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of Ontario



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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

A-29

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

A-29

**Standing Committee on  
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

2<sup>nd</sup> Session  
41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

Tuesday 20 February 2018

**Comité permanent des  
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

2<sup>e</sup> session  
41<sup>e</sup> législature

Mardi 20 février 2018

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Chair: Cristina Martins  
Clerk: William Short

Présidente : Cristina Martins  
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

## COMITÉ PERMANENT DES ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 20 February 2018

Mardi 20 février 2018

*The committee met at 0901 in committee room 2.*

### SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Good morning, everyone, and welcome back. Before we begin our intended appointments review this morning, our first order of business is to consider four subcommittee reports.

The subcommittee report dated Thursday, December 21, 2017: Would someone please move adoption of the report? Mr. Pettapiece.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, December 21, 2017.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

The subcommittee report dated Thursday, January 25, 2018: Mr. Pettapiece.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, January 25, 2018.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Discussion? All in favour? Carried. Thank you very much.

The subcommittee report dated Thursday, February 1, 2018: Would someone please move adoption of the report? Mr. Pettapiece.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, February 1, 2018.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Discussion? All in favour? Carried.

The subcommittee report dated Thursday, February 15, 2018: Would someone please move adoption of the report? Mr. Pettapiece.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I move adoption of the subcommittee report on intended appointments dated Thursday, February 15, 2018.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Discussion? All in favour? Carried.

### INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

#### MR. SCOTT GILLINGWATER

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Mr. Scott Gillingwater, intended

appointee as member, Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** The first intended appointment we have this morning is Mr. Scott Gillingwater, who is nominated as member, Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario. Mr. Gillingwater, if you could please take your seat. Welcome, and thank you very much for being here this morning. You may begin with a brief statement, if you wish. Members of each party will then have 10 minutes to ask you questions. Any time used for your statement will be deducted from the government's time for questions. Once questions start, it will be with the official opposition and Mr. Gates.

Welcome, Mr. Gillingwater. You have 10 minutes.

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Great. Thank you. I figured that I would jot a few things down to be a little more clear and on point.

Thank you, Madam Chair and honourable members of the committee. Good morning. I appreciate the privilege of appearing before you and the consideration of my appointment to the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario, which I will refer to as COSSARO from here on out.

I plan to take the next couple of minutes to provide a brief background on my experience and why it would benefit COSSARO. My professional career working with wildlife at risk began in 1994 and has included a wide array of species, with a strong focus on reptiles and amphibians. Although my speciality is herpetology, I've assisted in numerous projects spanning a wide taxonomic range, conducting surveys and providing advice. I've been a part of mussel, fish, bird and mammal research and, to a less degree, surveys for invertebrates such as dragonflies, sarcophaga flesh flies, beetles, butterflies etc., as well as at-risk plant species.

Additionally, since one cannot effectively conduct research in isolation, I take an ecological community approach to research and recovery, investigating how various species interact within a range of habitats. The bulk of my research is conducted in southern Ontario, although I have also conducted research in Mexico and am now part of a long-term research and education program in Costa Rica. My work in Mexico resulted in multiple range extensions for snakes, lizards and amphibians and the discovery of two new species of salamander.

Additionally, I have travelled throughout Ontario and across Canada in order to meet with biologists and take part in research studies encompassing diverse habitats and with a wide variety of species.

I'm currently the species-at-risk biologist for the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority in southern Ontario, and I manage one of the longest-running reptile research and education programs in Canada, a program that I've been with since its inception in 1994. Over the past 24 years, my work has included the study and recovery of the largest-known Canadian populations of the spiny softshell turtle, the spotted turtle, Blanding's turtle and queensnake, in addition to a number of smaller studies on various other wildlife species.

I'm a long-term member of the COSEWIC amphibians and reptiles specialist subcommittee, where I served from 2006 to 2013, and I'm currently serving my final four-year term, which began this past January. I'm past president and current director of conservation for the Canadian Herpetological Society, assistant editor of the journal *Herpetological Conservation and Biology*, and reviewer for the journals *the Canadian Field-Naturalist* and *Chelonian Conservation and Biology*.

I'm an invited member of the IUCN Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group; a current member of the Ontario Turtle Conservation group; a past member of the wood turtle, eastern hog-nosed snake and eastern foxsnake recovery teams as well as the Thames River, Sydenham River and Ausable River aquatic ecosystem recovery teams; chair of the queensnake recovery team; and former chair of the spiny softshell turtle recovery team.

In addition to my role as species-at-risk biologist for the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, I'm also a freelance biologist, carrying out research, surveys and writing contracts for a variety of organizations, including the Canadian Wildlife Service, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Toronto Zoo, Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, and NGOs and consulting firms, among others.

I'm a biologist, educator, photographer and author, disciplines that are necessary to effectively carry out my work. I've authored or co-authored multiple books, published papers, status reports, recovery strategies and popular articles, and have received multiple provincial and national awards for my work.

In terms of what I can provide COSSARO, I feel it comes down to long-term experience with wildlife in the field, as well as serving many years through either chairing or membership on a number of recovery teams, committees and other groups. In addition to my research and recovery efforts, a large component of my work includes community education. I carry out presentations and hands-on workshops for a wide array of community groups and base my school presentations on the curriculum needs of the teachers. I've spoken directly to many thousands of students, community members, land users and landowners, and have been able to reach many more through media stories.

I would come to the committee with 24 years of professional experience on the landscape, studying and recovering wildlife. I grew up in rural Ontario, so I've spent my entire life hiking through forests, trudging through wetlands or working on farms, all things that come from being a country kid in Ontario.

I'm one of the few herpetologists in Ontario who has been able to work consistently for almost a quarter of a century in Ontario. I've been able to assist in the progression of this field. I've been on the leading edge of research in the province and have been a part of early recovery efforts spawned by both provincial and federal species-at-risk legislation. I've conducted my research on private, provincial and federal lands, including parks, national wildlife areas, First Nations reserve lands and Department of National Defence properties.

