chair, I'll have a few more questions after the next round.

The Vice-Chair: I appreciate that very much. We'll go over to the government caucus.

Mr. Arthurs: We're prepared to stand down this 20 minutes in the interest of the time allocations that we're working towards.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much. Now we'll go over to Mr. Wilson of the official opposition.

Mr. Wilson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll take a few minutes, and I know that you have a few questions also.

Minister, going back to your \$6.2-billion funding commitment or long-range plan, out to 2009-10: Both the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance and the Council of Ontario Universities indicate that \$4.2 billion of that money arrives after the next election. The Council of Ontario Universities—and you may want to comment on this—calculates that the total operating revenues that universities can expect to receive over the period of the Liberal plan, when you take into account increased enrolment, inflation, weighted by program on a per-student average, will actually decrease every year from now till 2009-10. These statistics are from their committee on—enrolment statistics, projections and analysis of the Council of Ontario Universities. It says that the decrease on a—of course, they use the basic income unit, which is weighted. Taking in your enrolment, which you expect to increase, I think, by 14,000 more spaces by 2009-10, the actual decrease in the basic income unit is minus 1.4% in 2006-07, minus 1.1% in 2007-08, minus 4% in 2008-09, and in 2009-10, minus 1.9%. Do you want to comment on that?

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Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sure. Just a little compare and contrast: Over the five years of the Reaching Higher plan, the funding will go up 39% in total—35% on the operating side—for colleges and universities. By contrast, in the previous nine or 10 years, universities saw a total increase, cumulative for all years, of 12% or 13%, I think it is—it might be 13%. For colleges I think it was 2%. So this is a very substantial increase. On the operating side, for example, it means that over the first four years—last year and the three years of the multi-year agreements—there will be an additional \$1 billion for college and university operating, approximately a 26.4% increase in funding over those four years. Our commitment to post-secondary education stands, with respect, in stark contrast to what happened before. It's the biggest increase that has been seen by the sector in 40 years. It is

important to the sector, and we are committed to supporting post-secondary education.

Mr. Wilson: But given that 4.2% of the 6.2% won't even flow until after the next election, how can you say these things? How can you have over 40 press releases and media events since the 2005 budget that keep saying that you're the greatest thing since sliced bread to education when the per pupil funding will actually go down during your time in government?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, actually the per pupil funding will go up. It was about \$6,600 in 2004-05; it will go up to over \$8,000 in 2008-09, is my recollection—

Mr. Wilson: But in terms of real value, the COU says when you take into account the expansion that you're going to do—14,000 more pupil spaces—inflation, the cost of living and all that stuff, they're no further ahead, I guess is the point they're making.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: You know, I haven't had a college or university president suggest to me in my time here that they would trade what happened for any of the 10 years before the Reaching Higher plan.

Mr. Wilson: But we didn't have 40 press conferences and we didn't spend millions of dollars on government advertising to say that you're the greatest thing that has happened to education in 40 years. You forget to mention that the Conservatives built the colleges and most of the universities.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: None of them would trade the Reaching Higher plan for those years. It is a 39% total increase, 35% on the operating side, a very substantial increase in funding. Is there more to do? Absolutely. Do we want the federal government at the table? Absolutely. Do we think we could do more if the federal government was at the table? Absolutely. But we are determined to support post-secondary education, the quality and access to it, and we're pleased that the Reaching Higher plan does it.

As far as the plan is concerned, I know we had a discussion the other day about the fact that there is a commitment over five years. I'm pleased with the fact that there is a commitment over five years. It's very difficult for post-secondary education institutions, like other big publicly funded institutions, to lurch from year to year trying to do planning on the fly when they don't really know what the budget is going to be. We have made a multi-year commitment. We're complying with the commitment, and it happens to be a commitment to increased funding. That gives them the planning window. I think that's a good thing.

I'm not sure the various announcements say quite what you said. You made reference to the 14,000 graduate spaces. This is a 55% increase in graduate opportunities, every one of which will be fully funded. From what I've heard, the institutions, the universities, are very pleased to have the added capacity.

Mr. Wilson: On the apprenticeship side of things, the Ontario Trucking Association has raised concerns with our caucuses about the lack of truck drivers in Ontario.

