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Mercredi
18 juillet 2018

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO**

Wednesday 18 July 2018

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mercredi 18 juillet 2018

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Let us pray.
Prayers.

**NOTICES OF REASONED
AMENDMENTS**

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 71(c), the member for Scarborough–Guildwood and the member for Toronto–Danforth have filed with the Clerk reasoned amendments to the motion for second reading of Bill 2, An Act respecting Hydro One Limited, the termination of the White Pines Wind Project and the labour disputes between York University and Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 3903. The order for second reading of Bill 2 may therefore not be called today.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

Resuming the debate adjourned on July 17, 2018, on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Further debate? I recognize the member for Barrie–Innisfil.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and congratulations again on being the Speaker of the House.

I just want to recognize that I will be splitting my time with the member for Mississauga Centre.

I'd like to start today by taking a moment to thank the communities of Innisfil and Barrie for honouring me with the opportunity to serve their needs in this House. I'm here as an extension of the proud history of our communities and of the hope that they have in a better Ontario that serves the needs of all its citizens.

If you will allow me to indulge, Mr. Speaker, I would like to reflect on a few of the key elements that make our little corner of our province special and why we are so excited by the opportunities presented by the speech from the throne that we heard here last Thursday.

Part of an Aboriginal transportation route many years ago, our area has long been a crossroads of the winds of history, playing an important role in the defence of Canada during the War of 1812 and helping thwart the American attempt to invade Upper Canada from northern

Michigan. Our communities sat as one of the final destinations for the Underground Railroad, providing equality of opportunity, even then, for those fleeing tyranny. From those proud beginnings, Barrie and Innisfil have opened their arms to provide a welcoming home to those seeking hope and change.

I am humbled to follow in the footsteps of MPPs like Julia Munro, who holds tenure as the longest-serving female MPP in this House. It is an honour now to represent half of her former riding, and I am lucky to count her as one of my mentors and a friend.

Lady Munro, as she is more commonly known by her peers, keeps a framed copy of the Magna Carta behind her office desk, reminding her that the government is a contract with the people it represents. It is that contract that I want to focus on today, Mr. Speaker—on the idea of a government for the people, and how we can now realize the hope and the change that all Ontarians so dearly yearn for. Hope and change, Mr. Speaker—change, and that hope is here again.

We have seen the impact of 15 years of Liberal mismanagement. That impact is seen not only in the polling results for the now third party, but in the shameful impact that they have left on the legacy and dreams of Ontarians—dreams like those of Targol Asgari from my riding. Targol opened Bagel World in December 2015. She sold fresh bagels, breads and pastries as well as full breakfast menus and lunch. She got excellent reviews on TripAdvisor and became not only a local shop but a community hub where people laughed and where they had a sense of community that is the core of our community and where we thrive.

Bagel World was where my friend Melissa Varsava would bring her children, William and Charlotte, to break bread with her mom and her friends, where she could have adult conversations.

Sadly to say, Bagel World is now closed. Targol's dream was shattered by the onerous economic pressures from the previous Liberal regime. Choked by higher taxes and endless red tape, her efforts were snuffed out by the regime that forgot that the economy is built through the efforts of folks like Targol across this province.

But with change comes hope. My friend Chris Nelson is the owner of the Ol' West Wing, a restaurant in Barrie. The restaurant seats 100 and has 15 employees. Under the previous government, operating costs were high for Chris, who was always on the razor's edge. He faced taxes upon taxes, with regulatory burdens that were grinding his business down. He shared with me that if

this government had not been formed, he would have gone to his landlord for a quick exit. He sees hope again, Mr. Speaker, and the hope has led him to apply to extend his business to add a patio—an additional 30 guests.

Barrie–Innisfil is full of these kinds of stories of hope that a brighter future can be built for all Ontarians. Small businesses represent 95% of employers in Ontario, and we must always remember that it is in stories like these that we see the future direction of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be part of a government that understands that it stands for the people. A government for the people believes that we shouldn't mortgage the future for the present, that we don't need to pit people against each other for political expediency. A government for the people equates to the hope that all Ontarians can have equality of opportunity.

I was humbled to see that full display earlier this year, the full display of those who were knocking on doors with me in the rain, the hail, the snow and the sleet, with my friends like Gwen Deluce, Viola and Doug Jure, and Myra Ringhofer.

Myra, a mother of two young children, reminds me every day, and inspires me every day, to focus on creating opportunities for our youngest residents, opportunities like those found in the ideaLAB in the Innisfil libraries, where engineering, chemistry and computer science are the focus of the centre. They are fused with music, art and creativity to develop the fusion of skills necessary to develop our new economy.

0910

When we see a government for the people, we see an understanding that provides opportunity for Myra's family—not takes it away, but provides opportunity—so that Ontarians can contribute for many years and they can get ahead through their hard work. A government for the people understands that delivering quality health care does not come at the expense of education. A responsible government delivers on its promises to move forward, step by step, towards the ideas of accountability and honesty that have been lacking over the past 15 years.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my campaign chair, Mat Varsava, who is with us in the gallery today. His grandparents immigrated legally here from Slovakia in 1935, not too long before Czechoslovakia fell under the Nazis.

My family, too, immigrated to Canada. I was just four years old when my grandparents left the Soviet Union, taking me first to Cuba and then to Barrie where we arrived as refugees. They chose Barrie because a fellow they met in Cuba, Ken McKenna, told them he had travelled all over Canada and he was sure that there is no better place to live than where I live today. Every day since then, for over 25 years, Barrie has been my home, my Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this community has given so much of itself to my family and me. Barrie and Innisfil have a proud history of fostering equality of opportunity for people of all backgrounds. I am humbled and inspired every day to represent them here in this esteemed House,

and I thank them for the opportunity to serve and be a member of a government for the people.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you. Please be seated. Now I'm going to turn it over to the member from Mississauga Centre.

M^{me} Natalia Kusendova: Merci, monsieur le Président et merci à tous pour cet accueil chaleureux. Monsieur le Président, félicitations pour votre nomination au siège. Je suis honorée par la foi que mes électeurs m'ont confiée en m'élisant comme première députée de la circonscription nouvellement formée de Mississauga-Centre. Je voudrais également féliciter tous les députés nouvellement élus et réélus de cette Assemblée.

It is truly an honour and a privilege to rise today and address this assembly for the very first time as the member of provincial Parliament for the new riding of Mississauga Centre. Though some may say that my journey to this role may have seemed improbable, on June 7, constituents of Mississauga Centre spoke loud and clear. They elected someone who lives in their riding and who respects and understands its religious, ethnic and cultural diversity; someone who, like so many of them, immigrated to Canada and appreciates the unique challenges that new Canadians face; someone who does not shy away from hard work and accountability for her words and actions.

I want them to know that I do not take this responsibility lightly and that I will work hard each and every single day to deliver on what they sent me here to do. As I door-knocked in my riding, my constituents made it clear to me that their concerns were about the rising costs of hydro, hallway health care, wasteful spending and the carbon tax. The message was clear: Ontarians were ready for change. This is why I am so proud to be a member of a government that is acting quickly to keep our word to the people of Ontario.

As I mentioned earlier, I am proud to represent one of the most multi-ethnic ridings in Ontario. In fact, there are over 100 languages spoken in my riding, of which I am proud to speak five. As someone who grew up and spent my formative years in my riding, I was fortunate to benefit from the diverse mosaic of cultures, religions, languages, and people from all over the world and different walks of life, all of which have shaped the person I am today.

I, myself, am of Polish, Czech and Slovak heritage, and 100% Canadian and proud. Like many of my constituents, my family and I had to work hard to build our lives here, and we understand the value of the taxpayer dollar. Respecting your hard work will always be of the greatest importance to me.

My parents overcame adversity and sacrificed more than I could ever know to bring our family to Canada. When I was born, Europe was in the process of overthrowing a Communist regime that had crushed freedom and limited opportunity for its people. My parents had a difficult and life-changing decision to make. In fact, the hardship of immigration was so difficult that it ultimately

ended their marriage. However, Canada remained a beacon of hope for me, my younger brother and my mom.

As a single mother, my mom raised two very energetic children while holding down several jobs and providing a loving and safe household. For me, the definition of hard work is one word: "motherhood." My mother instilled in me the idea of a lifelong dedication to a cause. My mother's cause was her family, and as a result, I was afforded the best opportunities possible. She not only helped me surpass all obstacles, but she taught me the values of hard work, personal responsibility and never giving up. She would always say, "Be careful how you make your bed because you will have to sleep in it." For her work and dedication and for believing in me, she has my heart and my eternal gratitude. Above all, it is for her and for the many hard-working Ontario mothers and fathers out there that we work.

While my mother influenced my sense of work ethic and dedication, it was my father's own vocation as a physician that inspired my path to health care. His influence and incredible intellect during my formative years would contribute to my passion for helping others. From an early age, I knew that I would dedicate my life to the service of others.

After completing two bachelor of science degrees, I became a registered nurse. As a nursing student, I spent close to 1,600 unpaid nursing hours working and learning at various hospitals in Toronto. Once I completed my studies, I started working as a staff RN in the emergency room of a local hospital and as a correctional nurse at a female correctional facility. It was at this time that I felt my calling to become politically involved.

Over the last few days, I have been listening intently to my colleagues bring up hallway health care. Although "hallway health care" has become the catchphrase we all recognize, the term that I believe is more appropriate is "hallway nursing." Nurses like me often are the first point of contact with our health care system for many patients. Nurses are the ones who spend 24/7 at the bedside, in the hallway, struggling to maintain a level of care that is dignified, professional and compassionate. I've said this many times during my campaign, and I would like to say it once again today: A hallway is not a place of work, and it definitely is not a place of healing.

Mr. Speaker, I will never forget one of my first shifts in the ER. It was as busy a night as any. The hospital was in code gridlock, and the staff was happy that we hadn't reached super gridlock yet. I was working in the ambulatory care centre of the ER that night. A young woman came in, about my age, 15 weeks pregnant. She was having cramps and bleeding. After taking her bloodwork and scheduling her for an ultrasound, due to the lack of beds we sent her back out into the waiting room, which is considered routine practice. Some time later, while still waiting for the ultrasound, her husband came in visibly distraught, asking us to check on his wife. At this point, it was clear that she was having a miscarriage. I began frantically looking into patient rooms, in my mind triaging who was the most stable at

that point and could be taken out so that we could move this young woman into a room. At this point, there wasn't even room in the hallway; that's what "code gridlock" means.

Time ran out. The young woman had miscarried in front of 30 strangers in a hospital waiting room. She was wheeled in simply too late. Mr. Speaker, I will never forget the look on her face and the way I felt at that moment. No one should ever have to experience such a tragedy. At the most vulnerable moment in any woman's life, not having that privacy and human dignity is simply devastating. It was at this moment that I truly understood how badly the previous Liberal government had failed all of us—the patients, their families, the front-line staff.

0920

Unfortunately, stories such as these are not unique or exceptional. They happen daily, as many of my colleagues can attest, hand in hand with hallway nursing across Ontario hospitals. The deplorable conditions I witnessed at work were demoralizing and heartbreaking. Our broken, failing Ontario health care system, a legacy of 15 years of Liberal devastation and mismanagement, is finally in the hands of a government that will work for the people.

It doesn't help that Ontario has the lowest RN-to-population ratio in Canada but among the highest administrators-per-bed ratios. It is estimated that our province has only 669 RNs per 100,000 people, compared to 828 RNs per 100,000 people across the rest of Canada. This equation is off balance.

I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize my colleagues present here today from the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, CEO Dr. Doris Grinspun and president Angela Cooper Brathwaite, who have been sounding the alarm to the former Liberal government about the escalating health care crisis for years. This alarm had fallen on deaf ears, but no longer. A new day has dawned in Ontario with the election of 76 Progressive Conservative MPPs, with Premier Doug Ford at the helm. Ending hallway medicine, or hallway nursing, I should say, was one of our party's top campaign commitments.

The throne speech reaffirmed our commitment to the people of Ontario, who have given our government a clear mandate to deliver real change for the people. The infusion of 15,000 new long-term-care beds over the next five years and an historic \$3.8-billion investment in mental health and addictions, including supportive housing, is just the beginning. These two very clear and deliverable commitments will help to ease the burden on our acute care institutions and will allow our patients to be treated in the proper settings with appropriate supports at an appropriate cost. This, in turn, will result in decreased wait times, bringing closer the end of hallway nursing.

I know that my colleagues across the aisle seem to be surprised that this government is actually doing exactly what we said we would do. For example, our government's announcement on the creation of an independent

financial commission of inquiry into Ontario's past spending and accounting practices is yet another promise made and promise kept. This decisive action will restore the public's trust and provide an honest and accurate picture of where our province stands financially. The people of Ontario deserve to know where their hard-earned taxpayer dollars are being spent.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my campaign team for their unwavering support and their countless hours of volunteer work that have made this moment possible. I am forever grateful to them—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. You may be seated. You ran out of time. Sorry about that.

All right. Now we're into questions and comments. I recognize the member from Sudbury.

Mr. Jamie West: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, my congratulations to the members from Barrie–Innisfil and Mississauga Centre. Congratulations to all the MPPs, as well—a very important time.

Also, because yesterday we had our swearing-in ceremony and photos, I really want to thank the staff, who were incredibly supportive of my family as we did a quick little tour, especially when we came here. Security was very accommodating and made us feel at home and was excellent. It was great, as the son of a working family, to see that sort of treatment.

I want to speak briefly about the member from Mississauga Centre's comments on hallway medicine. I share those concerns about hallway medicine, and I do agree that there are concerns with nursing. In fact, it isn't an issue with the front-line staff; the concern with hallway medicine is underfunding. The funding was frozen. It doesn't matter where you point the blame. At the end of the day, it has to do with funding hospitals effectively. You have to pay for the services we need, so I hope that we're joined in funding hospitals appropriately.

My own city this morning—I don't have the article with me; I apologize, Mr. Speaker—is talking about 50 layoffs in my hospital. One year ago I was elected as the candidate in the riding of Sudbury, and we had a press conference because of the amount of overcrowding and the over 100% capacity in our hospital. A year later, I'm not sure I can get the media to show up at a press conference for this, because overcrowding in Sudbury has become so normal that it's not news anymore. That's unfortunate, and that's a remark on the government—the government that we all sit on—and something we absolutely have to address.

I'd also like to speak about the throne speech. I received a message this morning that I hastily had to scribble out here. I don't have permission to use her name because I haven't asked for it yet. It says:

"I'm writing you as a social worker here in Sudbury, but mainly as a concerned parent as a transgender child.

"My child has faced harassment and bullying at school that was so extreme that he became suicidal and we had to home-school him.

"The recent announcement that the Ontario government is reverting to the 20-year-old sex ed curriculum is incredibly troubling to me.

"School was already an unsafe space for my child and I worry that it will become even less safe for him and other LGBTQ+ kids"—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. I'm sorry, you ran out of time. It goes fast.

We're back into questions and comments. I'm going recognize the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte.

Mr. Doug Downey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounds like a game show. I love it.

I want to first congratulate my colleague from Barrie–Innisfil, who is not only my almost-seatmate here in the House, but we adjoin ridings in Barrie. So I know first-hand the incredible work that she's doing already. Also, congratulations to the member from Mississauga Centre. Both spoke of the opportunity in Ontario and the reasons people come to this great part of the world. And I think Ken was right: Barrie is the best place in the world.

It's troubling, though, because over the last 15 years, the previous government has squandered those opportunities. We hear about the closing of Bagel World because of high taxes and regulatory burden and all of these terrible things.

But I also want to note this hallway nursing—I couldn't agree more. Our Premier, Doug Ford, talked about talking to front-line workers. What I don't think the public knows is that we're not just talking to front-line workers; we've brought them into the House. They're here with real answers. The diversity within our caucus is unbelievable, and the diversity across the floor. It's not enough that we have a nurse who was on the front lines just a matter of months ago, but the Minister of Energy, Mr. Rickford, is also a nurse, and I suspect there are probably other similar experiences across the way.

I look forward to not just addressing all of the areas that have been squandered for the last 15 years with the Liberals, but doing it in a practical and reasonable way so that we can march forward and fix this province.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments? I recognize the member from Toronto–St. Paul's.

Ms. Jill Andrew: That's me. Thank you very much, Speaker. I would like to say congratulations to the members for Barrie–Innisfil and Mississauga Centre.

I direct my comment to the member from Barrie–Innisfil. As we speak of "our people," "the people" of Ontario, I just need us to remember that asylum seekers are our people. Black, Indigenous and racialized people who are discriminated against, carded, racially profiled, and killed by our police forces—or certain members of our police forces—are people as well.

We must also remember that our queer, our trans, our non-binary students are people as well. Standing here as an educator, as a proud student equity program adviser who used to work with the Toronto District School

Board, I have spoken to thousands of students who are queer and trans. They are people, and they deserve to be included in our Ontario. In order to include them, we've got to include them with curriculum, we've got to include them with human rights education, and we've got to include them with consent. And that is when we speak of "our people." We're all here.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: As always, it's an honour to be able to stand in this House on behalf of the fine constituents of Niagara West and respond to some of the fine contributions that were made this morning.

I wish to congratulate both the member for Barrie–Innisfil and the member for Mississauga Centre for their excellent inaugural addresses, given with such passion, with such care for their constituents, and with such vision for what Ontario can be: an Ontario that truly works for the people.

I have to say, it's incredible to see such strong young women stand in this House and speak about what they plan on doing for their constituents, what they plan on doing for this province. It's amazing to see these types of strong young women in the Ontario PC caucus, and I'm very proud to be a caucus member of theirs.

0930

I want to thank especially the member for Barrie–Innisfil for mentioning the history of her great constituency, the rich culture that has been lived there, and the rich community that there is as well.

I want to really touch base with the member from Mississauga Centre, because she brought to the fore the importance of listening to front-line workers. This is something that each and every one of us in this House has talked about at different times, but the Premier of this province, Mr. Doug Ford, is doing more than just talking about it, and the Minister of Health is doing more than just talking about it. I know that with the work of members such as the member from Mississauga Centre, we will be governing as a party, as a government that is truly listening to front-line workers, putting their best interests forward so that we can improve our health care system.

With the help of people such as the member from Mississauga Centre, who has served on the front lines and has front-line experience, we will be able to improve our education system, drive those efficiencies and make sure we're providing the best possible level of care that all our constituents deserve.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. Now back to the member from Mississauga Centre for final comment.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you to all my colleagues for your congratulations. It is truly an honour to be here today.

I would like to conclude by thanking once again my team of volunteers and my campaign staff. I will never forget the parents who came in with their toddlers to meet me and spend the day handing out flyers; or Dave,

our most senior volunteer, who at age 80 loved nothing more than to assemble hundreds of signs.

To the students, the first-time voters, friends and colleagues who came from as far as Windsor and Vancouver: I cannot find the words to express the level of gratitude that I feel.

I would also like to acknowledge those who didn't vote for me. I will work twice as hard to rebuild your trust in government. You are also my neighbours, and I am here for you. My door is and always will be open, and I look forward to working with you to bring positive change to Mississauga Centre.

I would like to end with a quote from Saint John Paul II, who has been an inspiration throughout my life: "The future starts today, not tomorrow." We have a unique opportunity today and every day to make life better for the people of Ontario. We won't let you down.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Ms. Suze Morrison: Aanii. Boozhoo. It is a great honour to rise and address this Legislature for the very first time.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Indigenous land that we are gathered on today. This area has a long history that predates colonial contact and is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe, the Huron-Wendat, the Métis and, most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River.

This land is also subject to the Dish With One Spoon wampum. The Dish represents what is now southern Ontario, from the Great Lakes to Quebec and from Lake Simcoe down into the United States. We all eat out of the same dish with only one spoon, and we all share a responsibility for ensuring that the dish is never empty. This includes taking care of the land and all of the creatures that we share it with. Importantly, there are no knives at this table, representing that we must always keep the peace.

I stand here today as a woman of mixed settler and Indigenous heritage, raised entirely in an urban setting. My family's history is scarred by multiple generations of foster care. The reality is, I may never be able to fill in the blank spaces on my family tree or point to a place on a map and say with confidence, "I come from there." I have struggled most of my life with how I identify, with what my responsibilities to my community are and how I carry the teachings that I've been given with humility and with grace.

I'd like to recognize the urban Indigenous communities across Ontario, and particularly the friendship centres that work every day to provide access to culture-based services to urban Indigenous people who live in towns, cities and rural areas across Ontario. It has been the urban community who has picked me up, given me teachings, given me a name and given me place in community.

I would like to remind all of my colleagues that we have a responsibility to do our work in a way that ad-

vances reconciliation and that works to address centuries of colonization and genocide.

I would also like to express my sincere disappointment that at no point during the throne speech was a land acknowledgement made, nor a single reference made to Indigenous people in this province.

If we are to do the work of this Legislature together in a good way, our work must be grounded in the government's responsibility to work respectfully with Indigenous nations and people in a way that upholds the treaties that we are all party to.

I'd like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your election as a Speaker of the House. I look forward to working with you in this Legislature as we all work to discuss the important issues facing the people of Ontario.

I'd also like to extend congratulations to all of my colleagues on their election to this chamber, especially those members who, like myself, make up the class of 2018, the largest group of newly elected MPPs in this Legislature's history.

I'd also like to recognize my leader, the leader of Her Majesty's official opposition, Andrea Horwath. I am so excited to serve with her in this place.

I look forward to serving my community alongside my fellow New Democrats, the largest opposition caucus in a generation.

Mr. Speaker, I'm humbled and I am honoured to be here. I'm joined in the gallery by some of my family and supporters. I'd like to thank my mom, Sue—hi, Mom—and my husband, Trevor, for their unwavering support and for helping me to believe that my voice mattered and that my voice could find a place in this room.

I'd also like to thank my campaign team, my volunteers and my supporters. I wouldn't be here without you. I'm joined by a few of them in the gallery: Ben Donato-Woodger, Jeff Slater, Tyler Johnson, Lester Brown, Colin Phillips, Fred Hahn, and a contingent from CUPE Ontario. There are a few people who couldn't be here today, and I would be remiss if I didn't thank them, including Angela Zhu, my campaign manager, for her fierce leadership, as well as Emma Beattie, who spent 16 hours a day with me throughout the campaign and, surprisingly, still likes me.

It's an extraordinary privilege to serve the people of Toronto Centre, and with 53% of the popular vote of my constituency, it is certainly a resounding mandate that they have given me.

On a lighter note, as an avid motorsport enthusiast and two-time women's autocross champion in southwestern Ontario, I can confidently say that winning off the track feels just about as good as winning on the track.

But in all seriousness, we made history in Toronto Centre, and I proudly stand here as the first New Democrat to represent this riding.

I'd also like to acknowledge my predecessor, Glen Murray, for his service to our community. I hope that he remains grounded in the work of decolonization as he addresses the challenges facing Alberta's energy sector.

My journey to this chamber has not been an easy one. I was born in a small town north of Parry Sound, where my earliest memories were of the little yellow school bus that we called home after we lost our house to a fire. My mom made the difficult decision to uproot our family to the heart of downtown Toronto, where she hoped to make a better life for us. She decided to go back to university as a mature student, as a single mother and with nothing behind her but a 10th grade education. I spent my formative years growing up in U of T's student family housing buildings, just a few blocks from here, up on Charles Street. Toronto Centre became my backyard, my teacher and a rich and diverse world for me to explore, growing up. But when I was 16, my mom's health began to deteriorate and our lives became a case study on what poverty looks like when amplified by disability.

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I started missing school to take my mom to doctors' appointments, working part-time jobs to support my family, and trying to keep my grades up because I knew that my one-way ticket out of poverty was through an education. But like many Ontarians, that education was not cheap. Saddled with rising tuition fees and massive student debt, I struggled to make it to the other side of my degree and into the workforce. But I persisted against every single barrier put in my place, because I knew that I couldn't let my family down.