I'm lucky to have been closely associated with highly regarded herpetologists and other wildlife biologists, some who have since retired but also with the new generation of herpetologists making their way forward in Ontario.

I've been mentored by the best, and now I get to return that favour to young biologists. I feel that my in-depth understanding of reptiles and amphibians, along with over two decades of wildlife recovery work in Ontario, make me qualified to be a member of COSSARO. Furthermore, now starting my ninth year on the COSEWIC amphibians and reptiles specialist subcommittee makes me uniquely qualified to understand the listing process, analyze large amounts of information, and assess species through well-established IUCN-based criteria.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Thank you very much, Mr. Gillingwater. We will now begin with Mr. Gates. You have 10 minutes.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Scott, how are you?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** I'm good. Thanks.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Thank you.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** You're welcome. Could you explain what compelled you to seek this appointment—

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Well, basically—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** There's more to it; sorry about that—and how your previous professional experience will assist you in your position with the committee on the status of species at risk?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** As I've mentioned in my intro, I've been doing this for 24 years now. I've been at the leading edge of research on reptiles and amphibians here in Ontario but I've also worked with a large diversity of other species throughout the province and nationally and internationally. My work on various committees, recovery teams and organizations has allowed me to work in a consensus-based environment where we are able to take on tasks and reach goals in an effective manner, using science-based information. With the amount of work in areas and partners—land users—that I've been able to reach over the past 24 years, I feel like

I'm in a very unique position to offer something positive and to move the committee forward in a positive way.

In addition, in my work with the COSEWIC amphibians and reptiles specialist subcommittee we use the same criteria that are going to be used to assess species on COSSARO, so I'm very well aware of and established with that way of thinking and assessing species.

0910

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thanks very much. I noticed in your opening comments you mentioned wetlands. How important is it to protect wetlands?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** It's absolutely important. If you look at where we're at now, especially in southwestern Ontario, we have lost a lot of our wetlands, but there has been a lot of work going forward with provincial protection of wetlands in order to retain what we do have and in some cases, through various programs, increase the number of wetlands.

They are the lifeblood of our local environments. Most species depend on wetland environments: amphibians, absolutely; reptiles, more often than not; as well as our mammals, our birds, our invertebrates—the list goes on. That is where, basically, life begins in a lot of ways for a lot of species.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Just following up a little more on that, you said that in Ontario we've lost a lot of our wetlands. Maybe you could explain how we lost them or why we lost them.

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Back when early European settlement—people came in to farm the land, so wetlands were drained and woodlots were cut down. We're at a point now where we have to maintain as best as we can what we have while working with landowners and land users, because we're not isolated in our approaches to conservation anymore. We need to work within—basically use the hand that you've been dealt.

In order to make progress, we need to work with communities, work with biologists and work with landowners to ensure that there's a certain amount of green space and corridors and wildlife connections while still ensuring that we have enough land for human use and human needs.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Have you been involved a lot with wetlands?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** On and off. Through the conservation authority, we do quite a bit of work with the protection of wetlands, especially in flood plain areas. In general, they act as a sponge to reduce the effects of flooding. They act as filters for pollutants. They act as all of these important features on the landscape. Through the conservation authority, we create wetlands, we rehabilitate wetlands and we look toward ways to better protect wetlands.

I have been involved with wetland creation, with ensuring erosion control along wetlands to prevent sedimentation, siltation etc., so definitely, yes.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Now, you might know better than me, but my understanding is that one of the reasons why we had the severe flooding in Houston was because they

got rid of all of their wetlands, so there was no sponge, so the water just continued to rise. Is that maybe how it happened in Houston? We saw what can happen there, and is that why wetlands are more important than ever, with the amount of rain we're getting?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** I can't speak directly about Houston, not knowing their environment and how that occurred, but in reading about Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans—that was definitely one of the issues there as well.

What we see on the landscape—and, again, this is promoted by conservation authorities across Ontario, but Upper Thames has been very vocal about the need for the maintenance of these wetlands because of exactly what you said: They need to absorb that water, that excess water. We're going to see a lot of that today.

In general, we've been pretty progressive with the conservation authorities and with the provincial protection of wetlands, to maintain what we have, but I think whenever we have the opportunity we need to increase the number of wetlands. If you look at what southwestern Ontario likely was in the past, it was Carolinian forest and a lot of that was Carolinian swamp, which is wooded wetlands. You're not going to have the extremes, the flashiness of flooding, if you have more wetlands.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** That leads into my next question. I appreciate those answers.

I've been quite critical in my local riding down in Niagara Falls on several environmental issues, particularly this summer increase in untreated waterway spills into the Niagara River. Protecting our environment for our future generation is incredibly important to me.

Could the witness speak about how assessing and classifying species help our overall ecosystem and our environment?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Yes, absolutely. When you look at species in general, not all could be considered indicator species, but many can. If you're looking at some of the at-risk amphibian species and even some of our reptile species—and I'll speak to species that I know the best. They can be seen as indicator species. They bioaccumulate toxins which can impact their reproduction rates, their fertility rates, the number of young hatched. Obviously, we've seen the impacts in a lot of the media, of what happens to amphibians, where they have growth mutations, they have decreased immune system response to toxins, to fungus, to stuff like that. When we see population declines or we see local declines, there's obviously an issue causing those declines. Is it road mortality? Is it persecution? Is it collection? Is it pollution? Is it issues with the environment? Is it climate change? Increased UV radiation? Basically, every species at risk tells a story, and it's up to us to understand that story through the best available scientific information. So we absolutely need to pay very close attention to species in decline because that will, down the line, impact us.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** In the past, there have been some concerns regarding regulatory changes under the Endangered Species Act. I understand that a lawsuit was

filed in 2013 claiming that the government was unlawfully undermining the Endangered Species Act. Could you briefly speak about your concerns regarding the current status of the Endangered Species Act? Do you believe that the current regulations are fair and help protect endangered species in the province of Ontario?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Based on years of doing this kind of work and seeing the Endangered Species Act come into being in 2007—not discounting the earlier editions of the act, but it gained its teeth in 2007. In some ways, based on available information, there is some potential that development could impact, to a higher degree, some of these species by removing habitat that may be few hundred or a few thousand years old and replacing it with new habitat for net benefit. That doesn't always work as well on the ground as it does on paper. So that may be something that needs to be looked at in detail, to see what we can do to ensure that we are making it a system that works well for people on the ground. We need to farm, we need to develop, we need to ensure that people are taken care of, but we also need to ensure that we have the best protection for wildlife.