Do you want to comment on what you're doing in that area?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sure. I think it's a very good point. I was pleased to have been at the convention in January to announce the formation of a new trucking apprenticeship. Our department has been working with the trucking association, the Teamsters and other interested parties on the implementation of that. But I think the issue you outlined—we do need trained truckers. It sometimes sounds simple, but I'm sure you're aware that the issues at the border, for example, are much more complex than they might have been 20 years ago: the type of paperwork that's required, the dangerous load-handling requirements, for example, the requirements of the various loads being transported—much more than they used to be 20 years ago. So we were pleased to have worked with the association, with the union—the Teamsters—worked with others in the development of a trucking apprenticeship which we were told, and which we anticipate, will help to ensure a good supply of truckers for the future.

Mr. Wilson: Do you know what your increase is going to be? Do you have a plan that tells us how many more truckers we'll have qualified?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The various associations and the Teamsters union outlined the need. That's why we worked with them to develop the truckers apprenticeship, which consists of two parts. The first part really is truckers receiving instruction on the various issues—route formulation, the load requirements for dangerous goods and others, the border requirements—and the second is a period of supervised trucking. We don't have numbers on how many more truckers will be available, but we anticipate, for the reasons that we developed the apprenticeship in the first place, that there will not only be more truckers, but as you'd probably agree, just as importantly, more truckers who actually are trained and able to transport goods safely across the continent.

Mr. Wilson: Yes, it's a serious issue, even in my riding. In Alliston, I have Honda and at least for the last two years they've had a big sign out in front of Gibson Transport, "Truck Drivers Needed," and every time I see them, which is frequently, the proprietors of that company remind me that it is a very serious issue.

We've got skills shortages in many of our business sectors. Across Canada, there's a shortage of 20,000 skilled tradespeople, expected to rise to 50,000 by 2010. The federal government has promised to provide a \$1,000 apprenticeship incentive grant to help with tools, boots and work accessories; they're giving a tax deduction for tools of up to \$500 for existing tradespeople; and they're implementing an apprenticeship job creation tax credit of 10% for an apprentice's wages for two years, to a maximum of \$2,000, to support businesses that establish apprentice positions to create more jobs in the trades. Does your government have any plans to provide tax credits for tradespeople?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Actually, we do. We're ahead of the federal government with respect to the tax credit for

businesses. As you know, we've got the apprenticeship training tax credit—\$5,000 a year up to \$15,000 over three years, the \$95-million program over several years. That is receiving ever-increasing uptake, and we expect that—we've seen that businesses are taking on more and more apprentices, providing more opportunities. We have a loans-for-tools program out there. We are increasing the pathways, the number of routes, where individuals can actually get into an apprenticeship, through an investment, for example, in college pre-apprenticeship programs and college co-op diploma apprenticeship programs.

The biggest issue on the table right now is the labour market partnership agreement. Before he was Prime Minister, Prime Minister Harper agreed to comply with the Martin-McGuinty agreement, the Canada-Ontario agreement. The labour market partnership agreement was part of that. This year it would have meant almost \$200 million in additional investment in training for businesses and for workers, including apprentices, in the province of Ontario. It rises to \$314 million in the fifth and sixth years of the agreement. That's the type of investment in training that all employers, whether it's your trucker near Alliston, whether it's the Honda plant in Alliston, whether it's businesses throughout the province of Ontario—they need that workplace training. We need the skills training. We need the training for the workers. And so we're really urging everyone to encourage the federal government to comply with the agreement so we can improve the availability of skilled trades in the future.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Jim Wilson): Thank you, Minister. The Chairman has some questions.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North): I've got a couple of questions to fill in some time here. I'm looking for information more than trying to give you some tricky question or something like that.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: That's often the preamble to the trickiest questions.