A friend of mine, a poet, Najwa Zebian, once wrote, "These mountains that you are carrying, you were only supposed to climb." And while I have worked most of my life not to carry the mountains of my upbringing with me, I have picked up small stones along the way. I carry my lived experience with me in small pieces that ground me and remind me why I have dedicated my career to improving the lives of people in my community.

Throughout my career, I have worked to amplify the voices of marginalized and oppressed communities through health equity work and in the Indigenous non-profit sector, where I have had the incredible opportunity to work with communities and organizations across Ontario towards reconciliation. I've worked to help increase the representation of women in politics. I've worked to address racism in our public systems. And I've worked to address community safety in the wake of gun violence.

As a resident of Regent Park, I have seen first-hand the effects that gun violence has on our community. This time last year, my husband and I were struggling with the trauma of having witnessed a shooting in our neighbourhood. We were first on scene and performed CPR on Lemard Champagnie, a young man who had been gunned down in a drive-by shooting. He was pronounced dead later that evening in hospital. His death was not the first shooting last summer and it certainly was not the last.

Although Lemard was a stranger to me, his death affected me immensely. It was one of the leading reasons I decided to put my name on a ballot for the very first time in my life. But I watched as my community and I continued to suffer a lengthy summer of violence. I watched as government officials and community leaders

proceeded down a path of victim-blaming community members. And I watched as the public rhetoric centred on the tried-and-very-untrue narrative that the solution to gun violence sits solely on the shoulders of our policing and justice systems.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues: We know that the root cause of violence lies upstream in poverty. Violence claws its way out of our underfunded education systems and our schools that are in disrepair, out of crumbling infrastructure and decades-long housing wait-lists, and out of limited access to health supports, to social services, to community programming and to health care.

Police officers alone cannot do the work of social workers, mental health professionals or educators. They cannot address the need for new public housing, for affordable rent and neighbourhoods that are linked through community networks and investments. Policing alone cannot solve gun violence.

Mr. Speaker, while my professional experience, growing up in my riding and my reasons for seeking elected office touch on some of the unique histories and priority issues we are facing in Toronto Centre, I would be remiss if I didn't also share with my colleagues a more fulsome picture of my home riding, a place which many of you call home when you're away from your communities doing the work of this Legislature. Toronto Centre is home to many diverse neighbourhoods with their own rich history, culture and local flavours, including St. James Town, Cabbagetown, the Garden District, the Church-Wellesley neighbourhood, Regent Park, Moss Park, Corktown, the Yonge corridor, and parts of the Distillery District and St. Lawrence neighbourhoods, which I share with my colleague Chris Glover, the member for Spadina-Fort York.

Toronto Centre is home to 103,000 people, and my constituents speak over 122 languages. We're home to the largest Pride festival in Canada. We have the largest concentration of co-operative housing in the country, one of the largest continuous areas of Victorian houses in all of North America, in Cabbagetown, and Canada's first and largest social housing development project in my home in Regent Park. We're also home to the most densely populated neighbourhood in Canada, in St. James Town.

Housing is a critical issue in Toronto Centre. In Toronto, the average price for a one-bedroom apartment has eclipsed even Vancouver at \$2,020 a month. There are more people on a wait-list for subsidized housing than actually housed in units, and most of the co-ops in my riding are so overwhelmed that they have closed their wait-lists entirely.

When I was nine years old, my mom went on the wait-list for Toronto Community Housing, and I will tell you that she didn't get placed into a unit until after I had graduated university and moved in with my husband 15 years later. Even then, it was only because she was triaged to the top of the list after having spent six weeks in a shelter.

More and more, I hear how families are choosing to leave their homes to relocate to other parts of the province because the cost of housing here is simply unrealistic. One constituent I met over the campaign told me he would only leave his apartment feet first in a pine box, because he would never be able to afford to live anywhere else. The government's speech from the throne fails to reference this critical issue facing my riding, and as the MPP for Toronto Centre, I will work to ensure that this government takes this growing concern—not just in my riding, but across the GTA—seriously.

Toronto Centre is also home to the Church-Wellesley Village, which has served as a sanctuary, meeting place and culture hub for the LGBTQ2S community for decades. The Village brings together a community of artists, activists and leaders who have fought and continue to fight for rights to safety, to equitable access to public services and for self-expression. The 519 Community Centre in the Village provides services to new Canadians and refugees, to displaced young people and to individuals looking for community. Last week, I joined some of my colleagues, including our leader, Andrea Horwath, at the 519 to speak out against this government's plans to revert back to a 20-year-old health and physical education curriculum. Young people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirited, queer, questioning, intersex, pansexual, non-binary and asexual students, deserve to be affirmed and see themselves in our curriculum.

The queer community in the Church-Wellesley Village has also been a central part of the discussion on policing and addressing the issues of community violence. Queer folks, especially trans women of colour, are disproportionately at risk of gender-based and sexual violence. Mental health concerns, including rates of suicide, are high for this community, and access to mental health care, protection and community supports prove difficult and full of barriers.

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We have a responsibility to all people in Ontario, especially the marginalized communities, to build up health services to include mental health and to remove stigma and barriers to access and care.

As the MPP for Toronto Centre, I vow to work alongside my LGBTQ2S colleagues in the Legislature to advocate for this community.

Mr. Speaker, I humbly offer these comments as a small insight into the issues facing my riding of Toronto Centre, for my colleagues. I want you all to know that I will fight fiercely on these issues and many more during my tenure in this Legislature.

I stand here before all of you today as a survivor of intergenerational poverty, of precarious housing, gender-based violence, gun violence and colonization, and as a member of my community who will use my lived experience, my fire and my heart to fight for my community.

Thank you. Meegwetch.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): It's now time for questions and comments.

Mr. Dave Smith: My opposition colleague from Toronto Centre spoke passionately about her heritage, even though she said she wasn't able to fill in the blanks on her family tree. I'm sorry for that.

With her husband and her mother here in the gallery, it's easy to see that she will have the supports that she needs from her family to focus on making sure that she's able to work with everyone in this building.

She raised herself up from a life of poverty and is now here representing her riding. We may disagree on how we accomplish things, but it's obvious to me that my opposition colleague from Toronto Centre will be someone I will be able to work with.

She spoke about the dish never being empty. Our plan is to make sure that that dish is never empty for anyone in this great province of ours.

She spoke passionately about the costs of housing, and the struggles that people in her riding are having with access to housing. Mr. Speaker, this is exactly why we need to reduce hydro costs and why we need to scrap cap-and-trade, a cash-grab scheme that only makes everything more expensive for the people in Ontario.

I look forward to getting to know her better, and I hope—I truly hope—that she's willing to work alongside and with me to help all of us make life better for everybody in Ontario.

I thank you very much for standing up and putting yourself out like that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Miss Monique Taylor: It's definitely confusing, having the government sitting right beside you when the questions and comments come. I'm waiting for the other side to happen.

I would like to congratulate the member for Toronto Centre on a wonderful maiden speech and for truly putting your life out in public today—and the importance of what that means to others in our communities who do live in poverty, who do live with disabilities, who were not spoken of within the throne speech from the government. I hope that the government was listening to your speech today, because there was so much meaning behind it.

When we don't ensure that people have adequate housing and ensure that people have supports and services that we do need, this is when the police come into action. This is when we have mental health issues that aren't dealt with for families. You overcame those issues.

I would like to congratulate your mom, who is here with us today, and your husband. How proud they must be to have heard you speak today in the Legislature.

We have a lot of work to do in this province. We have to make sure that we have adequate housing, that we have adequate supports, and that when a person is disabled, it doesn't automatically give them a life sentence of poverty. This is the work that we have before us. These are the things that we didn't hear in the throne speech. These are the complaints that you are hearing from the official opposition.

We need to ensure that all people are accepted in this province, that all people are thought of. I know the member from Toronto Centre is going to have a loud, strong voice to ensure that those voices are heard in this Legislature. Congratulations on your speech.

Thank you, Speaker, for allowing me some time to speak today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Stephen Lecce: Bonjour, monsieur le Président. Good morning.

I just want to, first off, welcome and congratulate the member from Toronto Centre on her election, and I want to build upon the comments made by the member from Peterborough-Kawartha.

Obviously, to the member from Toronto Centre, your life experience and the adversity you have faced no doubt will shape your contribution to public service, and we're all looking forward to working with you, understanding from the experiences that you've had how we can improve public policy for all Ontarians.

Mr. Speaker, the member spoke principally about lifting people up from poverty and helping to give First Nations opportunity. I'm very proud to be part of a political party that has a minister in this cabinet who has worked with First Nation communities for over a decade in the service of improving health and delivery of health in remote communities in northern Ontario. Of course, I'm speaking about the Minister of Energy, who serves dutifully in this House.

This is a government that understands our obligation, our duty to consult, to work with First Nations to give them the economic prosperity they deserve after 15 years of being ignored by the former government, and the principal way we're going to do that is through the dignity of employment. We believe the Ring of Fire, an opportunity for development, is going to be huge in creating jobs and prosperity in northern Ontario, and we're giving these communities a part of the revenue sharing that our Premier has committed to in our campaign.

The member is also from Toronto Centre, and I want to just, if I may add some levity in this place, offer condolences that she has to hold the seat with the federal finance minister, Bill Morneau. I regret that you have that experience. You deserve better. After all, he's shafting the people of Ontario by tens of millions of dollars in money they owe the people of this province. But nonetheless, change is hopefully coming in 2019. I'm sure that's something you and I can agree with or hope for.

Mr. Speaker, through you: The member obviously cares deeply about Ontario. We hope to work together to create jobs and opportunity for all of us.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments? We're going to have the member from Mushkegowuk—James Bay.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Mr. Speaker, you got it right today. Thank you.

Je voudrais remercier ma collègue de Toronto-Centre—très beau. C'était très touchant. Je suis convaincu que ta famille est très fière.

I'm convinced that your family is very proud and it was very touching, very much, your concern.

Like you, I represent—my riding is 30% First Nations. Like you, I was very disappointed when I heard in the throne speech that there was no mention, not even recognizing the First Nations.

When I heard the MPP from King–Vaughan say the minister has worked with First Nations, to me it doesn't fly very well. At least your government should have recognized the lands we are on; it should have made at least some mention in the throne speech. It wasn't there. I can tell you, in my constituency, it doesn't fly. I've been receiving texts, numerous texts, phone calls saying, "They left us out again," so I couldn't sit here and not say anything.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you again for letting me speak.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): We will now return to the member from Toronto Centre for a final comment.

Ms. Suze Morrison: Thank you.

I'm sorry if I get choked up. I made the mistake of looking up into the gallery at my mom, who is crying, and the waterworks will be flowing.

I just want to thank again all of my campaign team, my family, my friends, my supporters, my entire caucus. It is an absolute honour and an absolute privilege to be here today.

I would like to respond to a few of the comments that were made. I do share many of the concerns that you guys have raised in terms of housing and issues for Indigenous people. My concern, to the government, as you so eloquently said, is if housing is actually a priority for your government. I have to question why it wasn't in the throne speech.

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To the member across from King–Vaughan: I want to clarify your comments around Indigenous people. There are more than just First Nations in Ontario. When we misuse the language that is used to represent Indigenous people—you leave behind Métis and Inuit people when you exclusively talk about First Nations.

I'd also like to remind the government members that in the act of collapsing the ministry responsible for Indigenous affairs into a ministry that is responsible for mining and northern development, you exclude Indigenous communities in the south and, relationally, you change the relationship to be one that is exclusively based on resources that can be extracted from the land, which we know is foundationally one of the most problematic pieces with the historic relationship between government and Indigenous people. Indigenous communities are more than just what you can take out of the land. Merging that ministry into the ministry responsible for mining is simply inappropriate.

Again, thank you so much. It's an honour to be here.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? I recognize the newly appointed Minister of Transportation.

Hon. John Yakabuski: It's a pleasure to rise in this House for the first time on this side of the House. I understand what the member from Hamilton Mountain was alluding to: in a different set of circumstances, having the contingent of the governing party to her left, which is highly unusual. For me, it's different to be speaking from the right of the Speaker.

I did want to talk about the throne speech. I've heard so much from the opposition about what wasn't in the throne speech. I mean, it wasn't a novel; it was a throne speech here in the House that we all are so proud to be representatives of.

So I'm going to focus on—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Just like Reader's Digest.

Hon. John Yakabuski: My friend from Timmins would think it was a Reader's Digest condensed book. Yes, I understand. We used to get those when we were kids. We're dating ourselves; I understand that.

But I want to concentrate a little bit on the things that we did touch on in the throne speech and in the campaign, a campaign that elected 76 Progressive Conservative members to this chamber. I understand the members of the opposition elected 40, but their agenda was not one that was chosen by the people of Ontario. I'm loath to even use the word "agenda," because it always sounds like a bit of a sinister thing, an "agenda." But what we have is a mandate from the people to fix what is wrong in Ontario. After 15 years of waste, scandal and mismanagement, they wanted Ontario run in a different way.

Our leader, now our Premier, the Premier for all the people of Ontario, campaigned on a plan to fix what ails Ontario, and our throne speech reflects that. A throne speech is a brief document that touches on the priorities. It does not mean that there are not other priorities; it touches on the ones that we've highlighted.

I want to speak about a couple of those.

Hydro One: Premier Ford campaigned saying that the CEO of Hydro One would be gone and the board would be replaced. The opposition and the former party in power lamented and said, "Well, it will cost \$10.7 million in severance." But to his word, Premier Ford can stand up and say, without a shred of being called wrong, that the CEO of Hydro One left without a single penny of severance—not a single penny of severance. There was \$400,000 in pension benefits which he was entitled to under the contract that he had—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It was \$9 million.

Hon. John Yakabuski: My friend from Timmins wants to talk more about it. He may have a chance to speak to the throne speech. I hope he does.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I did.

Hon. John Yakabuski: Or maybe he did. Well, there you go.

They want to talk about the stock options. Almost every executive in this country will have the opportunity to be paid in stock options. If the CEO doesn't sell them,

he's not going to get a nickel; if he sells them, he'll get the value of them on the day that he sells them. But that was a contract that was worked out with the previous Liberal government. Our commitment to see him leave without a single penny of severance was absolutely followed, and we're so proud of the work that our Premier and his team did in protecting the people of Ontario once again. As he said, we'll protect the people because Doug Ford and the PC Party are for the people.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Order, please. The member from Timmins will come to order.

Hon. John Yakabuski: Let's talk about the Green Energy Act. Not all of the NDP, but I can tell you that most of the NDP who have been elected in this chamber, I suspect, would have supported the Green Energy Act and would have even supported the expansion of the Green Energy Act.

I can say that the leader of the NDP—and she has been feisty, because she also recognizes she's got a huge challenge on her hands within her own caucus. Within her own caucus, she's got a huge challenge on her hands. Some of the members of the new official opposition, they are so far to the left, it is actually—thank God it's a proven fact now that the world is not flat, because some of them have drifted so far to the left that in Christopher Columbus's day, they may have fallen off the edge.

We're governing for all the people—not a socialist liberal agenda, but a government that serves the needs of all the people. We have talked about the need to improve housing. We have talked about the need to fight poverty. We have talked about all of those issues that must be dealt with, but we are going to deal with those and all issues within a responsible fiscal framework.

So the Green Energy Act, which has cost billions of dollars to the people, the taxpayers and the ratepayers of this province, is history. We cancelled all of those expensive energy contracts that we could cancel, saving the people of Ontario almost \$800 million—\$800 million. We can build a lot of affordable housing with \$800 million. We won't solve all of the problems, but we can build a lot of it.

But back to fiscal responsibility: Our Premier, our Minister of Finance and our President of the Treasury Board again followed through on another one of our promises—to initiate a commission of inquiry to deal with Ontario's financial condition. Yesterday, they made a huge announcement, appointing the former Premier of British Columbia, the Honourable Gordon Campbell, to head up that commission, as well as Al Rosen and Michael Horgan, two of the most respected people in their field. Al Rosen is one of the most highly respected forensic accountants that this country has ever had.

In keeping with our promise, not only did we appoint them to this commission, but we got them at a bargain basement price, because our Premier, Doug Ford, has seen to it that fiscal responsibility will be the watchword on every decision we make—\$50,000 for each of those commissioners, with the credentials that they bring to the

table, is an absolute steal. I don't know how the folks in the Ministry of Finance, the Treasury Board and the Premier's office did it, but congratulations to you, and I thank you on behalf of all the people. When we think of the scope of the issue that they have to deal with and the challenges before them, we could not have gotten a better bargain. Promise made, promise kept.

Shortly after school resumes in the fall—and we'll talk about York University if we have a chance, another promise made and promise kept—by the time school shortly resumes in the fall, we will have a full report from this commission and we will have a better understanding of where we have to go and what we have to work with. That is a promise we made to the people that they desperately wanted. They want to understand how we're going to manage a problem that is well in excess of \$340 billion in debt—\$340 billion in debt. How are we going to provide the services of the future if we can't manage the finances of the province today?

1010

Was it Robert Frost who said, "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step"? It might have been him; I'm not sure. But it does begin with a single step, and that step was taken yesterday by keeping our promise to appoint this commission of inquiry to delve into the challenges and the mess that was left after 15 years of Liberal rule.

Where are we going to find ourselves in September? That yet remains to be seen, but what I can tell you is that we will take that information from that commission and use that to forge a path to balance in this province, because until we balance the books in this province, we cannot turn it around and we cannot take this province and make it the tremendous engine of Canada's economy that it once was.

We can't have this debt hanging over our shoulders, accumulating and growing. We have to start reducing that debt, and you do that by balancing the budget and continuing to balance the budget and pay down that debt. That can be done, because our government for the people, under Doug Ford, is doing that line-by-line audit and we are going to find efficiencies in the operation of a \$158-billion budget.

In 2003, when the Liberals came into power, the spending in Ontario was \$68 billion. After 15 years, it rose to \$158 billion—a \$90-billion increase in annual spending in that period of time. It's unsustainable and unacceptable. They found every place they could to spend money to buy votes in the upcoming elections. They did it in 2007; they did it in 2011; they did it in 2014—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: But, John, it didn't work so well.

Hon. John Yakabuski:—and it didn't work in 2018, yet they still tried it one more time. "Once more to the well" could have been their campaign slogan. But anyway, the people of Ontario came back to the Liberals and said, "I'm sorry, Ms. Wynne, but the well is dry."

Where is that going to leave us? It will leave us with huge challenges. But as government, you have to be

willing to take on those challenges. The easiest thing to do is to spend somebody else's money. That's what the previous government was doing for 15 years: spending other people's money. The toughest thing to do is to look inside and find where we can find those efficiencies, find how we can make government run better and actually have to say, in some cases, "The answer is no." Because you'll take the political heat on it, but at the end of the day, you will save the next generation.

Our responsibility is to the people, for the people, for the people from yesterday, for the people from today and for the people of tomorrow. We will not forget that. That is our commitment. You can count on it.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Please be seated.

The member knows that he will have extended time. When debate resumes, he will have that opportunity, at which time, then, there will also be an opportunity for questions and comments.

Debate deemed adjourned.

VISITOR

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Before I recess, Phil Gillies, former MPP in the 32nd and 33rd Parliaments representing Brantford, is with us today. Phil? There he is. Welcome.

On that fine note, it is now 10:15 and this House stands recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I'd like to introduce my mother, Marlene Hogarth, who is here, and my friend and staff special assistant, Janet Browes, who is visiting the Legislature. I'm so lucky to have her on my team.

Mr. Norman Miller: I'd like to welcome Louis Kan, who is here to observe proceedings today. He is a CPA and very interested in things going on here at Queen's Park.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I wanted to invite everyone to welcome Matt Varsava. He was my campaign chair. I'm really grateful for him to be here today.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'd like to welcome friends in the west members' gallery, friends of mine from Sarnia-Lambton, Etobicoke and Thunder Bay: Marilyn Armstrong, Corinne Armstrong, Lauren Armstrong, Susan Armstrong and Monique Manz.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: A couple of good friends of the House are here to watch yet again: Fred Hahn and Wynne Hartviksen. We welcome you to the Legislature once again.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I would like to introduce Bruce Chapman, the president of the Police Association of Ontario, who is here with us today. Welcome.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: I'm joined here today by several friends and supporters who were here to witness my maiden speech this morning. It's my pleasure to welcome Grant Gorchynski from Kingsbridge Matters, a local advocacy group in my riding; Doris Grinspun, president and CEO of RNAO, as well as Carol Timmings, immediate past-president; Nathan Kelly; Adrianna Tetley, CEO of Alliance for Healthier Communities; Sarah Hops; Lucia Costantini, associate director of RNAO; Maria Negri; Josephine Mo; and Halimo Dualeh, as well as my good friend Sarah Bokhari.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Doug Downey: I would like to note that Janet MacDougall, the owner of Yes I Can! Nursery, that serves autistic children, is here. Welcome.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Bruce Chapman, the president of the Police Association of Ontario, is joining us today. I wanted to welcome him on behalf of everyone in the Legislature.

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: C'est pour moi un plaisir de me lever dans l'Assemblée aujourd'hui pour souhaiter la bienvenue à Rita Mainville, à Pierre Mainville et aussi à Heather Potter, qui se joignent ici à nous aujourd'hui.

Mr. and Mrs. Kimber and Heather Potter are the parents and sister of Andrew Kimber, the executive director of issues management and legislative affairs in the Premier's office. I know that Mr. and Mrs. Kimber and his sister are very proud of the work that Andrew does here every day for the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I wish to extend a warm welcome to a former member of the Legislature who is with us in the chamber. He served in the 32nd and 33rd Parliaments representing Brantford. Phil Gillies is with us. Welcome.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I would ask the pages to assemble for their introduction.

I should point out that this particular group of pages has joined us on very short notice. They've given up some of their summer holidays to be here. All of them, I think without exception, have served as pages in recent days, so they didn't need a lot of training and they don't have any math lessons over the summer. They're excited about that.

We're delighted to have them here and to have their families visiting as well, in many cases.

Representing the riding of Scarborough-Agincourt, Adam Omarali—welcome; representing Mississauga-Lakeshore, Aidan Fletcher; from Sarnia-Lambton, Annabelle Rayson; from Scarborough Southwest, Bavan Pushpalingam; Kitchener South-Hespeler, Colin Robinson; York Centre, Eliana Rosenberg; from Markham-Stouffville, Emmanuel Samouel; from York South-Weston, Eric Albishausen; from Humber River-Black Creek, Justin Abraham; from Etobicoke Centre, Hannah Arseneault; from Mississauga-Streetsville, Medha Gupta; from Eglinton-Lawrence, Michael Daiello; from Don

Valley North, Rachel MacKinnon; and from Windsor–Tecumseh, Tamsyn King.

Welcome.

Applause.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Before we begin question period, I'd like to again acknowledge the presence of another former member in the House, who represented Burlington South in the 33rd, 34th, 35th and 36th Parliaments and the riding of Burlington in the 37th and 38th Parliaments. Cam Jackson is with us. Welcome.

It is now time for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

CURRICULUM

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Acting Premier.

Scrapping the updated sexual health curriculum puts students at risk, and I think—I hope—most members of the cabinet would agree.

We have heard for two days where Ford Nation stands on the issue. With the first ministers' meeting in New Brunswick and the Deputy Premier answering questions today, I want to ask the Deputy Premier where she and the other women in cabinet stand. Is it with the young people who need the information about consent, bullying, gender and sexuality, or is it with the radical extremist social conservatives that the Premier seems to be beholden to?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you to the leader of the official opposition for her question. What we stand for is a curriculum that is going to be full and thorough and represent the wishes of the parents—listening to parents, listening to students, representing what they need.

We want to make sure that parents are consulted. We were very clear about that during the election campaign. We heard from many parents, as you probably did as well, about their concerns about the age-appropriateness of some of the things that they were learning. We want to make sure that we have a full, complete and appropriate sex education curriculum for all the students in this province.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Take your seats, please.

Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Look, we all get it. The Premier cut a deal with radical extremists like Tanya Granic Allen and Charles McVety, and he chose to do what social conservatives told him to do instead of standing up for students.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government side will come to order. I have to be able to hear the Leader of the Opposition.

Leader of the Opposition, I apologize for the interruption.

1040

Ms. Andrea Horwath: He chose to do what social conservatives told him to do, instead of standing up for students, and I'm pretty sure that there are members of that cabinet who are having a tough time looking in the mirror these days because they know that the outdated 1998 curriculum puts students at risk.

With the Deputy Premier answering questions today, let's just get real. Is she seriously comfortable with taking consent, gender identity and LGBTQ families out of our classrooms in September?

Hon. Christine Elliott: First of all, let me be clear. What we are going to work with right now is the 2014 sex education curriculum. We are going to be dealing with all of the issues that the leader of the official opposition has mentioned, but what we are going to do, and who the Premier has listened to, and all of the members of our caucus have listened to, is parents. During the last so-called consultation, there were about 4,000 parents who got a link to a survey but only 1,638 responses were received, which is 0.001% of the elementary school population's parents. We are going to listen to parents and we are going to develop a curriculum based on what we hear from them that will be modern and effective and dealing with all of the issues that the leader of the official opposition is speaking about. She might not like to hear that, but that is what we're going to do.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Please take your seats.

Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Dragging Ontario backwards by putting the 1998 curriculum back in our schools will only put Ontario's children at risk. I am floored by the response of the Deputy Premier. It denies kids the information that they need to stay safe from cyberbullying and to make sure that every queer young person is safe.

In the past, the Deputy Premier, the Attorney General and the Minister of Children have all said that they support keeping kids safe. Now they actually have a chance to prove it. What will it take for the Deputy Premier to defend what she says she believes in and tell the Premier he's wrong to drag students back to 1998? Not 2014, but 1998.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Once again, for the information of the leader of the official opposition, we are using the curriculum from 2014. Consultations are already under way for the process that we will use going forward starting in the fall: listening to parents, listening to all of the issues that they want to talk about, making sure that we get it right this time. We heard very clearly from parents that we did not have it right with the curriculum that was developed by the previous Liberal government.

We are going to take the time and we are going to get it right.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Take your seats. Please take your seats.

Next question.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Deputy Premier.

I have to say it's worrisome, though, because while they take their time to get it right, kids will be bullied. They'll be cyberbullied. Kids will be at risk and LGBTQ youth will not get the support, respect and dignity that they deserve, like every other child deserves. It's very, very worrisome.

But my question is on a different topic. It's about the fact that Ontario employs hundreds of non-partisan auditors and we have an entire office of the Auditor General that reports to MPPs. But instead of asking the Auditor General to look at government spending and accounting practices, the Premier is giving the job to his own hand-picked insiders.

Why is this government sidestepping the Auditor General and putting another politician on the payroll?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Well, first of all, let me assure the leader of the official opposition that we do support the work of the Auditor General. We do listen to what she has said, unlike the previous government that tried to denigrate her and make her appear incompetent. We think she is thoroughly competent. She knows what she's doing, but she does not have the responsibility to do the line-by-line analysis that we promised the people of Ontario that we would cause to happen.

The commission of inquiry that we have brought forward is helmed by very, very accomplished people. We were able to get them to come and do this work for a very reasonable cost. We have no concern about the work that they're going to do. They are recognized professionals who anyone in Ontario would agree are well provided to do this analysis.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, \$50,000 for a month of work is a pretty darn sweet deal that most Ontarians will never, ever be able to get, Speaker.

That's exactly what Gordon Campbell is going to get, but his only qualification for the job is that he ran as a Liberal and then cut like a Conservative. As Premier of BC, he cut social services. He fired public workers. He sold off and privatized assets like ferries and BC Rail's entire operation. In fact, that privatization led to "Railgate" after police uncovered a backroom deal that cost British Columbians hundreds of millions of dollars.

Why is this government ignoring the Auditor General and hiring a politician famous for cutting and privatizing public services?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Once again, we support the work that is being done by the Auditor General. We believe that she is doing a fantastic job, but she needs some help because of the mess that was left behind by the previous Liberal government. We cannot rely on the numbers that they have given us. We need to know where the bottom is. We're not there yet, sadly. We need to know where the bottom is so that we can start building and going forward.

The three people who are going to be leading the inquiry are very accomplished individuals. Former British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell is very accomplished at dealing with issues like this. Dr. Al Rosen is recognized as a qualified expert, as is Michael Horgan. They have volunteered. They've come forward to do this work. It is in a very short time frame, because we need to get moving and fixing the books of this province. We are very proud of them coming on board with us.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members, please take your seats. Please take your seats.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This inquiry and this audit are not about looking at the books. They're not serious accounting exercises. This is all about finding excuses for the Premier to cut and privatize in health care, in education and across our public services. Why else would the Conservatives trust the disgraced former Premier of British Columbia more than they trust Ontario's own Auditor General?

Hon. Christine Elliott: We shouldn't be disparaging the people who are doing this work. They are experts.

I would also like to mention something. Here is a tweet from Ontario's Auditor General from this morning: "The Office of the Auditor General appreciates the government's intent, as part of the financial commission of inquiry, to address the accounting practices we have previously expressed concerns about. Our office will work co-operatively with the commission." So there you have it.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Take your seats.

I wish to inform the House that we are about 10 minutes into question period and there have been repeated standing ovations. I would remind those members who are engaging in that that I'm sure there are people on the list who would like to ask a question today, and they're not going to get their chance to ask the question today if indeed this persists.

CURRICULUM

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Minister of Education.

Speaker, this week Ontarians have seen chaos and confusion coming from this government about sex education. First, they announced the repeal of the modernized curriculum, dragging Ontario backwards to 1998 and

putting the health and safety of young people at risk. They pretend that there is a 2014 curriculum when there are only 1998 or 2015.

They claim there will be ample space to address critical social issues, and that teachers will have flexibility to raise these topics.

Speaker, school boards, teachers and parents need to know exactly what students will be learning in September. It shouldn't rely on individual teachers.

Can the minister explain how gender identity, LGBTQ families, consent and cyberbullying will be taught in our schools when the 1998 curriculum is silent on these issues?

1050

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: We need to be very clear here: Teachers will be going back to curriculum they are familiar with because they are going to be using the curriculum that was utilized in 2014. At that time, in tandem, we're going to be embarking on the most comprehensive consultation this province has ever seen, because we're keeping our election promise to respect parents.

We have heard from tens of thousands of parents who are uncomfortable. But do you know what really matters, Speaker? That we embark on a comprehensive consultation process whereby every person in this province has an opportunity to have their voice heard, because we know the previous Liberal government got it wrong. Through our consultation process we're going to get it right.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The members please take their seats. Please take your seats.

Supplementary?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Again to the minister: It may be news to this government, but this province has already had one of the most comprehensive education consultations in our history. It took place over a period of almost 10 years and resulted in the modernized 2015 health and physical education curriculum. The Minister of Education knows that; three years ago she publicly stated: "The Minister of Education has done a lot of consulting around this.... We do need an upgrade to the curriculum."

Why is this minister catering to a small group of radical social conservatives like Charles McVety, who wants to hold town halls in every riding in Ontario, instead of doing her job and keeping the modernized, updated curriculum in place?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: My job is to listen to the constituents who are represented in the ridings in every corner of this province. We have heard from tens of thousands of parents that their voices weren't heard and they are not being represented in what they're saying is okay to move forward with.

So we're going to keep our election promise. We are going to move forward with the most comprehensive consultation process this Ministry of Education has ever facilitated and, in the spirit of democracy, enable every person who wants to share their perspective to have an

opportunity to have their voice heard. I look forward to kicking that off later this fall.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The members will please take their seats. Please take your seats.

Next question.

TAXATION

Mr. Doug Downey: My question is for the Minister of the Environment.

Over the past several months, I've had the chance to talk to thousands of families and individuals across Barrie-Springwater-Oro-Medonte. I heard from families that work hard. They play by the rules, and they're trying to get by. At the end of the day, they still struggle to make ends meet.

The tax-and-spend policies of the last 15 years have made life unaffordable. Damaging policies like the Liberals' cap-and-trade, the carbon tax, only compounded the problem. It made it worse. It increased the cost of gas, it increased the cost of groceries, it increased the cost of everything that we do, day to day. I campaigned on a promise to my constituents to end cap-and-trade.

I would like to ask the minister if he would update the House and the public on the status of this commitment.

Hon. Rod Phillips: I'd like to thank the honourable member from Barrie-Springwater-Oro-Medonte. I know that he stands up for his constituents and represents them well.

Our government was elected on a promise to revoke the cap-and-trade program, which for too long had targeted low-income families, targeted businesses and made life unaffordable for people in Ontario. That's why we announced the end of the cap-and-trade program and have taken steps for its orderly wind-down.

Effective July 3, the province has revoked the cap-and-trade regulation and is prohibiting the trading of emission allowances. All programs currently funded through the cap-and-trade program will be concluded, and the immediate, orderly wind-down of the green Ontario fund is included in that.

Mr. Speaker, under the leadership of Premier Ford, we have delivered more promises in the first 10 days than the previous Liberal government did in the last 10 years.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members, please take your seats. Please take your seats.

Supplementary?

Mr. Doug Downey: Back to the minister, Mr. Speaker: I thank the minister for his commitment to and his comments on this very important promise, both to me and to the constituents. I heard it time and again at the doors: Families simply cannot afford this tax.

To make things worse, Mr. Speaker, during the campaign, the Leader of the Opposition not only endorsed the Liberal plan but committed to adjusting the Liberal plan—and obviously, I don't mean down. This would

have meant higher taxes for every family in Ontario, higher costs of living, higher child care, higher food, higher gas—everything.

Can the minister assure the hard-working families in my riding that the days of this unaffordable cap-and-trade carbon tax are finally over?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member: For too long the Liberals' ineffective cap-and-trade program did target low-income families and middle-income families. The member is quite right. I listened intently to the Leader of the Opposition's response to the speech from the throne. When she doubled down on advocating that continued cap-and-trade program, I was bewildered.

When she talks about radical extremists, we could talk about the NDP MPP from Ottawa Centre, who repeatedly called for increasing carbon taxes to 35 cents a litre. This is not what the people want. This is not what we were elected to do. On this side of the House, we understand that in this time of economic uncertainty, we need to avoid a carbon tax, and we will not allow it.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Members will please take your seats.

Next question.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Acting Premier.

Last May, the Liberal government announced a scheme to use borrowed cash to artificially and temporarily lower hydro bills before the election. After the election, ratepayers would need to pay back \$40 billion in debt and interest.

The government House leader, who was then the Conservative energy critic, obtained a leaked cabinet document that showed how this hydro borrowing scheme would drive up hydro bills by 70% over the next 10 years. He described the Liberals' scheme as "deceitful, dishonest and shady."

So why is the Premier keeping this deceitful, dishonest and shady Liberal scheme that will add \$40 billion onto hydro bills—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm asking the member to withdraw his unparliamentary comment.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Response? Deputy Premier.

Hon. Christine Elliott: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Greg Rickford: Let's talk about another set of numbers that are factual, true and about to reduce the ratepayers' costs for energy across this province. We set out a campaign promise to reduce those by 12%, Mr. Speaker. It involved a number of important steps, which have occurred over the past couple of weeks. That target is 12%. It's achieved by renewing leadership at Hydro One. It's achieved by cancelling contracts that were going to ultimately cost taxpayers way more money than

it was worth. The number that we're dealing with, Mr. Speaker, is \$790 million in savings.

That's what Ontarians listened to on June 7. That's why there are 76 of us in this House. Promise made, promise kept.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members, please take your seats.

Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Apparently the minister is not aware of the party's policies. Then I will go back to this question. It seems the Premier has decided to keep all the worst Liberal hydro plans. He won't return Hydro One to full public ownership, and he's going to keep the Liberal hydro borrowing scheme that his own minister called "deceitful, dishonest and shady."

Will he also use the same accounting tricks that the Liberals used to hide the truth about the \$40-billion hydro borrowing scheme?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Mr. Speaker, through you to my colleagues: Can I be forgiven for not paying attention to Liberal policies on energy?

Applause.

Hon. Greg Rickford: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to be focused like a laser on reducing hydro rates for Ontario taxpayers and for Ontario ratepayers. I'm a bit worried when the NDP start talking about an exercise of going into the private sector; those two tend not to jive.

1100

We've come up with a plan to renew Hydro One leadership, to lower costs by cancelling programs that were going to be representing a significant cost to ratepayers and taxpayers. This is the promise we made on June 7, and this is the promise that we're going to keep.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sit down. Sit down. Next question.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board.

In my riding of Barrie–Innisfil, I heard people's message loud and clear. They're concerned about the lack of trust in the previous government. Every new report by the provincial Auditor General or its Financial Accountability Officer gave them more cause for concern about the future of this great province.

Mr. Speaker, would the President of the Treasury Board please provide an update for this House on the steps the government is taking to restore trust in the provincial finances?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Thank you for the question, and thank you to the member from Barrie–Innisfil for raising this issue of great importance to the people not

only of the riding of Barrie–Innisfil, but across the province.

This government is committed to ensuring accountability for how taxpayers' money is spent. Unfortunately, this government is operating from a starting position where we are left with books that do not tell the real story on our province's finances. That is why we are taking action now. It's time to stop digging and find out how big the hole is.

Mr. Speaker, we want the public to have a full, honest and accurate picture of Ontario's finances. The people of Ontario deserve to know where their hard-earned money is going, how it's being wasted and how we are going to fix it.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I thank the President of the Treasury Board for his response and his swift action to restore public confidence.

In his remarks to the press yesterday, the President of the Treasury Board described his recent meeting with members of the public service who are eager to share their ideas for finding efficiencies and savings. I know that the people in my riding and, I imagine, people province-wide are interested in having their voices heard after feeling like the previous government failed to listen.

Would the President of the Treasury Board please tell this House how the government is ensuring that this audit is open, transparent and accountable to the people of Ontario?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: As we announced yesterday with the Premier and the Minister of Finance on the Independent Financial Commission of Inquiry and the line-by-line—promise made, promise kept.

The member from Barrie–Innisfil mentioned my meeting with the team at the internal audit division. I did a tour last week. I'm meeting all the people on the front lines in our Ontario public service. In fact, they mentioned that no minister had come by in 26 years to say hello. These are the people who will come up with the ideas for the efficiencies and savings that we intend to do.

To support this work, we're going to do an open tender for a transparent public request for bids. We issued that yesterday. That will take 15 days. It will be open, transparent and thorough.

This line-by-line will be for the people of Ontario and include the people—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Please sit down.

Next question. The member for Brampton North.

ANTI-RACISM ACTIVITIES

Mr. Kevin Yarde: Mr. Speaker, first of all I'd like to congratulate you on your election.

My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

The charter applies 365 days a year, not just when this government would like it to. But the unfortunate reality is that not every Ontarian's charter rights are equally respected. This government's SIU rollback sends the disturbing signal that this government is not interested in reforming an extremely dated system that does nothing to address this province's current reality.

Mr. Speaker, I personally have been carded. New Democrats have long been advocating for the end of carding, as a first step in addressing systemic racism.

My question is, will you be making changes to allow even more carding to take place on Ontario streets or will you work to stamp out carding?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Take your seats. Please take your seats.

Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Mr. Speaker and honourable member: First of all, I want to reassure everyone that the focus of this government is to ensure that safety is paramount in all communities. Personally, I went out to Jane and Finch, put on a bulletproof vest and spent 7 o'clock to 1 o'clock in the morning visiting sites that had previously had bullet-ridden people killed in the middle of the night.

The police need tools to work with. They're doing an incredible job ensuring that our streets are safe. I'm not a police officer but what I can tell you is they need skills, they need tools to work with. Our work will be to ensure, working with the communities, that we build trust and that we have those tools provided to them to be able to do their jobs properly.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: I didn't expect the question to get answered, and obviously it wasn't answered.

Casually combining the responsibilities of the Anti-Racism Directorate with the Deputy Minister of Correctional Services—now, that is problematic. Not only does this lumping of responsibilities demonstrate part-time attention to systemic racism, but this shift also assumes that racism only occurs in policing. This is simply not the case. Racism also occurs in the workplace, in schools, in consumer establishments and based on a person's postal code, as well as in accessing housing and social services and, of course, the list goes on and on. Racism also occurs in these areas, and this is why the Ontario NDP has been calling for the creation of an Ontario anti-racism secretariat since 2015.

So my question, once again, is, how will this government commit to giving full-time attention to eliminating racism in government policies, decisions and services?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you for the question. Once again, public safety is of paramount concern to this government. Anti-racism and the issues surrounding anti-racism are something that will be looked at seriously within our ministry. We will look to determine what we can do, both from the standpoint of assisting the police with the work they do and other organizations as well.

This requires consultation, it requires us to be involved with stakeholders, and it's every intention of this government to be open, transparent and to listen to the people, which is something that has not been done for a long time in the province.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. No. Sit down. Sit down.

Next question.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in the House today. It's the first time in the 42nd Parliament. I want to give a special thank you to the residents and the constituents of Scarborough–Guildwood for the confidence that they have placed in me in re-electing me for a third term.

Speaker, congratulations to you on your appointment as well.

My question is to the Deputy Premier, and also congratulations on your election and for your willingness to serve.

Yesterday the Premier appointed his commission of inquiry. Can you tell this House the cost?

Hon. Christine Elliott: To the Treasury Board.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question, through you, to the member.

Through the election, we criss-crossed this province. The Premier criss-crossed the province. We knocked on a lot of doors and we heard the same thing. We want to restore trust. People want us to restore trust in government.

To do that, we said we would have an independent inquiry to look at the accounting and look at it line by line, to do a value-for-money audit. To do this, we've hired an independent commission of inquiry, independent commissioners who are experts in their field. This is a drop in the bucket against the amount of spending and the waste and mismanagement we've seen over the last 15 years. This will be some of the best money we've ever invested in the province of Ontario.

1110

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Again to the Deputy Premier: On Monday, your government announced the cancellation of White Pines, with no idea of the cost to Ontarians. It signalled to the world that Ontario is no longer a safe place to invest in new business or spur innovation and job growth.

Mr. Speaker, we do know some numbers. The Premier has cancelled cap-and-trade with a cost of over \$2.4 billion, paid out the Hydro One CEO for \$9 million, and over \$350,000 a year to his personal friend and now health adviser—and now this commission with another cost. We are less than a week into the Ford government and already the fiscal mismanagement is clear. You say—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Government members will come to order. Government members, come to order.

The member for Scarborough–Guildwood.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: You say this is a line-by-line analysis of government in only a few weeks. Will the Deputy Premier admit that this commission is a smoke-screen and an extension of your campaign, meant to hide the fact that the Conservatives have no plan, and to distract from the deeper cuts that are coming to things that matter the most to Ontarians, like Ontario's health care, education and environment, and putting Ontario jobs at risk?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the question. Through you, to the member: I think the member opposite has a lot of trouble with promises made, promises kept, in such a short period of time.

We criss-crossed this province. We heard from the people, and the people said they're working harder and getting less. We provided a platform of providing relief through lower hydro costs, lower gas taxes and lower taxes, so this led us to look for savings, and that was one of the first areas of savings where we looked to help the people of Ontario. We stand behind the people of Ontario, making \$790 million of savings through these contracts for energy that we did not need in this province. We'll stand behind that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sit down.

Next question. The member for Willowdale.

TAXATION

Mr. Stan Cho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As it's my first time rising in the House, I'd like to congratulate you on your election and thank the wonderful people of Willowdale for giving me this great honour of representing them.

My question is for the Minister of the Environment.

The Liberals claim that having a cap-and-trade-style carbon tax would force people to make better choices. Well, most people in Ontario don't have the choice to jump on a bus with their two kids, hockey bags in tow, to get to the rink for 7 a.m. practice. Most people don't have the choice to bike home after shopping for groceries to feed their family of four. Most people don't have the choice to spend an additional \$35,000 on an efficient Prius. Ontarians can agree on the importance of reducing emissions, but the arrogance of those who imply that these kinds of decisions should bear a sin tax is astonishing.

Will the minister ensure that the people of Ontario will no longer be punished with unfair taxes as a result of making these very reasonable choices?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member: First of all, I congratulate the member from Willowdale on his election and also on his recent engagement.

I agree, and this government agrees, that climate change presents real challenges and that we need a program that will protect our environment. But, as the member alluded to, we need a program that's balanced and we need a program that understands the needs of working families, the needs of parents to take their kids to hockey and to go shopping. We will never be a government that dictates how people will behave and that punishes them if they disagree with this government.

This is why we're moving forward to revoke the cap-and-trade legislation, which has punished working families, which has punished businesses. Our government will move quickly to fulfill that promise, to fulfill our promise to working Ontarians, so that they can enjoy the lives they want.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Stan Cho: Back to the minister: I would like to thank the minister for his strong convictions to press ahead on this file. I know how much he appreciates the value of a promise, and I know how much the people of Ontario are counting on him to deliver on his promise.

Climate change is our generation's reality and we understand the importance of taking steps to ensure that we protect our environment. But there has to be a better way to achieve the results the people of Ontario demand.

I know the people of Ontario are looking to our government for relief. The reality is that families are not making choices at all; they're being forced. What is the government going to do to make sure that they get the relief?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Again, I'd like to thank the member, through you, Mr. Speaker. As I've said, we are committed to taking action, and we will be taking action in this sitting to begin the process of the orderly wind-down of the cap-and-trade program. We don't agree with the members opposite that we should double down on cap-and-trade, that we should put more pressure on Ontario families. We don't agree with the Liberals, the former government, that a carbon tax program is the approach, but we do understand the importance of addressing climate change.

But as we move forward here, we will also be taking our argument to Ottawa. We will also be doing everything in our power to ensure that the carbon tax cap-and-trade program here is not repeated by the federal government. The disastrous Liberal policies in Ontario can't be imposed by a Liberal government in Ottawa, and we will do everything in our power to avoid that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Please sit down. Next question.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: My question is to the Minister of Education.

On Monday, Fix Our Schools wrote a letter to the minister, putting the total estimate for school repairs in her riding at a staggering \$113.8 million. They reminded

her of the personal commitment she made to fix our schools during the campaign. They stated this clearly: "School conditions matter. They impact student learning, attendance, and health."

Yesterday, this government admitted that the colossal \$100 million they cut from school repair funding was just collateral damage in their crusade against cap-and-trade. They admitted that the well-being of students was an afterthought.

Will the minister's message to the students in her riding and across Ontario continue to be that they are just not a priority?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: You know, I find it rather ironic, because the reality is this: Under 15 years of Liberal rule which the NDP party—the opposition party—propped up the entire way, we've seen schools crumble across this province. I am very pleased to share with you, Speaker—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll ask the official opposition to please come to order. I have to be able to hear the response.

Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you, Speaker. I'm very pleased to share with you that in working with ministry officials, we're addressing the renovation needs of our schools. You're going to see this government always putting students first.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Back to the Minister of Education: Runnymede Collegiate Institute, a great high school in my riding of Parkdale–High Park, currently needs 15 urgent repairs among 64 others. These repairs include hot water boilers, roof coverings and a 90-year-old structural frame—urgent, meaning now. The students and families of Runnymede Collegiate cannot afford to hold out while this government makes cuts first and promises later.

How much longer will the students and families in Parkdale–High Park be left waiting?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: We need to be perfectly clear here: The \$100 million in the Green Ontario Fund—the gas reduction—

Interjection: The greenhouse gas fund.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: The greenhouse gas reduction slush fund that the Liberals created was never, ever going to be addressing those problems that the member opposite just described.

With that said, I look forward to inviting the member opposite to come forward and meet with me and share her concerns about her local school so that I can raise them with ministry officials and I can get a status update on those particular repairs.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Next question. The member for Brantford–Brant.

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GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Congratulations on your election.