As already mentioned, what impacts wildlife impacts humans down the road. This is not necessarily something that the members of COSSARO would have on their shoulders; this is under the Endangered Species Act alone. There are people who are far better prepared to work on this legislation and the politics of it all than someone like me. I can only say that, based on the limited information I've seen, there have been things that have worked well and there have been things that probably need a little bit of tweaking to ensure that we are doing what we say on paper on the ground.

It's hard for me to express that in a way that is concrete, with a good example. Again, the only thing I can say is, removing a 1,000-year-old wetland and replacing it with a three-day-old wetland will not be optimal for the species that have lost that wetland, so we need to look at the net benefit of habitat that has been lost for species. Again, that comes from a strictly fact-based science background, based on the ecology of species.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** You have five seconds.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Good job, young man.

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** We'll move to the government side. You have five minutes. Ms. Kiwala.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I have to start by saying that you really do have a staggering resumé, and I want to thank you for your contributions towards species at risk and within the field of herpetology and all the other realms that you work within. You've made an outstanding impact.

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Thank you.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** First of all, shortly after I was elected in 2014, there were some changes to the 2015 endangered species legislation that came out. I had an opportunity to speak at Queen's and also to visit the Queen's University Biological Station, which I'm sure

you're very familiar with. I'm wondering if you can just add anything with respect to the changes that occurred in that legislation at that time and how that change has allowed you, perhaps, to work with universities across the province.

**0920**

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Well, I know that changes to the act, when they happen, often ruffle feathers at first, till people understand these items.

But in terms of connecting opportunities and ensuring, down the road, that there are funding opportunities for people to do the work for these species while still respecting the needs of the act in order to prepare reports and management plans and recovery strategies for these species—and this is where we kind of get into a bit of a quagmire in terms of delays. It's one of those things that, in my line of work, is understandable. A lot of people are overtaxed in terms of work commitments and volunteer commitments to get these reports, data and information to the public and to peers within the scientific community.

When we have opportunities to network between universities, between conservation authorities, between government agencies—in many cases, MNR and other agencies have been limited in their ability to work on the ground and in the field, so they are forced to look at other opportunities for people to do that work on the ground. So here comes me, and people like me, in order to do that kind of work, to have, again, these opportunities to gather data.

But we do need to ensure that it is collected in a way and distributed appropriately from district offices to Peterborough and into NHIC and other organizations such as that, in order to make sure that it reaches committees such as COSSARO so that we can use that information in a progressive and positive way.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I noticed as well from your professional background that you have spent some time at Rondeau Provincial Park and done some work in biology through the University of Guelph. I'm wondering if you can tell the committee about any work that you might have done with the Ontario Veterinary College and that group. Is that ongoing?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Basically, as part of the OVC, they work closely with the Canadian health working group in order to detect disease right off the bat. Through OVC and through the Canadian wildlife health working group, if we find an animal that has been injured or, usually, an animal that is sick, the OVC provides an opportunity for us to assess that animal before diseases such as—we're seeing Bsal in salamanders and chytrid fungus with amphibians and snake fungal disease with snakes. We're able to quickly remove those animals from the field and get them in to be assessed through the OVC. That has been, I think, and will be, important into the future in stopping some of these issues that we're now seeing with pathogens entering our natural world.

In terms of my time at Rondeau Provincial Park, through the University of Guelph, from the 1990s until 1999 I was there off and on doing reptile and amphibian

work. In 2000-01, I initiated and started the largest reptile and amphibian research project that the park had had up to that point. We were finding species that were thought to be almost extirpated in relatively good numbers. But we were also seeing increasing threats. At that time, it wasn't necessarily a fungal pathogen, but we were seeing die-offs of birds. There was avian botulism. We were starting to see turtles die off. Those were animals, again, that were delivered quickly to the OVC. But we also saw the beginnings—

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Thank you very much, Mr. Gillingwater. That's all the time that we have.

We are now going to turn it over here to the official opposition. We're going to start with Mr. Pettapiece. You have 10 minutes.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Thank you, Chair. Good morning.

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Good morning.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** You say you have a rural background. Where were you brought up?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Princeton, Ontario, between Woodstock and Paris, off Highway 2.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Yes, I've been down there. I'm from the Stratford area, so I know that part of the province—a little better than the eastern part of the province, anyway.

I guess you'll be responsible for maintaining criteria for assessing and classifying species. Do you have some idea of what this criteria should include?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Yes. Basically, what happens now, through IUCN, which has been adopted by COSEWIC and then adopted by COSSARO, you're looking at a number of variables that can impact these species in order to list them at special concern, threatened, endangered, extirpated or, if there's not enough data, data-deficient; or if they are not at risk, you can list them as not at risk. These criteria are based on overall population declines, either over generations or over a 10-year period.

It depends. There are various criteria that you can use for various species and various circumstances. Not all lichens, fish, frogs and badgers are the same in the way we list them or in the ranges that they occur in. For example, there's a spike-rush, and it's only known from one area in Long Point. Then you have large-ranging species, such as badgers, that occur over large areas and in low densities. Then you have species that may be higher densities but locally abundant. It's these criteria that are used to flesh that out. It's based on, again, IUCN criteria that was recently updated—and by “recently,” it was about 2010—in order to better fit a multitude of species.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** So I guess you won't be dealing with the deer populations and turkey populations and stuff like that?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** No, not general wildlife management stuff unless it's listed as at risk.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Okay. Because they are getting way overpopulated in some areas—

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** There seem to be a few of them around, yes.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Your recommendations: There are a number of environmental groups around. Would your recommendations be influenced by advocacy efforts of environmental groups?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** As a member of COSSARO, it's science-based and traditional indigenous knowledge-based, and we are able and willing to take in information from all stakeholders. That could be environmental advocacy groups; it could be forestry groups etc. It's an opportunity for everyone to have their say. As a member of COSSARO, we can then synthesize that information. What is the truth? What is not based on science? What can be referenced through peer review and what can't be? Again, it's information. If it's fact-based science information, it will be taken in and reviewed. If it's not based on science, there's no point in adding that to a submission for a species' status.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I do like data, because things can get skewed when they're not based on facts, and we need to do that.

Do you believe that your advice to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry should take into consideration the social and economic impacts of any recommendations on the local human population?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Again, as a committee, it is science-based. We will synthesize all information allotted to us. There is going to be, just as there is with COSEWIC, a certain amount of social consideration, such as some of the east coast fisheries that have impacted whether species get listed or not. Members of COSSARO are going to be available to speak with the minister and to discuss these matters on any reports and any stakeholder presentations that are provided to us.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** This is something I find quite interesting, and not, maybe, for the right reasons. Nine of your 11 members are from southern Ontario. I think that's probably something that, at some point, we should try to correct. Your opinion on that?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Well, this comes up a lot, through the Canadian Herpetological Society, through COSEWIC, through a number of other groups, where you end up getting probably higher submissions—because of higher population, for one—but when you look in detail at the species diversity and the number of species at risk, they are generally within the area from Ottawa to Windsor. In that part of southern Ontario, you have the highest density of species and the highest risk factors from anthropogenic factors that will influence populations and viability over time.

In some ways, it's probably good to have a higher percentage from an area that is most heavily impacted, but I agree that there should be some ensuring of diversity of membership across the province as well. But I do think you should have the best folks from the area most heavily impacted.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** From your knowledge of this committee and what they do—northern Ontario is a big

place. It's a huge geographical region. I don't know how many species at risk are in what we would call northern Ontario, but is that something that you would think that we need more people up there?

**0930**

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Because of species richness, my gut feeling is: fewer people north, more people south. It's all based on species richness and threats affecting species. There are still threats affecting species north of Thunder Bay, absolutely, and north of there; but in terms of the information that's coming in, if we see an influx of information that is showing we need to focus more on northern Ontario, that's when we start looking at additional people from northern sectors. But until that amount of information comes and is showing that there is a real, direct need, we may have percentages, again, based on species diversity, richness and threat.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Do you know whether any issues are being covered adequately up north? Would you be able to comment on that?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** With COSSARO, not being on the committee yet, I don't know. I don't even know who is from north or south other than one individual who I saw the name of.

In terms of how COSEWIC has done it in the past, we basically try—where there are gaps and there is a need for more information, we put a call out for members from those areas or with an expertise in a certain field when that arises.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Have you done anything in the Bruce Peninsula?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Very limited. Mostly for fun, and that was about it.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** The reason I ask—and I know these animals are all over southern Ontario—is the Massasauga rattler. We go up there quite frequently, too. I've never seen one. I think one of the reasons that I've never seen one—I really don't go looking for them—is that there aren't that many around anymore. I know they go right down into southern Ontario. My brother has seen them in the Windsor area.

What's the status on that? Would you have any idea of what the status on the rattler is?

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Yes. In the southwest region, they're endangered because they're limited to very tiny populations in LaSalle and Windsor. There's a declining and limited population. Wainfleet Bog near Port Colborne has another small population. The next population you get to is the Bruce Peninsula, then the eastern shores of Georgian Bay and a handful of the islands.

It's the eastern shores of Georgian Bay that still have relatively strong populations in terms of when you compare that with other populations. When you look at Wainfleet, when you look at Windsor and LaSalle, those populations are in very, very rough shape.

The Bruce Peninsula: Because there is still quite a bit of natural area, it's hoped that they are maybe more hidden than rare, but there is more development happening, there are more roads and road mortality, and the

habitat might not be quite as conducive to strong populations as it is along the eastern shores of Georgian Bay.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Yes, like I say, we've been up there for about 10 years now and never even heard a rattle where we are. The farmers around us say, "They're here," and they hate them, because I guess one or two of them gets bitten once in a while.

Like I say, I just haven't seen any, and it's surprising to me that if there's supposed to be a population in the Bruce—

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** They were heavily impacted by persecution for many years. Even within some of the parks, they were killed at campsites etc. Now it's a game of catch-up to try to pull back what we had done wrong in the past.

My little piece on Massasauga rattlesnakes: A lot of people fear them, but the last person who died from a Massasauga rattlesnake bite was in the 1940s. They didn't seek medical attention. When I do my talks, I always say, if you looked at the stats on how many people have died from a dog bite in that same period of time, it would be much higher, but we don't put a bounty on or fear dogs in the same way and kill every dog just in case it might kill us.

In terms of toxicity in venom, they're very low on the spectrum.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Yes, and I should qualify—

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** You've got five seconds left.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** —that farmers don't kill them now, but they really don't like them.

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** Cool. Thanks.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Thank you, Mr. Gillingwater. That concludes the time for this interview. You may step down. We will consider the concurrence following all of the interviews today.

**Mr. Scott Gillingwater:** All right. Thank you very much.

MR. WILLIAM EDMUND CLARK

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party and third party: William Edmund Clark, intended appointee as member and chair, Liquor Control Board of Ontario.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Our next intended appointee today is Mr. William Edmund Clark. Please come forward and take your seat at the table, Mr. Clark. Welcome, and thank you very much for being here this morning.