Mr. Dunlop: No, Minister. It's all around physician recruitment and some sort of unknown questions that I have. Maybe part of this is a Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care question, but I'm trying to get my head around some of the issues faced by young people in my riding. An example I want to use is a young lady who graduated from secondary school in Orillia at about 97% and ended up getting her MD at Queen's, in the top three or four in her class, and had a very, very difficult time getting a residency position here in Ontario. Unfortunately, we, the taxpayers of the province of Ontario, have put a lot of money into this young lady, as her family has as well. She started a job in July in Edmonton at a major hospital out there. That's where she finally found a residency position that she was satisfied with. Unfortunately, she's got a younger sister who's almost following in her exact footsteps who may end up in the same predicament. She's been kind of advocating through me to try to do anything we could to help with this. I'm wondering, is that something that you can comment on at all, on where we can go with that?

1640

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, that's an issue that's properly within the purview of the Minister of Health. I would encourage you to direct the inquiry to them, on behalf of the person or just for your own information, because they are responsible for the various programs; it's not my ministry.

Mr. Dunlop: So in other words, you're fully responsible for the medical school as they graduate and pay their way through that system, but once they've graduated and try to get that—so do you not think there's maybe a better way of coordinating this? Because I find that almost tragic, that here we are with communities that need these young doctors. They're skilled in many ways and could be so useful in their communities, and the money we paid to have them educated is now sitting out in Edmonton, or working in Edmonton.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Yes. There is very good coordination between the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities now and the Ministry of Health in terms of ensuring that we are training the professionals that the Ministry of Health suggests we're going to be needing in the future. So there's good coordination there on the training part. I know the Ministry of Health has been working very hard with respect to the increase in the number of medical residency places and the procedure—I think it's the CaRMS procedure, isn't it?—whereby there's a matching between individuals and the residency availability.

I think one of the challenges, of course, is that individual—you don't want to discuss it now—would probably have had a specific residency in which she would have been interested, and I am not aware of what the circumstances are surrounding that residency. My recollection—and this is only from what was reported in the newspapers—is that there was a very high match rate between students and residency availabilities. There might have been one or two specialized parts in which there was some issue.

I'm not the one to be answering the question. I think it is an issue that I know the Ministry of Health would like to hear about so that they can deal with it. They're the ones who can really provide you with some good information.

Mr. Dunlop: I think it was one of the children's services—obstetrics, or something like that—she was planning on going into, and finally found it in BC, although she did send me the names of a number of her classmates who were having difficulty finding these residency positions, and a number of them had gone off to hospitals in the United States. I guess what I'm trying to say is that I know it's a system that's been in place for a long time, and I just think there's a way we can do a better job. I just absolutely hate the thought—first of all, I know there's the expense side of it, the high cost of educating, which includes their parents. But their families are all in Ontario, and here we have young people going south of the border and across Canada etc. So I'll continue to follow it up.

The other area—and it may be an area as well that is under the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care—is this whole area around foreign-trained doctors. I don't know how many times people have come up to me and said, “I hear there are all kinds of doctors driving taxicabs. Why can't we have them in our emergency rooms?” and that sort of thing. I understand there are programs we're trying to incorporate them into. Since I've been here in 1999, I've been hearing about these programs that have tried to incorporate foreign-trained doctors and have them working in our hospitals and in our clinics etc. However, talking to doctors, they tell me that a doctor who is trained in Ontario at one of our medical schools—I don't know how to put this. I don't mean to be negative towards any of the other countries, but apparently we have a very, very high standard. The people who are trained here, who go through the medical schools, are considered some of the best in the world. Doctors tell me that there are cases where, if you're going to start allowing foreign-trained doctors to work in some of our communities, they absolutely have to upgrade to our standards to follow through on that. I was wondering if you have any comments on that, or is that something you can even comment on in your position?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Well, no. The various bridge training projects for foreign-trained professionals were transferred a year ago June to the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. I know you, like I, would have read the various information coming out of the Ministry of Health. You, like I, would have read about the speeding up of the preliminary test that foreign-trained professionals would have to take before they could actually start getting into the program. And you're right, it's not a matter of lowering or changing Ontario's standards but making sure that we facilitate and improve the entry into the process for foreign-trained physicians.

You, like I, would have read about the new website that's up so that those who are thinking of immigrating would be able to access the requirements for qualification before they even get here and can start the process. We would have read about the doubling in the number of IMG spots, for international medical graduates to actually get in and start the process along. We would have read about that program, the name of which escapes me—physician assistant, I think it is. It's like what the army has had forever, where those who don't have full qualifications can actually get in and work alongside fully accredited physicians so that they get the necessary work experience. But it's really a question that is better directed either to the Ministry of Health or to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

The Acting Chair: Just two minutes left.