My question is to the Minister of Finance, who I would also like to congratulate on his election. I know he will be serving the constituents of Nipissing well.

For the last 15 years, the people of Ontario, especially in my riding of Brantford–Brant, watched Queen's Park in frustration. The previous Liberal government, time and time again, mismanaged taxpayers' dollars while insiders got rich off the public purse.

What's worse, on top of the waste and scandal, is that we were not provided with an accurate picture of the province's finances. It took independent officers like the Auditor General and the Financial Accountability Officer to expose just what was going on. But Premier Doug Ford promised to take immediate action to restore trust in Ontario's finances, and he has.

Minister, could you please tell the House about the commission of inquiry the government for the people launched yesterday into the state of the province's finances?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you for the question, to the member from Brantford–Brant, and congratulations on your election to this Legislature.

To you, Speaker: Considering this is my first time to rise in this sitting of Parliament, I want to congratulate you on a great position, and great success in this job.

We will be giving the commission of financial inquiry an expansive mandate. They are going to chase down any and all budgetary spending and accounting practices that might compromise the public's faith in our public finances. This work will be completely independent from my office, from the Premier's office and from any government office.

We are asking the commission to hit the ground running and issue a report in time for it to be included in the Ontario public accounts, and to be considered as part of the fall economic statement as well. That's why the terms of reference include a clear deadline of August 30 for their report, which will be made public. The people will see the exact same report that we will see.

The commission of inquiry will look into what went wrong, while the line-by-line audit overseen by the Treasury Board and Minister Bethlenfalvy will look at how we fix it.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Supplementary question?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sit down. Sit down. Supplementary?

Mr. Will Bouma: A follow-up to the Minister of Finance: Thank you, Minister, for explaining how the commission of inquiry will work and will complement the line-by-line audit as well. Getting to the bottom of the

true state of Ontario's finances is of paramount importance as we start on the path back to fiscal balance in Ontario. This arm's-length commission is truly the first step in doing just that.

I was pleased to hear the minister reassure Ontario taxpayers that the exact same report that he sees will be the one that the public sees. That's true transparency and accountability, and that is something that was sadly non-existent in the previous government.

It's important that we have the best people selected to do that job. Can the minister speak to the expert members of the commission of inquiry and why their specific experience is critical in ensuring that Ontario taxpayers can have faith in this process and the eventual findings?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: I am confident that this commission of inquiry has the right leadership, the right mandate and the right resources to get the job done. Their job will be to restore trust.

We have strong leadership at the helm with the former Premier of British Columbia, Gordon Campbell, acting as chair. Mr. Campbell will be joined by two co-commissioners, Michael Horgan and Dr. Al Rosen, each of whom is amongst the most qualified experts in Canada to perform exactly this type of work.

Let me express my personal confidence to this House that the road back to financial health for Ontario starts right here, right now, with this inquiry.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sit down.
The member from Kingston and the Islands.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

Mr. Ian Arthur: My question is for the Minister of the Environment.

I have met with many small businesses and families who have been affected by the cancellation of the GreenON program on June 19, like Michael Braby, who owns a small business, Aaben Windows and Doors; and his customers, who were supposed to receive the rebates.

The problem with how the government is withdrawing from this is that there are so many contracts, it would take until January to finish them all.

Now, I know this government is completely comfortable with arbitrarily cancelling contracts, but there is no need to force those values on the small businesses and families of Ontario. Instead of cancelling them with an October 31 deadline, will the minister work to extend it until January 31 at least, until all those contracts can be done that were entered into in good faith?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you, I thank the member for his question.

This is a government that has been quite responsive to the various parties that were involved in this program. We have set the dates based on consultation with those parties and we will stick with those dates.

But let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, to the member, that the important thing to remember is that all of this, all of the subsidy, was being paid for by taxpayers; all of the

subsidy was coming out of the pockets of Ontarians. The only responsible thing to do when we made the decision on behalf of Ontarians to cut the cap-and-trade carbon tax program was to end that program. We've worked to do that on an orderly basis and we will continue to do so.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Ian Arthur: Again to the Minister of the Environment: Mike has lined up jobs for November, December and January that represent \$177,000 in green Ontario rebates. Those families signed up in good faith before the sudden cancellation of the green Ontario program. Now those jobs are at risk. Mike is just one of the many contractors across Ontario who are still being affected by this cancellation.

The Premier promised to put money back in the pockets of Ontarians. So why is he taking thousands and thousands of dollars out of the pockets of Ontario families and out of the pockets of small businesses in Ontario?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you, thank you to the member for his follow-up question.

What the NDP doesn't appreciate is that the money for Mike is coming from 10,000 other Mikes, from 10,000 other Marthas, from Ontarians across the province who are tired of paying a tax to prop up a subsidy program and to prop up a carbon tax cap-and-trade program that is not working. So, with respect, we will stick with our October 31 deadline.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sit down. Sit down.

Next question. The member for Mississauga–Streetsville.

TAXATION

Mrs. Nina Tangri: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I'd like to congratulate you on your election as Speaker of the House. Your vast experience, I think, will serve us very, very well.

My question is to the Minister of the Environment.

The election in Ontario made one thing crystal clear: Ontario voters have had enough. Voters in our province are stretched thin. They have paid their share. They are done. That is why they voted for us. They voted for us because we promised to scrap the Liberals' cap-and-trade scheme. They voted for us because we promised to fight the federal government's carbon tax.

Have you raised the issue of the carbon tax with the federal Minister of Environment?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member for Mississauga–Streetsville, congratulations on your election and your time in this House. I know you'll serve your constituents well.

This morning, I did meet with the federal Minister of Environment. Although we discussed a range of issues, some of which we found common ground on, unfortunately when it came to the idea of the Trudeau carbon tax, we found no common ground. We both acknowledged the importance and the critical nature of dealing

with climate change, but we did not agree on the solution, and Ontario will not accept a carbon tax solution.

We have been given a very strong mandate from the voters of Ontario to repeal the cap-and-trade carbon tax program of the previous Liberal government. To proceed with that program, and frankly for the federal program to proceed, is disrespectful to the taxpayers of Ontario.

1130

Families have done their part. They've been stretched enough. Our commitment to the people of Ontario is to do whatever we can do to bring this argument forward. That's why Premier—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Supplementary?

Mrs. Nina Tangri: Back to the Minister of the Environment: I am disappointed to hear about the response from the federal government—a decision that reeks of contempt for our electorate, who just a month ago gave a strong mandate to our government, who promised an end to cap-and-trade and carbon taxes.

Ontario's economy has been hampered long enough. In recent years, under the former Liberal government, we saw trends that indicated some discretionary spending has been significantly compromised due to the added costs. Damaging policies like the carbon tax will only compound the problem, increasing the price of goods and making life more unaffordable. As we know, a carbon tax increases the price of everything. Ontario is being told one thing: It's all pain, no gain.

How will our government stand up for the people against our federal counterparts and their regressive carbon tax?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member: Again, an excellent question.

As I mentioned, Premier Ford today will be speaking with other Premiers. We've already seen a parade of provinces—Saskatchewan, Ontario, PEI—and that parade is only going to grow and grow. This is going to be quite a message that is going to be sent to the federal government.

I shared with the minister the fact that Ontarians had shown clearly, through the election of this government, through the election of these 76 members, that they rejected a carbon tax. I reminded Minister McKenna that just months ago, the Liberal Party of Ontario was reduced to seven seats in this Legislature based on their failed carbon tax policy.

Ontario has always been an industrious province. It's a province where we want people to succeed. It's a province where we care about the environment. We believe we can do those two things at once.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sit down. Sit down.

The member for Windsor West.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Acting Premier.

Auto and manufacturing jobs are integral to Windsor's economy. Our entire community and many others like it depend on the health and growth of the sector, yet there was not one mention of the automotive sector in the PC plan. We don't know what this government has planned for the industry, if anything at all.

What we do know is that the previous Conservative leaders have repeatedly shown that they would be happy to see the auto sector die, threatening to end all government investment. During the election, the Conservatives said they would cut the Jobs and Prosperity Fund, which provides millions of dollars of necessary investment in our auto sector.

Speaker, are the Conservatives still content to let the auto sector die? Or will they commit today to creating and implementing a comprehensive strategy to protect the industry, our local economy and the jobs that families depend on?

Hon. Christine Elliott: To the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Certainly, we are committed to making life easier and making life more affordable.

Today Minister Wilson is in Washington, DC, where he'll be vigorously advocating for the Canadian and American jobs that depend on our historic trading relationship with the United States. In fact, the US Department of Commerce will be holding a public hearing on the section 232 national security investigation of imports of automobiles and automotive parts. Minister Wilson was invited to attend, and he is there today speaking on behalf of the people of Ontario.

Our government for the people stands shoulder to shoulder with the government of Canada, and we will continue to work with Ontario businesses.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Back to the Acting Premier: President Trump recently threatened new tariffs that would decimate the auto sector in Ontario. On Monday, the Minister of Economic Development said he is going to the United States this week to talk to officials about NAFTA. He claims he will defend our jobs. But we know that in the last three weeks, this government has operated almost exclusively by making backroom deals that favour their friends and lobbyists at the expense of workers and families. They've also just fired Ontario's trade representative to Washington.

Mr. Speaker, with no commitment to an auto strategy, no plan for investment and no trade representative—something that the other side was just saying they're proud of doing away with—how can Ontarians possibly trust that this government will stand up for our auto sector?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, let me assure the people of Ontario that our number one priority is making Ontario open for business. That means creating and protecting jobs, supporting businesses and increasing trade so that the Ontario economy can grow and thrive. We stand shoulder to shoulder with the federal government on this issue. Jobs across our economy, workers and their

families, entire communities are counting on us to defend Ontario's interests and Canada's interests.

From our side, it's going to be a full-court press. Premier Ford is going to be meeting with governors. Minister Wilson is there today. We're going to continue talking about the economic benefits of trade with Ontario. We're also going to make Ontario open for business again.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sit down. Sit down. Next question. The member for Burlington.

TAXATION

Ms. Jane McKenna: Mr. Speaker, first let me say that it fills my heart to see you sitting in that seat.

My question is to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. Today you met the federal minister. This is the same federal minister who wants to impose a regressive carbon tax on the people of Ontario. The federal government knows Ontario can't afford that tax, but the Trudeau Liberals seem to be pushing ahead.

Can the minister tell us what he told the federal counterpart?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Again, congratulations to the member on her election.

I made it clear to Minister McKenna—I made it clear to the federal minister—that Ontario would not stand for a regressive Trudeau carbon tax. I made it clear that Ontario families are not prepared—and have made it clear through this election recently—to carry the burden of an inefficient, ineffective climate change strategy. That's what I made clear.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Back to the minister: Thank you for standing up for Ontarians. Thank you for telling the Trudeau Liberals that Ontario will never accept a carbon tax. We all know that this is a regressive tax. We know this makes life harder for Ontarians. Families have done their part. They are stretched thin. They have had enough.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister outline the steps we will take to stop the Trudeau carbon tax and what he told the federal minister?

Hon. Todd Smith: Finally, a McKenna that's sensible.

Hon. Rod Phillips: As the House leader said, a McKenna that makes sense.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sit down. Sit down.

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, we were very clear, very clear. And listen, the minister has her point of view. But it's not their way or the highway. The people of Ontario have spoken. This government has a clear plan and that plan is to get rid of the cap-and-trade program and that is what we will do.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That completes the time we have for oral questions today.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Brampton North has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services concerning respect for charter rights. This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

This House is now in recess until 3 p.m. this afternoon—

Ms. Suze Morrison: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Oh, sorry.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order.

Ms. Suze Morrison: Thank you. I would like to take a moment to introduce to the House my mom, Sue Ruttan, who is up in the gallery today. Thank you for coming today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Once again a point of order: the member for King–Vaughan.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: Just very briefly to acknowledge in the House Janet MacDougall, who is here and who is a great advocate for families with autism in the city of Toronto. Thank you so much, Janet, for joining us today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Another point of order: the member for Davenport.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I just would like to take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to acknowledge the presence of my father, Geoffrey Stiles, an energy conservation expert, in this House today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order: the member for Timmins.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I want to get into the spirit of the place and welcome Chris Watson, who is actually an advocate of workers with the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I think I'd like to take the opportunity to welcome everyone who hasn't yet been introduced in the House today and remind the members, of course, that we have introduction of guests, according to the standing orders, at the start of the morning and at 3 o'clock as well. Thank you.

There being no deferred votes, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1141 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Hi, everyone. Good afternoon. Sol Mamakwa, Kiiwetinoong riding in northern Ontario. I've got a couple of my constituents here: my sister, Esther Sakakeep, and the Deputy Chief of my home community, Verna Aganash. They're here this afternoon.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Mr. Speaker, as this is the first time I rise, I would like to send my congratulations on your election as the 42nd Speaker of the House.

I would like to introduce my team. First is my husband, Albert Wai. I thought my team of staff were going to be here, but I think they will join in later.

Mr. Billy Pang: I would like to take this opportunity to introduce my team from my constituency office, Vivi Hatzis, Lawrence Luk and Amy Huang; and also my campaign manager, Mark Borer, and my deputy campaign manager, Jason Grossman.

ANNUAL REPORT, FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that the following document was tabled: the 2017-18 annual report from the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

BICYCLE SAFETY

Ms. Jessica Bell: Mr. Speaker, congratulations on your election.

For the past month in my riding of University–Rosedale, I've gone past a white bicycle at Bloor and St. George. The bicycle doesn't move because it is a ghost bicycle. It marks the place where a cyclist was killed.

That cyclist was Dalia Chako, a 58-year-old grandmother and mother, who died near that intersection. As her son has written, "She was ... killed while doing something she loved, riding her bicycle...."

"She was following all the rules of the road and was in the bike lane when she was run over."

Dalia didn't have to die. Neither did Jonas Mitchell, a 35-year-old son and brother and beloved community member, who was struck by a driver who ran a red light in High Park on June 8. Nor did Douglas Crosbie, a father in his fifties, who was hit by a truck in Leslieville, just a few weeks short of his 25th wedding anniversary.

These deaths are tragic, they're needless and, in Toronto, they have been on the rise.

As a community, we have so much more to do to protect our vulnerable road users. Local advocacy groups are leading the way, groups like Cycle TO, GreenPAC, the Toronto Centre for Active Transportation, and Advocacy for Respect for Cyclists. These groups have just recently released the #BuildTheVisionTO report, which has been supported by the city.

So it is absolutely shocking that, on July 4 this year, stakeholders received notice that the Ontario government was cancelling the Ontario Municipal Commuter Cycling Program. This program is vital to the safety of our vulnerable road users and—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Thank you very much.

HOWARD BLOOM

Mr. Doug Downey: I rise today to highlight the great work of Howard Bloom, with a doctorate in philosophy from U of T and a master of education focused on educational psychology, special ed and adaptive instruction. Among his accomplishments, he co-founded a recreational program for at-risk youth, and it continues today.

He also established Blooming Acres, with two locations in my riding. Blooming Acres is a residential community for children, teenagers and adults diagnosed with complex special needs. Accommodations are made for individuals with autism, Asperger's, pervasive developmental disorders, FAS and other diagnoses. The individuals supported are deemed "hard to serve" and "hard to place" due to the complexity of their needs.

Blooming Acres is in Oro-Medonte. It's a 10-bed, licensed residence on 100 acres. It's a spacious farmhouse that he's expanded to 8,500 square feet. Blooming Acres Snow Valley Lodge is a seven-bed, 6,000-square-foot lodge in Springwater, 20 minutes from the first farm.

But there's more. On Friday, July 27, next week, we'll be cutting the ribbon on Apple Blossom Village. It's a spacious, state-of-the-art special care facility designed and built for adults with complex needs. There are 20 private resident suites that can be customized to meet individual requirements and preferences. There's one-to-one residential care support, and more if needed to achieve individual support plans.

Apple Blossom Village is in Oro-Medonte, which is shared with my colleague from Simcoe North. We're pleased to be part of the opening of this excellent facility.

SUPPORTS FOR SENIORS

Mr. Gilles Bisson: To the Minister of Finance: I want to make a suggestion in advance of your consultations that you'll be having sometime in the near future when it comes to the first Conservative budget, and that is helping to support seniors at home.

There's a really simple idea that was brought forward to my constituency office by Paulette Rowlandson. Minister, what she's asking for is—you know those Lifeline services where you're able to have a Lifeline button, an alert, an emergency thing that you can press should you need assistance and need somebody to come and check on you, should you slip and fall at home or become incapacitated? She suggests, why not allow at least the cost of the monitoring and the cost of the unit itself to be used as a tax deduction for your taxes, so that you can get some of that money back?

Obviously, seniors living at home longer and people being able to function independently is better for the individual, and certainly, when it comes to us as a province, it makes sure that we don't have a system of health care that has more people in hospital and long-term-care units than we need to. It's a cost-saving measure for the province.

To the Minister of Health and the Minister of Finance: I want to put this on your radar and will be following it up with a letter to give to you, so that hopefully people who need this type of service, this medical alert service, are able to do it in a way that they're able to get a tax deduction at the end of the year, so it helps defer some of the cost of having that service.

KEMP FAMILY CHARITABLE DONATION

Ms. Lindsey Park: I rise today to recognize the noteworthy and exemplary leadership recently demonstrated in the Clarington community in my riding of Durham.

On Friday, July 6, 2018, the Bowmanville Hospital Foundation announced an unprecedented \$2-million gift from the Kemp family. This gift is in support of the redevelopment and expansion of Bowmanville Hospital. It's the largest gift ever received by the foundation. The future emergency department will be named in honour of Doug and Billie Kemp. The family's commitment to the hospital foundation was proudly announced by their son, Kirk Kemp, surrounded by family. I congratulate the foundation leadership, in particular Frank Cerisano, CEO, and Chris Kooy, board chair, on a fabulous start to the capital campaign.

I want to personally thank the Kemp family for their generosity in the Clarington community. The Kemp family has been an integral part of the Clarington community for decades, beginning when Doug and Billie Kemp moved to the area in the mid-1900s to begin a life of farming. The family's apple farm, now Algoma Orchards, is the largest independently owned apple growing and packing company in Canada.

Families like the Kemp family make the community of Clarington a place that's sure to be an incredible place to live, work and raise a family for decades to come.

RIDING OF BEACHES—EAST YORK

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and congratulations on your election.

I want to acknowledge the 100th birthday of Nelson Mandela, the famed leader of my birth land, South Africa. Now, he was a leader who knew how to govern in the name of all the people.

1510

Thank you to the citizens of Beaches—East York for their confidence and trust in me. Beaches—East York is a staunchly progressive riding, and I'm honoured to represent the community that was home to Agnes Macphail, Stanley Grizzle, Frances Lankin and, most recently, Michael Prue.

Every day, I am approached by Beachers and East Yorkers who ask me to be strong in holding this government to account. They want their government to take the TRC's calls to action seriously and were appalled that the

throne speech contained not even as much as a land acknowledgement.

They want their government to end carding and other systematically racist practices once and for all.

They want a TRC curriculum and a sex ed curriculum that teaches consent and embodies respect for 2SLGBT+ kids.

They understand that asylum seekers are not only legal but an asset to Ontario, that housing is a human right and that all Ontarians deserve clean drinking water.

As did Nelson Mandela, they want to live in a province that works for all of us, not just some of us. They want me to know they are more than taxpayers; they are first and foremost citizens. I look forward to being their voice at Queen's Park.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I rise today to share how my home community of Guelph is taking steps to create jobs and tackle the climate crisis. Yesterday in the House, the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks said that a plan for reducing emissions is forthcoming. I suggest he look to Guelph for inspiration.

In May, Guelph city council voted unanimously to adopt a goal of becoming a net-zero-carbon community and to have city operations powered by 100% renewable energy by 2050. Just a few days ago, the city chose a sustainable green developer for the new Baker District redevelopment that will create 950 jobs, deliver a new library, housing and commercial space—all saving energy.

Last month, Guelph and Wellington county were named as one of the finalists in the national Smart Cities Challenge. Their proposal for a circular food economy will increase access to affordable food, reduce food waste and create 50 new businesses.

This is what climate leadership looks like. So I would like to thank the people of Guelph, Guelph city council and staff for showing the rest of Ontario that building a sustainable economy and protecting our planet go hand in hand.

RIDING OF KITCHENER–CONESTOGA

Mr. Mike Harris: Mr. Speaker, congratulations. As your neighbouring MPP, I congratulate you on your election as Speaker.

I rise today to thank the good people of Kitchener–Conestoga for this opportunity to represent them in this Legislature. I wish to express my gratitude to my campaign volunteers, who also include my incredible wife, Kim, and my five children for their commitment and sacrifice.

In the last month, I've been to community events talking to constituents across my riding, including at recent Canada Day festivals in the communities of Maryhill, New Hamburg and Elmira to personally extend thanks and discuss with them how we can move forward

on shared priorities. These conversations will continue at upcoming agricultural festivals in Wellesley and Baden, where I look forward to enjoying the delicious foods of Waterloo region.

Mr. Speaker, I must tell you that people are excited about the return of affordability and economic growth under Doug Ford's government. They are excited by recent legislation and announcements that will show we are fulfilling our campaign promises in tackling the deficit and cleaning up the hydro mess.

As a pioneering community, Waterloo region is delighted that our government is committed to lowering taxes and hydro rates to help individuals and businesses while protecting front-line services. They are also relieved that we are serious in finally completing much-needed transit and infrastructure projects after 15 years of disappointment and lost opportunity.

I look forward to serving Kitchener–Conestoga in this assembly over the coming years.

CIRCONSCRIPTION

DE MUSHKEGOWUK–BAIE JAMES

RIDING OF MUSHKEGOWUK–JAMES BAY

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, monsieur le Président, et félicitations pour votre élection. Je veux remercier le monde de ma circonscription de Mushkegowuk–James Bay de m'avoir donné le plaisir et le privilège de les représenter. Je veux remercier le monde qui a travaillé sur ma campagne, et mon collègue Gilles Bisson, qui m'a encouragé à me présenter comme candidat. Je veux remercier aussi mon épouse, Manon, et mes deux enfants, qui ont tout le temps cru en moi.

My riding includes 32,000 people, with 60% francophone and 30% First Nations. Since the throne speech, I have been receiving numerous phone calls and texts. You have to understand that francophones and First Nations have things in common: We both are very proud of our culture and our language, and we both fight constantly to maintain them. And, Mr. Speaker, to hear nothing—rien—in the throne speech was a bit disappointing for both francophones and First Nations. To see that both ministries have been watered down to other ministries worries us a lot.

When we enter the House, we give a sign of respect to you, Mr. Speaker. You would think that the least the government would do is recognize the lands and territories of the First Nations that we are on.

Et la moindre des choses qu'on peut attendre d'un gouvernement est d'entendre dans un discours du trône un simple passage en français, qui fait partie des deux langues officielles—

Le Président (L'hon. Ted Arnott): Merci beaucoup.

WOMEN'S SOFTBALL AND FAST PITCH CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: I'm pleased to rise today to recognize the outstanding achievements of two local

women's softball teams from the village of Kars, located in my riding of Carleton. The two teams from the riding have made it to the Canadian national championships. Kars Aces is the name, and the senior women's team from the club is headed to Saskatoon for the nationals. The intermediate women's team from the club is headed to Moncton, New Brunswick, for the Eastern Canadian Softball Championships.

The head coach is Mr. Norman Adams, who has been coaching since 1989. Mr. Adams reached out to me, asking for 160 Ontario pins so that they can present them to the four teams they will be playing before the championship rounds. We have ordered those pins, and I'm pleased that we'll be providing them with the pins that they need soon.

The national Canadian women's fast pitch championship has been going on since 1965, and the Eastern Canadian Softball Championship Committee is made up of the six most eastern provinces. Apparently, the Kanata Pirates won gold in 2008.

I would like to ask my fellow colleagues to please rise with me to congratulate both of these teams as they represent Ontario, and to wish them good luck.