You may begin with a brief statement if you wish. Members of each party will then have 10 minutes to ask you questions. Any time you use for your statement will be deducted from the government's time for questions. When that time does come up, it will be the government that will begin questions.

Welcome, Mr. Clark. You have 10 minutes.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Thank you very much. Let me begin by expressing my thanks to you and all the members of the committee for this opportunity to be with you today. I have a few short remarks to kick things off, and then I look forward to answering your questions as best I can.

I'd like to start by saying that I feel immensely fortunate for having had the opportunity to give back to the province in both my pro bono roles, initially as chair of the advisory council on government assets and then as business adviser to the Premier.

At all times I've been keenly aware of the boundaries of my role: to advise and help implement but not to decide. The responsibility to decide and to act falls to the government, the cabinet and the elected members of the Legislature.

I continue to admire and respect the willingness of so many people—obviously the people in this room—to endure the sacrifices necessary to carry out a political career.

During this time I have worked on a variety of issues. Initially I was involved in taking Hydro One public while maintaining the government as the largest shareholder. As part of that, I helped to negotiate the related labour contracts.

I produced a report on eHealth, outlining the steps we should take to move more rapidly in this area, both to improve patient experience and outcomes but also to lower costs.

Recently I had the opportunity to help support the rebirth of Stelco in a manner which saved 2,500 jobs and provided assurances to more than 10,000 pensioners. While this was often a difficult task, extending over a period of over two years, it was also immensely satisfying.

Currently I am working with the city of Toronto to see whether we can follow up our first-round victory of being one of the top 20 cities on Amazon's list for its new headquarters to get on the final shortlist. Our success so far, as the only non-American city and one of the few to provide no special incentives, has brought the attractiveness of Ontario for knowledge-based companies to world attention.

I have provided advice on how to use public-owned lands to create more affordable housing, a project near to my heart given my significant personal philanthropic support in this area.

Not directly related to my government roles, I helped spearhead the funding of the Vector Institute, a unique coming-together of the two levels of government in the private sector. I now chair its board. We have recently brought home a great Canadian, Garth Gibson, to be its CEO.

Let me now turn to the alcoholic beverage sector. As you are aware, our panel tried to address a number of issues. We had a beer distribution system which was an uneven playing field. Craft brewers had only a 1.2% share in the Beer Store. In the wine sector, few producers had competitive advantages in having their own stores. We tried to address these issues with a set of reforms.

We also concluded that the government should not privatize the LCBO but work to improve it. The main focus should be to improve access and convenience for the consumer. We renegotiated the agreement with the Beer Store to provide better governance and ensure fair treatment for all producers. We opened up the sale of beer and wine to grocery stores. This expanded choice for the consumers but retained the economic advantages of the LCBO.

The results have been encouraging. Today, beer and cider are carried in over 230 grocery stores across the province, and of those, 70 are also selling wine. Eventually up to 450 grocery stores will be authorized to sell beer and cider. Of those, 300 will also be able to sell wine, either in the store or in boutiques located inside the store.

Our craft brewers are doing very well in this new channel, achieving a market share of about 25%. In the Beer Store, the number of craft brewers has more than tripled since the reforms were introduced.

Total VQA wine sales have grown by almost 10% in this year through the LCBO and the grocery stores, capturing almost half of the sales in the new grocery channel.

In accepting the opportunity to chair the LCBO, I look forward to continuing to work with the management to drive forward these changes and to further improve the availability of their products to the public by improving the e-commerce capability of the LCBO.

**0940**

I look forward to helping launch the cannabis corporation. The board of the cannabis corporation reports to the board of the LCBO. In doing so, I want to make sure that we do the launch in a careful and prudent way. I could provide more details on my views on both these topics, but we'll wait to hear your questions as a way of doing so.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Thank you very much, Mr. Clark. We'll now begin with the government side. Mr. Rinaldi, you have four minutes and 30 seconds.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Thank you, Chair. I probably don't need them, but I'll try my best.

Thanks very much for being here. Thank you for your commitment to the province of Ontario and all the work that you've done.

Just a quick question, maybe. If you can elaborate—I know you touched on a part of this. If you become chair, do you see any specific things that you want to see done differently?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Sorry, any specific—

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Any specific things that—

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** —I would like to see happen?

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Yes.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** What I've sort of pointed out—first off, I'm going to have to say that I'm kind of a customer-satisfaction nut. That's how I built Canada Trust, and TD bought us to get our business model. We won J.D. Power every year as the best

customer service, and that translated into one of the best shareholder values in banking in the world, so I really believe in that model.

I have to say, I can remember the days when you had to go into the store and fill out the piece of paper, and you had a wall—

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** I remember that.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** The world has changed enormously. I have to say, I'm impressed with the customer service that I get now in my LCBO visits. It's not just good service, but as in all these channels, it's evolved into good advice and service. So if you're lost—it may not just be a seventies moment that you're having; you may actually not know what you want to do—they have someone there to help you.

I think the big change that's coming for every retailer in the world is e-commerce. That's clearly the consumers voting with their feet. If you take a look at the battles that are going on between Walmart—and Amazon is in this area. The thing that we did in the bank was integrate these channels, and not see them as competitive but see them as complementary. Right now, if you read the literature, what's interesting is that Walmart is now seen as having the competitive advantage because it does have stores. And so by integrating e-commerce with their stores, that's going to put a challenge on Amazon that will be hard for them to meet. I think working your way through that, having done it in my career once before, would be probably one area.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Great. Thank you so much.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Mr. Qaadri.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** Thank you very much, Mr. Clark, for delineating, first of all, your extraordinary portfolio of contributions, and obviously your well-earned Order of Ontario there.

I would just ask: Will you, obviously, of course, in your capacity with your application today, also be overseeing the whole cannabis portfolio? If you might share some of your thoughts on how that will evolve.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Right. The board of the cannabis corporation reports to the board of the LCBO. It's a little awkward structure, but that's the structure. So I think it de facto means that the chair of that board has to work closely with the chair of the LCBO. My attitude on this is that you have to step back and say, "Why is the government of Canada doing this and decriminalizing it?" I think it starts with a very simple proposition: that we have a significant portion of our population that's now taking a drug that's not tested, that they don't know what it is, actually, and how much they're getting, and they're buying from people who are breaking the law. When a significant portion of your population does that, that's a dangerous situation.

You're not coming at this to try to encourage more people to take cannabis; you're trying to come at this to make sure that you have a controlled substance, that the people know what they're getting when they buy it, and they can buy it in a perfectly legal way.

I think, again, what will happen in that is the government has decided to start off modestly, which I think is

the right thing to do, because I think we're going to learn how to do this. We don't know how to do it right now.

My own bet—but I could certainly turn out to be wrong—is that you will find that e-commerce is dramatically more important in this sector. It's an easy product to deliver to the house; it's already being delivered that way with medical marijuana, so I think the number of stores that we will actually have will be more limited than people think.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Thank you, Mr. Clark. Time has expired.

We'll now turn the questioning over to the opposition. Mr. Oosterhoff, please.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Thank you very much, Mr. Clark, for taking the time to come before the committee today. I do have a few questions.

You've spent a lot of time in Liberal backrooms. Would it be fair to say that you're a Liberal insider?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** I carefully avoid being involved in political discussions. I certainly have never been in a Liberal backroom, so I've made the distinction all the way—

*Interjections.*

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Order, please.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** As you know, our asset council had a minister of the previous Conservative government.

I've always viewed my work as a non-partisan activity, trying to recognize, as I say, that the government of the day has to make the decisions to do what it wants to do and, therefore, you have to take into account what their views are. But I have not been involved in politics.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Okay. So you would, then, not consider this appointment to be a patronage appointment or any type of—

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** No, I don't think so. As you know, I've done all of my work for free. I've never submitted an expense account to the government in three years. What the patronage benefit to me of this would be—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** I get to ask the questions.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Order, please.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** I don't know what the patronage benefit for me would be to do this. I'm not doing it for that; I'm doing it because I did study the LCBO and I have views on how the LCBO could—

*Interjection.*

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Order, please.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** —could work. I know the management team well, obviously, through my previous work. I think we have a good relationship. They rely on me for business judgment, and that's the role I'll play.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** One of your statements about overseeing the privatization of Hydro One and being actively involved with that: When you advised Premier Wynne to sell Hydro One, I'm assuming you thought that

was a good idea at the time. Do you stand by that advice today?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** So, just again, what we ended up, the panel—which had NDP members, Conservative members, Liberal members and people like myself who are businesspeople—we ended up saying, “Why don’t you come down to between 40% and 50% and hold that 40%?”

Yes, today I think that we’ve actually proven out that Hydro One is clearly operating efficiently. Even the FAO reports acknowledge that. That has resulted in lower prices to the consumer. So I think this has been an all-around win.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** So you’re saying that that sell-off has resulted in lower prices, even as—

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Well, there’s no question about that. The OEB is clear on that. If you take a look at what the 100% Hydro One asked for in price increases and what, having had your government broaden the ownership in Hydro One—it asked for about 40% less of an increase, so very significant. Again, as I say, the FAO acknowledges, too, that when you get private involvement, you’re probably going to get operating costs that will be saved and passed on. The good savings then get passed on to the consumer.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Maybe I’ll take the questioning in a slightly different line. OPSEU president Smokey Thomas said that your appointment scared the bejeepers out of him. Should the rest of Ontarians be concerned?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** I think Smokey’s comment, as much as I got it, is that he’s convinced that I’m now going to turn around and try to broaden the ownership in the LCBO. When we were doing our report, there were a lot of people that were arguing for that. I think that’s a mistake.

What was interesting is: What was the challenge with the LCBO? If you compare it to alcohol regimes in the other provinces, there are three things you can look at. You can look at: What’s the price to the consumer? What’s the revenue to the government? What’s the availability of the product? Some provinces—and Alberta would be an example—opted to maximize availability, at the cost of money to the province and higher prices for the consumer.

We looked at that and said that there were ways of increasing availability without affecting those two. That’s why we ended up with the models that keep it as a public entity and extend it in grocery stores. If I was writing the report today, I’d say, “Wow, that’s an even stronger argument,” because what e-commerce does is give you a chance to really—and I think this is where the LCBO is going—you can have availability to the consumer of any wine they want in the world.

0950

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** So—

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** If I can just finish my sentence here—critical to how you can do that is the dominance and buying power of the LCBO. There’s nobody, other than Costco, that buys as much wine and

spirits around the world. Therefore, you have the logistics.

I would say my that challenge to the LCBO would be, “You should have the best website in the world, Ontario should have the most convenience of access to world product—and that flows, actually, ironically, out of the fact that you’re a 100%-government-owned entity.” So I think the decision, in retrospect, was a much better decision, probably, than we knew at the time that we were making it.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** I appreciate the response. I just want to have a clear answer: As head of the LCBO, you will not advocate for the privatization of the LCBO.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Absolutely not. I’d argue for the counter.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Great. Perfect.

I haven’t called you this, but others have called you Premier Wynne’s go-to guy on government assets. A brief summary includes being appointed to lead the council on government assets, a council proposal on the partial privatization of Hydro One, still serving as Premier Wynne’s financial adviser, the efforts to attract Amazon here to Toronto and now LCBO chair. You have a very impressive resumé.

I guess my question is: Are there any other people out there who the Liberals trust to do their work?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** I think there are lots of people. If you take a look—and I’m a big believer in the role of government. I particularly believe that in a knowledge economy, the government actually is an important agent. But when it comes to interacting with the private sector, in general, there are not as many people in the government who have experience.

I was picked by Barron’s as one of the top 30 CEOs in the world in all businesses. I was picked by the Harvard Business School as among the top 100 business leaders in the world in all businesses. I have a bit of experience. When I ran TD, we had \$1 trillion in assets and were the only bank in 2008 to keep our AAA rating. So I’ve been around; I’ve seen the experiences.

I think if you take Stelco, and if you were going to ask Bill Ferguson or Gary Howe, the heads of the two unions with which we dealt, did they like having Ed Clark at the table, I think their answer would be, yes, they did.

It’s been an enormously rewarding chance to bring a 35-year business career to help the government implement its programs.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** Sir, I just want to make sure that my colleague has a chance to ask questions. Thank you.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Mr. Pettapiece.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Thank you, Mr. Clark. I want to get back to a statement you just made about hydro rates. You say that hydro has gone down. Is that correct? Is that what I heard?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** What happened was—this is an odd world, where costs are going up. But the increase in cost that Hydro One, as 100%-owned, asked the OEB for and the increase in costs which then, when

there were public shareholders in Hydro One—the increase was about 40% less in the second case.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Okay, then can you explain why that's not reflected on my hydro bill?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Sorry?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Can you explain why that's not reflected, other than the 25% and all these discounts that the government has proposed—can you explain why that has not ever appeared on my hydro bill?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Why doesn't it feel that way to you?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** No.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Yes, to the consumer. I perfectly understand the sensitivity—

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Then how can you sit there and say that rates have been lowered or that costs have been lowered when we're not seeing that in our hydro bills?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** No, because I think that—

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Excuse me. Can we just bring back the questioning to the reason why Mr. Clark is here today, which is for appointment as chair of the LCBO?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** No, I understand that, but he brought that up, Chair. I'm just questioning him. When he brought that up, he said the costs went down. Why hasn't that reflected—

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** I'm happy to explain. In this period, 2015 to 2018, of 100%-owned Hydro One, there was going to be \$900 million of increases in costs. You can get into why the costs were going up, but the costs were expected to go up on electricity bills by \$900 million, of which Hydro One was responsible for \$374 million of that increase.

When you broadened the ownership, the new management team said, "We can find cost savings, so we don't need \$374 million. We need \$225 million, or a reduction of \$149 million from what it was previously." So they changed the application and said, "We're going to ask for less."

But to the consumer, and I get it, the consumer says, "They still went up."

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Thank you, Mr. Clark. That concludes the time given to the opposition to ask questions.

We'll now move it over to Mr. Gates. You have 10 minutes.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thank you very much, Chair. I'll be talking about hydro and I'll expect to get my questions out.

Mr. Clark, did you apply for this position at the LCBO or did the government approach you to assume the role?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** No, I actually called them and said, "I know that you're trying to figure out who to put in." I have to balance—I do have quite a few things on the go. I talked it over with my family and then called them up and said, "If you can get someone, great.

But if you would be interested, I would put my hat in the ring."

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I appreciate that.

In your previous role with the current government, you encouraged the privatization or leveraging of government assets. In your role at the LCBO, do you envision more private sales on top of what you've already spelled out in your previous report for the Premier's Advisory Council on Government Assets?

Because I have lots of questions, I'd just like a yes or a no.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** No. The answer is I do not believe that you should privatize the LCBO.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Okay. I'm going to take you to some of things that have happened in the past with you.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Well, we could be here all day. I hope you have a lot of time. When you get to be my age, there's a lot of—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I could certainly spend more time with you, that's for sure.

I would like to remind the witness that in your first report on Hydro One, you recommended that we keep the transmission system in public hands, only for you to call for a complete privatization a few months later. It's clear to me that plans do change. Are you sure you don't plan on changing your mind regarding more privatization of liquor sales?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** As I indicated to you, if you had asked me when we gave the original thing, "Do I feel stronger about that today?", the answer is yes. I've embedded it into pure industrial logic. The LCBO is in a unique position in the world because, in a sense, it's 100% government-owned. It has therefore this huge buying power and therefore it can think about doing something in the e-commerce space that can't be done by any other company. I think what you'll find is, over time, there will be an evolution in Canada where the LCBO represents the go-to place for people to buy their alcoholic beverages.

This is a tremendous asset. I'm a businessman. Why do you throw away a competitive advantage?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I don't know, but you did it with hydro.

I would like to read a quote from the witness from May 19, 2015:

"So, do I believe this company with a diluted ownership of the government will be better for the customer? Absolutely without question because it will be run better and when it's run better, its costs are less and those costs are automatically by law passed on to the ratepayers," Clark said. "So why is that not a good thing to have lower rates?"

The witness promised lower rates and a better run company, and yet the Hydro One distribution arm is currently seeking a 20% rate increase and continues to hold the Ontario Energy Board's absolute lowest rating for efficiency more than two years after privatization.

The CEO of Hydro One now makes six times the salary of the previous CEO: \$4.3 million. Hydro One is

also about to put the Ontario government back in the coal business thanks to a \$6-billion purchase, which has exposed Ontario ratepayers to new cost risks.

According to the recent report from the FAO, the government's own poll showed that over 80% of the province opposed the sell-off of Hydro One. Do you believe that 80% of the province was wrong and that you are right?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** I don't know whether you want me to comment.

Just a couple of little points to bear in mind: I think the FAO report was crystal clear that the acquisition of Avista in the United States will have no impact on hydro rates in Ontario. So you can go question them on why they have that view, but it is.

I think you're also aware that in terms of executive compensation, the OEB disallowed \$15 million of executive compensation costs and so did what I think is your job, as you have to say there.

As I've already explained, no, hydro rates are not falling, no, electricity rates in Ontario are not falling, other than as a result of the government's program; but the growth in those rates is substantially less than it would have been if we had continued with 100% ownership.

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**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** I'm just going to remind Mr. Gates that the questions that are asked here today really should be related to the appointment of Mr. Clark to the LCBO.

So you can ask the question—but just really how it relates to the actual appointment. I'd really appreciate that.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Well, I hope you stopped my clock, because I have some other questions.

The reality is that he is being appointed to the LCBO through Hydro One. They are certainly connected, because he's going to be making decisions on the LCBO—whether it's privatization or whether it's public ownership.

I believe these questions are fair, balanced and certainly reasonable—

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Fair enough. Just bring them back to the appointment. That's great. Thank you.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I think they relate.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** You can continue, Mr. Gates.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** People in the province are struggling with their hydro rates. I have constituents who come to my office—

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Point of order.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Sorry, Mr. Gates.

Mr. Crack?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** Mr. Clark is here with reference to being the proposed chair of the LCBO. I ask that you question whether or not Hydro One has any relation,

given the fact that he was not the chair of Hydro One at that time.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** As I said earlier to Mr. Gates, he can ask the questions as long as it relates directly to the reason why we have Mr. Clark here today, which is for the appointment as chair of the LCBO. So if the questions can please bring that back to why we're here today.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm going to respond to you—because they're going to stay on exactly where they are, because him being part of Hydro One and privatizing Hydro One, with your government, reflects exactly who should be chairing the LCBO. They're together. You can't just say, "Well, Mr. Clark was this way when he was at Hydro One, and he's going to be this way with the LCBO." It doesn't work that way.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** He wasn't the chair of Hydro One.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Let me finish, sir. I let you finish.

In my opinion, these questions are fair, reasonable. This is the first time I've ever had the opportunity to even meet this Mr. Clark or even talk to him. I think these are fair questions. I think he's the guy who has to defend his record on what he did here.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** So long as we tie it back to the appointment.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'll tie it back somehow to—

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** We can continue, Mr. Gates.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I don't want to see what happened to hydro happen to the LCBO. So I'll finish my question.

I have constituents in my office who see me at local events and tell me that sometimes they have to choose—and think about this, Mr. Clark, because I know you have friends and family who might not face the same challenges that my friends and family do—between paying their hydro bills and paying their rent or buying groceries. Seniors, single parents, hospitals—I spend a lot of time in the hospitals—municipalities, recreation facilities are all struggling to pay for their hydro rates. The privatization will continue to make it worse. Shareholders are there for one reason. They're there to make money; make no mistake about it.

Do you regret your recommendation to the government to sell off Hydro One? We owned it. The people in the province of Ontario said, "No, don't sell it." You decided that this is a good thing for the province of Ontario.

I worked for General Motors. I've met with them a number of times. Their biggest concern is the cost of hydro—every manufacturer I talk to, cost of hydro; small business, cost of hydro. Everybody is suffering from that decision. You can agree with me or you can disagree with me, but I think the proof is in the pudding. We are hurting in the province of Ontario because of that decision. We should buy it back.

You can answer it whatever way you want.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** How much time have I got left?

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** You have three minutes.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Perfect. I'm going to ask you another question, because this is interesting to me, too.

Don't worry; I've got more. I thought he'd answer that a little differently.

I'm going to be honest here. The privatization of hydro started under the Conservative government and Mike Harris; make no mistake about it. In the last election, in the platform of the Conservative government, they wanted to sell 100% of Hydro One.

Did you ever have any conversation with the Conservative government on selling Hydro One—either under the Harris government or with Tim Hudak as the leader?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** No.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Never? So they did that all on their own? They made that decision on their own without your help?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** They didn't ask me.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** My last question is regarding the legalization—certainly, the Liberals will like this. My last question is regarding the legalization of the sale of recreational cannabis. The government has decided to allow the LCBO to administrate the sale and distribution of legal cannabis. Recently, it was reported that Shopify will handle all of the online cannabis sales. Are you able to shed light on this decision, and was there an RFP issued?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Yes. I'd say that the structure between the cannabis corporation and the LCBO is that, effectively, the LCBO is providing the backroom so that we're not duplicating the costs of building out how to open up stores, run the systems, IT. But the decision-making of what to do is going to be in the cannabis corporation. It's going to have a separate board and a separate president. Their role will be essentially to implement the policy, to set the price, to make the core business decisions, and they will be separate from the LCBO.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thank you. I've got one last question. I think this is really a fair and balanced question as well. Do you know, in your heart, that Ontario is hurting by the sell-off of Hydro One?

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Since I think that's factually incorrect, no, I don't.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Well, I guess we can certainly disagree on that one.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Right.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Thank you, Mr. Gates. That concludes the time allocated for this interview. You may step down. Thank you very much, Mr. Clark.

**Mr. William Edmund Clark:** Thank you.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** We will now consider the concurrence for Mr. Scott Gillingwater, nominated as member, Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario. Would someone please move the concurrence? Mr. Qaadri.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Scott Gillingwater, nominated as member, Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

We will now consider the concurrence for Mr. William Edmund Clark.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Chair, can we have a recorded vote please? On the next one, a recorded vote?

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** There has been a request for a recorded vote. That's fine.

We will now consider the concurrence for Mr. William Edmund Clark, nominated as member and chair, Liquor Control Board of Ontario. Would someone please move the concurrence? Mr. Qaadri.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I move concurrence in the intended appointment of William Edmund Clark, nominated as member and chair, Liquor Control Board of Ontario.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** Any discussion? All those in favour, please raise your hand.

#### Ayes

Anderson, Crack, Kiwala, Qaadri, Rinaldi.

#### Nays

Gates.

**The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins):** The motion is carried. Congratulations, Mr. Clark.

Those are all the intended appointments for today. We are adjourned until next Tuesday. Thank you very much.

*The committee adjourned at 1008.*







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Mr. Sam Oosterhoff (Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook PC)

Mr. Randy Pettapiece (Perth–Wellington PC)

Mr. Shafiq Qadri (Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord L)

Ms. Daiene Vernile (Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre L)

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