Mr. Dunlop: Okay. A final comment on the whole area around physician recruitment: I think the general public have not been educated very well on some of the problems involved in attracting these physicians to countries like Canada and the education of them. I don't know what we can do on that. However, I'm sure that everybody in this room, or all the members around the

table at least, has heard the story: People come up to you at an event and tell you, "I hear these doctors are driving taxicabs or they're working on construction sites." It's deplorable, as far as they're concerned, because they don't know all the background. So if there was a message I could send to sort of a combination of Ministry of Health and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, it would be that I think we have to find a way to better educate the general public about the barriers we face as we try to actually put a physician in place in the province of Ontario, and the qualifications that they have to receive before they can actually practise here.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It's an enormously important issue. I know both the Minister of Health and the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration would love to work with you in making sure that you can get the word out about all the things that are going on to make sure that people don't miss opportunities, because I know there's a lot going on. But they're really the ones who need to speak to that.

The Acting Chair: Thank you. Mr. Marchese.

Mr. Marchese: I just have a few questions for you, Minister. With respect to apprenticeships, in 2003 Dalton McGuinty promised to eliminate the in-class fee for apprenticeships. It's still there. Is that going to be eliminated, as promised, in this fiscal year perhaps?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: We're still working on that. We want to make sure that the barriers to apprenticeship aren't there.

Mr. Marchese: Okay. Thank you. I guess you've got just another year left. You might be able to do it, if you work hard, before the next budget. You never know; you might be able to keep that promise.

Discrepancies in spending in training and apprenticeship: Why do the 2005-06 estimates indicate only an \$18-million increase in spending on the training and employment program when, according to the Reaching Higher plan, there would be an increase of \$44 million in this area for 2005-06?

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Hon. Mr. Bentley: My recollection from last year is that the biggest issue there was the seat purchase of apprenticeship in-school training spots. The federal government flows money through the EI program because they still have the labour market development agreement, they still have the labour market development money. For a number of reasons, the anticipated take-up by apprentices of in-class training was not as high as was budgeted for. That was the biggest item in the decrease. There was another item, and we'll dig the details of that out for you.

Mr. Marchese: So if you were to announce how much you spent, you would say you've only spent \$18 million. You wouldn't say you spent \$44 million, because it wouldn't be true, right?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sorry?

Mr. Marchese: The Reaching Higher plan says that you were spending \$44 million, but that didn't happen. Only \$18 million was spent. You were giving reasons as

to why only \$18 million was spent in that category called "training and apprenticeships," right?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I was giving you those reasons. Absolutely. Yes.

Mr. Marchese: So the real number is \$18 million. If the deputy could just send me that explanation you were giving to me that would account for that discrepancy, that would be helpful.

The access strategy: You were targeting some resources to underrepresented groups or groups with fewer available resources, such as aboriginal students, franco-phone students and students with disabilities, and you formed advisory committees. These groups have been announced for a while, and MTCU resources have been directed to support these committees. What are these committees currently considering since the tuition fee increases have been announced or have been implemented this year?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sorry, what are they considering?

Mr. Marchese: Tuition fees have been announced. What are they considering, based on this access strategy vis-à-vis the increases in tuition fees?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think you saw some examples of the work that has gone on at the access committees in the recent first-generation enhancement. So, for example, the SCORÉ program at Seneca is the type of community-based interaction between the post-secondary institution—in that example, a college—and the community which nominates people to go into the program. That's the type of wraparound program, wraparound service that these committees are coming up with.

The bigger issues relating to access, relating to tuition fees, don't come into the discussion, for the most part, of these various committees. So another one of the first-generation recommendations was the type of program we announced with Pathways and the expansion of that program—again, a community-based program which encourages individuals who might not otherwise finish high school to finish so they can go on to post-secondary education. You're aware of Pathways—you have been for years now—and how successful it is.

Mr. Marchese: Is any of the money from the Reaching Higher plan funding these committees or providing supports for these committees to meet travel expenses?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sure.