EVENTS IN PARRY SOUND

Mr. Norman Miller: I rise today to highlight some of the great things happening around Parry Sound and the Thirty Thousand Islands area of Georgian Bay this summer.

This Friday marks the start of the Festival of the Sound. This festival, which features classical, jazz and, this year, folk music is in its 39th year. Most of the concerts are held at Parry Sound's beautiful Stockey Centre, while some are held on the Island Queen during a cruise around the sound.

I also want to mention that the Island Queen has started a new tour for those who wish to get off the boat and explore one of the beautiful islands of Georgian Bay. The Islander adventure tour uses a 40-passenger boat to take guests on a cruise that includes an hour-long stop at Huckleberry Island, where a naturalist from the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve takes them on a guided tour.

Finally, I want to let everyone know that Henry's fish restaurant at Sans Souci is back up and running this summer under new owners. Ted and Rachel Larocque purchased Henry's this spring, and I can tell you from personal experience that the fish is just as delicious as ever. If you don't have a boat of your own, you can get to Henry's by plane with Georgian Bay Airways, by water taxi or as part of a boat tour on the Chippewa III. I know many people, locals and visitors alike, were disappointed when Henry's closed last summer, so I'm pleased to see it back up and running. I wish Ted and Rachel Larocque all the best in their new endeavour.

So if anyone is looking for a great getaway this summer, Parry Sound has lots to offer.

1520

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

COMPASSIONATE CARE ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LES SOINS DE COMPASSION

Mr. Oosterhoff moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 3, An Act providing for the development of a provincial framework on hospice palliative care / *Projet de loi 3, Loi prévoyant l'élaboration d'un cadre provincial des soins palliatifs.*

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Niagara West can give a brief explanation of his bill.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: The bill enacts the Compassionate Care Act, 2018. The act requires the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to develop a provincial framework designed to support improved access to hospice palliative care. The minister must table a report setting out the provincial framework in the Legislative Assembly within one year after the bill comes into force. Within five years after the report is tabled, the minister must prepare and table a report on the state of hospice palliative care in Ontario. Each report must be published on the government of Ontario website.

PETITIONS

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Norman Miller: I have a health care hospital petition. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare has been considering the future of the Huntsville District Memorial and South Muskoka Memorial hospitals since 2012; and

"Whereas accessible health care services are of critical importance to all Ontarians, including those living in rural areas; and

"Whereas patients currently travel significant distances to access acute in-patient care, emergency, diagnostic and surgical services available at these hospitals; and

"Whereas the funding for small and medium-sized hospitals has not kept up with increasing costs including hydro rates and collective bargaining agreements made by the province; and

"Whereas the residents of Muskoka and surrounding areas feel that MAHC has not been listening to them; and

"Whereas the board of MAHC has yet to take the single-site proposal from 2015 off its books;

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

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario request the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care commits to maintaining core hospital services at both Huntsville District Memorial Hospital and South Muskoka Memorial Hospital and ensure small and medium-sized hospitals receive enough funding to maintain core services.”

I’ve signed this and support this petition and will give it to Eric.

CURRICULUM

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have a petition signed by many residents of the London area and it reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the health and physical education curriculum empowers young people to make informed decisions about relationships and their bodies;

“Whereas gender-based violence, gender inequality, unintended pregnancies, ‘sexting,’ and HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) pose serious risks to the safety and well-being of young people;

“Whereas one in three women and one in six men experience sexual violence in Canada, and a lack of age-appropriate education about sexual health and healthy relationships leaves children and youth vulnerable to exploitation;

“Whereas one in five parents reported their own child being a victim of cyberbullying; and

“Whereas Doug Ford and the Conservative government is dragging Ontario backward, requiring students to learn an outdated sex ed curriculum that excludes information about consent, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexting, cyberbullying and safe and healthy relationships;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Education to continue the use of the 2015 health and physical education curriculum in schools and move Ontario forward, not backward.”

I fully support this petition, affix my signature and will give it to page Colin to take to the table.

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION HALLS

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I have also a petition for the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that reads as follows:

“Whereas the poppy is a traditional symbol of courage under fire and valour for Canadian veterans; and

“Whereas the current government campaigned on removing property taxes for Legion halls; and

“Whereas members of the New Democratic Party during the campaign were found to have made disparaging comments about both the use of the poppy and Canada’s veterans;

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

“That the government follow through on all efforts to support Legion halls as important parts of Ontario’s communities.”

I fully support this petition and I will add my signature to it.

ENERGY POLICIES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Renée Valade-Ross from Capreol, in my riding for this petition. It reads as follows:

“Whereas hydro bills in Ontario have become unaffordable for too many people, and that reducing hydro bills by up to 30% for families and businesses is an ambitious but realistic target;

“Whereas the only way to fix the hydro system is to address the root causes of high prices including privatization, excessive profit margins, oversupply and more;

“Whereas Ontario families should not have to pay time-of-use premiums, and those living in a rural or northern region should not have to pay higher, punitive, delivery charges; and

“Whereas returning Hydro One to public ownership would deliver over \$7 billion back to the province” of Ontario and its people;

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

Reduce hydro bills “for businesses and families by up to 30%, eliminating mandatory time-of-use, ending unfair rural delivery costs, and restoring public ownership of Hydro One.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Hannah to bring it to the Clerks.

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION HALLS

Mr. Daryl Kramp: As a proud member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 363, I’m certainly most pleased to present this petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the poppy is a traditional symbol of courage under fire and valour for Canadian veterans; and

“Whereas the current government campaigned on removing property taxes for Legion halls; and

“Whereas members of the New Democratic Party during the campaign were found to have made disparaging comments about both the use of the poppy and Canada’s veterans;

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

“That the government follow through on all efforts to support Legion halls as important parts of Ontario’s communities.”

We all certainly recognize the need for all of our Legions to have the support that we can from our communities in every way possible.

ANTI-SMOKING INITIATIVES FOR YOUTH

1530

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Cheri Bainard from my riding for sending this petition. It reads as follows:

“Whereas in the past 10 years in Ontario, 86% of all movies with on-screen smoking were rated for youth, and the tobacco industry has a well-documented history of promoting tobacco use on-screen;

“Whereas a scientific report released by the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit estimated that 185,000 children in Ontario today will be recruited to smoking by exposure to on-screen smoking, and more than 59,000 will eventually die from tobacco-related diseases incurring at least \$1.1 billion in health care costs;

“Whereas the Ontario government has a stated goal to achieve the lowest smoking rates in Canada, and 79% of Ontarians support not allowing smoking in movies rated G, PG, 14A...;

“Whereas the Minister of Government and Consumer Services has the authority to amend the regulations of the Film Classification Act...;”

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

“To examine the ways in which the regulations of the Film Classification Act could be amended to reduce smoking in youth-rated films released in Ontario.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask page Eliana to bring it to the Clerk.

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION HALLS

Mr. Lorne Coe: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the poppy is a traditional symbol of courage under fire and valour for Canadian veterans; and

“Whereas the current government campaigned on removing property taxes for Legion halls; and

“Whereas members of the New Democratic Party during the campaign were found to have made disparaging comments about both the use of the poppy and Canada’s veterans;

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

“That the government follow through on all efforts to support Legion halls as important parts of Ontario’s communities.”

I agree with this particular petition. I’m going to affix my signature to it and provide it to page Eric to bring to the table.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further petitions? Going twice. Further petitions? Therefore, the time for petitions has now expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

Resuming the debate adjourned on July 18, 2018, on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke—if it’s still that one—to continue on with debate.

Hon. John Yakubuski: I did get to begin speaking this morning, but it was interrupted by the clock, so I have a split performance today—not a split personality; a split performance. I wanted to make that very, very clear. Although sometimes I wonder about what it must be like in the NDP, because if I asked the question, “Who wants to close Pickering?”, how many would raise their hands? And if I said, “Who wants to keep Pickering open?”, would they be allowed to raise their hands? It’s got to be really tough over there these days.

I’ve noticed in question period that they really think the election actually didn’t happen. They want us to follow their agenda. They’re asking questions in the House about things that the people of Ontario decided on June 7. Most recently—well, we’ve only had a couple of question periods—we hear these questions about cap-and-trade and the punitive carbon tax, like somehow they thought we were going to keep it. I don’t really quite understand where they’re coming from.

When we campaigned during May and into June, we heard it all across Ontario: It’s time to get rid of the carbon tax. It’s time to get rid of cap-and-trade. Shut it down. After the election, when I travelled in my riding, the great riding of Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke—and a shout-out to those great people who continue to place their trust in me and have sent me back here for a fifth term: Thank you very much. I really do appreciate it. When I travelled the riding after the election, Canada Day was a big day. It’s a great day to honour our country, the greatest country in the world. It’s a great day to stand up and speak about how proud we are to be citizens of this wonderful country and to thank those who came before us to make this country so great. But it’s also time to rub shoulders, as they say, and mingle with the people in all of the events that you have the pleasure of attending on Canada Day. And I don’t know how many times I heard on Canada Day, “You make sure that that carbon tax is gone. You make sure that there’s no carbon tax and cap-and-trade in Ontario. We don’t want it. It hurts business and it punishes families. It’s time to get rid of it.” I heard that over and over and over again. And voila, Premier Doug Ford and the Minister of the Environment: cap-and-trade gone in Ontario. Promise made, promise kept.

But we didn't arrive at this conclusion by ourselves. Every polling agency out there has found that over the last little while, the support for carbon taxes and cap-and-trade is sinking like a rock—gone—because the people have realized the scam that has been perpetrated on them by the governments that have instituted cap-and-trade and carbon taxes. They take money out of everybody's pockets and spend it on their little boutique programs, which have no other purpose than to curry favour with a specific portion of the electorate: "We'll take money from everybody, but we'll give you \$14,000 if you buy this car." A \$14,000 rebate to buy a car: How can can possibly say that is fair? The electric car industry is not in its infancy anymore. It's been around for over a decade, for sure. So why would the struggling family that can't pay its hydro bills, which were driven up by 300% by the previous government, have to take more money out of their pockets so someone could get a \$14,000 rebate on an electric car? It doesn't make any sense.

All of the experts will also tell you that the carbon taxes and the cap-and-trade have done nothing to actually reduce emissions. It's a shell game. It's like moving the rice around on the plate. You take it from one and you give it to another.

The people in this province made it crystal clear: "We've had enough." The Liberals felt that they could go on and on with these kinds of programs, taking a little bit here and a little bit there, but—do you know the old saying, the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back? That's what happened to the electorate here in Ontario. They just couldn't take it anymore. They said enough is enough.

Hon. Todd Smith: Trop c'est trop.

Hon. John Yakabuski: Trop c'est trop. Enough is enough.

Former Premier Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals just didn't understand. They actually believed that what they were peddling out there, like the old snake oil salesmen of the past, was going to be lapped up by the electorate one more time. But we weren't into the campaign very long when they realized that they weren't buying it this time.

Part of it is the self-education of the public on carbon taxes and cap-and-trade. When they first brought these things out, a lot of people wanted to believe the government and that what they were doing with these programs was actually going to have a huge effect on the environment and the emissions that are happening in our society and in our economies. Then they found out that if you have a lot of emissions, you buy some credits from someone else; you trade them here, you trade them there. It's like a Ponzi scheme. Then they found out that over \$400 million would be going to the state of California.

Hon. Todd Smith: Hollywood.

Hon. John Yakabuski: Hollywood. Money from Ontario's struggling families was going to Hollywood actors and actresses making \$20 million a film. How do you square that? You don't.

The more people understood about this kind of a scheme and this kind of a scam, the more they were convinced that it wasn't to their benefit; it was to the benefit of the government, which thought that they could fool you one more time, where they'd just say, "We'll play this game. We'll get you a free this, a free that"—\$500 rebates on windows, when you didn't really even need that type of window. But if you're getting a \$500 rebate, you're going to buy it.

Like I said, there's no easier money to spend than someone else's. But the people said, "No more." And the PC Party, under Doug Ford, said, "The people are right, because we're for the people."

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Be seated, please. Please be seated.

Questions and comments?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: "For the people"—I think it's only for some of the people, especially Tory insiders, as we're finding out.

I just want to say a couple of things here. The member went on and on about the terrible parts of cap-and-trade, but the basic principle of cap-and-trade is actually quite sound. I will agree with you, as a New Democrat, that the government bill that was introduced under cap-and-trade didn't provide the transparency that was needed, and there were things that had to be adjusted in that bill. We campaigned on that; we don't have a problem—but not to scrap it.

Cap-and-trade, essentially, is this: Those who pollute are the ones who are paying in order to incent other people to do things to lower their carbon emissions. That's what cap-and-trade is all about. If you're the polluter and you're the one who's causing the problem, you will be taxed by way of cap-and-trade—if I were to use the Tory language—and then you use that money to create programs to incent people to reduce their carbon emissions. That's a logical way of doing it.

But what this government is doing is, they're not only cancelling that particular approach—it will be interesting if they replace it with anything. But what is really galling is, when you look at their Bill 2—and we'll get a chance to debate that, I'm sure, next week. They're taking the cost of all of the decisions around cap-and-trade—for example, the cancellation of the wind farms, all of that stuff—and they're saying, "We're moving it from the hydro bill and we're going to put it on your tax bill."

1540

What this bill does is transfer the cost from the ratepayer and the rates that we pay on hydro, and it transfers all of the liabilities that will be assumed as a result of the actions you're taking on the wind farm and the actions that you're taking in schedule 1 of this bill, and you're saying, "It's the taxpayer who's going to be paying."

I'm going to say what Mr. Harris said some years ago: There is only one taxpayer. All you're doing is you're transferring it from the right pocket to the left pocket. At

the end of the day, the taxpayer is on for the bill. That is not very conservative, in my view.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: As always, it's an incredible honour to be able to stand, and especially to speak to the fine minister's comments that he brought forward this morning as well as this afternoon.

I do have to very briefly address the member opposite from the New Democratic Party.

I've got to say, it's a very surprising day when I hear the member for the New Democratic Party referring to the cost for taxpayers. It's not language that we're used to hearing from the left. I know that one of his colleagues stood up yesterday and declared himself a proud socialist. So it's going to be very exciting to see how the next four years play out from that perspective. I know that socialists do like to steal from Peter to pay Paul, and perhaps steal from everyone else in between.

The reality is that the member this morning and this afternoon spoke about the promise of the throne speech, and that promise of a better life for all Ontarians, that equal opportunity that has brought forward. He addressed it in a very eloquent and passionate way. The way the member speaks is always one that I think is reflective of all the passion that we may feel in our hearts but not always express so vehemently with our mouths the way the member does. But the member definitely, as well, spoke about a very important subject, that of carbon pricing.

Of course, the cap-and-trade program, as we all know—even those on the left side of the spectrum, who may not want to admit it—was sending money to California. We were paying for California to pollute. It was hurting families in our constituencies. It was hurting families in the constituencies of the official opposition and—well, I guess they're not a third party—the independents. It was hurting the previous government's constituents as well.

I think it's important we recognize that we're here on behalf of our constituents. The first rule of good governance—we all know this—is do no harm. The government before us did harm—a great deal of harm, in fact, over the last 15 years.

So it's very exciting to be part of a government that is committed to doing no harm and, in fact, doing good for the people of Ontario. It's clear that the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke brought that forward this afternoon and this morning, so thank you for your fine contributions.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to respond to some of the comments made by the honourable minister, starting with a quote from a letter from the Sudbury Integrated Nickel Operations, better known as Glencore. Glencore is the second-biggest mining company in Sudbury. They directly employ 1,800 employees but support 8,000 jobs. I will quote directly from their letter.

They go on to say that, basically—they have a number of projects going on in Sudbury that they have announced—combined, projects “are a US\$1.3 billion infusion of new investment and demonstrates Glencore's commitment to its operations in Sudbury and ... in Canada....

“However, to ensure that these and future investment are fully realized we must have regulatory certainty.”

They go on to say, “Achieving certainty around carbon pricing in light of the new government's proposed scrapping of the current cap and trade” is worrisome. “We are a highly trade exposed industry, a low GHG emitter”—greenhouse gas emitter—“and more than 98% of the energy used by our Sudbury operations is carbon free; these factors must be considered when assessing the impact any carbon pricing would have on our operations.”

They go on to say, “Having confidence in our projected electricity costs.” Electricity, you will know, is one of the largest expenses for this company—“and our exposure to increased costs is material as we have one of two remaining smelters in the province, operated with an electric furnace.” So what do they do? If they need to melt more rocks, they turn it up.

Did you know, Speaker, that they are the highest user of electricity in all of the province? They are in my riding. They are not happy with the government that changes the rules halfway through.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Ms. Lindsey Park: I'd like to thank the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for his passionate remarks. When I was door-knocking in Durham, I heard a lot of similar things to what the member heard.

Two things in particular really bothered people about the cap-and-trade system that was brought in under the Liberals. One was that this was simply a slush fund, and not only was it a slush fund, but it was a slush fund to cover up and hide the spending spree that the Liberals were on. The second thing—and I think this bothered people more than the first—was that it was hundreds of millions of dollars simply being sent to California through this program. Look, we acknowledge the challenges of climate change, but sending money to California was doing zip-all to reduce emissions in Ontario.

To proceed with cap-and-trade, which it seems the members opposite, the NDP, are in favour of, would be to proceed in a way that's simply disrespectful to the people of Ontario. It's disrespectful to the people of Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, and it's disrespectful to the people of Durham in my riding.

There's a way to be responsible about the climate, and I'll be the first to sit at that table and work on that plan, but it is not necessary to have this complicated cap-and-trade system that's sending money to California and is simply a slush fund to hide the spending spree that the former government was on.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I now return to the Minister of Transportation for his final comments.

Hon. John Yakabuski: I want to thank the members from Timmins, Niagara West, Nickel Belt and Durham for their comments.

To the member from Timmins: I would certainly wish to point out to him—we'll have a chance to debate Bill 2 next week, but I do want to point out to him that the taxes under cap-and-trade were harming individuals and families the most. When they have no choice but to heat their homes in a province like Ontario, and an undisclosed amount was going for every fill-up of natural gas or every BTU that was created heat-wise by natural gas, and also for every litre of fuel to drive to work or take their kids to soccer or hockey or whatever, the individual families were paying for that over and over again. It's a punitive tax. It drives up the cost of everything.

If you look at the prices at every fast-food restaurant in this province these days, they've all gone up. It's all part of the scheme, driving up the cost of everything. You've got to transport those products to those restaurants, to the grocery stores and everything else. It drives up the cost of everything. It drives up the cost of living.

I also want to say to the member from Nickel Belt that I understand certainty. Everyone likes certainty. I'm pretty confident that with the alliance that is slowly building with Brian Pallister in Manitoba, Scott Moe in Saskatchewan and even Premier Gallant in Prince Edward Island—they're all saying, "Wait a minute here. This cap-and-trade, this carbon tax thing, is a scam. We don't support it. We're going to fight it." Before this is done, I think we will have certainty. We'll have certainty with the provinces across this country, and we'll have certainty next year when Justin Trudeau gets his walking papers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? I recognize—

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I miss the People's Guarantee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Order, please.

Further debate? I am now recognizing the member from Kiiwetinoong.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch.

Remarks in Oji-Cree.

My name is Sol Mamakwa. I am originally from the community of Kingfisher Lake. It's a small community of 600 people. It's a fly-in community. I'm very pleased to be here today to paint a picture, I guess, of the area, the new riding that was created.

I'd like to acknowledge the great people of Kiiwetinoong. I have about 32,000 people, the population. When we talk about treaties with First Nations, we have Treaty 3, Treaty 9 and Treaty 5 that exist in the riding.

1550

I'd also like to acknowledge my guests here, my community leadership.

It's been really interesting, the last few days, for me. When I first decided to run—I've always been an

advocate for the First Nations side. I realized that this is a colonial system; this is a colonial government. The legislation, the policies, the approaches never served First Nations people best.

I spoke about my language. Oji-Cree is my first language. It's really an historic moment as well for us, as First Nations people, to be able to speak the language in the House. Also, most importantly, it's an historic moment for the people of Kiiwetinoong riding and all the Indigenous-language speakers of Ontario.

Further, let it be said that the people of Kiiwetinoong have worked hard over many years to advance their issues outside of government. My role as an MPP gives us an opportunity to push what is right and what is just inside Ontario's Legislature.

Again, as the newly elected member for Kiiwetinoong, I am deeply honoured to be here standing before everyone and again, acknowledging the significance of it, I would like to thank the Creator and my people for being here.

At the opening of this session, the Speaker acknowledged the traditional territory of the First Nations people. It really hit home for me. Again, I'd like to acknowledge the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit and the Six Nations of the Grand River that we are on.

Also, I'd like to acknowledge the many First Nations and Métis and, in more recent times, the Inuit who have travelled through this territory: once upon time as hunters, gatherers and traders, but in more recent times in search of work, education and a better way of life. To all those people who have succeeded in this goal, I salute you. But to those sitting on the margins of society in our region and struggling to achieve what Canada and Ontario promised would be our future within the treaties, I will work hard to ensure that we in this Legislature work towards building a system where our people have access to those great things: to education, to jobs, to the support systems that you need when coming from a small community to a big city. The structure right here that I'm standing in today is a very foreign structure for me.

When we talk about Kiiwetinoong riding, I start thinking about equity; I start thinking about equality. I have 26 fly-in communities that are the responsibility of the federal government, and when we talk about equity, that does not exist. This is Ontario. This is 2018. We need to do something with that—all the human rights issues that are at play in my communities, the Third World conditions that are happening in our communities.

So when I talk about equity, when we talk about physician services, in my home community, we have five days of physician services per month, 60 days per year to access a physician. Everyone in Ontario has access to a family doctor. We have a community doctor, and the wait times for that are very long.

When we talk about long-term care in the Sioux Lookout area, our wait time is four and a half years. When we talk about equity, when we talk about equality, that does not exist—again, this is 2018—and the reason being, I

believe, is the jurisdictional ambiguity, the federal-provincial ambiguity that exists. Our people fall into the jurisdictional black hole of systems and structures that are misaligned, and our people are placed into a jurisdictional Ping-Pong. That's your responsibility.

I'm glad the Minister of Health is sitting here listening to this.

There are just too many needless deaths that happen in our communities. There's too much unnecessary suffering that happens to our people.

Last year, in my previous role as a health adviser for a political territorial organization, we dealt with a lot of youth suicides. It is very troubling for me, as an individual, as a human being, when you hear of girls as young as 11 years old taking their own lives. Where is the humanity in that? We try to provide mental health services to these individuals, where we have to send them to Ottawa, we have to send them to Saskatchewan, we have to send them to Alberta, we have to send them to BC to access those level 1 psychiatric units. In Thunder Bay, they only have eight to 10 units that are able to provide that service. That's the reality of it.

One of the things that really, when I talk about equality and equity—I was hoping that the Minister of Transportation would be here. There are incidents where, because we're fly-in communities—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Sorry. I just want to remind all members in the Legislature that it is not parliamentary to refer to someone who is a member of our Legislature who is not here. I would ask, just as a comment—but now I see that he is here; he's just not in his seat. But there we have it. Now we all know. He's moving around on me.

Forgive me for interrupting, but please continue. I'll turn it back to the member from Kiiwetinoong.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Sorry, sir; sorry, Minister.

One of the things that is striking is when communities deal with, certainly, some real issues. I know there was one community a few years ago, two or three years ago—a young boy went into medical distress. It really hit me, to a point whereby Ornge was trying to—it was the middle of the night, 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, and they couldn't land because the lights kept coming off. They tried three times. They went back, and they'd come again. It ended up whereby they couldn't land and it was just too late. The airports are not looked at as essential services because we're on reserve. I think when you actually look at some of the municipal airports, they're essential services. It's the same with policing; it's not an essential service. That's what I mean when I say "needless deaths." That type of thing would not be allowed down here. But it becomes normalized, it becomes socialized for scarcity—some of the services that are there. Those are the realities of it.