Mr. Marchese: They're doing that, eh? How much money, do you know?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It depends on the committee. We can provide the expenditures for 2005-06 and the anticipated for 2006-07.

Mr. Marchese: So we'll make a request, and you'll consider it, basically.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Some of the representatives—for example, the aboriginal committee—come from all over the province of Ontario. We met once in Thunder Bay. We've met in Brantford.

Mr. Marchese: And their travel is paid and so on.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Yes. Absolutely.

Mr. Marchese: Or related expenses, I'm assuming.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I would think so. Some of them come from a long way away.

Mr. Marchese: At some point, you'll have a total amount in terms of the assistance you're giving to these committees. Once you do, I'd appreciate an amount.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sure.

Mr. Marchese: Thank you. Have they produced any recommendations so far?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: They've produced quite a bit of excellent advice that has gone into the announcements that we have made already. What we're working toward is a longer term strategy. So, again, the suggestions that have come out of the first-generation committee so far is that we have to be sensitive to the differing needs of communities, that we should build on the success of programs that have been out there for many years—and that's Pathways, for example—that it doesn't necessarily apply the same from one community to the next.

Mr. Marchese: Sure.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: So that's a characteristic that has animated the products of our expenditures. In the disabilities committees, one of the issues that was identified, I recall, was money for print-alternate materials and for assistance for the deaf and hard of hearing. That is just one of many suggestions that came directly from that committee.

Mr. Marchese: Do these suggestions or recommendations become public, or is this just advice that goes to you directly and no one else knows about it? Is that the way it works?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It's been advice that's come essentially to me, as minister; there are ministerial committees.

Mr. Marchese: Do they become public in any way? Do you know? Do we know?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No. They're advisory committees for the minister; they provide me with advice.

Mr. Marchese: Right. So they don't publish anything?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No.

Mr. Marchese: They just give you advice.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Very helpful advice, absolutely.

Mr. Marchese: For sure. But we don't know, for example, whether they make some recommendations that you may not take up, that you may not pick up. We wouldn't know that, because they only talk to you.

Would it be useful to have those recommendations made public so that we would all be engaged to help you, as well?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I know that you've never hesitated to provide assistance either to me or to previous ministers in this position—

Mr. Marchese: That's the point I make, right?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: —so I don't anticipate there's any barrier there.

Mr. Marchese: I'm just trying to help, right?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think what's very helpful about the committees is that there's a free interchange of ideas between the participants—

Mr. Marchese: And yourself.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: —and me, and among the participants.

Mr. Marchese: But not me. There's no interchange with me.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: As I say, I'm happy to receive suggestions from you today and every day.

Mr. Marchese: But I don't know what suggestions they're making, so I can't interchange with you because I don't know what their interchange is with you.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The great thing is that I certainly welcome the opportunity to receive advice from you on how to improve participation by, for example, first-generation students in post-secondary education or ensure their success while they're there. I know you're connected to the community in so many ways and you'll pass on the information to me.

Mr. Marchese: It's just that it's so much harder for me. You've got so many assistants, and imagine me, just little old me, working alone and having to call these people. How do I do it? It's so hard. You know what I'm talking about.

Mr. Khalil Ramal (London-Fanshawe): I'm crying now.

Mr. Marchese: Khalil is crying. Don't do that. No, come on.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I'm looking forward to your suggestions.

The Vice-Chair: Okay, guys.

Mr. Marchese: Thank you, Chair. Those are the only questions I have.

The Vice-Chair: Okay. We're going along pretty quickly here.

Mr. Arthurs: We'll stand down this 20 minutes as well, Mr. Chair.

The Vice-Chair: Mr. Wilson, you have 10 minutes left and, Mr. Marchese, you have 10 minutes remaining today, and the government would have another 20 minutes, if they wish.

Mr. Wilson: The government is a chatty bunch over there.

Interjection.

Mr. Wilson: You should at least say something to record your attendance.

Minister, thank you again for being here.

On apprenticeships, there was an article in a publication called Education That's Worth More, published by the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario. It was pointed out in that article that the "Ontario government has quietly cut the \$10-million apprenticeship enhancement fund that allows colleges to purchase equipment for apprenticeship programs. The government has also eliminated the \$10-million college equipment renewal fund, which colleges use to purchase industry-standard equipment for student training."

I guess the obvious question is, why did you cut this \$20-million worth of capital from the colleges which, on the surface anyway, seems to be pretty useful money for

buying computer lab equipment, diagnostic imaging equipment, welding machines, defibrillators etc.?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Actually, it was a five-year program. Both of them were five-year programs started, I think, in 2001-02 under your government: \$10 million a year for five years; the five-year program was up. We're looking for opportunities to find ways to continue to support the requirements we have to ensure we have enough skilled trades in Ontario. I mentioned a few of the operating investments we're making for the benefit of colleges to increase the availability of programs. I think you make a good point: We need to continually look to ways to ensure they have up-to-date equipment.

I'm pleased with the fact that we have increased the amount of operating expenditures for the operating income for colleges substantially over the past couple of years. But I think you make a good point about the need to be ever-vigilant and to continually ensure we have the support that's necessary.

Mr. Wilson: Do you see bringing back these capital dollars? It's the test tubes and the microscopes and everything that makes the student experience worthwhile.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: It's certainly something we're looking at.

1700

Mr. Wilson: One question I do have that I forgot to ask under tuition fees is, what is the proportion of tuition fees to operating revenues today for universities and where will it sit in 2009-10 under your plan?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Today, my recollection is that it's about 37%, depending on how it is calculated and who calculates it. That, I anticipate, will remain relatively constant throughout the Reaching Higher plan.

Mr. Wilson: Do you want to take a moment to comment on the possible strike at Carleton U in terms of, just for the record, "Unionized teaching staff at Carleton University are set to strike November 15 if a collective agreement is not reached"? It involves, I gather, 750 professors and librarians and affects about 19,000 full-time students.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: You know it wouldn't be appropriate for me to comment on negotiations that are under way or any sort of anticipated or pending labour relations issue. I know the Ministry of Labour is available with very trained mediators and conciliators for these issues and, as in all collective bargaining cases, I urge the parties to continue talking, work hard and reach an agreement as quickly as possible.

Mr. Wilson: You put a substantial amount of money into capital—deferred maintenance, I would think—this year, I guess. Was it this year or last year?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: A couple of years ago.

Mr. Wilson: I think I read \$133 million. Was all of that money disbursed, or was it meant to be put out over a number of years?

Hon. Mr. Bentley: No, no. The money last year, about \$130 million in total—some of it was deferred maintenance money; some of it was the third year of monies for new build. It was the third year of the expenditures of those monies.

Mr. Wilson: I probably should look it up myself in the estimates, but what happens going forward now? They say they have about \$1.77 billion worth of deferred maintenance and capital requests. I'm sure some of that's a wish list, but I'm sure much of it is essential work that needs to be done.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I think deferred maintenance is a continuing challenge. I know it was experienced under previous governments and experienced by us. There's \$40 million available this year for deferred maintenance across the sector. Two years ago—you're right—we put in a total of \$240 million to assist with deferred maintenance and equipment issues. Last year it was about \$130 million. This year it's \$40 million, and there is money in the plan in the out years to do more, but that is something that we will continue to look at and monitor.

Mr. Wilson: I mentioned last week the high cost of oil, gas and electricity—utilities—for universities. Are you looking at anything to assist them? Because it's nice to give them increases in their budgets from the province of Ontario, but if up to half of it's being taken away for utility bills, it doesn't bode well for catching up for these schools.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: I was pleased that the recent announcement with respect to electricity utility rates showed an average decrease provincially of about 6%. How that works into the specific institutional sector, I don't have those figures at the moment. You're right: We have put a substantial increase into the operating budgets of both universities and colleges to help deal with that, as well as the quality and access issues. I know there's some work going on with the Ministry of Energy about energy-saving initiatives.

You mentioned before the deferred maintenance capital investment we've made. One of the projects that I went to see in fact was at the University of Guelph, and it was a very interesting project. What they were doing with the investment of the money was to upgrade the greenhouse area, I think it was, and they were actually going to end up saving more money than the capital cost of the project by about the fourth year of the project. So I think that shows the creative approach we really can bring to both deferred maintenance and an energy-saving initiative.