1600

I was discouraged during the throne speech whereby there was no mention of Indigenous peoples. I was discouraged that there was no mention of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

One of the things that we started looking at with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, focusing on health—Ontario, Canada and First Nations signed a document called the Charter of Relationship Principles Governing Health System Transformation in the NAN Territory. It's to take the governance piece of health back to the First Nations. Without any accountability, without any responsibility, without any resource allocation going back to the community, things will not change. We cannot make decisions at this level in Toronto or Ottawa to make change in these communities. We need to start looking at self-governance, the autonomy of First Nations, whereby they take the control of the communities. A step towards reconciliation is doing that work with First Nations.

In Sioux Lookout, back in 1997, we entered into an agreement with the province and with the federal government where we amalgamated hospitals. We had a federal and a provincial hospital. The four parties worked together—the federal government, the provincial government, the municipal government, and First Nations—to come up with a hospital that works for everyone. To me, that is reconciliation.

Within the Kiiwetinoong riding, the cost of doing business, the cost of providing service, the cost of doing things in our communities is very high. A million dollars may be worth \$500,000 in Fort Severn, Eabametoong or communities like that. I think we need to start looking at the remoteness quotient or a factor that will refactor those in in those agreements that we sign with the communities.

Another thing that I hear people talk about is engagement with respect to the education curriculum. Engagement is very critical, but everybody has their own definition of what engagement is. Engagement can mean talking to the leadership, talking to the Grand Chief, talking to the council. But real engagement is when you actually talk to people on the ground. I hear something about engagement on the education curriculum—you need to do that with First Nations, where you actually engage with people.

At this time I want to acknowledge the Chief from the Eabametoong First Nation in talking about how the court cancelled the mining permit over the lack of consultation. That's what consultation means: We've got to talk to the people.

I know some of these stories are very sad, but they're real. I have to make it clear that reconciliation will happen with or without government. Reconciliation will continue on. It only depends on what side you're going to be on. Change is coming. Change is happening. Change in our communities is happening today. I believe that we are here in the Ontario Legislature to make that change. I'm able to help in every way I can to be the voice of the north, the voice of the riding of Kiiwetinoong, of Sioux Lookout, Red Lake, Sandy Lake and Eabametoong.

We often also hear news about the people of Kiiwetinoong, that our people are suffering, as I said earlier. I talked about suicides, children and youth, poverty, lack of infrastructure, lack of essential services. In some

cases, children lack basic nutrition, nutritious breakfasts, comfortable desks in heated schools. There are so many things that become so normal for our people that would not be acceptable in your ridings in Toronto.

An example like health: Even though it's a federal responsibility, they still run it on a nursing station model. I have communities that have 3,000 to 3500 people. A little bit down south there's a community of 2,700 people, and they have a hospital. They have nine beds of long-term care. In Sioux Lookout, we have 19 or 20 beds for long-term care for 30,000 people.

I know one of the things is that the province never funds anything on reserve, and that's where the jurisdictional ambiguity exists. Why are we not having hospital structures on reserve? I think that's something that we need to start having discussions on, funding infrastructure on reserve. Just because we're First Nations, just because we're brown, doesn't mean we're different. This is Ontario. I believe that's something that we need to deal with, the jurisdictional ambiguity. I keep talking about the jurisdictional black hole our people fall into.

Again, I'm very hopeful. There's hope among our children, our youth, that they will have access to a great education, good jobs, careers. There's hope among our people in the north, the leadership, the towns. We started looking at building roads, infrastructure, economic development opportunities, revenue-sharing agreements, to ensure that they're self-sustaining and self-reliant in the way our grandmothers and our grandfathers once were before the treaties were signed. There is hope among our elders with language, with the lifelines of positive change, that our children will be well fed and go to good schools.

As the MPP of Kiiwetinoong, I am guided by all of these things—guided by my ancestors, who signed Treaty 9, Treaty 5 and Treaty 3. The sole objective of signing those treaties was to ensure that our people live a good life. And yes, while I'll be guided by the challenges and despair of our people in Kiiwetinoong in the Far North, I also will be guided every single day by the hope that is there.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments?

Mr. David Piccini: I would like to thank the member from Kiiwetinoong for his comments and congratulate him on his election to this place.

Just to address a few of the things he said: One, I think we've got an active listener and leader in our minister in charge of the file.

With respect to health care and physician services, an area close to my heart, having worked in health care, it's tough, and I hear you. Whether it's in rural communities or across Ontario, the lack of access to physician services—it's tough when over the last 15 years, we've made cuts to residency positions, to funding those health care professionals. We were elected on a mandate to listen to those health care professionals, to ensure the provision of that dollar gets down to support them, so

that we can get more physicians and health care professionals in those areas that need it. So thank you for those comments.

But I have to get back to the impassioned remarks made earlier by the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. Our own watchdog a number of years ago said that the cap-and-trade system—he warned us that the pitfalls of this system would be sending millions of dollars to California. It's tough; the previous government just didn't get it. They just didn't get it.

He was passionate when speaking about rural Ontario. I was at those same Canada Day parades when people came up and said, "You've got to get rid of the cap-and-trade system. It's making our life tougher." Single moms, moms and dads, parents getting in their minivans, getting in their trucks and going two hours to work, making the long distance to soccer and hockey practice in their minivans—unable to afford the gas and the cost of everything going up. It's very ironic that, in those same minivans, you could fit the entire Liberal caucus. Those moms and dads sent a clear message to that government in the last election: that they will not stand by and idly watch the misuse of their tax dollars.

On this side of the House, we're going to stand up for those moms, those dads and folks in rural Ontario and ensure we respect their tax dollars.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: I actually just wanted to start by thanking my colleague in the opposition for showing us again, in action, what true leadership is.

I want to connect it to—I wish I knew your name, sir, in the red tie.

Interjection.

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: Yes, you.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I'm Sam.

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: Hey, how are you doing?

You had said earlier that the first rule of good governance is, "Do no harm." I love that, because that's what I see is happening with my colleague right here, by speaking about these kinds of issues, which are so difficult for us to conceive of because our experiences are so different, and to do so from a place of respect, from a place of humility and a place of empathy.

I'm nervous about the kinds of conversations that we've been having in the House, but I think that we have an amazing leader and an amazing example of what leadership can look like, even when we have such contrasting and different, disparate experiences. So I just wanted to say again thank you for providing us with such a clear example.

I think that we're going to have to do a lot of sitting back and reflecting on the way that we communicate with each other, because this is a historic moment. My colleague is the first person who is First Nations to be elected to this House. That is amazing—

Applause.

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: Yes, honestly.

For me, what that means is that we have an opportunity to show a whole group of people who never thought that we could work together that we can. I know that we're not going to agree on everything—it's clear that we won't agree on everything—but we can listen. I should be talking to the Speaker, but I'm learning. We should listen, Speaker, to what people are saying and recognize that these are their real experiences, and together, we can make a difference.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Ms. Donna Skelly: I'm so very proud to be standing here as the very first representative for the new riding of Flamborough–Glanbrook.

Interjection: Yay!

Ms. Donna Skelly: Yes, I'm very proud.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: It's a great area.

Ms. Donna Skelly: It is, it is—and I have big shoes to fill.

Mr. Speaker, as you heard so eloquently from my colleague the representative for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, the people of Ontario voted for a party that stood to make their lives better. They voted for a party that now sits in this chamber with a decisive victory.

Our plan, that people right across this province support, includes cleaning up the hydro mess. It includes restoring accountability and trust. It includes ending hallway health care, creating good jobs and putting more money back in their pockets.

We are already moving swiftly with our first three priorities: We're going to bring an end to the York University strike, and we are repealing cap-and-trade and cancelling wind and solar projects. The days of having to choose between heating and eating will soon be over, as we move to save the Ontario family an average of 12% off their hydro bills.

Every cent of cap-and-trade slush fund spending is money that was taken out of the pockets of Ontario families and businesses. We believe this money should go back into their pockets—and it will. We openly and clearly campaigned on cancelling the cap-and-trade carbon tax and this fund. It was a commitment in our plan for the people, and we are keeping our promise.

We made a promise to the people to make life better and to make it more affordable. That's what we are doing. Promise made, promise kept.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: They say in politics that it's all about timing. I think that speech is fine in itself, but considering who we just had speak, it was a bit off-topic, I must say.

I want to say something, as someone who represented Timmins–James Bay for years: I cannot hold a candle to this man when it comes to representing people in the First Nations that I used to represent and that, certainly, he represents now, because he has lived the experience. He has walked the walk. He has had to look people in the

eye and live in the communities to see what happens. There's good and there's bad, and wonderful experiences and lots of laughter and love, as we know, in all of our families and our communities, but there's also a lot of tragedy.

I have got to say, as somebody who represented the James Bay for a number of years, that it always struck me, the degree to which they were always willing, as a people, to let me in and to sort of help me try to understand.

But as I listen to my friend the member for Kiiwetinoong, I'm really starting to understand now how little I actually know—and that's somebody who has actually done it for a number of years.

You talk about hallway medicine. They would just be happy to have the hallway, because they have no health care in their communities, in many cases. He just spoke about how we have federal nursing stations on reserve, rather than having the provincial government do its job of providing health care in those communities.

I'm lucky. Attawapiskat and Fort Albany, along with Moose Factory—we had a provincial hospital in those communities. In most of your communities—I can't use your name—it's nursing stations, as I had up in Peawanuck and as I had in Marten Falls and as I had in Kashechewan. It's 20 to 25 families living in a house; poor infrastructure; can't drink the water; youth suicide that will make you cry. I've been to too many damned funerals up north of young people who have died.

If this man can help us and lead us to the way to get to a better place, God, I want to be with him.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I respectfully return back to the member from Kiiwetinoong for his final comments.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Again, thank you very much for those responses. I really appreciate the opportunity to speak.

Again, I spoke about hope at the end. It is my hope to bring the voice of the north, the voice of our people, of Kiiwetinoong—the high cost of living; the needless debts that are happening that become very socialized, as if it's normal. We need to understand what's happening in the backyard of Ontario.

One of the things that was very clear to me—a few years ago, I met with Health Quality Ontario. One of their missions—their vision—in their statements was equity and equality. I couldn't understand it. That was totally not true. That wasn't a very true statement.

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It happens in health, it happens in education, it happens in child welfare and it happens in the court system, where our people are marginalized. That needs to end. We need humanity back in this process. We are Ontarians. Ontario signed that treaty with our people. We need humanity back into those processes. We need to work together.

I look forward to this, putting the government to account to make sure that they work with the people of

Ontario, especially Kiiwetinoong, and the people of the north. Meegwetch.

Applause.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you. Please be seated.

Further debate?

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: I first want to say how humbled I am to be speaking after the member from Kiiwetinoong. It's been a great honour to listen to your speech, sir.

I just want to say, even before I heard you, I wanted to acknowledge that we are in Indigenous territory, and how important it is for all of us legislators to continue to recognize this, because we all are part of reconciliation efforts. If we don't do it, it speaks to their lack of commitment to this. I think it was unfortunate that the speech from the throne did not do that. I hope that there is a lesson in this for all of us as we move forward.

I had titled my intervention this afternoon as "words of caution." I will speak a little bit from the perspective of the portfolios that I have the honour to hold in the Liberal caucus, and present a bit of a legal analysis, a justice and community safety analysis, a women's issues perspective and, finally, an environment and conservation perspective. I will do so with the background that I have, the baggage that I have, which is a human rights background.

Therefore, you will forgive me if I start a little bit on the issue of justice and community safety by referring to a story about the 20th anniversary of the charter. At that time, I was president of the Law Commission of Canada and we had organized a panel on policing and the charter. We were trying to acknowledge or decipher whether, indeed, policing had changed with the charter and what the impact had been.

The first speaker was the chief of police for Peel region at the time. He started his speech in the following way. He said, "When the charter came in, I was very worried about policing. I was worried that the charter was going to undermine policing. I was worried about the impact that it would have on the way in which I was carrying out my work." But he concluded with the following terms: After 20 years, he thought that respecting the charter had enhanced policing, that respecting the charter had been good for policing, that it had ensured that the right people were being charged and the right people were found guilty. His commitment to the charter was unwavering.

Indeed, I think these are words of caution, and words that I wanted to share. I wanted to share this story with the government members because I think we want to make sure that we continue to observe the charter. I know it's a commitment that we all share, but we have to be careful in proceeding, as they have indicated, to pause the implementation of Bill 175, with the rationale that it fails front-line officers. I just want to remind you that Bill 175 aimed to modernize policing and implement the oversight measures that Justice Tulloch had suggested. It looked,

really, at the current best practices around the world in community policing, and also in oversight.

My words are to caution us and caution the government a little bit about the language that it has used in describing this fight. I've been here, obviously, for the whole week and have listened to question period every day, and I'm worried about the language that says that, on one side, there are the pro-police, and anyone who advocates for oversight is anti-police. I think we're all in this together.

We need to ensure that we have good policing. Everybody is for justice. We know that the vast majority of police officers do a fabulous job, and we rely on them and thank them for all the work they do. We need to ensure that we continue to have policing that is rooted in anti-discrimination, that is rooted in respect for the charter. Being pro-oversight, wanting to ensure good oversight, which is necessary for good policing, is not to undermine policing work. It's to support it. It's to honour it. When you say that you want policing to be as good as it should be, I think it's to honour the profession, their professionalism and the fairness that they demonstrate most of the time.

Charter compliance enhances the confidence of the public, and I think police know that they need the cooperation of the community to resolve crimes. People, witnesses and victims alike, must feel confident in the professionalism and fairness of the police, and I think I want to continue to be a part of a Legislature that recognizes that this is fundamental to the good functioning of our society. So I caution us against polarizing debates, essentially, because I don't think that that's going to be helpful to the future of policing and the future of community safety, particularly in a time where there are some big issues of safety throughout the province.

There were very few words in the speech from the throne that were dedicated to other issues of justice and access to justice. *J'espère que la nouvelle procureure générale aura l'occasion de dévoiler un peu ses plans, lorsqu'on aura l'occasion de l'entendre plus souvent.*

Let me just move, then, to a human-rights focus on women's issues. Again, I'm going to speak from the position of having been at this House for only 18 months before being re-elected. I worked with the people from across the aisle on many issues that were dear to my heart—women's issues. Indeed, I worked on human trafficking, the modern slavery that we have. I worked with the MPP for Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, who is now the Minister of Labour, and also with the MPP for London West. We worked across the aisle on this file, recognizing how important it was to act in a coordinated fashion to prevent human trafficking.

One of the essential elements of this was education being a strong tool for prevention. In addition, lots of the good work that we did to continue to prevent violence against women spoke, again, to education. So this is where we were at the end of the 41st Parliament: How do we prevent human trafficking? Through the education of young people on the risk of being lured on the Internet.

How do we prevent and reduce violence against women? Through the education of young men and young women on the right to say no and the duty to respect a no, and how important it was to make sure that there was consent all the time on any form of sexual touching.

I have to say that, myself, my background was in working on childhood sexual violence for many years. I know that it requires children to be able to speak, to know and to name what's happening to their bodies. It's very important, if we want to empower young people to come forward, that they have the ability to speak—to speak powerfully—and to name what's happening to them.

I also know that the other files that we worked on across the aisles—how do we prevent suicide by young LGBTQ teens? By education and by the acceptance and the creation of an equal and inclusive school environment. How do we prevent bullying? Again, by education.

A human-rights analysis of the removal of the LGBTQ language from the curriculum is itself worrisome, because to me it says that this might be discrimination in itself. I'm surprised that after all this work that we did across the aisles we are now faced with the repeal of the health and sexual education curriculum. I just want the government to analyze this in light of other promises. The women's focus, the health of LGBTQ must be taken into account, and I'd be honoured to continue this discussion about what's the best way to move forward.

1630

On the environment: I want to say a couple of things about the cancellation of the tax on polluters that is cap-and-trade is. First of all, we haven't understood from the government the full cost of the way in which they are proceeding. There were rules about participating in the Western Climate Initiative, and these rules are not being respected. I'm going to refer to some of the lawyers who are putting things on the Internet. Aird and Berlis had this to say: "Much uncertainty still remains" about how to cancel this program that "was linked to similar cap-and-trade programs in Quebec and California.... Many former participants in the cap-and-trade program have concerns with how the government will reimburse the substantial amount of money that had been invested in emissions allowance credits."

As a legal scholar, as a lawyer, I worry about the climate of uncertainty and the inability to honour contracts. This is part of the rule of law. The rule of law is about the government not using its capacity to legislate to actually discriminate against or undermine the rights of individuals or even the rights of corporations. I worry about the way in which cap-and-trade was eliminated without fully complying with all the rules, and the way in which many of the contracts on renewable energies have been evacuated without, again, looking at the costs that will come to the taxpayer and the respect for the contracts.

Indeed, I think you should know that the Ontario Waterpower Association is complaining that many of

these contracts created good jobs in different areas of the province, and they will be undermined.

I think it's worth noting that in the job of governing, you may have good ideas, but you have to go over there with caution so that you don't detrimentally affect a large number of people. Those are the words that I'm trying to utter today to ensure that this is well recognized.

I am concerned about the way in which the government is planning to limit the amount of compensation that will be available through regulation. This is a part of Bill 2. That does not allow for much transparency, and I think it could have a negative impact on the climate for investment in Ontario. You cannot be open for business if you're going to tell businesses that at any time the government can decide to eradicate your contracts, walk away and limit the compensation that's going to be available to you. That's dangerous. It's dangerous for jobs. It's dangerous for investments. It's also dangerous for our commitment to the rule of law.

Those are the things that worried me when I heard the speech from the throne, besides all the things that were not mentioned, which I mentioned in my statement yesterday: the lack of recognition, the lack of commitment on Indigenous reconciliation; the lack of words in French; the lack of recognition of the influence of the francophone community in Ontario—c'était un peu démoralisant—and finally, the lack of commitment on housing, which is a key aspect of the things that I've heard in my own riding of Ottawa-Vanier.

I continue to look forward to this debate, and I urge the government to consider some of the points that were made in this debate.

Formerly, when I was on the other side, the Conservatives would always say that good ideas come from all sides and not only from the government side, and I hope that now that they're in government they will continue to abide by this model. Il faut faire attention—

Hon. John Yakabuski: We want new ideas, not the old ones.

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: Well, I have lots of new ideas. Count on me.

Il faut faire attention d'insister sur le devoir de transparence. Les nouveaux gouvernements doivent commencer à gouverner.

It's not enough just to go backward; it's important to go forward. I just urge that we do not create bad and worse outcomes for Ontarians. The job of governing is to look at the interests of all Ontarians in moving forward. I urge this government to continue to do that and do it while ensuring that people know what's going to happen.

I would finally urge the government to publish the letters of mandate for the different ministers so that, actually, we know what was not in the speech from the throne and we know what's going to happen to Ontarians over the next little while.

Merci beaucoup. Meegwetch. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. Questions and comments?

Mrs. Nina Tangri: First, I'd like to congratulate the member from Ottawa–Vanier on her election.

I found it very interesting, you talking about the intervention. You spoke about the charter of human rights. I really am interested that you mentioned the chief of Peel police—the Peel police is my area, Mississauga here—and how they were initially worried about the charter when it first came in and talked about oversight.

I just wanted to touch on oversight. No one wants to support our front-line officers more than us in the PCs. Unlike the member from the NDP in Brampton East, who thinks being profane to our police officers—we want to make sure we equip our officers with the right tools they need to protect us, to help prevent crime. We can't always be reactive. We should also be proactive in helping to prevent crime. Public safety for us is paramount.

The people of Ontario voted for a majority government here with the PCs. They voted for a government that was listening to them. They voted for a government that was going to scrap cap-and-trade. People want life to be more affordable. People here—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Excuse me. Thank you.

I recognize the member from Timmins on a point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I remind the member it is against the standing orders to refer to a member who is not in the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I appreciate that. I may have missed that. I was preoccupied with another thing. Thank you for bringing that to my attention and to others' as well.

Please don't refer to a member who is not here. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Nina Tangri: My apologies.

The people of Ontario, as I said, voted for a majority government. They voted for a government that was listening to them. They voted for a government that was going to scrap cap-and-trade. People in Ontario want life to be more affordable. They want lower gas prices. They want lower hydro prices. Life has become so difficult for people in Ontario that they're having to choose between eating and heating—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you. Time is up.

Further questions and comments?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to comment on the speech from our colleague the member from Ottawa–Vanier, notre collègue M^{me} Des Rosiers. Je suis très fier. Félicitations d'être réélue ici à cette Chambre, et j'apprécie votre discours. Vous avez parlé de la chance que ce nouveau gouvernement a d'entendre les membres de l'opposition, d'écouter, et aussi d'avoir de l'humilité.

I think you offered them some sage advice, as a member who formerly sat on the government benches. I think they would be wise to take that, especially when it comes to their, I think, frantic position on cancelling cap-and-trade, the Western Climate Initiative, without laying

out a plan or any accountability or transparency in terms of how much exiting this massive, complex regime is going to actually cost.

I think it makes us vulnerable on a whole host of multinational levels and subnational levels because these are agreements that have been put into place and are investments that corporations have made relying on those revenues and relying on the transactions that happen. We have no idea at this point how much it's going to cost us, and I think it's incumbent upon the government to do that.

Also, you talked about the rule of law and our responsibility to not only respect, but protect the charter of rights and those who rely on it for their protection. It would be again incumbent upon and sage advice for the government to have that as a lens with each and every piece of legislation that they put forward, because at this very moment in these early days of this Legislature, we're already becoming concerned that that certainly isn't their focus.

1640

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments.

M^{me} Goldie Ghamari: J'aimerais premièrement féliciter la députée provinciale d'Ottawa–Vanier pour sa réélection.

Notre gouvernement est un gouvernement pour tous les Ontariens. Nous sommes ici et nous sommes préparés à écouter, et à travailler pour, tous les Ontariens.

Throughout the election and moving forward and even now, our plan has always been to clean up the hydro mess, to restore accountability and trust, to end hallway health care, to create good jobs and to put more money back in the pockets of Ontarians. We have started the summer session early just so that we can get to work on that.

I find it strange that we are getting all these criticisms about broken promises, and yet all we have done is kept our promises. Every single day our ministers are making announcements. Our Premier is working hard.

We are here for the people. We are working. We are prepared and we have started the summer session early so we can hit the ground running and get to work. That was also part of our campaign, and that's what we promised the people of Ontario.

Applause.

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Thank you. I am proud to be here today working, even though I haven't even set up my constituency office yet. I'm scrambling to get that done. I'm scrambling to get my staff trained. But they're working; they're responding to emails every day, because what I heard from the people of Carleton is that they are tired of a government that doesn't listen to them. They are tired of a government that just does not care.

But we are working hard. We've listened. We've taken their feedback. You see it in everything that we're doing: in the line-by-line inquiry that we're starting, in the consultation we're going to be doing with parents, and also looking at some legislation that really is not to

the benefit of patients, is not to the benefit of health care practitioners and it's not to the benefit of our police associations.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ça m'a fait extrêmement plaisir d'écouter la députée d'Ottawa–Vanier nous présenter ses commentaires sur le discours du trône.

She started pretty much the same way as our member from Kiiwetinoong started, saying that he was rather surprised—disappointed—to see that there was no acknowledgement of the First Nation territory when the speech from the throne started.

Elle a ensuite continué en disant qu'elle aussi était surprise et désappointée de voir que le discours du trône n'a pas parlé des francophones du tout—il n'y a pas eu un seul mot en français.

J'aimerais rappeler aux gens du gouvernement qu'il y a des lois.

I want to remind people on the government side that we have a French Language Services Act. We have a law that applies to the government. That law clearly dictates that a speech from the throne has to have parts of it delivered in French. It is part of the law.

I attended a press conference by the French Language Services Commissioner as he tabled his report today, and he has received complaints of people who say that the government did not respect its own law.