Mr. Wilson: I just want to ask you, in the three minutes I have left, in terms of the labour market development agreements with the federal government: Where are you on that and how many civil servants or bureaucrats will be displaced? You have several thousand, do you not, from the federal government to integrate, which I guess is what you call it?

Secondly—and I ask this seriously, because I'm going to get the name of the labour board wrong. But one of my labour boards, which was Grey-Bruce-Huron—

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The training board?

Mr. Wilson: Training board, sorry—was in to see me about four weeks ago. We've not heard much, in a public way, anyway, on how that whole integration process is going.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Sure. The two agreements: I spoke to the labour market partnership agreement earlier; the labour market development agreement transfer takes place on January 1, 2007. We expect there will be a total of 600 and 700 federal employees who will become the employees of the province of Ontario. One of the things we're determined to achieve with respect to the transfer is a continuity of service. It will mean that more than \$500 million in federal EI dollars are transferred, to be administered by the province of Ontario.

You mentioned training boards, and we have the one down my way. I've met with the training boards individually and collectively. They perform a very important function. I don't know if I've met specifically with yours, although a group of training board representatives met me when I spoke to the board of trade some weeks ago, so they might have been in the group. I am enormously supportive of the work they are doing. I look forward to getting up there and meeting and discussing issues with them specifically.

Mr. Wilson: You probably did address this, then, in your board of trade speech, but I missed it. Lisa Kidd was the executive director who came to see me, along with some representatives from her organization. Specifically they asked me: Will their role change? Just to be frank about it, they're kind of worried about their future and whether they have much of a role to play.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: The training boards that I am aware of have performed a very helpful role in bringing together, as a sort of the neutral third-party adviser, the training needs and the opportunities within a particular jurisdiction. As we bring the labour market development agreement—we assume responsibility for that—there will be a planning process throughout the province of Ontario. I think identifying regional and community needs is extremely important.

I expect and anticipate that there will be a role for training boards. It may evolve slightly over time. But, as I said before—and I'm being direct with you—the training board people I've met do a very good job. I am supportive of what they do and I'm looking forward to their continued advice.

The Chair (Mr. Tim Hudak): I'm sorry, Mr. Wilson, but that concludes your time.

The third party, I believe, has forfeited their last 10 minutes, so we have a 10-minute cycle for the government.

Mr. Arthurs: We are down to the last rotation, are we? Is it 10 minutes at this point?

The Chair: Yes.

Mr. Arthurs: Mr. Chair, what we'd like to do, I think, at this point, rather than questions—normally, often the government will provide its time to the minister, I understand from my past practice, if they have any final comments they would like to make. We would be prepared to provide up to our 10 minutes to the minister for that purpose, if that's agreeable.

The Chair: Sure; okay.

Minister, you have eight and a half, nine minutes. Go ahead.

Hon. Mr. Bentley: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'd like to thank you and the members from all parties for their participation in these proceedings and for the opportunity to present and to answer the questions.

The Chair: Oh, come on, now. You're not acting like a minister. All right. Well then, thank you, Minister Bentley, for your brevity. Thank you for appearing before the committee; to the deputy, as well, and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities staff who have been in attendance for our seven and a half or so hours together.

I think members know that before we adjourn we need to proceed with a vote. So, Minister, you can attend with rapt anticipation of how these votes are going to proceed.

Are members ready to vote on the estimates of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities?

Mr. David Zimmer (Willowdale): I'd like some time to think about it.

The Chair: You'd like some time to think about it?

Shall vote 3001 carry? Carried.

Shall vote 3002 carry? Carried. We're on a roll.

Shall vote 3003 carry? Carried. Not as enthusiastic on 3003.

Shall the estimates of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities carry? Carried.

Shall I report the estimates of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to the House? Agreed.

Our business having been completed with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, I remind members that we reconvene on Tuesday, October 31, 2006, at 3 p.m. or following routine proceedings, to consider the 2006-07 estimates of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal—which is our last ministry, I say to the clerk? So it's the last ministry in this set of estimates renewals.

Folks, thanks very much. The committee is adjourned until Tuesday the 31st.

The committee adjourned at 1711.

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