For a government who stands up every day saying that law and order is their number one priority, it sort of doesn't add up. There is a law that applies. The law said that in the throne speech, you have to respect the French Language Services Act, and you have to deliver some of it in French. You did not respect your own law.

I'm really glad that the member from Ottawa–Vanier brought this forward. It is a point that needed to be made and hopefully learned from by the government.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I now return to the member from Ottawa–Vanier for final comments.

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: Je veux remercier les députés d'Essex, de Carleton, de Mississauga–Streetsville et de Nickel Belt de leurs commentaires.

It's a real honour for me to be here representing Ottawa–Vanier. I'm really pleased to continue to work with all of you to ensure that all Ontarians' voices continue to be heard and that, indeed, when we move forward, we pay attention to the impact, the real impact, that it could have on people across Ontario.

I will continue to advocate for the rule of law, respect for the charter and respect for human rights, because it's a commitment that we share and that we must continue to share.

I am particularly concerned with the fact that no one up to now has disclosed a little bit what the plan of reconciliation will be. I think it's incumbent upon the government to repair a little bit what has happened in the speech from the throne. I think it would be a good thing to do.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? I now look to, and refer to, the member from Peterborough South.

Mr. David Piccini: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise before the House today. Given all the congratulations, I'd like to offer you special congratulations on your role as well.

It's an enormous honour to be elected the first-ever MPP for the great riding of Northumberland–Peterborough South. I would like to thank the people of my community for placing their trust in me, for allowing me to serve.

I would also like to take a moment to thank the former member of Northumberland–Quinte West, Lou Rinaldi, for his many years of service to my community and our province.

Mr. Speaker, my presence here speaks to all that's great about Ontario and great about Canada. My grandfather immigrated to Canada from postwar Italy to forge a better life for himself and his family.

My other grandfather, born in a small Newfoundland outport of Musgrave Harbour to a minister, travelled the world working for the United Nations, helping to restore stability to a world ravaged by the chaos of World War II.

My story, not unlike so many others, speaks to all that is great about Canada and our province of Ontario. Mr. Speaker, it's a fundamental belief that one can pursue opportunity free of persecution and of government interference. Ontario is willing to provide a future for those looking to build a better life and come to this country legally, while always standing tall on the world stage representing the interests of our province and working hand in hand with our federal government. In fact, we see this in action today, as Minister Wilson is currently south of the border promoting the economic benefits of working with Ontario, a province that is once again open for business.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to talk about this pursuit of greater opportunity and our plan for Ontario, a plan that is for the people. It was this pursuit of greater opportunity that drove so many frustrated Ontarians of all political stripes to support Doug Ford and our PC plan in the election last month.

I grew up in a remarkable rural riding, home to a vibrant agricultural community, a town steeped in rich heritage and small businesses showcasing all that is great about the ingenuity in our great province. From the apple orchards in Newcastle and Orono, to the windy shores of Rice Lake, over to Norwood, down through the farms of Trent Hills and past the Big Apple to Cobourg and Port Hope, my riding was ready for change. In fact, it was ready so much so that we had the highest voter turnout in the entire province, close to 70%.

Riding boundary changes: We welcome the new communities of Clarington with the rich history of the O'Toole family. Of course, former MPP John O'Toole served this place with distinction, and his son, a friend and mentor of mine, Erin O'Toole, serves in the federal

Parliament. We also welcomed the northern communities of Otonabee-South Monaghan and Asphodel-Norwood, and I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the important Indigenous communities of Alderville and Hiawatha.

Mr. Speaker, I do selfishly believe that I live in the greatest riding in this province, but I would like to take a few minutes to speak to the speech from the throne and our plans to create the conditions for jobs, growth and economic prosperity not just in my riding, but across the province.

This year, in this election, Ontarians sent a strong message. They chose concrete changes through action that they could visualize, that would restore their confidence in government and restore their hope.

Over the last 15 years, the previous Liberal government lost sight of why we are really here. We're here for the people. Power comes from the people up through the Legislature, who are there to question and supervise the executive council. It is beholden upon us to be responsible stewards of the taxpayer dollars. It was in our speech from the throne that we highlighted how we would respect those taxpayers, and outlined our priorities for the years ahead—our plan for the people.

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But what does “for the people” mean? “For the people” means that when there is a senior in Sarnia choosing between heating and eating, that matters to me, even though it may not be my parent; that when there is a single parent in Toronto struggling to pay child care while balancing the need to want to support their family through gainful employment, that matters to me, even though I don't have children myself; that when hard-working farmers in rural Ontario get up every day before most of us, to till the land they have worked for a generation, just to find out it has been sold to build costly solar farms for energy we don't need, that matters to me.

Ontario's stories may be singular, but our destiny is shared. “For the people” is a fundamental belief that there is not a person in Ontario that we will not fight for.

In the speech from the throne, we outlined our plan for Ontario, which includes firing the six-million-dollar man and restructuring the leadership at Hydro One, and lowering hydro bills by 12%, providing much-needed relief for tax-paying Ontarians.

When I was out at the doors, a theme emerged. People would have their bills on their table when I knocked on their doors. But as I listened in question period today and in the previous days, the opposition are so out of touch with everyday Ontarians—Ontarians who dread opening their skyrocketing hydro bills, who are sick and tired of paying more in bills out of one pocket, only to have the former Liberal government's hand in the others with increased taxes.

Interjection: That has got to stop.

Mr. David Piccini: That has got to stop.

People told me they were tired of a Liberal government that sat idly by as Hydro One executives

rewarded themselves with pay increases equivalent to more than the median salary of a person in my riding.

On the campaign trail and in the speech from the throne, we said we would not allow this gross injustice to go on any further. Promise made, promise kept.

In the speech from the throne, we also made a commitment to Ontarians that we could create the conditions for good-paying jobs. I met with so many young professionals concerned about their job prospects in my community, and countless more students concerned that there would not be a good-paying job for them when they graduated. On this side of the House, we understand their concerns. We have an experienced, diverse and exceptionally hard-working team.

In addition, I'd like to highlight the many millennials elected to this House—in fact, 13, proudly, in our caucus. We were a generation unwilling to stand by idly while our future was mortgaged, a generation that understands that if you want a stake in your future, you've got to go out and seize it.

We understand that through getting governments off our backs, ending the job-killing red tape that is stifling growth, and reducing taxes on small businesses, we will create the conditions for greater opportunity, and encourage innovation and job creation right here in Ontario.

To the students of York University, I say this: We hear you. Help is on the way. Promise made, promise kept.

To the many students pursuing skilled trades, many of whom I spoke to in my community: We will tackle the skilled trades gap and once again open Ontario for business.

Finally, I'd like to talk about an issue near and dear to my heart: health care.

Working the past number of years for the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, working alongside our skilled health care professionals, I was dismayed at the bureaucratization of our health care system over the last 15 years. Fundamentally speaking, we were not listening to our health care professionals.

In our speech from the throne, we highlighted our commitment to listening to our health care professionals and to ending the hallway medicine that has become the norm, not just in my community, but in all of our communities, and, where there are no hallways, ensuring that we put them there.

To the complete lack of dignity afforded to too many Ontarians, some of whom were from my community—the harrowing stories—who took their final breaths crammed in the hallways: Where is the dignity in that?

We have a collective commitment to end this, a commitment to supporting the delivery of patient-centred care. To this end, I'm pleased to note that our government will create an additional 15,000 new long-term-care beds over the next five years that will greatly support the needs of our aging population.

In addition, we know that access to affordable housing is an important social determinant of health, and in the speech from the throne, we committed to investing \$3.8 billion into mental health, addiction and housing. We

need to increase the supply; that is clear. We can all agree that this investment is welcome news.

Mr. Speaker, the election is now over. Ontarians have spoken. They chose change. Through our change in priorities, we will ensure that the doors of opportunity remain open to all. We shall ensure that our government remains a government for all, a government for the people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also like to highlight that I'll be splitting my time with the member from Brampton South.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. Now I recognize the member from Brampton South.

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I want to take an opportunity to congratulate my colleague from Northumberland–Peterborough South on his victory. I'm confident that he will do his constituents and the people of Ontario proud.

I want to take an opportunity to thank all of my volunteers who sent me here to Queen's Park for all the time that they took out making those phone calls, knocking on doors and putting up signs all across the great riding of Brampton South. I will never forget their hard work and will be reminded of my duty to my constituents every day that I take my seat in this House.

I also want to take an opportunity to thank two very important individuals, my mother and my father, who have provided me with every single opportunity I could possibly have had. Without their hard work and commitment, I could not be here today. I am forever indebted for their sacrifices and their help.

My father left his country at a very young age in search of a new life full of opportunity. My mother left her village with her brothers and sisters in search of prosperity and freedom. My parents came to Canada with nothing but dreams and a strong work ethic. My mother worked multiple jobs lifting boxes in factories, working overtime, making every single hour count and making sure that she could provide for our family. My father drove a taxi and worked in factories, lifting boxes, operating heavy machinery, just so that I could have the opportunities and my family could have the opportunities that they were never afforded.

My parents worked hard, persevered and finally saved enough money to pursue their dream of opening a small business. They never gave up. They are my inspiration. They are the reason I want to fight for Ontarians and the people of Brampton and ensure that they have the same opportunities for success that I had—and the next generation.

Even though my parents' journey is special, it isn't unique. It's a story told countless times across this country, across this province: a story of successful immigrants making Canada a better place.

I would also like to thank my wife for all of her support and encouragement. As everyone can appreciate, politics is not often kind to families, but I can sincerely say that she has made this a lot easier for me.

I made a promise over the campaign that I would be a strong voice for the riding and the residents of Brampton South. Mr. Speaker, community is everything. I was shaped by my community, and I will never forget my roots. That's why I will always be an advocate for the residents of Brampton South and Brampton. That's my promise to my constituents. That's why I wanted to run: to be a strong voice and to advocate for the residents.

One of the great things about Brampton South is the people who you'll meet there every day—hard-working, entrepreneurial and proud. Our potential is great. The success of our residents has come in spite of 15 years of waste, mismanagement and scandal.

Brampton is a vibrant place to be. It is Canada's second-fastest-growing city and ninth largest. It is one of the youngest and most diverse in Canada, and it also houses some of the best companies, like Amazon, Loblaws and Canon.

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Canada is the greatest country in the world, a country where no matter where you are from or what you look like, you have every opportunity to succeed. But we must ensure that our future generations have the same opportunities that we all did when we were growing up. We need to ensure that our government truly works for the people.

Unfortunately, life hasn't been so easy for many individuals in this province after years of mismanagement, waste and scandal. We must ensure that every decision we make will benefit the people and the communities that we live in. The residents of Brampton have put their faith in our government because they believe in our government's agenda.

The residents of Brampton South and Brampton were delighted to hear that our government wasted no time getting to work, rolling up our sleeves and finding ways to ensure taxpayers are getting value for money. Our government is committed to making life more affordable for Ontarians, with a number of commitments, starting with the striking of cap-and-trade. Cancelling the cap-and-trade carbon tax will save money and put more money into the pockets of those who so desperately need it and will be a necessary first step in making sure that we reduce the price of gas by 10 cents a litre.

I came across so many families that were working harder, working longer, but were getting less. These families were fed up with waste, halfway health care and the lack of jobs in our province. They really wanted to know who was looking out for them. There are individuals in this province who are choosing between heating and eating, and that is totally unacceptable.

But thankfully, we have a government that is finally listening to the people and making life more affordable. That started earlier this week when our Minister of Energy announced that they will not be renewing—and will be cancelling and winding down—758 renewable energy contracts, saving ratepayers over \$790 million.

I come from a riding of hard-working Ontarians—residents who work countless hours to put food on the

table, individuals who drive trucks, individuals who lift boxes in factories, single mothers who work two jobs. But it was so disheartening when I went door-knocking and I heard that these residents had lost faith in our public institutions. But once again, I'm so proud to stand here with a government that intends to restore public confidence in its institutions, starting with a line-by-line audit of all government spending that will identify and eliminate duplication and waste.

As a resident of Brampton, I also know all too well that our health care system is broken. But I am happy that, once again, our government is taking action. This starts by respecting our front-line workers: our doctors, our nurses and our health care practitioners. Our system can count on stable, long-term funding, which includes 15,000 new long-term-care beds in the first five years.

I am also very proud of this government's historic commitment of \$3.8 billion towards mental health and addictions, including supportive housing.

To conclude, I also want to recognize an individual who has motivated my desire to join public service; an individual who has devoted his entire life to public service, without any compensation; an individual out of the state of Punjab, a spiritual and humanitarian leader by the name of Sant Gurdial Singh. He's an individual who provides public health care to those in need, provides access to free clean drinking water, and provides access to free vision care for thousands and thousands of people who cannot afford it. If I could even have a tenth of his commitment to public service, I am sure that I will make the residents of Brampton South very proud.

Over the next four years, I look forward to taking on the difficult challenges that our province is currently facing, but I am confident that our government for the people will deliver real change and make life more affordable.

Applause.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you. Be seated, please.

Questions and comments?

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: I wanted to begin by saying congratulations to both the member from Brampton South and the member from Northumberland-Peterborough South.

I heard both members speaking about people in Ontario who are choosing between heating and eating. But my concern comes with the discussion about forcing the York University CUPE members back to work, because I'm concerned that there's a lack of understanding of how that's going to perpetuate poverty, as opposed to addressing the issues at hand. So I just wanted to take a second to explain that a little bit further.

Part of why CUPE members are on strike is because they have been given non-stop precarious contracts. A lot of people who are faculty members—students go into their classrooms and believe that they have full-time tenured jobs, when in fact they're applying for those jobs every semester, sometimes having been at the university for 12, 15, 20-some-odd years.

In fact, my mom, who happens to be a graduate from York University at the tender age of 35—really, 80—missed her graduation this year, even though she would have been the wisest—we'll just say “wise”—graduate, because she realized that every single course that she was taking was being taught by a contract academic staff member, and by crossing the picket line, she was not providing them with the respect that they deserve for the knowledge that they had. Most importantly, though, she knew that if she didn't stand up and choose not to be present, that would mean that they would have no other choice but to go back to a space where their job would be precarious and they wouldn't be able to afford heat or food.

I just wanted to point out that the complicated nature of the York University strike is one that we probably need to spend some time speaking about, so that we can actually make sure we deal with the root causes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Ms. Jill Dunlop: I would like to congratulate all of the members today on your maiden speeches.

Thank you to the member from Ottawa-Vanier for your comments.

Thank you to the member from Kiiwetinoong for your comments. I'm very honoured to work with two First Nation communities in my riding, Beausoleil First Nation and the Chippewas of Rama, and also a large population of Métis in the riding of Simcoe North.

I'd also like to thank the members from Northumberland-Peterborough South and Brampton South for your comments today. I'd like to thank you both for the comments on the struggles of families in Ontario as well as small businesses, and also for mentioning the skilled trades gap. This is a topic that is close to my heart. I'm sure I may be the only member in the House who is from a family with a plumbing business. So I'm quite honoured to be here.

During the campaign, I had the opportunity to travel across my riding and speak to manufacturers, to developers, to marinas about the skilled trades gap. It is quite concerning in the area. If we are to create an economic environment where Ontario is open for business, we need to be filling that skilled trades gap. So there's quite an opportunity here for us.

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Also, when I travelled across the riding, whether it was talking with manufacturers or talking with business owners, hydro was a real concern. I'm quite excited that promises made are promises kept with this government and that I'm able to return to my riding weekly and hear that people are excited about the promises that we're making.

Thank you to both of my members this afternoon for those comments. I look forward to addressing the skills gap, too, as we move forward.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It's my pleasure to rise and add two minutes of comments to the PC members' comments on the throne speech.

I'm going to start with the member from Northumberland–Peterborough South, because he's the one who started their time. It's just interesting to me that he talked about their concern for seniors. If you go to the throne speech, seniors are not mentioned once. The word "seniors" is not in the throne speech anywhere, so it doesn't actually appear to be a priority for the Conservative government.

They're not the only ones who aren't mentioned, and during my 20 minutes—I'm next in the rotation—I'll talk about the numerous other people who are not included in the throne speech or prioritized.

I also want to address his comments about hydro, that we are not concerned about hydro, or that we're somehow behind what the Liberals have done with privatization and the CEO there. What the member needs to do is to familiarize himself with Hansard, and go back and look through Hansard. We are the only party that has consistently opposed—New Democrats consistently opposed—the privatization of our public hydro system. We are also the only party who were originally opposing the skyrocketing, out-of-control CEO salaries.

In fact, it was the PC government prior to this one that started the privatization of our hydro system. It was actually the Conservatives who started the privatization and started us down this road to where we are now with Mayo Schmidt, and it was the Liberals who then charged full-steam ahead. I just wanted to set the record straight.

He also mentioned that there are too many bureaucrats in health care, but I want to point out that the PCs just hired one of them, and he just happens to be a former president of the PC Party. They just hired a health care bureaucrat, and they're giving him this million-dollar contract.

They really need to pick a lane, and they really need to do their research before they start throwing stones over here at the NDP.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I find it quite rich to hear the opposition party talking about doing the research, when during the last provincial election, I believe they did have to come out and admit a billion-dollar error that they had made in their costing platform. It's a little bit rich to hear those words spoken.

But nonetheless, I'm speaking in response to both the member for Brampton South and the member for Northumberland–Peterborough South and their excellent comments that were brought forward. I think they both referenced their parents as being immigrants who came to this beautiful province of ours as a land of opportunity.

The member for Brampton South mentioned a line where he said that his parents were hard-working, entrepreneurial and proud, and so were the constituents of Brampton South. I think that really typifies not just his constituents, but really our constituents in this House, the

great people of Ontario. It also exemplifies the Ontarian dream. I know that's not something that perhaps we talk about as much here in this House, that dream, but the real dream of being an Ontarian is to be able to exemplify those virtues of being hard-working, entrepreneurial and proud.

Both members have really demonstrated in their speeches this afternoon their commitment to their communities and their commitment to making it a reality here in the province of Ontario, that we are the economic powerhouse of Canada and a shining star of what a province can be, a shining star of what a sub-sovereign jurisdiction can look like and a shining star of prosperity for all the people not only of Ontario, but of the rest of Canada, to view with respect.

That's something that we've talked about in this House today: respect. I hear in the speeches of both of these members a deep and abiding sense of respect for the office that they have been entrusted with, a sense of humility for the task that they have before them and a real sense of responsibility for what they have embarked upon to improve the lives of their constituents and the rest of the province of Ontario. I'm very proud to be able to stand and respond to them, and to thank them for their work and the hard work that they're going to be providing not only this summer, not only this fall, but for the next four years and hopefully a great deal longer.

I look forward to working with you both, and I thank you for your contributions and your inaugural addresses this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I now return to the member from Northumberland–Peterborough South.

Mr. David Piccini: When it comes to listening to the little guy, when it comes to being a government for the people, when it comes to respecting the taxpayer, when it comes to research, we'll take no lessons from the NDP.

I would also like to address Rueben Devlin. Rueben Devlin is a respected front-line health service provider. If the honourable member did their research and was part of the health care community, like myself and like our minister, they would know that he's very well respected in this community and is the right person for the job. I look forward to getting our system back on track to deliver patient-centred care, with him at the helm.

This really boils down to a choice that Ontarians were given in the election on June 7: a choice between bigger government and a tax-and-spend agenda driven by ideology, or getting the government off your back.

I would encourage the opposition to join us. Ontarians sent a clear message that they want government off their back, that they want to be supported, that they want the conditions for greater opportunity, and that the tax-and-spend agenda of government bureaucrats deciding what's best for them and their life is not an agenda they will support.

So I encourage the opposition to join us in the coming years and work with Ontarians and listen to the people, so that we can be a government that supports them, gets

government off their back and gets people back to work in this great province.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Please be seated. Thank you,

Further debate?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It's my pleasure to rise on behalf of my constituents of Windsor West to talk about what's in the throne speech—or, today, I'm going to talk about what wasn't in the throne speech.

But first, I want to thank the people of my community of Windsor West for putting their faith in me again, for a second term, and sending me back here to represent them and their voice and their concerns. I can tell you that their voice is certainly not aligned with the other side of the House.

What I want to talk about is, we heard a lot during the campaign, and we're still hearing a lot, about how the PCs are a government for the people.

But the question that my constituents have is, which people are they for? Because when you look—if you had heard the throne speech, but if you go back and read it—there are a lot of people missing from that throne speech. Some of the most vulnerable people in this province were not mentioned in the throne speech.

So their question is, “Am I your people? Am I the people you're for? Because you won't even talk about me.” That's the question that I'm getting from my constituents: “If the Conservatives are a government for the people, why am I not mentioned? Why are they not talking about helping me?”

First and foremost, Dave Lepofsky: I want to give him a mention. He is a tireless advocate for people with disabilities, especially those from the blind and low-vision community. He very quickly noticed that there was no mention of people with disabilities in the throne speech—not a mention.

So as we are trying—and it's happening so slowly, too slowly, in this province—to move forward to support people with disabilities, to make every corner of this province more accessible to people with disabilities, including the building I'm standing in right now, the government, the PC government, doesn't see that as a priority. They don't even mention people with disabilities in the throne speech.

That's concerning to me, that's concerning to my constituents and that's concerning to people across this province who have disabilities. What they need from their government is support and to be moving the agenda forward; to be actually making progress in making sure that this province is accessible to everybody and that everybody has an opportunity to come to this building and listen, first-hand, to what we are doing here; to be able to have a sign language interpreter here if they need to; to have what they need, should they be blind or low vision, to be able to understand what is going on here. A government who won't even mention people with disabilities in their throne speech is very concerning.

1720

People who are living in poverty, those in low-income families or those living on social assistance: not mentioned in the throne speech—not a word. That is a large portion of my riding, people who are low income, living in poverty or homeless—the “invisible population,” as my daughter refers to them, and she doesn't mean that in a loving way. It's very concerning to her that people who are living rough, living on the streets, are considered basically invisible, invisible human beings. It's pretty sad that with this PC government, through the throne speech and the lack of mention of low-income people and people living in poverty, those who are out living rough, who are homeless, have been shown by their government that they are indeed the invisible population.

No mention of First Nations or Indigenous people—not a word. And yet these are some of our most vulnerable populations as well. There's no mention about supporting their specific needs around health care, their specific needs around mental health support, no mention about their specific needs when it comes to education—nothing. There's no mention of ensuring they have clean drinking water, something that most of us, if not all of us in this House, take for granted. If you want a drink of water, you turn on the tap and you have a drink of water. Many people in our First Nations and Indigenous communities do not have that same opportunity as we do.

There's no mention of housing. I'm not just talking about housing. You'll hear me repeat this when I'm talking about people living in supportive housing, if they are able to get into supportive housing. But right now, I'm talking specifically about First Nations and Indigenous. We're not just talking about them having housing; we're talking about them having safe housing and talking about them having housing that is actually habitable, something that all of us in this room would find acceptable to live in. But this government doesn't even mention First Nations or Indigenous people—not a word. So what people are you for?

There's no mention specifically of northern communities—not a word. Now, I'll tell you, I enjoy our northern communities in the summertime. I am from the deep south of the province, the sunny south as I call it, the banana belt, so I like to go up north when it's sunny, when it's warm. I'm certainly not a northern person in the winter. I grew up in London, in the snowbelt. I now live in the banana belt. I enjoy being in the moderate climate I live in. However, that doesn't mean we shouldn't be talking about northern communities and their specific needs, their needs around transit. This would also relate back to our First Nations and Indigenous people.

When we're talking about northern communities, in many northern communities, the cost of food is outrageous. It's unaffordable. When I look at what it costs for somebody to go buy produce in the north in the winter compared to what I pay, it's mind boggling that there would be such a difference in the cost. Then, if you look at those that are low-income people and those living in poverty in northern communities, that marginalizes

them even more when you look at the cost of food. No mention of northern communities in the throne speech.

Auto and manufacturing—not a word. And yet, so many communities across this province, including mine—we're called the automotive capital, and no mention of auto and manufacturing. I don't think that was a mistake. I actually don't think that was a mistake. I don't think most of what they left out of the throne speech was a mistake. They didn't do it accidentally.

Usually in the past, when they talked about our auto and manufacturing sector, Conservatives said, "Let it die." They were going to cut programs and supports to our auto sector. They called it "corporate welfare." Now I just want to point out that when you loan money to somebody and they pay it back, that's a loan, which happened in many cases with our auto manufacturing.

But the point is that these sectors are so important. The auto and manufacturing sector is so important to our economy and so important to so many of our communities, including mine. Yet previous Conservative leaders have said, "We don't pick winners and losers. If they can't make it on their own, oh, well, we're not investing in them."

During the last campaign, not too long ago, within the last couple of months, they actually said they would cut the Jobs and Prosperity Fund—

Hon. Victor Fedeli: A slush fund.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: A slush fund? Oh, wow. The member from Nipissing–Pembroke—I'm not sure if his riding name has changed—is calling it a slush fund. This is how dedicated they are and how concerned they are about the people they claim to be for who work in the auto and manufacturing sector. He's calling the Jobs and Prosperity Fund a slush fund—money that has actually gone into that sector and provided middle-class jobs. So, according to the member for Nipissing–Pembroke, they're not for the people who are middle-class working people. We certainly know they're not for unionized workers. That's probably why they don't like much of the auto and manufacturing sector, because they're not for unionized people.

Anyway, they didn't talk about the auto and manufacturing sector, and yet they have a minister who is in Washington who claims he's going to fight for those very jobs. And we have a PC member who is saying the Jobs and Prosperity Fund is a slush fund. It draws the question to mind of how hard they are really going to fight against the tariffs coming from President Trump and the States—the threat of the coming tariffs that are going to decimate our auto sector. How hard are they really going to fight for those jobs when we have a PC member who is calling a fund that is an investment into that sector a slush fund?

There are so many more people who are not mentioned in the throne speech. Again, I'm going to ask: If you are for the people, who are those people?

When I look at my current critic portfolio, community and social services, I talk about people who are living on social assistance. Let's look at social assistance rates, because they didn't actually talk about helping people on social assistance. Actually, that probably wasn't by

accident either, because the last time we had a Conservative government, they cut social assistance by 21%. To people who were already low-income and struggling to get by, they said, "You can get by with even less."

The worst—other than just cutting their supports by 21%—was what the then minister responsible for that portfolio said. What he said, Madam Speaker, was that they could just go out and buy dented cans of tuna and eat baloney sandwiches. Rather than recognizing that these people needed more support, they cut the support they had and said, "Eat dented cans"—not just tuna, dented cans—"of tuna and baloney sandwiches." Clearly, the people that they are for are not those people who are living on social assistance.

When you look at people who have developmental disabilities—and I know they talked about autism; we will go back to that one because then we can talk about what their leader said about a group home for young men with autism—although they mentioned it in the throne speech, they're clearly not really for people with autism.

1730

They don't actually talk about the broader spectrum of people with developmental disabilities. They don't talk about the fact that people with developmental disabilities are cut off from supports and services as soon as they turn 18. They didn't talk about addressing this gap between ages 17 and 18; they didn't talk about that. They didn't talk about the crisis in supportive housing for people with developmental disabilities, and that's not surprising to me, because the now Premier—at the time, when he was receiving some complaints from community members about a group home for those with autism in his community, he said, "Well, I didn't know they'd go outside." So his thinking is that people with developmental disabilities should be locked away somewhere, not to be seen, rather than being contributing, involved members of their community.

It's not surprising to me that there really is no plan for everybody with a developmental disability, that there's no talk about supportive housing for people with developmental disabilities. There was no mention of dealing with the decades-long wait-list for supportive housing for people with developmental disabilities. There was no talk about getting rid of the years-long wait-list for them to get their supports and services back. Clearly, those are not the people they're for.

They didn't talk about the people who actually work in developmental services. They didn't talk about the people who work in our supportive housing—what is available. They didn't talk about them. They didn't talk about the fact that these workers have incredibly difficult jobs, very emotionally draining jobs and physically demanding jobs. They didn't talk about that and they didn't talk about the fact that these workers have stagnant wages, that many of these workers themselves are low-income or living in poverty and don't have stable housing. They didn't talk about them at all, likely because the majority of them are also unionized workers,

and again, we all know how the Conservatives feel about unionized workers.

They didn't talk about the high cost of living. They didn't talk about the fact that food bank use is way up. In my community alone in my riding, the Downtown Mission serves—this is a staggering number—700 people a day; 700 people a day go to eat at the Downtown Mission. That's one organization in my community—one. There are many more, unfortunately. A few years ago, it was 100 people a day. I think that's really important to point out to this government, because they didn't talk about these people.

Some of these people are homeless, but we have seniors who are going into places like the Downtown Mission to eat because they don't have enough money to get by, so they have to make the choice. And these are just people going to get fed there; this is not talking about the number of people who actually go in to use the food bank and/or access the clothing swap they have and that kind of thing. This is not even addressing the fact that we have shelters for women who are fleeing abusive domestic situations.

Again, there was no mention of people with low income, because their plan isn't really for those people.

What they did talk about was cutting \$6.1 billion in social spending during the election, plus billions more lost by cancelling cap-and-trade and hundreds of green projects. Now, things can be phased out; contracts can be phased out as they come due. You can renegotiate or you can decide not to renew. You shouldn't go off all haphazardly cancelling contracts when it's going to cost people more. You shouldn't go haphazardly cancelling programs that are actually going to be supporting some of these very people I'm talking about, but that's what the PCs have done. In fact, they promised to leave no stone unturned when it came to privatizing the services that all of these people depend on.

The PCs, now the government, promised to cut taxes for low-income earners, which, actually, it was found out to cost—to take money out of the pockets of low-income earners. Yet the tax breaks on the high end, for the people on the high end that were already making high wages or whose companies were making good money, were going to benefit more. Actually, the Premier himself would have benefited more under their plan than low-income people.

I want to point out that when I'm talking about—I'm running out of time, and I haven't even got through most of this.

I want to go back to homeless people, low-income people and those living rough, those that do not have a place to call home. There is a very important thing that I want to point out, because this just points to the fact that this PC government, when they talk about how they're for the people, they're not talking about homeless people and they're not talking about low-income earners. That was very clear when the now-Premier picked up the phone to call the mayor of Toronto, Mayor Tory, to stop a homeless shelter from being built in his own riding. To

say that that is shameful is an understatement. When you have so many people struggling, especially in a city like Toronto, to find affordable housing, for the now-Premier to have picked up the phone to stop—it was a temporary shelter, but it was a shelter. To have that stopped from being built in his own riding is shameful, and it's very concerning. It clearly points out that this government, when they say they're for the people, they are not for homeless people. They're not interested in assisting homeless people.

In the last little bit, I want to say that many people in my riding are very concerned about what wasn't in the throne speech, and I think it's incumbent upon this government to address their specific needs.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments? Questions and comments? Last call for questions and comments.

Hon. Todd Smith: Point of order, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Todd Smith: I'm seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding presiding officers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The government House leader has put forward a motion with regard to—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Just to be clear, are there any questions and comments?

Further debate.

APPOINTMENT OF HOUSE OFFICERS

Hon. Todd Smith: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Todd Smith: I'll do this again, Speaker: I'm seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding presiding officers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The government House leader has put forth a motion seeking unanimous consent regarding presiding officers. Do we agree? Agreed.

Hon. Todd Smith: I move that Rick Nicholls, member for the electoral district of Chatham-Kent-Leamington, be appointed Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of the Whole House; that Lisa Gretzky, member for the electoral district of Windsor West, be appointed First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House; that Percy Hatfield, member for the electoral district of Windsor-Tecumseh, be appointed Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House; and that Jennifer French, member for the electoral district of Oshawa, be appointed Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The government House leader has put forth a motion—

Hon. Todd Smith: Dispense.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Dispense? Agreed.

Shall the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

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THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate?

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Mr. Speaker, I'm humbled and honoured to present my inaugural speech as the member for Richmond Hill. I'm going to split my time with the member for Markham–Unionville.

I would like to congratulate all members on both sides of the House on their successful elections, and I look forward to working closely with them. As a long-time resident of Richmond Hill, I would also like to thank and acknowledge the contributions to my community of the previous member from my riding, Reza Moridi.

Our country is a land of opportunity for many. So many have come here with very little and have been able to achieve success and choose to give back to our nation and our country. When I immigrated to Canada 35 years ago, I began the hard yet rewarding process of starting a family and building a business. My husband, Albert, who is in the chamber today, and I came to Canada with our two-year-old daughter, and now we have four grown children and five grandchildren.

It is because of our future generations that I decided to run for the position of MPP. My daughter, who has three children, has been homeschooling them because of the concerns she had with our education system. She has master's degrees, and instead of entering into the workforce, she has made the sacrifice of teaching the children herself in order to ensure that the content is age-appropriate and the mathematics taught would adequately prepare them for the future.

My husband and I are also very concerned, especially for our grandchildren, given the debt load that we have, and that the future generations will be forced to carry it. The waste and mismanagement of the previous government was propped up by mortgaging the future of my grandchildren.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Shameful.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Yes. For these reasons, I said to myself, "Enough is enough," and I decided to step forward and run to become a member of this House. I am determined to bring the voices of parents who are concerned for the future of their children. I will speak up at Queen's Park.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Good on you.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Thank you. I believe that this is the most meaningful thing I can do in my life, even though it requires me to put aside a successful business that I have started. Actually, this year marks the 25th anniversary of my marketing business.

The companies that I worked for in Hong Kong, Ogilvy and Mather, and Burson-Marsteller, have really trained me well. I'm honoured to have received the business achievement award from the Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce, as well as an award of merit from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce outstanding business awards. I was also recognized by the Association of Chinese Canadian Entrepreneurs, and also received the York Region in Celebration for Women award.

I owe my business's success to the self-employment assistance program. I realize that meaningful programs introduced by the government can really make a big difference and impact in our lives. For the past 25 years, I expressed my appreciation through my volunteering work in the community. Running for office has become a natural progression for me now. It is with great honour that I have this opportunity to serve as MPP for Richmond Hill.

I would like to take this time to thank my campaign manager, Christopher Poulos, who is in the chamber now. He has worked tirelessly over the past several months leading my campaign. Do you know what? Despite being only 20 years old, he has been working very hard and doing such great success. I know he will be a great minister one day.

I'm very blessed with the staff that I have, and that I acquired very soon, as soon as I took office. I'm happy that I have Maxine McGuigan to be my EA. She also joins me in the chamber today. She is the EA for the office at Queen's Park. I also have my EA for the constituency office. I also have Tarun Saroya, who supports me with outreach. I thank them all. This will be a great team. With this great team, I'm very sure I can deliver what I have promised.

I owe my deeper political and community involvement to my dear friend and mentor, former cabinet minister Frank Klees. He would have joined me today, but unfortunately a prior engagement has not made it possible for him to be with us right now.

Frank, I am here today all because of you.

I still remember that 20 years ago I was busy with my family and running my business. I was reluctant to get actively engaged in the political process until Frank invited me to join his riding association as a director. I will always remember his advice to me: "Daisy, if you don't get involved in the political process, you are destined to be governed by those who do." This is the advice that has been with me and that has made me step forward, and it will be with me and driving me from this point onwards as well.

Thank you, Frank.

Mr. Speaker, I see it not just as my goal but as my duty to stand up and be the voice of the community which has done so much for me. I honestly and truly believe that For the People is much more than just a catchy campaign slogan and song; it is the fundamental guiding principle of why I'm here today and how I plan to represent my constituents. As reminded to members of

this House by the Lieutenant Governor, every seat in this chamber ultimately belongs to the people who sent you here. I will definitely work hard and be a strong representative for my constituents.

I would like to share with this House a few of my experiences serving my community over the past 25 years.

Having served on the boards of both Mackenzie Health and Markham Stouffville Hospital, I value the hard work and dedication of our front-line health care professionals.

In a riding with an aging population, health care is a concern for many. Outrageous wait times and hallway medicine must end.

Mr. Speaker, I watched first-hand as new layers of health care bureaucracy were created while resources were pulled away from the front line.

I am confident that this government, being directed by my colleague the Minister of Health, the Honourable Christine Elliott, will address those very important and impacting issues.

Additionally, having served on the York Regional Police Services Board, I would like to commend and thank our brave men and women on the police force who so tirelessly serve to protect our communities. I thank the Premier, Doug Ford, and Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the Honourable Michael Tibollo, for giving them the respect they deserve. Our number one responsibility as a government must be keeping the people of the province safe.

Mr. Speaker, my involvement with my community has also at many times mixed with my passion for business and entrepreneurship. I have served as the chair of the Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce, as the vice-chair of the Markham Board of Trade, and on the Richmond Hill-Markham Chinese business association.

Business is very important for all of us, and creating jobs is so important. I am thankful that Minister Jim Wilson is already in the States speaking on our behalf and fighting on our behalf, making Ontario the number one prosperous place to live.

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Interjection: Promise made, promise kept.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Promise made, promise kept.

I thank you all in the House, everybody here, and I will be working very hard with all of you and delivering what I promised to give for Richmond Hill.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Please be seated. Thank you very much.

Continuing along in debate, I now recognize the member from Markham-Unionville.

Mr. Billy Pang: Thank you to the member from Richmond Hill and congratulations on all my colleagues' success in the election.

It is my pleasure to speak in the Legislature for the first time as an elected MPP for Markham-Unionville. I want to thank my wife, Krystal; my daughter, Hannah; my son, Simeon; and all the volunteers, including my

campaign staff: Mark Borer, Jason Grossman, Vivi Hatzis, Amy Huang and Lawrence Luk—they are all here today—who have helped me get here. It is an honour and privilege that I will not soon forget.

As a first-generation Canadian, I arrived here 18 years ago from Hong Kong. My family and I have been given so much by this great country and the province of Ontario. I am proud to serve my community and to give back all that I have. As a former public school board trustee, I have had the opportunity to meet and serve many members of the school community, and look forward to meeting many more of them in my new role.

As a church minister, I have had the chance to meet with faith groups in Markham-Unionville, where I have heard various policy concerns. I approached elected officials in the community at the time. However, our concerns fell on deaf ears. This is why I committed myself to run for office, so that I could make a difference, like all the members here today.

During my campaign, I spent my days door-knocking, talking to my constituents and listening to all of their concerns. I found that the PC government's platform is exactly what most of my constituents were looking for. On election day, we won by 62.4% of the vote in Markham-Unionville. In this House, we won 76 seats. We can clearly see that the people of Ontario voted for change—not just change: They voted for change in the PC government's direction.

I'm now thrilled to have the opportunity to bring forward the concerns of many communities in Markham-Unionville, and I look forward to meeting with all faith groups in the coming months. As a member of the new Ontario PC government, I look forward to lowering your taxes, lowering your hydro rates and re-establishing government accountability.

A few elements of the throne speech I want to highlight first: financial accountability. Our government has begun a line-by-line audit of all government spending as part of the efforts to find billions in efficiencies. Our government has a commission to identify ways to boost financial transparency. Regarding cap-and-trade, our government will move forward with its plan to scrap cap-and-trade, having already revoked the regulations that govern the program.

Education reform: Our government has committed to replacing the failed ideological experiments in the classroom with the tried-and-true methods when it comes to math and sex education. Our government announced last week that the schools will temporarily revert to a previous version of the sex ed curriculum, rather than the version brought in by the Liberals three years ago, in order to properly consult parents, teachers and educators.

On expanding beer and wine sales: Our government trusts adults to make responsible choices. We will allow customers to buy beer and wine in convenience stores, grocery stores and big-box stores.

Honouring vets and police: Our government has pledged to build a new monument to veterans of the war in Afghanistan and will create a dedicated hotline to help military families.

We promise to remove restrictions on police officers so that they can spend more time protecting members of our community.

Markham–Unionville is a community with hard-working residents. They work hard and long hours to put food on the table. High hydro rates are not only a concern but a heavy burden.

Markham–Unionville is a community with parents who seek quality education for their children. When the 2014 sex ed survey rolled out, parents strongly felt that they were not respected or consulted. As a father with an engineering background, I cannot understand my daughter's 4th-grade discovery math, and now the level of math in Ontario keeps getting worse.

When I went door to door during my campaign, my constituents sent me a clear message: They want a government that can put money back in their pockets. They want a government that respects parents. They want a government that really cares about student achievement.

I'm so humbled and honoured to be a part of this "promise made, promise kept" government. I look forward to working with my colleagues from all sides as we make the Ontario government work better for all Ontarians and for those who live in Markham–Unionville.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. Looking at the time, there will not be enough time for questions and comments this day.

To the two members who have spoken: If you are present the next time that this particular motion is debated in the Legislature, there will then be questions and comments. If you're not present, then we will just move on to further debate.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Having said that, pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

ANTI-RACISM ACTIVITIES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The member for Brampton North has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given by the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

The member for Brampton North may debate for up to five minutes, and the parliamentary assistant—in this case, the member from Brampton South—may reply for up to five minutes.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Do you have a flak jacket?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Order, please. Thank you.

Therefore, I now turn it over to the member from Brampton North for your up to five minutes.

Mr. Kevin Yarde: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I just want to let everybody know a little bit about my family background. I can trace my family background to 1903, when my relatives came from Virginia. They came to Ontario, and they worked as porters in Ontario. Come forward to 2018, and here I am.

I was appalled and I was dismayed at what I heard today. I didn't expect to hear something like that here in Ontario—perhaps in another country, but definitely not here in this lovely province of Ontario. So today, Mr. Speaker, was a very sad day in Ontario.

During the question period today, I asked this government to finally end the unconstitutional and discriminatory police practice of carding.

Carding and forms of systemic racism hurt Black people, Indigenous people and people of colour. Carding attacks basic constitutional and human rights, and systemic racism also hurts all Ontarians. It destroys the bonds that hold our communities together, and it divides us.

I can tell you from personal experience what carding is like: It's upsetting and it's alienating. It makes you feel like you are less valuable because of the colour of your skin. For many years, and to this day, many Ontarians continue to face this indignity. It's wrong, and it has to stop.

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New Democrats understand this, which is why we have joined community advocates in calling for an end to carding as an important step in addressing systemic racism. It is also why we have been calling for the creation of the Ontario anti-racism secretariat since 2015. Because that is what it looks like to engage respectfully with communities, to listen to their needs and concerns, and to fight to make their lives better.

Today, I asked the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services if the government was planning to take Ontario from bad to worse. I asked if the government's approach will be to take us from the carding still happening today to a system where carding is expanded and legitimized. Unfortunately, the minister responded with a sad and divisive statement—a statement which stigmatizes the vibrant community in the Jane and Finch area, a community that had nothing to do with my question about carding.

In essence, when I asked about the practice of carding, the minister responded by claiming that predominantly Black neighbourhoods are dangerous. That neighbourhood is a place where people live and work, where parents take their kids to school and to soccer practice, where families go out to catch a movie. Sadly, the minister was not interested in seeing the community this way.

In fact, earlier today, he said—and I will quote what the minister said: "Decided instead of going during the day, I went in the evening so I could actually see what it's like." When I asked the minister if his government will uphold the rights of Ontarians, he said, "I ... put on a bulletproof vest and spent 7 o'clock to 1 o'clock in the

morning visiting sites that had previously had bullet-ridden people killed in the middle of the night.”

It was only when he was speaking outside of this chamber that the minister said that he actually believes in street checks—which is another term, of course, for carding—saying, “Street checks make community safer.”

Carding is unconstitutional. It is wrong and does not make communities safer. Tearing each other down by peddling stigma and division doesn’t make it safer.

So I wanted to give the minister another opportunity to answer my question. I see, of course, that he’s not here today—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Please sit down for a moment. Stop the clock. Please sit down. Thank you.

Again, I will remind everyone—I mentioned it already this afternoon—that you cannot make reference to an individual who is an elected official who may not be in the Legislature. So please refrain from doing so, and that goes for everyone.

Thank you. Please continue.

Mr. Kevin Yarde: My question to Mr. Sarkaria: Will your government be making changes to allow even more carding, or will you listen to communities and finally eliminate the discriminatory practice of carding?

Applause.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Please be seated.

I now recognize the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, who will have up to five minutes for a response.

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Let me start by saying that I am proud and honoured to be the PA to Minister Tibollo.

Let me begin by saying that, tonight, we welcome this debate. Let me also say to you as well that nobody, not one person on this side of the House, is going to be silenced from speaking out on behalf of or fighting for the families who are most at risk from gang and gun violence.

The members opposite are quick to hurl insults at those who disagree with them. They—and I include the Leader of the Opposition—are quick to shout “racist” in order to shut down debate. The Leader of the Opposition should be ashamed of herself, but that would require her to have any shame.

Let me tell the Leader of the Opposition something about racism: The majority of victims of gun violence in the city of Toronto this year are visible—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Stop. Sit down, please.

I’ve had enough. I will name individuals if I hear it continue, because I know where it was coming from. Again, let’s have some respect in this Legislature. They showed respect when the member from Brampton North was speaking. We’ll now show respect to the parliamentary assistant, the member from Brampton South.

Please continue.

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: The majority of victims of gun violence in the city of Toronto this year are visible minorities; in particular, the Black community. That is a fact. If we do nothing, the number of victims—victims who are more likely to be visible minorities—will continue to grow.

When the NDP tries to shame those who call for more action, when it tries to silence those who call for changes to the status quo, when the NDP continues to insult and undermine our men and women in uniform and do everything they can to block action to give our police more resources, to improve enforcement to protect these communities, you tell me: Who gets hurt the most? I will tell you who gets hurt the most: visible minorities, including members of the Black community.

The member from Brampton North is upset that the Minister of Community Safety wore a bulletproof vest in 31 division—Jane and Finch. I’m sorry he’s upset, but maybe he should be just as upset about the 35 shootings that have taken place in that neighbourhood just this year.

People are dying every single week. And where is the NDP? Do you know where the NDP is? Doing nothing. That’s what the NDP want to do: nothing. Because to them it’s not about public safety; it’s about public opinion. They don’t care about chasing gangs. They only care about chasing headlines. They don’t really care about gunshots. They are more interested in cheap shots. They don’t want to be part of—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Excuse me; we have a point of order.

I recognize the member from Timmins.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Speaker, we’ve been trying to be very quiet and to listen to what’s going on here, but he’s imputing motive, and that is against the standing orders.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Order, please. If you want to hear what I have to say, then I would ask for quiet.

That is not a point of order, and so we shall continue with debate.

Back to the member from Brampton South.

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: They don’t want to be part of the solution.

One member of the NDP caucus, the member for Brampton East, made a name for himself chanting, “Eff the police.”

The NDP member for St. Paul’s made a name for herself calling Toronto’s chief of police a racial slur.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we’re here to say, “Enough.”

Little girls are being shot on playgrounds. The entire country was horrified by that shooting in Scarborough. When the Premier and Minister of Community Safety visited that neighbourhood, a little eight-year-old girl came up to them and said she was happy to see them, because it meant they were trying to keep things safe—a little girl about the same age as those two schoolgirls who were shot on that playground in Scarborough.

Mr. Speaker, the reason the Minister of Community Safety wore that bulletproof vest was because the police in 31 division advised him to wear it. And the real insult is not that the minister wore the vest; it's that the vest was needed in the first place in that little girl's neighbourhood.

The status quo is failing. And we're the only party in this House prepared to do something. We're going get resources to our police services. It means boots on the ground, it means more resources to the front line, so they can do their job.

That is what we committed to in the last election: more tools, more resources, more supports.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Be seated, please.

There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to have been carried.

This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1810.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
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Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
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Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
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Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	
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Cho, Stan (PC)	Willowdale	
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
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Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
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Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Parm (PC)	Milton	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutilla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Orléans	
Lecce, Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (PC)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)	Ajax	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Piccini, David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Government and Consumer Services Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakabuski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry