

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

No. 33

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

N° 33

2nd Session
42nd Parliament

Tuesday
22 February 2022

2^e session
42^e législature

Mardi
22 février 2022

Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
Greffier : Todd Decker

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



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

ISSN 1180-2987

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 22 February 2022

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 22 février 2022

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PARLIAMENTARY BROADCAST
AND RECORDING SERVICE

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the government House leader to move the motion.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, I move that the guidelines for the television broadcast system be updated to read as follows:

Television guidelines

The guidelines for the television coverage of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario are as follows:

(1) The television coverage of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly should be an accurate, factual and coherent record of the legislative proceedings which is understandable to the viewing public and which does not dramatize or editorialize such proceedings.

(2) The guidelines shall be enforced by the Speaker. Specific concerns of members regarding the televising of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly should not be raised in the House. Such concerns should be raised in private with the Speaker. The television guidelines shall stand referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly. The committee shall conduct periodic reviews of the televising of the legislative proceedings and consider such matters or concerns as may be referred to the committee by the Speaker, and it shall report its opinions and observations upon any matters referred to it.

(3) The proceedings in the legislative chamber beginning with the Speaker's parade and prayers until the adjournment of the assembly shall be recorded, broadcast live on the Ontario Parliamentary Network and streamed over the Internet. Proceedings of standing and select committees in committee rooms 151,1 and 2, and media studio press conferences will also be recorded and streamed live over the Internet and on the Ontario Parliamentary Network when the House is not meeting.

(4) Only the member who has been recognized by the Speaker shall be the primary focus of the camera shot recorded, broadcast or streamed. If approved by the

House, a sign-language interpreter may also appear on-screen.

(5) The initial shot of the member shall be of his or her head and shoulders, or a medium shot showing some of the members who are seated on either side of the speaking member.

(6) When the Speaker is standing, the active camera shall always include the Speaker. A wider shot of the chamber may be used during a division in the chamber.

(7) In Committee of the Whole House, when the Chair of the Committee of the Whole House is speaking, the active camera shall always include the Chair. A wider shot of the chamber may be used during a division in the chamber.

(8) When the Speaker or the Chair of the Committee of the Whole House is giving a ruling or calling the House or committee to order, the active camera should include the Speaker or the Chair.

(9) Except as provided in paragraph 10, coverage of the legislative proceedings should be limited to the strict confines of the floor of the House and cameras should not deliberately record shots of public interruptions or demonstrations. When the Speaker stands to address a disruption in the public or members' galleries, only the Speaker's microphone will be activated.

(10) Medium close-up shots may be taken of any distinguished visitors sitting in the Speaker's gallery who are introduced by the Speaker.

(11) Applause shots may be taken; however, care should be taken to ensure that the decorum of the chamber is maintained.

(12) The name, constituency, portfolio and political affiliation of a member, as the case may be, shall be shown periodically on the screen while he or she is speaking.

(13) Factual information shall be shown in print across the bottom of the screen from time to time to explain the proceedings. Such information should be shown only after consultation with the Clerks-at-the-table.

(14) The television content which is produced by the Legislative Assembly may be broadcast or streamed by television stations, news organizations and/or cablecast live or by means of recordings.

(15) Copies of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly may be obtained from broadcast and recording service. Access to this service shall be according to the following priority: members of the Legislative Assembly, officers and officials of the House, members of the press, and the general public. This service shall be provided free

of charge. Broadcast and recording service will provide a link where the file can be downloaded.

(16) Broadcast and recording service shall ensure that a complete record of the day's proceedings is archived. This material should be kept indefinitely.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader has moved government notice of motion number 9.

Does the minister care to lead off the debate?

I recognize, again, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Let me just welcome back all members, Mr. Speaker—you and all the table officers as well.

I'll be deliberately brief on this. The legislative committee reviewed the guidelines back in 2019—much of the language of the review. The last time this was done, I believe, was in 1986. Much of the changes reflect the fact that, obviously, the world has changed and we can now stream out the broadcast, the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, over the Internet. It reflects the fact that over the last year or so, both the committee rooms have now become fully functional in terms of being able to record and broadcast proceedings over the Internet as well.

Given those changes, given the fact that it was reviewed by a parliamentary committee—and if I'm not mistaken, all of the recommendations of the committee were accepted—I think I'll just leave it at that. Of course, don't assume anything, but hopefully all of the members will see to approve these changes today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'd also like to welcome everyone back to what will be a very interesting session of the Legislature.

I will be equally brief in my comments on these updates to the television broadcast policy for the Legislative Assembly.

The guidelines were last approved in 1986. It has been almost 36 years since they have been formally updated, and a lot has changed in those almost 36 years. We now have the ability to stream, to download footage digitally, and to make broadcast recordings available through file-share services. So the updates that we're looking at today simply reflect the changes in technology and enable the actual policy to reflect the practice of this assembly.

I did want to highlight one of the changes that is very important, and that is a provision to allow sign-language interpretation to accompany broadcast proceedings when there is a direction from the House. We know, Speaker, that at a time when accessibility is a huge priority and so many people with disabilities are excluded from participation in civic life, sign-language interpretation is an important way to make the proceedings of the Legislature accessible to people with disabilities.

I also want to recognize the Clerks, who brought forward the recommendations that have been incorporated into these guidelines. The guidelines really are non-partisan. They are to the benefit of all the citizens of this province in terms of the ability to watch the proceedings

of this place. It is important that those guidelines be non-partisan and reflect the reality of the current technology.

Speaker, we do support the changes and look forward to seeing, as I said, the policy reflect the practice of the Legislative Assembly.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate? Further debate? Further debate?

Mr. Calandra has moved government notice of motion number 9 relating to the Legislative Assembly's television broadcast system guidelines. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I did not hear a no, so I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Orders of the day? I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: No further business.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): No further business. This House stands in recess until 10:15 this morning.

The House recessed from 0912 to 1015.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Before I invite members' statements, I have a number of announcements to make to the House.

RESIGNATION OF MEMBER FOR AJAX

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that, during the adjournment, a vacancy has occurred in the membership of the House by reason of the resignation of Rod Phillips as the member for the electoral district of Ajax, effective February 2, 2022. Accordingly, I have issued my warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of a writ for a by-election.

TABLING OF SESSIONAL PAPERS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that, during the adjournment, the following documents were tabled:

—a copy of my warrant, issued in accordance with the adoption of the House on December 9, 2021, of the report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts respecting the production of documents relating to Laurentian University, which was served on Claude Lacroix by the Sergeant-at-Arms on December 10, 2021;

—a copy of my warrant, issued in accordance with the adoption of the House on December 9, 2021, of the report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts respecting the production of documents relating to Laurentian University, which was served on Robert Haché by the Sergeant-at-Arms on December 10, 2021;

—a report concerning Vijay Thanigasalam, member for Scarborough—Rouge Park, from the Office of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario;

—a report concerning the Honourable Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation and Minister of Francophone Affairs, and Stan Cho, the member for Willowdale, from the Office of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario;

—a report entitled 2022 Budget Outlook, from the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario;

—a request by the member for Kitchener–Conestoga, Mr. Harris, to the Integrity Commissioner for an opinion pursuant to section 30(1) of the Members' Integrity Act, 1994, on whether the member for University–Rosedale, Ms. Bell, has contravened the act or Ontario parliamentary convention;

—a request by the member for Kitchener–Conestoga, Mr. Harris, to the Integrity Commissioner for an opinion pursuant to section 30(1) of the Members' Integrity Act, 1994, on whether the member for University–Rosedale, Ms. Bell, has contravened the act or Ontario parliamentary convention;

—a request by the member for Kitchener–Conestoga, Mr. Harris, to the Integrity Commissioner for an opinion pursuant to section 30(1) of the Members' Integrity Act, 1994, on whether the member for Hamilton Centre, Ms. Horwath, has contravened the act or Ontario parliamentary convention;

—a report entitled Ontario's Energy and Electricity Subsidy Programs, from the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario; and

—a report concerning Stephen Crawford, the member for Oakville, from the Office of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Speaker, Alzheimer's disease and dementia steal memories and take loved ones away much too early. One quarter million Ontarians live with this disease which cannot be prevented or cured—a number which will double in 20 years. It's clear that the best place for these folks is at home, with support from great organizations such as Alzheimer Society Southwest Partners.

Supporting individuals with dementia is the right thing to do, but it also saves money. Dementia costs our health care system and caregivers billions of dollars per year and is only set to increase.

Every day in Ontario, thousands of patients sit in ALC beds while they wait for a spot in long-term care.

Care partners, the family members and loved ones of those who live with dementia, are the unsung heroes whose efforts hold up our precious health care system. A staggering 70% of home care in Ontario is provided by care partners. If we don't help those who care for others, they could end up being patients themselves.

I urge the government to implement the Alzheimer Society's fiscally prudent and thoughtful budget request to support individuals with dementia and their families by investing in at-home services and expanding innovative models to divert people living with dementia from ER rooms.

The most precious resource we have is time—time spent with our loved ones. A solid investment in dementia

care will keep our loved ones with us, at home, where they belong.

1020

JOHN CURRY

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Mr. Speaker, it's with a heavy heart that I rise in the House today. On February 5, 2022, Mr. John Curry, a staple in the Stittsville, Richmond and Ottawa Valley communities, passed away.

John was a fountain of knowledge. He was smart, funny, and he always had so much charisma. He was willing to give his time to his community and the many organizations he was a part of.

John was a dedicated editor and publisher of the Ottawa Community Voice, Stittsville-Richmond. He would often be seen at community events ready to report with his camera and notepad in his pocket. He was a proud journalist, historian, storyteller and a friend to many.

John also served on the board as a trustee with the Ottawa Catholic School Board for over 20 years. His last project with the school board was assisting me in helping to build the first public Catholic elementary school in Findlay Creek.

John will always be remembered as a gentleman who loved his community and spread positivity wherever he went. He was passionate about celebrating the youth of the community, always ready to report on celebrations, birthdays and graduations. Throughout his many decades of service, John touched the lives of so many people in Stittsville, Richmond and the surrounding communities in the Ottawa Valley. He was a role model and an inspiration to many. John had an incredible impact on the community he had met, including myself. He was always so warm and humble, with quick wit and humour.

John, you will be missed dearly. We were blessed to have you. You were and will always be an icon, and you made our community better. Thank you for all you have done. You will forever remain in our hearts and memories. Rest in peace.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I rise today to once again speak on behalf of the decent and hard-working community of York South–Weston. I am honoured to have the opportunity to recognize February as Black History Month.

Our province and our country has a long, rich history of Black excellence, one that is too often ignored. For generations, Black Canadians have been contributing to the political, cultural and economic fabric of our society. There are so many examples of Black excellence in our community, from leaders and community organizations doing tremendous work to the mothers, fathers and grandparents helping to raise a family and instill good community values of helping others and standing up against injustice.

As youth opportunities critic for the official opposition, I meet young people across the province on a regular basis.

I am so inspired by how they know their Black history and how they have the energy and commitment to try to do their best for themselves and their community, often when it is not easy to do so.

Black History Month is a reminder that we need to know our past and to be aware that often nothing changes without us lifting our voices.

The late Archbishop Desmond Tutu left us with these words to reflect on: “There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in.”

CHINESE NEW YEAR

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The next statement, the member for Markham–Thornhill.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Xie Xie, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate this time to express my sincere wishes in what was a wonderful 15-day lunar Chinese New Year event across all of Markham–Thornhill, Ontario and Canada. This Chinese holiday has ancient roots in China. It is one of the most celebrated festivals in the world. It is also an annual opportunity to celebrate the harvest, worship the gods, and seek a good crop in the coming years. This time it was not just a New Year’s celebration, but it was a time for renewal and new beginnings.

We all know the pain of this pandemic as loss and sorrow. I have seen our Chinese community, for their resilience, perseverance and generosity—including our front-line workers, who continue to play a vital role in our community.

During these challenging times, COVID-19 has also brought another hardship to the Asian communities, in the face of discrimination. The Ontario government has made racial equity a top priority, and everyone deserves to be treated with dignity.

Diversity has always been the strength of the beautiful city of Markham, this province and this entire country.

Our communities in Markham rose together to celebrate the new year with their families, some virtually and some with family. Many of our businesses like Pacific Mall, T&T Supermarket and Gibson community centre celebrated with food and friends, embracing these ancient traditions, which is considered good business etiquette—healthier, prosperous and more optimistic, filled with a strong hope and fortune and joy.

From my family to all your families, we continue to wish you all a happy lunar new year.

Gong Hay Fat Choy.

HOME CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: The Ontario Community Support Association released the latest stats: 26% of nurse and 14% of PSW positions in home and community care are vacant. In my community that means that a young lady with a severe infection—she lives 40 minutes away from the hospital and does not drive—must find a ride to the hospital three times a day for the next 14 days because they cannot find a nurse to come to her house.

Mrs. Rock from Whitefish is partially blind and has had multiple amputations. She qualifies and is supposed to get home care daily. In December, she was only getting care twice, maybe three times, a week. Now she goes five days at a time with no help at all. Mrs. Rock needs care daily. Her cries for help are really hard to listen to, Speaker.

After two weeks in hospital, Jennifer in north Durham was released from Markham Stouffville Hospital. Thirty minutes into her drive home she was told that there were no nurses to provide home care. She had to turn around and be readmitted to the hospital.

According to Dr. Hamilton in London, there is a record number of emergency visits and admissions of palliative care patients because there are no nurses to care for them in their community.

Our home care system is broken. It fails more people every single day. Let’s bring pay parity to the home care workers as a first step to ease this crisis.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

M^{me} Lucille Collard: I think everyone in this Legislature will understand where I’m coming from when I say that my city has gone through incredible torment and fear for more than three weeks. The media has widely reported on the symbols of hate and obvious disrespect by these occupiers, not only for authority but for the right of people to live peacefully. But what the media didn’t get to see is the hundreds of emails and calls I’ve been getting from Ottawa–Vanier residents—residents who have faced abuse, harassment and constant hate for wearing a mask; residents stressed out by the loud horns and their quality of life affected by the diesel fumes; residents who have not been able to go and support their local restaurants or favourite small businesses because they’ve been closed because of this occupation.

From the start of this protest, the Premier has been absent. On the last weekend of January, indoor dining, gyms, retailers, shopping malls and cinemas could reopen—but one of the most vibrant economic and tourism sector of Ottawa was forced to remain closed, not for an additional weekend or an additional few days, but for more than 24 days.

Mr. Speaker, it was not lost on anyone in my riding and downtown Ottawa that the important measures that were needed to help didn’t get the attention of the Premier before the situation became problematic at the Ambassador Bridge. Residents in Ottawa feel that this government has failed them, and I agree.

STAFF APPRECIATION

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: I rise today to pay tribute to a group that often goes uncelebrated: my constituency team in Ottawa West–Nepean. Over the past several months, my constituency team has been hard at work running dozens of pop-up clinics around my riding to print off wallet-sized vaccination QR codes for folks in the riding who need it. Whether it be seniors who might not have a phone, vulnerable groups who needed some support, or

just everyday, run-of-the-mill residents who wanted to have access to that QR code in their wallet, we were able to provide this service. At the end of this process, we had printed off over 4,500 QR code cards across our riding—a tremendous feat. We ran these pop-up clinics around the riding. Whether it was at seniors' homes, condos, apartments, the Carlington Community Health Centre, the Nepean Museum or Carlingwood mall, we were there and my team was hard at work getting this job done.

1030

Today I would like to recognize my amazing constituency staff: Pam Crawford, Brandon Purcell, David Gibbons, and Braedan de Bakker. Thank you for your tremendously hard work. And a big shout-out to three volunteers who helped us along the way: Marilyn Trudel, Schona Fitzgerald and—a special volunteer—my mother, Janine Roberts.

To all of those who helped make it possible and to all those who came out to our QR-code clinics, thank you so much.

COST OF LIVING

Ms. Doly Begum: The cost of living in Ontario is at an all-time high. The past two years have deeply impacted the financial security and income of many in our communities, especially seniors, young people, those working minimum wage jobs, folks with disabilities, and many more. With the skyrocketing price of basic necessities like rent, groceries and electricity, we are looking at an affordability crisis.

I have heard from many in my community, some families with two incomes, where missing just one or two paycheques due to isolation or illness has made it impossible to buy their usual amount of groceries. So many in my community have lost days of work and income during this pandemic and have faced a similar or worse reality, while the price of day-to-day items has gone up unbelievably. Just in the last year, the price of cooking oil has gone up over 40%; gas, over 34%; meat, close to 15%.

With inflation being at 5.2% and the average income and support payments remaining unadjusted to the cost of living, those already struggling continue to fall through the cracks in our system. And yet this government is providing little to no hope, despite the extraordinary circumstances, record-high inflation and public health crisis. They failed to prioritize issues of affordability, fair wages, concerns of tenants and small landlords, families looking to buy their first homes in our province, or even a young person simply trying to get started.

Ontario's affordability crisis is making it impossible for people to make a living in this province. We need urgent action from our government to help Ontarians and protect the future of our province.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Sherif Sabawy: This government has been working tirelessly since 2018 to build Ontario and protect what matters the most for the people of Ontario.

Just two weeks ago, I was with the active Minister of Long-Term Care, announcing 128 new long-term-care beds in Mississauga with the Church of the Virgin Mary and St. Athanasius. I want to thank Bishop Mina and Father Angelos for their service and their vision to serve the community in Mississauga. This is the first facility that will serve Arab, Egyptian and Coptic residents in their own native Arabic language in Ontario.

In Mississauga alone, we have budgeted and approved 1,880 long-term-care beds. By adding 1,251 new beds and upgrading another 629 beds in Mississauga, we will increase access to modern long-term-care capacity, we will reduce wait-lists, and we will ease hospital capacity pressures that have been neglected for years.

After 14 years of neglect and careless management by the previous Liberal government, the past two Liberal administrations only built 611 net new beds in all of Ontario. Liberals have failed Ontarians, and they have put Ontario in a vulnerable position.

On this side of the House, we continue to work for all Ontarians and are building an inclusive, equitable and public health care system, reducing hallway health care.

Promise made, promise kept.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I am very pleased to inform the House that page Tanisha Hossain from the riding of Scarborough Southwest is one of today's page captains, and we have with us today at Queen's Park her father, Abdullah Hossain, and her brother Tameem Hossain.

Also, we are joined by the parent of our other page captain, Zane McKinnon from the riding of Waterloo: his father, Don McKinnon.

Welcome to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. We're delighted to have you here.

AILEEN CARROLL

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow members to make statements in remembrance for the late Mrs. Aileen Carroll, with five minutes allotted to Her Majesty's government, five minutes allotted to Her Majesty's loyal opposition, and five minutes allotted to the independent members as a group.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow members to make statements in remembrance of the late Mrs. Aileen Carroll, with five minutes allotted to Her Majesty's government, five minutes allotted to Her Majesty's loyal opposition, and five minutes allotted to the independent members as a group. Agreed? Agreed.

I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Doug Downey: It's an honour to be able to pay tribute to a remarkable parliamentarian, the Honourable Aileen Carroll. Our community in Barrie, our province

and our nation lost her on April 19, 2020. I would like to extend greetings to Kevin Carroll, her husband, and her two children, Joanna and Daniel, who are watching today.

Kevin and Aileen Carroll married in 1968. They were very accomplished separately, and even more so together.

I'll talk about Aileen Carroll's formal record so that you hear it and it's captured in Hansard, but the story of this Haligonian born in 1944 needs context so you understand the presence she had before she came to Queen's Park. She didn't take a traditional path to this place. In fact, she didn't take traditional paths to most places. She was a woman of firsts. Aileen was the first woman to graduate from Saint Mary's University in Halifax. She was the first federal member of Parliament from Barrie to become a cabinet minister. And she was the first federal cabinet minister to become a provincial cabinet minister.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Born and raised in Halifax, Aileen had Maritime charm. She was welcoming, friendly, smart, driven, and she was a fierce competitor.

My fondest memory of Aileen was when she was accompanying Kevin to a law conference. Kevin was past president of both the Ontario and Canadian bar associations at the time. We were at a small dinner at someone's home in Niagara-on-the-Lake. At this small dinner, here was this very accomplished woman engaging me as a young volunteer, and she knew my politics, as I had been in campaigns that she was involved in, and not on the same side. But that didn't matter to her. She was engaging. She was sharing ideas as if we were equals, and we very clearly were not. That humbleness and inclusiveness are reflective of her character.

But Aileen was also a competitor. Patrick Brown, who ran against her twice, spoke from personal experience in 2020 when he said this: "She was probably the toughest opponent I ever faced. I thought the 2004 and 2006 elections were like nothing I'd ever gone through."

Ms. Carroll was a federal member of Parliament for three terms and a city councillor before that. Her roles as a federal MP included parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs between 2001 and 2003, and then Minister of International Cooperation between 2003 and 2006. Aileen Carroll was then a member of provincial Parliament from 2007 to 2011, and served as Minister of Culture and Minister Responsible for Seniors during three of those four years with Premier McGuinty's government.

She won provincially because she built a federal-provincial "big red machine," as she called it, and she attracted all the heavyweights of the Liberal Party to the riding several times, including the Premier. Eileen was a Liberal red force in a county of blue. In 1995, she took Joe Tascona's seat on council when he became an MPP, and years later she would take his seat in the provincial Legislature after a very hotly contested election.

Her perspective on provincial versus federal politics was this, and everyone here will relate: "Provincially, it's an entire different world, way more different than I anticipated, with greater opportunities to impact more quickly the course of activities. You're closer to the ground. Good decisions get felt quickly and bad ones come back to haunt you."

Again, Patrick Brown summed it up: "She was not someone to be underestimated.... I also admired that she was well connected in the city and had deep roots and a lot of respect across partisan lines."

You see, Aileen saw herself as a policy wonk, and she was engaged in many issues of the day. She counted among her local accomplishments the Lake Simcoe airport, Georgian College, the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Centre and re-establishing the GO train to Barrie. Those are just some of the things that she was very active in and made happen. She was in the middle of issues like cultural and performing arts centres in Barrie. As the minister responsible, she had a lot to say—and the debate continues to this day.

Her riding, at one time, was Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford. Today, that spans three ridings: Minister Mulroney's, PA Andrea Khanjin's and mine. She was immersed in the Innisfil boundary issues and the growth pressures of our time.

1040

Upon her death, the newspapers reported that Aileen Carroll resigned from public life in 2011. I think it's more accurate to say that she resigned from elected public life. She continued to be engaged in the Barrie community with Hospice Simcoe, Habitat for Humanity, the David Busby Centre, the Barrie Public Library, and the Grey and Simcoe Foresters, among many other things. She was a part of our community fabric; she was before she was elected, and she certainly was afterwards.

I saw her most recently at the installation of Honorary Colonel Renee van Kessel to 16 Wing Borden. Aileen was there adding gravitas to yet another occasion.

The Honourable Aileen Carroll will be remembered for her extensive public service. She was a woman of class, grace, depth and character.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize next the member for Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I want to offer my condolences to Mrs. Carroll's family, who are watching today—her husband, Kevin; her children; her grandchildren—all her friends, and everyone who knew her.

Mrs. Carroll and I were elected to the Ontario Legislature for the first time in the October 2007 election. Back in 2007, I sat on this side of the House, in the middle of the House, third row, and she sat kind of the same but in the second row, so we looked at one another quite a bit. She was sworn in as Minister of Culture, and she was also the minister responsible for seniors' affairs. I was the critic for seniors' affairs for our party. From the first time I met her, I liked her.

It was in the spring of 2008 when I crossed the aisle for the first time to go and sit beside her, and I started telling her about a complicated case of elder abuse that I had been made aware of, as she was the minister for seniors. I started telling her, and then she put her hand on my arm and gestured me to stop. I could see tears in her eyes as she turned to face me. I stopped talking. She took a deep breath and asked, "What can I do to help?" This is who she was. She was there to serve the people of Ontario with integrity, and this is what she did.

I had many other conversations with Aileen over the four years that she was at Queen's Park. She was always in a good mood and willing to listen and willing to help the people of Ontario.

As I got to know her better, we had conversations about health care projects in Barrie. Royal Victoria Hospital had just hired a new CEO, Ms. Janice Skot. I knew Janice Skot very well. She used to work at Laurentian Hospital, and she and I had worked together. Aileen was keenly interested in the expansion of the Royal Victoria Hospital as well as the development of a new cancer treatment centre for Barrie. Before being elected, I worked in health care. I was working at Laurentian Hospital when they built our cancer treatment centre in Sudbury, so we had a lot to talk about. Aileen stayed very interested and kept a keen eye on these projects, and she helped bring them to success as much as she could. I must extend my congratulations to her and to everyone involved—from the very first temporary radiation site in Barrie's hospital to doubling the size of the hospital and opening up a full cancer treatment centre. Aileen and I had many conversations on these projects, and I know that she did everything she could to help them along, to push them along.

Aside from the many work-related conversations, there was another reason I admired Aileen: I liked the way she stood, the way she walked, the way she moved, her posture. It did not take long before she shared with me her keen interest in ballet. Her body positioning and her movements were an integral part of the ballerina training that she had taken. She had the strength to move gracefully, and I admired that in her. I know a whole lot more about ballet than I did before I met her; I can tell you that much, Speaker. I would say that her strength in movement was also obvious in the way that she behaved as a minister and as a politician representing Barrie. She was strong, she was smart, she was knowledgeable, and she was funny. It was really hard to have a conversation with her that did not end up with a few good laughs. She had a great sense of humour, and in a place like Queen's Park where infighting makes the front page of the paper, having and keeping a good sense of humour is something that requires effort, and she made those efforts.

I know that there is a lot to say about the millions of dollars she was responsible for as the Ontario Minister of Culture. We saw big changes at the Royal Ontario Museum, at the Art Gallery of Ontario, as well as many smaller visual arts centres and performing arts centres around our province during the two years that she was Minister of Culture.

We did not always see eye to eye, though, Speaker. If you check the Hansard, you will see that Minister Carroll and I had exchanges during question period on issues where we did not agree at all. A lot of it had to do with regulating retirement homes. The Liberals had made a promise that they were going to regulate retirement homes. She was the minister responsible for seniors' affairs, and nothing was moving. But I can tell you, it didn't matter how many times I stood in this House and asked her about seniors' issues; she was always polite, she was always respectful.

I pulled one of the many questions and answers on that subject and realized that she always started her answers the same way, by saying, "I am delighted to reply to my colleague from across the way." Then she would go on to her response, which I did not agree with at all. But at least she always started in a very polite and respectful way.

After she was released from her ministerial duties, she became a member of the public accounts committee where I was also a member. I got to know her even better then, once she was no longer a minister, through the work of public accounts.

In a place that's hyper-partisan like Queen's Park, I thought I would try to show a side of this MPP, a side of Aileen Carroll that most people would not know. When I think about her, I remember her smile; I remember her laugh; I remember the gracious ways she moved.

I was very surprised and saddened to hear about her passing shortly after the pandemic started. I'm glad we got to spend a few minutes to talk about her today.

To the people of Barrie: I can assure you that she tried her best to bring positive changes to your community. She loved her community and dedicated a lot of time, effort and energy to making it better.

To her family and friends: Thank you for sharing her with us. She was a good politician, she was an effective member of Parliament, and she was a great minister.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Next, I'll recognize the member for Don Valley West.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm really honoured to join my colleagues from Nickel Belt and Barrie—

Hon. Doug Downey: Springwater.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne:—Springwater, yes, in honouring Aileen Carroll today and paying tribute to her.

When I learned that we had lost Aileen in 2020, I wrote that she was a feisty, funny, smart woman, and her political supporters and opposition alike saw her in that way: fierce, feisty, principled and really funny. She was a funny woman.

Aileen served the people of Barrie and the area at all three levels of government. I got to know her in Dalton McGuinty's cabinet, where she served as Minister of Culture. She loved serving the people of her community, and she loved the cut and thrust of policy discussion. That was where she was at her best. She really understood more than most of us that the decisions made by elected officials are important, no matter what level of government they are serving at.

Margaret Aileen O'Leary was born in 1944 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. In 1965, she was the first woman to graduate from Saint Mary's University in Halifax. That fact reads like a smooth victory, but for those of us who were young women in 1965, what I read between the lines is that she put up with a lot of discrimination and—I'll say "nonsense," in order to preserve the decorum of the House—in that male bastion. So she was pretty much preparing for her political life, Mr. Speaker.

1050

As a young woman, Aileen ventured far from home. She volunteered in Algeria and worked for the Canadian

International Development Agency. But she came home, she married Kevin Carroll in 1968, and they lived in Barrie with their children, Joanna and Daniel. Aileen ran her own small business before she entered politics, as she was raising her kids.

Her love for the music and lyrics of Stan Rogers might be a clue to what Mayor Jeff Lehman called her “Maritime belief in community”—all those trials and tribulations at sea, and still, the beauty of a song.

Aileen’s staffers described working for her as a quest for fun. Lisa Clements never knew when her boss was going to break into French, not to be pretentious, but just because “écoutez” or “doucement” were the better words.

John-Michael Poon remembers that life and all the good things in it were “delicious” to Aileen, and that word went way beyond food for her.

Emma Wakelin, who was her candidate aide on her first federal campaign in 1997, divulged that they would tell their campaign manager that they had to book an hour every morning for mass. Instead, they would go for ice cream and just catch a moment to talk and get away from the campaign—every morning, while at the same time she was teaching Emma to drive a stick shift throughout the campaign.

Lynda Murtha, a long-time friend and associate, described her integrity as unquestionable. She just wanted to do the right thing.

Aileen Carroll was passionate and loving, and she was all-in. I benefited from her enthusiastic commitment during my leadership campaign, but I was just one of many women who felt the warmth of her support in public life.

The most interesting people in life, I think, are unpredictable. We never knew exactly how Aileen was going to put us all on notice, but whether the issue was the protection of Lake Simcoe, funding for libraries or women living in poverty, we all knew where she stood. We all knew she cared. Her zest for life, for the well-being of the people she served and for the state of our democracy was never in doubt.

On behalf of one part of Aileen’s Liberal family, we thank Kevin, Joanna and Daniel and Aileen’s beloved grandchildren for all the time you shared this woman you loved so much with all of us. We loved her too, and she’s sorely missed.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Guelph.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I’m honoured to rise today to pay tribute to the Honourable Aileen Carroll, former Liberal MPP and cabinet minister, for her distinguished service.

Ms. Carroll’s accomplishments are truly extraordinary. Born in 1944, as the member noted, she was the first woman to graduate from Saint Mary’s University. Throughout her life, she became a leader, a community builder, a volunteer extraordinaire, a city councillor, a member of both the federal and provincial cabinets—and, yes, served in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

She inspired women to enter politics, and she knew that women could rise to the highest heights of politics, such as the member from Don Valley West and other colleagues.

Barrie Mayor Jeff Lehman said, “She, very quietly sometimes, worked tirelessly for marginalized residents in Barrie and causes that were very close to her heart in the city.” While Ms. Carroll obviously enjoyed the cut and thrust of politics, as a policy wonk, if I can say that, she understood that sometimes it’s those quiet accomplishments that truly make a difference in your constituents’ lives.

I want to say thank you to Ms. Carroll’s family. I want to offer you my condolences and let you know that the province of Ontario and the country of Canada are better because of Aileen Carroll’s service.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I want to thank the members for their presentations as together we give thanks for the life and public service of Mrs. Aileen Carroll.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Ottawa South has a point of order.

Mr. John Fraser: Just a quick point of order: I want to welcome—I know we don’t have guests in the gallery, but the members from SEIU and CUPE are here today to deliver some postcards. They can’t get in, but they’re here, and I want to welcome them to Queen’s Park even though they can’t hear me.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): It is now time for oral questions.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Before I start, I want to wish everybody a happy Canadian agriculture day. It’s a day that we celebrate our farmers and farm families for not only providing the food on our table but great jobs and great fuel to our economy. Celebrate ag more than ever.

My first question this morning is to our Premier.

We know that residents of Ottawa, particularly, have lived through a terrifying three and a half weeks under siege in our province and in our country’s capital. Thankfully, things are finally turning around, but we definitely need to focus on moving forward now. I think the first step in doing that is to have this government acknowledge their role in letting that hate fester for three and a half weeks in the city of Ottawa and dividing this province.

My question to the Premier: He went out of his way to apologize to the occupiers. Will he now or has he yet had the opportunity to apologize to the people of Ottawa and the people of Windsor, and if not, will he do that today?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Solicitor General.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I appreciate the opportunity to talk about what has been a very challenging time for many

individuals in Ottawa, in Windsor, in Niagara and numerous other communities. It speaks to the value of working together.

The fact that Chief Bell and the OPP and the RCMP and numerous other police agencies have been able to remove the illegal operation in Ottawa safely, carefully, to ensure a minimum of injuries, speaks to the integrity and the professionalism of what we have seen with our front-line officers. It is incredible to me to see how well these officers from different agencies, from different police departments have worked together. I'm proud of the work that they have done, and I am proud of the work that has happened as a result—safely being able to deal with these illegal operations.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the reality remains that this Premier had the tools to end this occupation much, much sooner. I think we're all grateful that it is over. And we're all very grateful for all the people on the front lines who helped to make that happen. But this government could have acted sooner.

We and others repeatedly called for the government, for this Premier to step up and revoke commercial vehicle operating licences, but the Premier said he couldn't, and of course we all know that wasn't accurate. It took the dump truck association to provide the proof that that wasn't accurate.

This government could have protected our communities and protected our economy much, much sooner, but they chose not to do so.

My question is, why did the Premier not use the tools that he had to stop the occupations sooner, rather than let them fester in Ottawa and in Windsor for three weeks?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Again, I will remind the member opposite that in fact the tools that the police have been using safely, professionally, carefully, have been working.

If there is anything that I regret about this instance, it's the fact that a member of this parliamentary Legislature was encouraging people to block 911 calls.

If you want to talk about how we can do things better, we can make sure that individuals respect the rule of law, understand that there are opportunities—they were given multiple warnings, they were asked to leave, they were encouraged to leave, they were told what was going to happen if they did not leave. That has happened, and, again, I will say it has happened safely.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I think it's shameful that the government is not acknowledging that they had an important role to play here and they absconded when it comes to their responsibility. They were completely, completely MIA.

1100

The bottom line is, Ottawa is still going to need support. We know that the federal government is providing some financial support to businesses that were impacted, but the small businesses that I met with in Ottawa were very, very

worried about the thousands of workers who are also impacted, who have also lost wages because of what happened for over three weeks.

In Windsor, Unifor members were talking to me about the impact on the workers in the auto sector—manufacturing, parts and other supply chain workers. The bottom line is, they lost hours and they lost wages as well.

My question is, will this government step up now to support those workers who lost so much because they didn't move quickly enough and make sure that they are made whole, because the Premier decided to sit on his hands and could have ended this sooner but chose not to?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Finance?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: It's nice to see everyone again in this House, so hello to all my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, many have been impacted by these numerous blockades and measures that the Solicitor General mentioned were, at various points, illegal. The families, the people who wanted to go to their jobs, the people who have the small businesses like in Ottawa have been impacted; there's no question about that.

That's why, since day one, we've been there to support the small businesses. We've been there with the small business grants they are eligible for. We've been there with the property tax rebates and the electricity rebates, which they are eligible for. We've been there for property tax and various provincially administered tax deferrals, up to \$7.5 billion.

We recognize these are very unique circumstances, and that's why I will have more to say in the very near future about supporting those businesses.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

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

We all know that everything costs more than ever here in the province of Ontario. Folks are having a hard time making ends meet. Inflation is running at 5.7%, but nobody's wages are going up like that.

In fact, the Premier has decided, through Bill 124, that he is going to keep wages as low as possible. In fact, as was mentioned earlier, folks are going to be on the lawn today to protest that wrong-headed decision.

But when it comes to gas prices, Speaker, this Premier said, regarding the \$1.50 gas price that was happening, in the election, "I can tell you, that's not going to happen under our watch." Well, the government's own gasoline price tracker is showing that gas prices are in fact \$1.59 in most of Ontario; in the north, \$1.63 is the price of gas; and in the meantime, oil companies are flush with cash.

So my question is, why did the Premier break his promise to keep the price of gasoline below \$1.50 a litre?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, it is really rich to hear the Leader of the Opposition talking about affordability for the people of the province of Ontario when on every opportunity the Leader of the Opposition and her colleagues had the opportunity to vote with Ontarians, to vote

with this government, when we have reduced taxes for the people of the province of Ontario to put more money back in their pockets.

Colleagues, you'll remember this: When we said that the carbon tax would cost the people of the province of Ontario too much, they fought against us. We said it would cost too much. We said it would cost everything too much: the produce in your stores, driving your kids to sports—everything would be more expensive because of a carbon tax. They said that wouldn't happen, but we are seeing that today.

Over the next months, as we have done over the last three years, we're going to work harder to put even more money back into the pockets of the people of the province of Ontario, Mr. Speaker. We made announcements with respect to val tags from the Minister of Transportation, removing tolls from the 412 and the 418, putting more money back in the people of the province of Ontario's pockets. And I'm sure that—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the Premier said that he'd lower hydro bills by 12% as well, and of course we all know that that hasn't happened. He said he was going to do that "without shady accounting tricks."

The FAO report, however, said that hydro has gone up every year since this Premier has been in office, including during the pandemic. The FAO said, "The government does not intend to lower electricity bills by 12% from 2018 levels."

Despite spending billions and billions of dollars, the government continues to increase the price of electricity in this province each and every year.

My question is, why did this Premier outright break his promise to reduce electricity rates for the people of Ontario by 12%?

Hon. Paul Calandra: What the FAO did say was that the price of electricity was coming down for the people of the province of Ontario. What he also highlighted was that the contracts that we had to take over, that we had to assume, supported every step of the way by the Leader of the Opposition, these high prices for electricity, for power that we didn't need, that we could not afford—again, all in this attempt at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, when we knew that the reason we had the cleanest electricity sector in North America was because of the hard-working men and women who work in our nuclear sector. That is what happened. That is why we were able to bring that down, and because of the hard work of our government back in the early 2000s—Harris and Eves—to eliminate coal-fired generation. That is what has helped us on greenhouse gas emissions.

Now, all of a sudden, the NDP and the Liberals care about people's pocketbooks. Give me a break, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Oh boy, Speaker, this member needs to take a history lesson or two.

Nonetheless, I think we all saw: It's the first day back in the Legislature, the last session of this term, and the gimmicks and promises are rolling ahead like they did before the last election.

Unfortunately, the people of Ontario are still suffering. In fact, one of the promises that this Premier actually kept was one that is making the cost of rent for people skyrocket in Ontario. He said he would end rent controls in 2018, and, boy, did he do that. Now renters are facing rent increases of up to 25%. Can you believe that? Twenty-five per cent.

Last week, a study showed that the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in the province of Ontario in various cities was skyrocketing. In Hamilton, you had to earn \$70,000 a year to afford a one-bedroom apartment; in Ottawa, \$73,000 a year to afford a one-bedroom apartment; in Toronto, \$90,000. That's more than two to three times the average wage of a minimum wage worker.

What is this Premier going to do to undo the damage of the one promise that he did keep and address the crisis of unaffordable rents in our province?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, we're seeing across the province of Ontario, for the first time in decades, more rental housing being built. We're seeing that because we are taking action to ensure that we can bring housing online much more quickly.

Look again at affordability: We're seeing auto insurance rates come down in the province of Ontario, not because of the stretch goals that the Leader of the Opposition wanted, but because of the policies of this government. We're seeing a reduction in taxes for the people of the province of Ontario, more money in their pockets. We've eliminated tolls. The only two parties to put tolls in have been the NDP and the Liberals. We're removing them and putting more money back in the pockets of the people of Ontario. We're reducing red tape and regulation so that businesses can thrive in the province of Ontario. And we're seeing jobs come back. The Minister of Economic Development and Trade is bringing back jobs through the auto sector.

The economy is starting to boom again, Mr. Speaker, and it's because of the policies of this government. Despite the fact that they vote against everything and worked so closely with the Liberals to destroy this economy, we came into power and made sure that they couldn't—

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

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Joel Harden: Like others have done today, I want to begin my question, which is to the Premier, by acknowledging what our city, Ottawa, has lived through: an occupation that has lasted three weeks, which at one point involved over 500 vehicles, Speaker. I have to admit, through you, that it has been tough for me to realize why my city became a target—a target of sabotage attempts in apartment buildings, including arson attempts, the locking of doors, the shutting off of water and electricity systems, of constant blaring of truck and car horns, and of

harassment of people walking in the street—verbal and physical—for wearing masks. Speaker, I ask the Premier, why did this happen?

1110

Having talked to convoy participants myself, and so many residents, I believe that many people who are part of this movement were taken advantage of by extremists who convinced them that the source of their problems involved harassing Ottawa residents.

What I believe, Speaker, is that hate and division grow when people feel unheard. Our city's pleas for help went unheeded by a response from this government for 14 days. As those 14 days elapsed, that hate grew.

My question, through you, Speaker, to the Premier: Why did it take you so long to happen—why did you let this hate grow?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll remind the members to make their comments through the Chair.

To reply on behalf of the government, the Solicitor General.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: There is no doubt that the city of Ottawa and the people of Ottawa have experienced a very challenging three weeks. However, the assertion of the member opposite, to suggest that there was no involvement or engagement from the provincial government, from provincial resources, is categorically false. From the beginning—actually, before the protests even appeared in Ontario—we were having, through the OPP, through the RCMP, conversations with police chiefs of jurisdictions to ensure that all information, all intelligence, was shared, so that people could prepare.

If the member opposite is suggesting that there needed to be a role where we directed police, I respectfully decline that. Our job is to ensure that the police have the resources they need to effectively do their job.

The fact that we had an operation that, again, came from the city of Ottawa, came from the RCMP, came from the OPP and had co-operation with police services from across Ontario, and, in fact—

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

Mr. Joel Harden: Speaker, I find that to be a really tiresome answer.

We've had to, in this parliamentary session, talk about this government's relationship to people like Faith Goldy and Charles McVety. Let's add to the list. What about Pat King? What about BJ Dichter? What about people who've made their life's work hating on our Jewish neighbours; our Muslim neighbours; our queer, transgender and non-binary neighbours? Where has your repudiation of them been in 14 days?

I want to ask that question on behalf of small businesses and workers—workers like Liv. Liv works at a coffee shop just a stone's throw away from Parliament. There were anti-mask hate folks who came into her workplace, demanded she take off her mask and wouldn't leave until they were escorted to leave. They hung around outside the door after, trapping the workers inside the building. That's how toxic it was on the first day of this protest.

Security officials told us this was coming.

Will this government today, with us, as an entire Legislature, commit to condemning this hate, working to de-program it, rebuilding and healing our community? That's what we need today, not words.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members will please take their seats.

To respond, the Solicitor General.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Speaker, our government has consistently condemned hate, wherever it comes from and to whomever it is directed.

I want people to understand that in the city of Ottawa, in Windsor, in Niagara, we had coordination. We had participation. There is opportunity for us to learn from those and to see how well-coordinated police can work together.

To suggest in any way that this is somehow directed by a government, by individuals within government, I think really is beneath the member opposite.

We did what we needed to do. We gave the police services the resources they needed, through the emergency measures. We have pulled CVORs to ensure that individuals who were participating in these illegal operations were dealt with, and dealt with quickly. We'll continue to work with our police partners.

I want to underline and remind the member that this was an illegal operation that was dealt with—

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

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Dave Smith: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

Ontario's automotive sector and the nearly 100,000 people directly employed by it are critical to Ontario's economy. Our auto sector is currently undergoing a transformational shift towards the production of electric vehicles—the car of the future.

Can the minister please inform this House how our government is making the necessary investments to ensure Ontario is a world leader in electric vehicle production?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Our government is committed to protecting jobs in Ontario's auto sector today, while also investing in the technology of the future. That's why we were in Hamilton with the Premier last week to announce a generational investment in the largest private sector employer in the city. We were proud to announce \$500 million of support for ArcelorMittal Dofasco's \$1.8-billion investment to produce green steel. With our support, AMD will replace their old coal-fired coke ovens and blast furnaces with new electric arc technology.

This is a game-changer, Speaker, for Ontario's auto sector. You can't create the electric vehicle of the future with steel that's made from burning coal. Investments like these position Ontario's automotive sector and our supply chain for the success we know will happen.

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

Mr. Dave Smith: Through you, Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for that. This is a significant investment that will secure the economic future of Hamilton and the entire automotive supply chain.

The link between green steel and Ontario's automotive sector is clear. Can the minister update this House on what else Ontario is doing to secure the future of Ontario's automotive sector?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: We announced phase 2 of our Driving Prosperity plan. Since then, Ontario's automakers have announced \$6 billion in new investments; over \$4 billion of that is in electric vehicles. We are supporting these manufacturers. We are working day and night to support electric vehicle battery production right here in Ontario.

In addition to the \$500-million investment in green steel, we're investing \$12 million in our automotive parts, and tool, die and mould makers.

We're also supporting our auto tech sector with \$54 million to expedite electric driving developments.

And finally, we are investing in our critical minerals sector, where we'll bring northern Ontario into the automotive game for the first time in 120 years.

The signal from our auto sector is clear, Speaker. They're committing to producing the cars of the future, and we're committed to supporting them.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: My question is to the Premier. Every province and territory has signed the federal \$10-a-day child care agreement—except Ontario. Last week, the federal government revealed that they are still waiting for the Ford government to submit Ontario's child care plan, needed in order to access \$10.2 billion in funding.

Speaker, my question is simple: Does this government even have a plan?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

Of course, we've said right from the beginning, Speaker, that we wanted to ensure that we had a child care plan that worked for the people of the province of Ontario. It had to be stable, it had to be long-term funding that met the goals of the \$10-a-day child care program. Surely, members opposite would all agree that we have to get to that point. We have seen what federal promises have done in health when they promised 50% and then reduced it to 22% funding.

We will not enter into a new program that does not give the people of the province of Ontario surety that they will continue to get the support that they need.

Interjection.

Hon. Paul Calandra: We're hearing the Leader of the Opposition hollering across the aisle. We know what she would do, because for her it's about stretch goals that accomplish nothing, Mr. Speaker. That is the history of the NDP in this place.

For us, it's about accomplishing things for the people of the province of Ontario—despite all of the hollering that gets nowhere.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

Supplementary question.

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Speaker, through you, I say to the minister: Enough excuses. To delay any further is the Ford government telling the people of Ontario that their political games are more important than helping families.

If the government has a plan, as the minister says, then why the stonewalling? Every other province and territory has managed to get this done. Why not Ontario?

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Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, we have a significantly different child care program than almost every other province in this country—a program that was made ostensibly more costly and expensive for the people of the province of Ontario because of the policies of the previous Liberal government, supported by the NDP, who could not often enough get their hands in the pockets of the people of Ontario. It wasn't enough that they increased taxes. It wasn't enough that they increased hydro rates. It wasn't enough that they drove away jobs. They also made it unaffordable to put your kids in child care.

They're suggesting we should sign a deal that isn't guaranteeing \$10 a day—to just put our hands up and say, "We'll take whatever you have to offer because the people of the province of Ontario can afford to pay it." Well, I'm telling you they can't. That's why we will stand up for a child care deal that works for the people of Ontario, that gives us long-term stability, that ensures that we get to \$10 a day. That's our goal. I'm surprised to hear that the opposition doesn't share the same goal.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios: Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

Last night, the federal Trudeau Liberal government, with the support of the NDP, passed a motion to extend the continued use of special policing measures for a situation that no longer exists or requires them.

The Conservative Party of Canada opposed the extension of these measures, which give the federal government the ability to freeze bank accounts and credit cards, put in police checkpoints and separate parents from children—all without due process ordinarily given under the law.

Why does this Ontario government continue to prop up Justin Trudeau—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios:—this time by supporting the continued extension of these authoritarian and unwarranted special federal measures, when the situation used to justify them no longer exists?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

I had difficulty hearing parts of the question because the member for Orléans was heckling loudly and the member for Carleton was heckling loudly. I'd ask you to come to order.

Start the clock.

To reply on behalf of the government, government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: The federal Parliament made a decision yesterday that was supported by a majority of the House of Commons, and we of course will respect that decision.

I think what you hear, Mr. Speaker, is the ongoing issues with respect to the COVID-19 response. It has been very difficult. As the member for Ottawa Centre said, people are frustrated and they are angry. We have to make sure that we do a better job of understanding what that anger is about.

We heard from farmers. Farmers were protesting, Mr. Speaker. We heard from different families who were protesting. Some people were protesting the high cost of living. Some people were protesting the fact that a carbon tax put so many more costs on farmers and their ability to bring their food to market. There's a whole range of issues that need to be addressed by our Legislature and by Legislatures across this country.

Of course we'll let the federal government make decisions on behalf of the federal government, but ultimately, we all have to do a better job of understanding what it is that brought people to Ottawa.

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

Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios: Premier Moe of Saskatchewan and Premier Kenney of Alberta both opposed the Trudeau government's authoritarian special measures. Member of Parliament Leslyn Lewis—who the Premier gave a government appointment to on the Ontario Trillium Foundation—herself said that the Trudeau government's special measures are about one thing: to financially attack and silence people he despises for disagreeing with him. Even Premier Kenney, who Premier Ford once stood shoulder to shoulder with, announced that Alberta is filing a court challenge against the federal government's special measures.

Why won't this government stop propping up the Trudeau government and, instead of being in the back pocket of the Prime Minister, try standing up for Ontarians and join Alberta in court to challenge the federal government's unnecessary, destructive and authoritarian measures?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, Mr. Speaker, I think it is that type of language that helps to inflame and get people really misunderstanding how government has responded to the COVID-19 crisis.

First and foremost, we wanted to ensure that the people of the province of Ontario were safe through the COVID-19 crisis, Mr. Speaker.

Let's be honest and let's be clear about what we saw in these protests. It doesn't matter who is on what side of the chamber; nobody supports symbols of hate. Nobody supports the absolutely ridiculous aims of the protest

organizers. We're all on the same page on that. But let's be clear: There were farmers there who were protesting the high cost of fuel. There were families who were there protesting the cost of living in this country. There was a whole other subset of people who were there for different reasons. We can continue to inflame that—I'm not sure why—or we can look at what it was and what has caused people to go to Ottawa, what has caused them to go to the Ambassador Bridge.

But make no mistake about it; we will always stand up for law and order. We will always stand up for the authority of the state. That is our job, and we will continue to make sure that that happens.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

When our government took office, Ontario had become a high-cost jurisdiction. Manufacturers were leaving the province. Ontario's economy and our families were suffering.

Through you, Mr. Speaker: Can the minister please outline how the previous government, propped up by the NDP, allowed this to happen and what our government has done to rebuild Ontario?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: The previous government gave up on Ontario's manufacturing sector. Here are a few excerpts from, thankfully, what turned out to be their final report on the economy. Here is what they wanted to happen: "The structure of the Ontario economy will continue to shift from goods-producing, to service-producing sectors ... in particular, manufacturing—to service sector industries." They gave up on manufacturing. They threw in the towel.

Well, we did not give up on our manufacturers. Instead, we reduced their burden to regain our long-held position as the economic engine of Canada.

We will never give up on the people of Ontario, like the previous government did.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Through you, Mr. Speaker: Those statements from the Liberals' last report on the economy were shocking to hear—a government that gave up on one of our most important sectors. Business owners in Ontario deserve to know that they have a government that will continue to have their backs by making meaningful investments in Ontario businesses that are creating good jobs and helping to protect our economy.

Through you, Mr. Speaker: My question to the minister is, what other actions is our government taking to bolster the economy and reduce the cost of doing business in Ontario?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: When our government took office, we knew the cost of doing business under the Liberals was too high. That's why we moved very quickly to introduce policies that lowered the cost of doing business, like lowering WSIB premiums without reducing benefits, which resulted in a savings of over \$2 billion annually.

We've introduced a capital cost allowance so Ontario companies could write off new equipment in-year. That's a \$1-billion savings every year. We introduced eight red tape reduction bills and reduced the burden on business, saving them nearly \$400 million a year. The latest savings are the reduction of commercial and industrial hydro rates by 15% and 17%, respectively.

These actions and more are saving businesses \$7 billion each and every year, and that's why businesses have a renewed confidence in Ontario.

HIGHWAY TOLLS

Ms. Jennifer K. French: My question is to the Premier.

Everyone knows that the last Conservative government made wrong decisions about the 407 toll route. Now, clearly, this Conservative government is too, and the public, both times, is losing out.

According to a Toronto Star investigation published today, the Premier did indeed have the power to demand a \$1-billion congestion penalty from the operators of the 407 ETR toll highway. Last year we were told there was no congestion anywhere, so there was no justification for collecting a congestion penalty. But now we have proof of what everyone knew back then: All the highways were congested except for the 407 ETR, because the tolls were too high. The tolls were too high because the Premier refused to enforce the contract.

Why did the Premier give a \$1-billion gift to the private operators of the 407 toll highway while failing to relieve congestion on all the other highways?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Associate Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Stan Cho: I'm happy to answer that question this morning. I'd like to welcome all my colleagues back to the chamber as well.

These last two years have been very difficult. We've experienced some unprecedented circumstances that all Ontarians have faced. They've had to comply with stay-at-home orders while fighting multiple waves of COVID-19, and this resulted in the 407 invoking the relief clause under the contract with the Ministry of Transportation.

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At the very beginning of the pandemic, our government froze tolls on Highways 407 east, 412 and 418 to deliver more relief for drivers, and we will gladly compare our record on tolls with the Liberals, supported by the NDP, Speaker.

We have gone even further. We've recently announced the permanent removal of tolls on Highways 412 and 418. But there's more to be done, and that's why we are doing more this morning. Our government announced the elimination of validation fees for drivers across this province. This is real relief, Speaker. We're going to continue to support drivers across this entire province we're back on that road to recovery and prosperity.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Again to the Premier: As every other highway was congested last year, Highway

407 was so underused that a plane could land on it without difficulty. One billion dollars is a lot of money to forgive. Imagine how much \$1 billion could support existing infrastructure. But even more interesting is the story that can be told if we allow congestion to grow, instead of better utilizing the 407. This government is bent on justifying building the 413 through hill and dale.

The Premier would rather let the private operators of the highway keep collecting excessively high tolls from drivers than enforce the contract and maximize traffic flow throughout the highway network. And now the Premier is using congestion as an excuse to waste \$10 billion of public money on an unnecessary new highway through the greenbelt whose main beneficiaries are friends and donors of this Premier.

So my question is this: Instead of wasting all of that money, why won't the Premier simply make better use of the underused Highway 407 that is already there and, while he's at it, collect the \$1 billion?

Hon. Stan Cho: Speaker, there are some puzzling contradictions in the question here. On the one hand, the member is talking about congestion and how it affects Ontarians. We agree. In fact, the GTA is going to grow to eight and a half million people in the next 10 years. There's unprecedented growth on the way. That means more congestion on our highways, more need for transit systems, more need for highways. I think that's what the member is saying.

But I'm also hearing the member say it has been a very difficult time for Ontarians, which means that people in this province need more relief. That's exactly why we have removed tolls on Highways 412 and 418. That's why we're making life more affordable for drivers across this province, by doing the things that matter to people's pocketbooks.

I don't blame people for wanting to move to this great province. We're going to plan for the future, unlike the Liberals and the NDP.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

RESPONSABILITÉ GOUVERNEMENTALE

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the Premier.

Thanks to officers from Ottawa, Ontario and across Canada, the three-week occupation of Ottawa has come to an end. It should never have come to this: lawlessness, intimidation, threats to schools and lost paycheques. The member from Ottawa Centre was right: Residents were not safe in their own neighbourhoods.

For two weeks, the Premier's message to those residents was, "You're on your own." He wanted it to be somebody else's problem.

On February 6, the Solicitor General said 1,500 OPP officers had been sent to Ottawa. That number was closer to 150. It took a four-day blockade in Windsor before the Premier took any action.

Speaker, through you: How can any community in Ontario have confidence that this Premier will be there for

them and not abandon them the way that he did the people of Ottawa and Windsor in this situation?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Solicitor General.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: When you actually do the math of how many officers there were per day over the course of the illegal operation, you see that there was participation from the RCMP, from the OPP, from Peel, from Toronto, from York, from Hamilton. I could go on.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Ottawa South, come to order.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: The point is that the chief of police in Ottawa worked with the OPP commissioner. They came up with an operational plan that was agreed upon by all three—two commissioners and the Ottawa chief—and it was executed.

Mr. John Fraser: Three weeks—three weeks.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Again, I have to say, what is your option, sir? Was your option that you expected political people to be interfering with policing operations? I respectfully and categorically refuse that. We need to have police doing their jobs. As politicians, we have absolutely given them additional resources—

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Once again, the member for Ottawa South, come to order.

The member for Ottawa–Vanier.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: I've seen this occupation first-hand; in fact, I was practically in the middle of it. I just want to say, on the ground, I didn't see these thousand more officers. The question I've been asked the most by people in Ottawa is, where has the provincial government been? The businesses and workers have been feeling abandoned by their government—workers who have lost their paycheques because they couldn't go to work; businesses that had to remain closed because they couldn't open.

Les résidents d'Ottawa demandent, où était le gouvernement pendant ces dernières trois semaines?

The province needs to step up, to at least match the federal \$20-million fund that is being offered, provide hydro bill forgiveness, a moratorium on evictions—because businesses are worried.

The Minister of Finance says, “Help is on the way; I have more to say.” We're listening.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Thank you to the member opposite for that very important question.

As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, many businesses across Ontario—in fact, right across this nation—have been impacted over the last two years, and none more so than Ottawa in the last couple of weeks. That's why it's important that we reiterate that they qualify and have qualified for the property tax rebate, the electricity rebate—and by the way, the portal is still open. Portals are still open for the grants. They still have the opportunity to defer the

provincially administered taxes, of which there are over a dozen, which add up to about seven and a half billion dollars. That will be interest-free and penalty-free.

We've been there since day one for businesses—over \$6 billion. We'll continue to be there for businesses right across this great province, including the businesses in Ottawa.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: My question is to the Minister of Long-Term Care.

Long-term care, as a sector, has been long neglected by successive governments. Between 2011 and 2018, the previous Liberal government only managed to build 611 net new beds. That is an increase of only 0.8%, while the population of Ontarians aged 75 and over grew by 20%. Speaker, that is only 611 beds for over 176,000 people.

The citizens of Mississauga Centre have long called on previous governments to deliver new long-term-care beds that will serve the linguistic and cultural needs of our seniors. That is why I was so proud to recently welcome the minister and my Mississauga colleagues to my riding to announce an allocation of 128 beds to a flagship organization of Mississauga, the Coptic Church of Virgin Mary and St. Athanasius. This was long-awaited and absolutely phenomenal news.

Speaker, through you, can the minister please elaborate on our government's plan to fix long-term care?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Let me just thank the honourable member for her hard work, not only in helping to secure this new long-term-care facility, but of course, she has been on the front lines and has been working every single day to make Ontario an even better place.

And let me just congratulate all of the Mississauga members of Parliament. Their hard work helped us to secure funding and the ability to bring a new long-term-care facility to the community.

She referenced 128 new beds. Again, Mr. Speaker, put that into contrast—128 new beds. That is on top of the other announcements we've made for new beds and upgrades. That's over 1,200 new and upgraded beds for Mississauga alone.

She isn't mistaken when she says that the previous Liberal government was only able—the previous two Liberal governments, and in four of those years, of course, supported by the NDP, only brought in 611. That is a record of futility that we will never match, and that is why we are well on our way to creating 30,000 new spaces for our seniors.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you to the minister for that response.

Minister, 1,251 beds is an incredible number. That's one bed shy of double what the previous government built in seven years, and that's just in our city of Mississauga.

We have heard from Ontarians across the province that meeting the linguistic and cultural needs of our seniors in

long-term care is vital to ensuring their well-being. That is why I was so proud to bring my motion on linguistically appropriate care last year and see it passed unanimously.

I also want to acknowledge the passionate work of my colleague the member from Mississauga—Erin Mills, who is an absolute champion for Mississauga’s Coptic and Egyptian community, and whose advocacy continues to be positively impactful for our city.

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With this recent announcement, we are continuing to consider the cultural, linguistic and spiritual needs of our seniors as we build these new homes.

Back to the minister: Can you please explain, what is our government doing to ensure that seniors in Mississauga and across Ontario receive culturally and linguistically appropriate care?

Hon. Paul Calandra: That’s a really good question.

It’s something that we heard right from the beginning from people across the province—that as much as it’s important to bring new long-term care online, in a province as diverse as the province of Ontario, it is also important to bring in long-term-care homes that respect people’s culture, that people can communicate in.

That’s why I was very happy when the Mississauga team—of course, led by our first Coptic Christian ever elected, in Mississauga—Erin Mills, and the entire Mississauga team. But we didn’t stop there. The members from Brampton talked about the Hindu and Sikh community having a home specific for them, and we were able to bring that online, Speaker. The member for Markham—Thornhill, of course, talked about the importance of the Chinese Canadian community in his community and in mine, so we were able to bring that online. It is actually shocking that in the province of Ontario this wasn’t something that we ever thought of. So, along with their hard work, along with the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, we’re able to work together to ensure a quality of care second to none, Mr. Speaker, and—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Order. The next question.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. Faisal Hassan: My question is to the Premier.

Small businesses have struggled during the pandemic, and I have heard from many of those in my community of York South—Weston. Many have complained about the Ontario Small Business Support Grant program and the many difficulties navigating that program.

Hao Nhat Chau, owner of Shell’s Nails and Spa, was forced to close due to the COVID-19 restrictions, and despite applying for the grant, neither approval nor denial was received.

What is the government doing to address a grant program identified by Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk as a problematic situation here?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction.

Hon. Nina Tangri: I want to thank the member opposite for his question.

Our government recognized that small businesses impacted by public health measures required immediate support so they could continue serving their communities and employing people across our province. Our goal was to get money to these businesses quickly, because we knew these employers were affected by these strengthened public health measures.

Through the Ontario COVID-19 Small Business Relief Grant, we’re providing an additional \$10,000 for eligible businesses. This builds on the nearly \$3 billion that we provided last year through the Ontario Small Business Support Grant to over 110,000 businesses right across our province. Speaker, this is an extraordinary, historic level of support that went out to all of our small businesses.

I’ll have more to say in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Mr. Faisal Hassan: Back to the Premier: Here is a letter I wrote to the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, and we have no answer yet. My constituent Hao Nhat Chau took meticulous notes of her interactions with the ministry. Failure by the minister to respond in time or at all is unacceptable.

When we know that the government awarded \$210 million to ineligible recipients, how is it that Hao Nhat Chau, who did everything right, could not even get a resolution to her application? I’m calling on the government to review her case to determine what went wrong. Will the minister, also, respond to my letter addressing this case? As a new round of business supports come online, we need to ensure this mismanagement does not occur again.

Hon. Nina Tangri: Once again, thank you to the member opposite for the question.

I think it was critical that our government, as soon as possible, got the funding out to the eligible businesses that applied. Through public health measures, we had to close down a number of businesses, including gyms, and restaurants for indoor dining, and we wanted to make sure those who received the second round of grants previously—we sent them a very quick email where they were able to respond that they were still in business and that they were under 100 employees, and the turnaround time to get that \$10,000 to them was just a few days. This is historic for any government to be able to get money into the hands of those businesses that desperately needed it. Not only that, we allowed the businesses to use those funds as they saw best. This is their business and they knew where they needed that money, whether it was to pay for rent, for taxes or anything else.

We’ve responded in many other ways: Property tax relief, many other areas of relief for them; for example, PPE. We gave them a thousand dollars for PPE—

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

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Mr. Mike Schreiner: My question is for the Premier.

The health care system is hanging on by a thread. Nurses are at a breaking point, feeling overworked, underpaid and underappreciated. The ONA says we're facing a nursing shortage of as high as 20% in hospitals. ICUs have reduced capacity because we don't have nurses to staff them. The surgery backlog is getting worse because we don't have nurses to staff them. This directly affects patient care.

Nurses are at Queen's Park today asking for fair compensation, fair wages and benefits, like access to mental health supports and services.

Will the Premier do the right thing, show nurses the respect they deserve, and finally revoke Bill 124 so nurses can negotiate the compensation they deserve for working so hard caring for us?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Our government is incredibly grateful for the contributions of Ontario's health care workers throughout this pandemic, and our government has been there to support our health care systems and our health care workers throughout this entire pandemic. That is why this government invested over \$342 million in 2021 and 2022 to add over 5,000 new upskilled registered nurses and registered practical nurses as well as an additional 8,000 personal support workers. This included providing 500 registered nurses with specialized acute-care training and 420 registered nurses through the existing community commitment for nursing.

Our government's priority is the health and safety of all Ontarians, and we have been singularly focused on ensuring that everyone is kept safe through this—

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Back to the member opposite: The government has been there to cap total compensation for nurses at 1% over three years, which represents a significant pay cut given the inflation we're experiencing.

Nurses are not only asking for fair wages, but they're asking for benefits, such as access to mental health supports and services.

After two years of the pandemic, I can tell you all Ontarians are asking for additional access to mental health supports and services.

If the government is going to clearly say no to paying nurses a fair wage and fair benefits, will the government at least say yes to my motion to make mental health care more affordable and accessible by expanding mental health care services coverage under OHIP?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I'd like to remind everyone what we are, in fact, doing for our front-line workers. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we've seen how significant the impacts have been on the mental health of Ontarians across the province, including the front-line health care workers. That's why our government invested \$12.4 million over two years to provide existing and expanded mental health and addictions supports for all

front-line health care workers across the province. This investment will protect our progress in the fight against COVID-19 by supporting the workforce in the acute-care sector, and the long-term care and home and community care sectors as well. That is what our intention is—to ensure that we do have these supports in place.

We also took action to invest another \$23.6 million to expand access to Internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy to further support our front-line workers, and over 70,000 people have subscribed to the program, as well as 10,000 health care workers. We are doing everything we can to help support our health care workers.

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COVID-19 RESPONSE

Ms. Catherine Fife: My question is to the Minister of Education.

In an announcement yesterday that was months overdue, the government said it would finally be providing HEPA filters for school and child care settings. Two years into this pandemic, we've known for some time that this goal to get indoor air closer to outdoor air with constant, well-mixed ventilation and to lower CO₂ as much as possible with the help of portable HEPA filters in order to keep students safe at school needs to happen. We have all heard this from parents, from community leaders, from medical professionals. Yet the government has operated with zero sense of urgency to get an adequate amount of HEPA filters to schools and to child care centres.

Mr. Speaker, can the government explain why these 49,000 filters are only being sent to school boards now, when we are over halfway through the school year and two years into this pandemic?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Of course, we've known how important it is to improve air quality in our schools and in settings. That's why even in long-term care we've provided over 8,000 HEPA filters. The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services has been at the forefront of helping us better understand the importance of that in combatting COVID-19.

Having said that, when it comes to our education sector, actually, 70,000 units have been delivered to schools across the province of Ontario. So I'm uncertain as to where the member is coming from. Not only have 70,000 been delivered, but we're actually increasing that by 3,000, because there are additional options, whether it's to ensure that units stay in the best condition to continue to provide service—but as I said, 70,000, and of course the Minister of Government and Consumer Services has also been on the forefront of securing that.

I don't think there's a jurisdiction in Canada that has done better than these ministers have in helping to keep our schools safe.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Well, let me help the House leader, then. Mr. Speaker, for months, the Premier, the

Minister of Health, the Minister of Education wanted us to believe that schools already had these air filters and HVAC upgrades that they needed. In fact, last September, the Minister of Education guaranteed that he had given school boards enough money and time to get mechanical ventilation or HEPA units into every classroom.

In my riding, as recently as last week—Thursday, to be exact—just one in five Waterloo Region District School Board classrooms had HEPA filter units in every school. School boards even had to go to such lengths as to fundraise for HEPA filters. We are asking community members, teachers and educational staff to fundraise for basic health and safety measures in Ontario. This has become a full-blown equity issue, Mr. Speaker.

Can the minister guarantee that with these additional filters that were just announced yesterday, every single school, every single classroom, every single child care centre will have the health and safety measures they need and a HEPA filter in every classroom?

Hon. Paul Calandra: I think it's worth noting that the opposition actually voted against these measures, Mr. Speaker. It is very rich to hear they're now suggesting, "Well, we should put HEPA filters in our classrooms," when they actually voted against the initiative.

We've, of course, provided 70,000 HEPA filters and we're providing even more. We've provided the tools, whether it's rapid testing, whether it's screening in our schools, whether it's bringing vaccination clinics right into the schools so that our kids could have the safety and security that all Ontarians have asked for. That has allowed us to move forward in education.

Of course, it's not just about that. Moving forward, we want to have the best quality of education in the country. We want to move ourselves away from the legacy, again, of the previous Liberal government that saw our kids last when it came to science, saw them last when it came to math. We want to prepare them for the jobs of tomorrow, and that is what we are doing, and we can do that by making sure our schools are safe. That is what we have done in the pandemic, that's what we were doing before the pandemic, and we will continue to do that for many years to come.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: My question is to the Premier.

My riding of Scarborough–Guildwood has been a COVID-19 hot spot throughout this entire pandemic, including the most recent Omicron wave.

Last week, a peer-reviewed article in the Canadian Medical Association Journal outlined what everyone in my riding already knows: that areas in this province that face systemic inequities and social determinants of health and have vibrant Black, Indigenous and other equity-deserving communities with recent immigrants have higher rates of COVID-19 transmissions. This article concludes that there needs to be a geographical prioritization of resources and services that are tailored to addressing these inequities.

Speaker, the science is clear. People's lived experience and tragedies with COVID-19 have confirmed it.

Will the Premier follow the science and create tailored programs to address inequities in our province?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Health.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you very much to the member for the question.

As the member will know, during the course of this pandemic we did target specific areas where we knew that there was a higher level of transmission, that there were many issues that were involved. We specifically targeted with more vaccination clinics and more opportunities for people to be vaccinated, so that those inequities would not continue. As a result, we did see in many parts of Ontario where the areas that were targeted had higher rates of vaccination than other areas.

That is continuing now, of course, with the testing. People can have access to the rapid antigen tests because Ontario was able to secure a significant supply. We have 5.5 million tests going out per week to 2,385 pharmacies and grocery stores across the province, plus in community partners, we have 500,000 tests per week. Those are going to places like community health centres, homeless shelters and other places where we know there could be that level of inequity. That's where we're making sure that they get those volumes of tests to address those issues.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our question period for this morning.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 101(c), changes have been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. Hassan assumes ballot item number 30, Ms. Begum assumes ballot item number 33, Mr. Mantha assumes ballot item number 61, Mr. Burch assumes ballot item number 41, and Mrs. Gretzky assumes ballot item number 66.

There being no further business this morning, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1157 to 1500.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received a report on intended appointments dated February 22, 2022, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 111(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member for Essex.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you very much, Speaker. Good to see you back in the chair, in good health, “en bonne forme.”

I beg leave to present a report on Acute-Care Hospital Patient Safety and Drug Administration, section 3.01, 2019 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Natyshak presents the committee’s report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I move adjournment of the debate.

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

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I beg leave to present a report on Emergency Management in Ontario—Pandemic Response, chapter 1, special report on COVID-19 Preparedness and Management of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I move adjournment of the debate.

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

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I beg leave to present a report on Public Accounts of Ontario, 2020 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I move adjournment of the debate.

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

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I beg leave to present a report on Value-for-Money Audit: Blood Management and Safety, 2020 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Natyshak presents the committee’s report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I move adjournment of the debate.

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

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Finally, as Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, I’m pleased to table these five reports today. I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the permanent membership of the committee and substitute members who participated in the public hearings and report-writing process.

The committee extends its appreciation to officials from all ministries and all agencies who participated in respective hearings. The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during the hearings and report-writing deliberations by the Office of the Auditor General, the Clerk of the Committee and legislative research.

I beg leave to present a report on Value-for-Money Audit: Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority, 2020 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Natyshak presents the committee’s report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I move the adjournment of the debate.

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

Debate adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. John Fraser: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Valerie Quioc Lim): Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 50, An Act to proclaim Hungarian Heritage Month / Projet de loi 50, Loi proclamant le Mois du patrimoine hongrois.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. John Fraser: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Valerie Quioc Lim): Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 51, An Act to proclaim the Provincial Day of Service / Projet de loi 51, Loi proclamant la Journée provinciale du service.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Pursuant to the order of the House dated October 7, 2021, I beg leave to present the 16th interim report of the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Kramp presents the committee's report. Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Mr. Speaker, as I have two more subsequent reports, I will comment at the end of the third one.

Report presented.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I beg leave to present the 17th interim report of the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Kramp presents the committee's report. Does the member wish to make a brief statement at this time?

Mr. Daryl Kramp: No, I will make my statement after the last one, Mr. Speaker.

Report presented.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I beg leave to present the 18th interim report of the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Kramp presents the committee's report. And I will now invite the member to make his brief statement.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought, being as how I haven't spoken lately too much in the House, that I would put them all into the one, so thank you.

As Chair of the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight, I am pleased to table today the 16th and 17th and also the 18th interim reports.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the membership of the committee—a really good committee, Mr. Speaker—for their wonderful work: Tom Rakocevic, the Vice-Chair, who ably filled in for me during my absence; Bob Bailey; Gilles Bisson; John Fraser; Christine Hogarth; Robin Martin; Sam Oosterhoff; Sara Singh; Donna Skelly; and Effie Triantafilopoulos, as well as substitute members Lorne Coe, Stephen Crawford, France Gélinas, Michael Parsa, Dave Smith and Marit Stiles.

The committee extends its appreciation to the Solicitor General, the Minister of Health and the Associate Minister of Digital Government, as well as the House leader and minister for appearing before this committee.

The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during the hearings and the report writings and deliberations by the Clerk of the Committee and the excellent staff in legislative research.

Report presented.

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INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

FREEING HIGHWAYS 412 AND 418 ACT (TOLL HIGHWAY AMENDMENTS), 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR L'UTILISATION GRATUITE DES AUTOROUTES 412 ET 418 (MODIFICATIONS CONCERNANT LES VOIES PUBLIQUES À PÉAGE)

Ms. French moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 83, An Act to amend the Highway 407 East Act, 2012 with respect to toll highways / Projet de loi 83, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2012 sur l'autoroute 407 Est en ce qui concerne les voies publiques à péage.

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): Would the member for Oshawa like to briefly explain her bill?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I would be glad to. The Highway 407 East Act, 2012, currently designates Highway 407 east as a toll highway. The bill amends the act to restrict the designation of Highways 412 and 418, which

are described in the act as the “King’s Highways (except Highway 35/115) that connect” the highway between the easterly end of Highway 407 and Highway 35/115 to Highway 401, as toll highways. The bill also amends the act to restrict the Lieutenant Governor in Council from prescribing any toll that is payable for the operation of a vehicle on Highways 412 and 418.

It’s been a compelling issue across my riding and region, and while the government’s recent regulation is to pause the tolls through May 2023, this proposed legislation would make the removal permanent. Again, I’m happy to reintroduce and propose a solution.

FEWER FEES, BETTER SERVICES
ACT, 2022
LOI DE 2022
POUR DE MEILLEURS SERVICES
ET MOINS DE FRAIS

Mrs. Tangri moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 84, An Act to enact two Acts and amend various other Acts / Projet de loi 84, Loi visant à édicter deux lois et à modifier diverses autres lois.

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): Would the associate minister care to briefly explain her bill?

Hon. Nina Tangri: Thank you, Speaker. This legislation, if passed, will continue to build on our past supports for people and businesses by streamlining government processes and, where practical, eliminating fees. We’ve come a long way in modernizing provincial regulations. Cutting red tape and putting money back into the pockets of Ontarians remains a hallmark of our ministry’s mandate. As we cautiously move away from restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, our aim is and always has been to create a business-ready, family-friendly, government-supported environment. We are doing this while keeping Ontario workers and families safe and healthy. We’re also protecting the environment and public interest, making government easier to access by removing excess processes and more predictable by developing service standards. We’ll help Ontario be top of mind for those considering where to invest.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY
AND RESPONSES

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Hon. Jane McKenna: Today is Human Trafficking Awareness Day—a day dedicated to raising awareness about one of the fastest-growing crimes in the world. Human trafficking is a serious crime in Ontario. Often referred to as modern-day slavery, it involves the illegal trade of human beings through recruitment or abduction

by means of force, fraud or coercion for the purposes of forced labour, debt bondage or sexual exploitation. It is a vicious crime that shatters lives and creates long-term emotional, physical, spiritual and mental trauma.

Across Canada, women, children, men and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals are being trafficked. The most common form of human trafficking in Canada is sex trafficking, but labour trafficking also occurs in a wide range of sectors, such as agricultural work, construction and domestic work.

Unfortunately, the majority of police-reported incidents happen right here in Ontario, Speaker, and it’s known to happen along the 401 corridor. These circuits are easily travelled by car. Although anyone can be a victim, young women and girls are particularly vulnerable, especially those from Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities due to the legacy and impacts of colonialism and slavery.

According to the latest research by the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking, 77% of Canadians are not confident they could recognize the signs. That’s why raising awareness—and learning how to recognize the warning signs of human trafficking—is a critical step in prevention.

I’m pleased to be here today with my colleague, Ontario’s Solicitor General, to not only raise awareness but also share our government’s progress on the anti-human trafficking strategy. In 2020, we released our comprehensive, five-year, multi-ministry anti-human trafficking strategy. The \$307-million plan includes key actions to raise awareness, intervene early, protect victims, support survivors and hold offenders accountable. It is the largest total investment in dedicated anti-human trafficking services and supports in the country.

We’re also increasing community-based services by investing \$96 million over five years to provide more supports for victims and survivors. This includes \$46 million for new community programs, including services led by and for Indigenous people and supports led by survivors. These programs are already in operation and are providing critical supports.

We know that children and youth are targeted by human traffickers. We have prioritized community-based programs that focus on protecting them, Speaker. We have launched two new specialized intervention teams called Children at Risk of Exploitation Units, which pair child protection workers with police officers to develop relationships with these children, locate them when they are missing and protect those at high risk of sex trafficking. These multi-sector teams began operating last summer in the city of Toronto and in Durham region, with an investment of \$11.5 million over three years.

We’ve also opened two specialized residences in Toronto and Durham dedicated to serving children and youth who have been sex-trafficked. These licensed residences provide 24-hour supervision, specialized programming and wraparound supports to respond to the complex trauma experienced by children and youth who have been sexually exploited.

In addition, our government has launched new human trafficking awareness tools and resources, like our interactive digital tool for children and youth called The Trap and our Indigenous-focused awareness campaign, Speak Out: Stop Sex Trafficking.

And last year, we released our Keeping Students Safe policy, the first of its kind in Canada's education sector, which requires that school boards have a plan in place to protect students. This policy empowers school communities to play a key role in fighting sex trafficking.

Speaker, knowledge is power, and we all have a role to play in stopping human trafficking. I encourage all members of this Legislature and those at home watching: Please use your social media today to help spread the word.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the Solicitor General.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I am pleased to join my colleague Minister McKenna in the House this afternoon to mark Human Trafficking Awareness Day. It is our shared goal to raise awareness about the devastating impact human trafficking can have on victims and their families, and to encourage Ontarians to assist in combatting this heinous crime.

Many colleagues have assisted in our all-of-government effort to combat human trafficking. Leading by example, Premier Ford met with survivors, organizations and law enforcement to hear first-hand how Ontario could lead Canada with our anti-human-trafficking strategy. That strategy is now supported by legislation, thanks to Minister Dunlop, who co-led the Combating Human Trafficking Act with me. In opposition, Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock MPP Laurie Scott served on the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment and introduced the Saving the Girl Next Door Act, paving the way for our work.

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Many more have made an impact, including Minister Lecce through a critical education campaign in our schools; Minister Mulroney launched an educational partnership to combat human trafficking with the Women's Trucking Federation of Canada; and Minister Downey, through critical justice reform, has made it easier for survivors to get protections through restraining orders and increased investments to support them through the proceeds-of-crime fund. I also want to acknowledge PA Kusendova's work and many colleagues who have hosted awareness campaigns in their communities.

Trafficking is vicious. It's violent, not only causing unconscionable trauma, but also fuelling other criminal activities, like illegal drug and gun smuggling and gang activities. To turn the tide, we need to continue to strengthen our ability to prevent this crime before it happens and to apprehend, charge and convict perpetrators. Conviction rates are too low, as Minister McKenna and I have heard first-hand from survivors, community organizations and the justice sector.

Our government's anti-human trafficking strategy has prioritized raising awareness of the issue, protecting

victims and intervening early, and holding offenders accountable. Through the strategy, we are strengthening law enforcement and justice sector initiatives to better identify, target and bring human traffickers to justice. To support the strategy and make sure it is enduring, our government passed the Combating Human Trafficking Act in 2021. The first of its kind in Canada, this groundbreaking new legislation is increasing prevention; doing more for survivors and the people who support them, with specific consideration for Indigenous survivors; and strengthening the ability of children's aid societies and law enforcement to protect children and more. Beyond this, we are expanding the Ontario Provincial Police's Child Sexual Exploitation Unit, adding 23 new positions to investigate sexual offences against children.

Collaboration across jurisdictions is essential in investigating and bringing traffickers to justice. That's why our government established the intelligence-led joint forces strategy, a team made up of 21 Ontario police forces, including the OPP and First Nations police services. We are working with provincial and territorial partners like Manitoba, which is doing excellent work to prevent human trafficking and expand child welfare. And we are seeking the support of the federal government to address areas under federal jurisdiction, including online exploitation, through funding, legislative reform and stronger enforcement.

We are investing more in security teams, field intelligence officers and intelligence analysts to identify and monitor human traffickers within the correctional system, and end the so-called prison pipeline that makes inmates easy targets for traffickers. Local leaders are doing tremendous work on prevention, crisis counselling, research and public education. We are proud to fund this work through a stream of our \$267.6-million Community Safety and Policing Grant and through \$2.5 million seized from criminals and rightly reinvested in this cause.

I want to leave you with this: Awareness is our single, greatest weapon in the battle against human trafficking. I encourage all Ontarians to learn the risks and signs of trafficking, so that as a community we can protect our most vulnerable.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Hon. Parm Gill: I am pleased to rise in this House to formally recognize February as Black History Month. Black History Month is our time to celebrate and recognize the many contributions of Black communities, both here in Ontario and around world. It's also the time to acknowledge the work that still needs to be done to achieve racial equity.

The 2022 theme for Black History Month is "February and Forever: Celebrating Black History Today and Every Day," which focuses on recognizing the daily contributions that Black Canadians make to our country.

Ontario is blessed to have many rich and diverse contributions from Black leaders and trailblazers. There are too many to mention in the time allotted, but I will

share and shine a spotlight on a few, starting off with Lincoln Alexander, the first Black member of Parliament and LG of Ontario; Jean Augustine, the first Black woman elected to the House of Commons, and champion of Black History Month in Canada; Cameron Bailey, the CEO of the Toronto International Film Festival; Malcolm Gladwell, author and journalist; Drake, we all know, Mr. Speaker, rapper, actor and Raptors' global ambassador; Micheline Rawlins, the first Black woman appointed to the Ontario Court of Justice; Oscar Peterson, celebrated jazz pianist; Dr. Douglas Salmon, Canada's first Black surgeon; Cynthia Appiah, 2022 Olympic athlete; Mary Ann Shadd, the first female newspaper publisher; and Dr. Anna Jarvis, international authority on pediatric emergency medicine.

It's important to recognize and build on the history that each of these individuals represents. Doctors, musicians, business people and leaders, these contributions and many others are celebrated during Black History Month.

While we reflect on the accomplishments of Black Ontarians that enrich our lives here in Ontario, we must remember that many of these accomplishments were achieved despite racism and discrimination. Many Indigenous, Black and other racialized people experience racism and hate on a regular basis. As the minister responsible for citizenship and multiculturalism and the minister also responsible for anti-racism, I can tell you that our government continues to ensure all communities have equitable opportunities to fully participate in our society.

To build a more inclusive province, we are strengthening anti-racism efforts to identify and remove barriers that stand in their way. Building inclusivity is a collective effort, exchanging best practices, creating networks and amplifying voices to create meaningful change. Ontario endeavours to be a place where all people can live without discrimination and enjoy equal opportunities for success.

The province's Anti-Racism Directorate, as part of the Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, leads its initiatives to eliminate racism for a stronger Ontario. Our initiatives use a collaborative approach, working across ministries with community partners to create change.

In our recent fall economic statement, our government committed an additional \$8.1 million to new and enhanced initiatives to help address racism and hate. This includes a new Racialized and Indigenous Support for Entrepreneurs Grant, also known as the RAISE Grant, to help racialized entrepreneurs grow their businesses and succeed.

We are also supporting community-based anti-racism initiatives to combat all forms of racism and hate, including anti-Black racism, by doubling our investment in the Anti-Racism and Anti-Hate Grant program from \$1.6 million to \$3.2 million over two years. These initiatives will make a difference to communities across our great province, making Ontario a better place to call home. Our anti-racism and inclusion initiatives are also an investment in our shared future.

We know that building a more just and inclusive province starts with investing in the next generation of Black leaders and professionals. I am proud to be part of a

government that is committed to helping all children and youth, including racialized children and youth, be the best they can be.

We recently announced an additional \$14 million to the Black Youth Action Plan to enhance supports for Black youth and entrepreneurs. The new Economic Empowerment Stream will help Black youth launch their careers by accessing professional networks and skills development programs. Our additional investments in this important plan will also connect Black youth and young professionals with training and work placement opportunities to advance, and support Black business leaders in high-growth sectors of our economy. Black Youth Action Plan programs are delivered by over 70 community-based and culturally focused community partners. They support more than 10,800 individuals in targeted communities across our province, including Ottawa, Windsor and the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. Most importantly, they strengthen Black and racialized families, communities and businesses in Ontario. Our ministry will continue to work with our community partners to create more equitable workplaces, promote economic empowerment and create an inclusive economic recovery.

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In addition to the economic empowerment stream, the Black Youth Action Plan supports culturally focused parenting and mentorship programs. In alignment with the commitment to redesign Ontario's child welfare system, the province is reinvesting \$1.5 million into Black Youth Action Plan initiatives that increase access to local, culturally relevant supports, Mr. Speaker. The funding will expand to innovative supports for a Black parents' program and provide capacity-building resources to the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities. This will allow Black community partners and families to have a voice on how child, youth and family services are designed and delivered in their local communities.

Our government is also investing more than \$77 million a year to support employers to hire apprentices from under-represented groups. This investment will fund projects focusing on empowering workers and job seekers who face higher barriers of entry and enhance pathways into meaningful and gainful employment.

We have also taken immediate and strong action to address and eliminate barriers to educational success. As part of its efforts to ensure all students can reach their full potential, beginning in September 2022, all grade 9 subjects will be offered in one stream. Destreaming grade 9 students is helping to create the conditions for all students to be successful.

Just last week, the Minister of Education announced that the Ontario government is investing to support the development of curriculum-aligned resources to assist educators in teaching about Black history and contributions to Canada. This investment will include promoting Black history, such as raising awareness about Black Canadian leaders and diversifying the people that students learn about in business, politics, science, arts and democracy. This initiative will help build greater understanding of the presence of and the positive role Black

individuals have played as part of Canada's history, heritage and identity.

Our government is committed to ensuring equitable opportunities, meaningful experiences and successful outcomes for every student in our province.

Mr. Speaker, as we near the end of Black History Month, I encourage all Ontarians to join the members of this House in paying tribute to our fellow Black Ontarians. We must also renew our individual and professional commitments through removing all barriers so that we can create an equitable Ontario that celebrates our differences and our vibrant communities. With a better understanding of the history and complexities of each cultural identity, we are building the bridges for a stronger province.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): It's time for responses.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Ms. Jill Andrew: It is my honour to rise on behalf of the official opposition to commemorate Black History Month, Black futures month. I am here, a Black, queer, fat woman literally elected to Queen's Park, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

The Ontario NDP is home to a Black caucus, the first of its kind in this Legislature among any party in Ontario's history. We are here because of our communities and because of trailblazers like Zanana Akande who were also here too, the first Black woman and NDP MPP to serve in this Legislature, and the first Black woman to serve as a cabinet minister in Canada. We stand on the shoulders of Black porters in Canada, who fought with great tenacity to establish North America's first Black labour union; Black History Month she-roses like Dr. Jean Augustine and Rosemary Sadlier; Dr. Daniel G. Hill and Wilson O. Brooks, founders of the Ontario Black History Society; and others who fought for our actualization.

Last session, we proclaimed August as Emancipation Month in this House. The best way to commemorate Black history is to ensure our actions in this House amplify and uplift Black futures: in my community, Nia Centre, home of Canada's first Black arts centre; Little Jamaica, Black small businesses and families on Eglinton West, Oakwood-Vaughan, Winona Drive and beyond—shout-out to Scarborough Heroes, as well, and spoken word TO. These are the spaces and places, among others, where our Black voices are busy building, organizing and creating for our Black excellence to soar.

It is the mighty prose of dub poet and educator Lillian Allen reminding us of our being and our becoming. It's why we must have K-12 mandatory Afro-centric curriculums in all of our schools. It is Black farmers like Joe G. Thomas, feeding and sustaining our Black futures. It is nurses and front-line health care workers like Ms. Laurie, taking care of our Black lives. Bill 124 does not serve her, Speaker, or her other colleagues, predominantly Black and racialized women, nor does workplace violence

or harassment against health care workers. Environmental racism and the unaffordable cost of food doesn't serve us.

If we want to honour Black history and futures, the government must repeal Bill 124. If we want Black artists to have space to live and create Black futures, we've got to commit to real affordable housing and a minimum wage boost reflective of the affordability crisis we're facing today. Fifteen bucks is simply not enough.

Happy Black History Month, everyone, but our Black futures must be happier still. We will continue to work hard, as we always have, but it is not the responsibility of individual Black folks to be resilient, squeezing water from a stone. Government has a duty to ensure Black lives, to uplift and amplify our Black futures, 365 days a year. I'm very, very thankful to be able to speak on behalf of our caucus for Black History Month, and I'm going to move right into our words for human trafficking awareness.

I'd like to start by thanking the "heartwork" of the Canadian Women's Foundation in my community, as well as the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, Toronto Rape Crisis Centre, OAITH and WomenatthecentrE for their daily advocacy against gender-based violence and violence against women of all forms, including labour and pay exploitation. Shout-out to OCASI doing amazing work standing up for new immigrant women in Ontario.

Human trafficking is a heinous crime that remains largely misunderstood. It is first and foremost violence, removing victim-survivors of their dignity, depriving them of their autonomy and, at the core, their humanity. It removes choice—our human right—and instead is the embodiment of brute force. It is the responsibility of each person in this room to fight for the safety and personhood of our community members. That includes drastically improving the very social conditions that exacerbate human trafficking.

The carceral approach cannot be alone. It is not the sole response. The response must be community-based. It is real, intentional investments in community agencies and resources, our sexual assault and rape crisis centres, women's shelters. It's creating supportive and transitional housing and accessible mental health resources. It's annualized funding, fair wages and benefits for front-line workers working around the clock to support survivors. It's not only hotels; it's Airbnb. It's the short-term rental agencies that the government has to also address if they're actually taking care of human trafficking.

Survivors of human trafficking and other forms of gender-based violence will never be seen or heard or supported by this government that severely cut legal aid as they did. We must ensure no woman, no teenage girl, no trans youth or adult must stay with an abusive partner or person—usually a man—simply because they cannot afford a home, food or child care.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Black History Month's theme, "February and Forever: Celebrating Black History," ought to be throughout the year. The strength and resilience of

Black Canadians in the face of the systemic discrimination, racism and inequities is undeniable as we honour heroes like Viola Desmond, the Honourable Dr. Jean Augustine, Herb Carnegie and the Honourable Harold Brathwaite. They broke barriers for a more inclusive and diverse society in Canada. They also opened doors for people like Randell Adjei, Phylicia George, Wayne Simmonds, Vanessa James, Stephan James, Shamier Anderson and Sarah Nurse.

We must also preserve and keep alive Black history in Canada that has been hidden, by spotlighting Rose Fortune, the creator of hotel room service and Canada's first policewoman; Chloe Cooley, who helped pass laws to phase out slavery in Canada; Anderson Abbott, the first Black Canadian doctor; and Elijah McCoy, the inventor of the device that allowed for continuous movement. This is Black history that ought to be taught in our schools.

Let's also address the Black history that evokes the colonialism that once enslaved and segregated Black people in Canada. The deeply embedded structural inequities that persist in 2022 remind us that Black history is not only in the past; it is also in the present. A disproportionate number are still essential workers who, along with many other Canadians from racialized, lower-income neighbourhoods, are at higher risk of contracting COVID-19. The historical legacy of this nation can be seen in the way the pandemic does not impact us all equally, with people who are structurally vulnerable and struggling with health and housing inequities more likely to be impacted by the virus.

In this Black History Month, as it draws to its close, it is as important as ever to celebrate the achievements of those who have inspired and continue to inspire us. Let us move forward with what still needs to be done for Black people and push the envelope of structural change in meaningful ways. We must not only acknowledge the urgent needs that persist due to historical inequities; we must also take bold action to bring about lasting change. Let that be our legacy.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

M^{me} Lucille Collard: When working to confront human trafficking, we must provide the best possible supports to survivors and those who are at risk of being trafficked. There need to be plans to prevent trafficking, to enforce anti-trafficking laws, and to support survivors. Often, the government is focused strictly on the enforcement side of things, and we should ensure we have a holistic approach.

I want to point to a specific issue: There is a problem of coerced debts being taken into account when evaluating the credit of survivors. We should not be making information on debts available to financial institutions if the debts were forced onto trafficked persons. We should instead be forgiving these debts, in order to address the injustice of this situation and to give survivors a better chance of getting a fresh start. I hope the minister hears me.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I'm honoured today to rise to recognize Black History Month, a month when we honour the heritage, courage and contributions of Black Canadians. This month and every month, we must also commit to dismantling systemic anti-Black racism in our society. We must understand the past if we want to change the future, and we must change the future. We must remain committed to condemning hate and tearing down barriers to build a more equitable, accessible, just and caring Ontario.

I want to recognize organizations such as the Amherstburg Freedom Museum, Buxton Museum, Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site, the Ontario Black History Society and, in my own riding, the Guelph Black Heritage Society, Black Lives Matter Guelph, the central student association and the Black students' association at the University of Guelph, and so many others who talk about the history and the future of the Black Canadian experience and community in our province.

I also want to thank members from all parties who came together to pass historic legislation: the Emancipation Month Act, declaring the month of August Emancipation Month in this province.

In the few seconds I have remaining, I just want to commit our commitment to combatting human trafficking in this province, and how important it is for us to work across party lines to fulfill that commitment.

PETITIONS

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Jamie West: The petition is entitled, "Petition for an Official Statement of Apology on Behalf of the Government of Ontario to the McIntyre Powder Project Miners."

Before I begin, I want to thank Jim Hobbs's family—Elaine Hobbs, Janice Hobbs Martell and her husband, Don Martell—for collecting these petitions and for working so hard on the McIntyre Powder Project. It says, "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas over 25,000 Ontario mine workers were subjected by their employers to mandatory, non-consensual inhalation of finely ground aluminum dust, known as McIntyre Powder, between 1943 and 1979 as a scientifically unproven industrial medical treatment for the lung disease silicosis; and

"Whereas the government of Ontario supported and sanctioned the McIntyre Powder aluminum-prophylaxis program despite the availability of safe and proven alternatives to effective silicosis prevention measures, such as improved dust controls and ventilation, and also despite expert evidence from the international scientific and medical communities as early as 1946 that recommended against the use of McIntyre Powder treatments; and

“Whereas the miners who were forced to inhale McIntyre Powder experienced distress, and immediate and long-term health effects from their experiences and exposures associated with aluminum inhalation treatments, as documented through the participation in the McIntyre Powder Project;

“We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to provide an official statement of apology to the McIntyre Powder Project miners.”

I support the petition. I’ll affix my signature and provide it to page Morgan.

WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Mrs. Michelle Bastien from Chelmsford in my riding for this petition.

“Improve Winter Road Maintenance on Northern Highways.

“Whereas highways play a critical role in northern Ontario;

“Whereas winter road maintenance has been privatized in Ontario and contract standards are not being enforced;

“Whereas per capita, fatalities are twice as likely to occur on a northern highway than on a highway in southern Ontario;

“Whereas current MTO classification negatively impacts the safety on northern highways;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly ... as follows: to classify Highways 11, 17, 69, 101 and 144 as class 1 highways; require that the pavement be bare within eight hours of the end of a snowfall and bring the management of winter road maintenance back into the public sector, if contract standards are not met.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Kristian.

LAND USE PLANNING

Ms. Jill Andrew: This petition is entitled “Stop the 413 GTA West Highway.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government is pushing ahead with plans to build Highway 413, a redundant and wasteful 400-series highway through the greenbelt that would cost taxpayers an estimated \$10 billion or more; and

“Whereas according to a TorStar/National Observer investigation entitled ‘Friends with Benefits?’ powerful developers and land speculators with political and donor ties to the Premier and the PC Party of Ontario own thousands of acres along the proposed highway corridor and would profit from its construction, suggesting that this \$10-billion taxpayer-funded highway is about serving the private interests of the Premier’s friends and donors, not the public interest; and

“Whereas the Ontario government’s expert panel concluded in 2017 that Highway 413 would be a waste of taxpayer money that would only save drivers 30 to 60 seconds on their commutes; and

“Whereas that expert panel identified less costly and less destructive alternatives to new highway construction, such as making better use of the underused Highway 407, just 15 km away; and

“Whereas Highway 413 would pave over 400 acres of the greenbelt and 2,000 acres of farmland, destroy the habitats of at-risk and endangered species, and pollute rivers and streams; and

“Whereas building more highways encourages more vehicle use and increases traffic and congestion; and

“Whereas the highway would cause significant harm to historic Indigenous sites;

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

“Stop the plans for building Highway 413.”

I resoundingly agree with this petition. I’m affixing my signature to it and handing it to Morgan.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further petitions? The member for Timiskaming. Oh, I’m sorry. I’m out of my head today. It’s the member from Timmins.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, I know the member from Timiskaming may have issue with that.

I want to read the following petition, Mr. Speaker:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas over 25,000 Ontario mine workers were subjected by their employer to mandatory, non-consensual—to breathe in—“finely ground aluminum dust known as McIntyre Powder between 1943 and 1979 as a scientifically unproven industrial” material “treatment for a lung disease known as silicosis;

“Whereas the government of Ontario supported and sanctioned the McIntyre Powder aluminum project despite the availability of safe and proven alternatives to effective silicosis prevention measures, such as improved dust control and ventilation, and also despite expert evidence from the international scientific and medical communities as early as 1946 that recommended against the use of McIntyre Powder”—in my union, we did the same;

“Whereas the miners who were forced to inhale the McIntyre Powder”—I was one of those people—“experienced distress and immediate and long-term health effects from their experience and exposure associated with aluminum inhalation treatments, as documented through the practice of the McIntyre Powder, which was produced at the McIntyre mine in Timmins;

“We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to provide an official statement of apology to the McIntyre Powder Project miners.”

And I would appreciate having that apology, being one who breathed that stuff in for years.

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Ms. Catherine Fife: It’s my pleasure to read this petition in the House today. I want to thank Pierce Family Vision for sharing it with me.

“Petition to Save Eye Care in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has underfunded optometric eye care for 30 years; and

“Whereas the government only pays on average \$44.65 for an OHIP-insured visit—the lowest rate in Canada; and

“Whereas optometrists are being forced to pay substantially out of their own pocket to provide over four million services each year to Ontarians under OHIP; and

“Whereas optometrists have never been given a formal negotiation process with the government; and

“Whereas the government’s continued neglect resulted in 96% of Ontario optometrists voting to withdraw OHIP services beginning September 1, 2021;

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

“To instruct the Ontario government to immediately commit to legally binding, formal negotiations to ensure any future OHIP-insured optometry services are, at a minimum, funded at the cost of delivery.”

We certainly hope that a deal is close.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Mrs. Lou-Anne Ricard from Chelmsford in my riding for these petitions: 911 everywhere in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas when we face an emergency we all know to dial 911 for help; and

“Whereas access to emergency services through 911 is not available in all regions of Ontario but most Ontarians believe that it is; and

“Whereas many Ontarians have discovered that 911 was not available while they faced an emergency; and ... Ontarians expect and deserve access to 911 service throughout our province”—like every other province has done;

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

“To provide 911 emergency response everywhere in Ontario by land line or cellphone.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Morgan.

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Mr. Jamie West: I want to thank the patients from Dr. Albiani’s optometry centre for collecting these petitions.

“Petition to Save Eye Care in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has underfunded optometric eye care for 30 years; and

“Whereas the government only pays on average \$44.65 for an OHIP-insured visit—the lowest rate in Canada; and

“Whereas optometrists are being forced to pay substantially out of their own pocket to provide over four million services each year to Ontarians under OHIP; and

“Whereas optometrists have never been given a formal negotiation process with the government; and

“Whereas the government’s continued neglect resulted in 96% of Ontario optometrists voting to withdraw OHIP services beginning September 1, 2021;

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

“To instruct the Ontario government to immediately commit to legally binding, formal negotiations to ensure any future OHIP-insured optometry services are, at a minimum, funded at the cost of delivery.”

I support this petition, affix my signature and provide it to the Clerk with Kristian.

RETIREMENT HOMES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Chris Mainville from Azilda in my riding for these petitions:

“Oversight, Regulations and Limits on Fees Charged by Retirement Homes....

“Whereas residents of retirement homes are mainly seniors on fixed incomes who often pay very high amounts for rent and services and cannot afford ... increases;

“Whereas we are seeing more financial hardships on seniors, their families and caregivers who support them, due to retirement homes exponentially increasing the costs of the services they provide to their residents;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“To protect retirement home residents from financial exploitation, the government should implement oversight, regulations and limits on the fees charged by retirement homes for all services they provide to their residents.”

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

CELIAC DISEASE

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I have a petition that I am pleased to share in memory of my friend Susie Boyle from the Canadian Celiac Association.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the IgA TTG blood screening is the internationally recognized standard as the first step in diagnosing a person with celiac disease;

“Whereas celiac disease is an autoimmune disease that can strike people with a genetic predisposition at any time of life and presents with a large variety of non-specific signs and symptoms;

“Whereas many individuals, such as family members of diagnosed celiacs, are at higher risk and pre-symptomatic screening is advised;

“Whereas covering the cost of the simple test would dramatically reduce wait times to diagnosis, save millions to the health care system due to misdiagnoses, unnecessary testing and serious complications from untreated celiac disease and reduce the painful suffering and health decline of thousands of individuals;

“Whereas Ontario is the only province in Canada not to cover this blood test;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Ontario government to cover the cost of the diagnostic blood test (IgA TTG) for celiac disease for those who show symptoms, are a first-degree relative or have an associated condition.”

I wholeheartedly support this petition, will affix my signature and send it to the table with page Kristian.

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Mr. Jamie West: These petitions were collected by the office of Dr. David Chisholm. I'd like to thank them for collecting these petitions. The petition is the “Petition to Save Eye Care in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has underfunded optometric eye care for 30 years; and

“Whereas the government only pays on average \$44.65 for an OHIP-insured visit—the lowest rate in Canada; and

“Whereas optometrists are being forced to pay substantially out of their own pocket to provide over four million services each year to Ontarians under OHIP; and

“Whereas optometrists have never been given a formal negotiation process with the government; and

“Whereas the government’s continued neglect resulted in 96% of Ontario optometrists voting to withdraw OHIP services beginning September 1, 2021;

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

“To instruct the Ontario government to immediately commit to legally binding, formal negotiations to ensure any future OHIP-insured optometry services are, at a minimum, funded at the cost of delivery.”

I support this petition. I'll affix my signature and provide it to the table with page Julia.

TRAVAILLEURS BLESSÉS

M^{me} France Gélinas: J'aimerais remercier Nicole Ayotte, de Hanmer dans mon comté.

« Pour une déclaration officielle d'excuses au nom du gouvernement de l'Ontario aux mineurs du McIntyre Powder Project.

« Considérant que plus de 25 000 mineurs ontariens ont été soumis par leur employeur à l'inhalation obligatoire et non consensuelle de poussière d'aluminium finement broyé, connue sous le nom de poudre McIntyre, entre 1943 et 1979, en tant que traitement médical industriel scientifiquement non prouvé pour la silicose, une maladie pulmonaire;

« Considérant que le gouvernement de l'Ontario a soutenu et sanctionné le programme de prophylaxie de l'aluminium, poudre McIntyre, malgré la disponibilité d'alternatives éprouvées aux mesures efficaces de prévention de la silicose, telles que l'amélioration du contrôle de la poussière et de la ventilation; et aussi malgré les preuves d'experts de la communauté scientifique et médicale internationale dès 1946 qui ont déconseillé d'utiliser les traitements de poudre McIntyre; et

« Considérant que les mineurs ont été forcés d'inhaler la poudre et ont ressenti de la détresse, des effets immédiats et à long terme sur leur santé causés par leur expérience et des expositions associées aux traitements par inhalation de l'aluminium, comme documenté par leur participation au projet de la poudre McIntyre; »

1600

Ils pétitionnent le gouvernement de l'Ontario de « fournir une déclaration officielle d'excuses aux mineurs du McIntyre Powder Project. »

J'appuie cette pétition, je vais la signer et je demande à Tanisha de l'amener à la table des greffiers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROVINCIAL DAY OF SERVICE ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR LA JOURNÉE PROVINCIALE DU SERVICE

Mr. Coe moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 51, An Act to proclaim the Provincial Day of Service/ Projet de loi 51, Loi proclamant la Journée provinciale du service.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): We turn to Mr. Coe, the member from Whitby, to lead off the debate.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'm honoured to have the opportunity this afternoon to speak to Bill 51. The Provincial Day of Service Act, if approved, would be observed every September 11.

Scripture tells us, “Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you ... write them on the tablet of your heart.” We shall do just that. We shall observe and write on our hearts the memory of nearly 3,000 lives taken from us so cruelly, including 24 Canadian citizens, 11 of whom were from Ontario.

We will never forget how the world would forever change. Let it not be remembered by the insidious act of terrorism, but by the courage, the bravery and the acts of heroism that will forever mark this day.

Let us remember on this day the Ontarians and the other Canadians who rallied alongside our American friends, opened their hearts and homes and helped them to recover and persevere. Love is stronger than hate, and there's no better example of love and generosity and kindness greater than the small community of Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador, as you well know. We took in so many stranded travellers and provided them with food, shelter and kindness, in the process creating a lasting friendship.

Bill 51, the Provincial Day of Service Act, will turn a day of pain into a day of giving, to not only reflect and honour the lives that were lost, but more importantly, to claim the day as a day to be forever remembered for compassion, courage and strength in the face of adversity.

But it's also about reflecting on what we've learned in the 21 years since that awful morning. That list of lessons is long and growing, but one thing that became clear on

9/11 and has been clear ever since is that Ontario has always been home to heroes who run towards danger in order to do what is right. We know the dedication of people who serve their local communities, such as local police officers, firefighters and first responders. The commitment they feel goes beyond their occupations and it extends into charitable activities, fundraisers and community service for worthy causes across the country.

But it also goes above and beyond that, doesn't it, Speaker? Every one of us can contribute to our own community in any way we can. We can each do our part to help those around us, whether in time, in kind, or through financial support. It is by coming together that we can strive to more effectively change our communities and make them a better place in which to live and raise our families, always remembering that we are stronger together than apart.

On September 11 we have the opportunity to not only thank all the volunteers who give up their time, put their skills to work, demonstrate acts of kindness and compassion and willingly make sacrifices to better the lives of others, but also all Ontarians who give back in any way they can. Speaker, let the Provincial Day of Service truly be a day that serves as an inspiration to rise to the occasion, which celebrates generosity and allows us to reflect on the importance of Ontarians coming together for the best of our province and, yes, our country. We honour the courage of those who put themselves in harm's way to save people they never knew, and we vow to honour them by serving our communities in the way in which they so selflessly served.

Speaker, we come together this afternoon in gratitude for the strength that has fortified us across these 21 years, and we renew the love and the faith that bind us together as one Ontario and Canadian family.

Bill 51, the Provincial Day of Service Act, will also honour the selfless service of civilian and military volunteers who continue to stand up in the face of terrorism and the outpouring of Canadian support in the aftermath of the attacks. In response, over 40,000 Canadian Armed Forces members would deploy to Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014. More than 150 Canadian soldiers died during the 13-year campaign and thousands were wounded, physically and psychologically.

Twenty-one years, Speaker, may seem like a long time, but for the families like Maureen Basnicki and her son Brennan, who lost a piece of their hearts that day, I imagine it can seem like just yesterday.

Perhaps it's the memory of a last kiss given to a spouse or the last goodbye to a mother or father, a sister or a brother. I wonder, Speaker, how their lives might have unfolded, how their dreams might have taken shape, and I am absolutely mindful that no words we offer or deeds we do can ever truly erase the pain of their absence.

The question before us, Speaker, as always, is how do we preserve the legacy of those Ontario residents like Maureen's husband, Ken, and the other Ontarians who died on September 11? How do we live up to their example? How do we keep their spirit alive in our own

hearts? Well, colleagues, for Ontario families, we have that opportunity before us this afternoon with Bill 51, the Provincial Day of Service Act.

The most enduring memorial to those lost is ensuring that we stay true to ourselves, that we stay true to what's best in us, that we do not let others divide us. Speaker, "Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you ... write them on the tablet of your heart." Colleagues, we have the opportunity each and every day to live up to the sacrifice of those heroes that we lost.

Decades after the attacks, Speaker, there is a new generation of Canadians with no memory of the events of that dark day, September 11, 2001.

1610

Building on the legacy of Maureen Basnicki's tireless advocacy, with support from Wounded Warriors Canada, situated in my riding, the Provincial Day of Service Act will help ensure generations of future Ontarians never forget.

Speaker, we reaffirm our commitment to keep the sacred trust with their families, including the children who lost parents and who have demonstrated such extraordinary resilience.

But this is also about reflecting on what we've learned in the 21 years since that awful morning. One thing that became clear on 9/11 and has been clear ever since is that Ontario has always been home to heroes. Over the last 21 years, we've seen the same courage and selflessness on display again and again. And we're seeing it again today, with the doctors, nurses and paramedics who are bone tired, doing what they can to save lives; the service members, some of whom weren't even born 21 years ago, putting themselves at risk to save Canadians and help refugees find a better life; the first responders battling roaring fires and rising waters in Brampton and other parts of Ontario to bring families to safety.

For every person in Ontario who lived through that day, the September 11 attack is seared into our soul. It was a day filled with shock, horror, sorrow and righteous fury.

I stand in the Ontario Legislature this afternoon in the knowledge that we cannot erase the pain or reverse the evil of that dark, wretched day.

But to Maureen and your family, as well as those Ontarians who also lost family members on September 11: You have our unwavering loyalty, our undying devotion, and our eternal pledge that your loved ones will never, ever be forgotten. As we gather here this afternoon, I know that my colleagues will agree that they represent what is best in Ontario and what can and should bring us together. Speaker, 9/11 reminded us how so many Ontarians give of themselves in extraordinary ways, not just in moments of great crisis, but every single day. Let's never forget that, and let's never take them for granted.

We cannot erase the pain or reverse the evil from that day. Decades from now, when the Legislative Assembly of Ontario is comprised of an entirely new group of legislators, should Bill 51 pass into law, the Provincial Day of Service Act will remain. That will be part of our legacy. That will be part of our legacy together.

Speaker, Bill 51 will help ensure that future generations—like my two granddaughters, Sophia and Annette—mark the day by showing the compassion and generosity characteristic of so many Ontarians who were impacted. Through even the smallest of actions, we can reclaim the sense of unity that followed the attacks and demonstrate that our sense of common purpose is just as strong today as it was 21 years ago. Ontarians can once again come together to mark this solemn anniversary with service, and together move towards a bright future as one province.

Maureen Basnicki, the founding director of the Canadian National Day of Service Foundation, who is watching this afternoon, had this to say about the legislation before us: “The attacks on 9/11 were a global attack on our values ... let us show our gratitude to all who serve their country”—serve this province—“and communities in official and unofficial ways.

“Join the Canadian 9/11 family members to thank our heroes who make a difference....

“It is a fitting living memorial and legacy for the Canadians” and Ontarians “taken on that day.

“We are honoured and grateful to have the continued support of the province of Ontario.”

Scott Maxwell, the executive director of Wounded Warriors Canada, situated in my riding and representing thousands of first responders and former military members, had this to say: “Wounded Warriors Canada is proud to support the Provincial Day of Service Act. The success of this bill will help ensure we remember the 9/11 tragedy while, at the same time, honouring the service and sacrifice of our veterans, first responders and their families—and our everyday citizens that go out of their way to make a difference in their communities.”

I’m honoured that both have taken the time to provide their support of this particular legislation, Speaker.

In closing, may God bless the memory of the loved ones lost on September 11. They remain in our hearts today. May He watch over their faithful families, and all who protect us.

Once again, Speaker, I’m so grateful for the support received from my House leader and colleagues on both sides of the House on this important piece of legislation. I look forward to listening carefully to their upcoming presentations.

MEMBER’S CONDUCT

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): I recognize the government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to immediately move a motion respecting the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston and that the question of the motion be put immediately, without debate or amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to move a motion. All agreed? All in favour and agreed.

I return to the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I move that this House expresses its disapproval of, and disassociates itself from, continued disreputable conduct by the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston, most specifically his use of social media to make racist and discriminatory statements about a federal cabinet minister and for publishing social media posts insinuating a call to violence; and

That this House demands the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston make written apologies for his behaviour to the Honourable Omar Alghabra, PC, MP, and to this House, by way of the Speaker, and publish his written apologies and desist from further conduct that is inappropriate and unbecoming of a member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario; and

That the Speaker is authorized to not recognize the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston in the House until the Speaker has received copies of the member’s written apologies and is satisfied of their sincerity.

1620

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The government House leader has moved a government motion—dispense? Agreed? Agreed.

What is the pleasure of the House? Does the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PROVINCIAL DAY OF SERVICE ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR LA JOURNÉE PROVINCIALE DU SERVICE

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate? I recognize the member from Timmins.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I’ll be sharing my time with the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane. The member from Timmins—it’s the least that he can do for his colleague in Timiskaming–Cochrane.

I just want to stand in support of this particular bill, Bill 51, the Provincial Day of Service Act. We all know that people who choose to become first responders do so because they have a certain want to serve. Be it in policing, be it paramedics, be it fire or whatever it might be, there is a real sense of wanting to serve their communities.

And it’s not an easy job. The member talked a little while ago in regard to what those people in the armed forces and those that were first responders dealt with when it came to situations that have happened in Canada, for some years. Unfortunately, many of them have lost their lives as a result of them wanting to serve their country, wanting to serve their province or wanting to serve their municipality. We are citizens, all, of those particular entities. We’re so fortunate to have people who are willing to do these jobs, even though, at times, they knew they do so a great peril, to be able to stand in and do the work that needs to be done.

I always have a bit of fun with a few of my firefighter friends back in Timmins when we talk about, you know,

“You guys, I never understood you. You guys will go running into fires when the fire is on; I’m trying to run out.” That’s exactly what these men and women do. They go into fires in order to, first of all, make sure that if there’s anybody in there you’re able to get them out and they’re able to survive. I’m glad to say the fire services, both volunteer and full-time, have done an excellent job of being able to provide that type of service in our communities. Unfortunately, at times, they do so at great peril. They do so with sometimes very serious injury. Other times they do so with their very lives. I think it’s only appropriate that we say to these men and women, “Thank you. And we need to recognize the work that you do, and what you do to make us safe.”

You take a look at paramedics who put themselves in all kinds of situations in order to try to treat often traumatic cases as they happen. I couldn’t do it. I think most of us in this House couldn’t do it. Having to walk upon a scene where somebody is in huge medical distress, and you are having to deal with the individual who’s in distress and deal with those around them, often loved ones, who are, quite frankly, upset for good reason—and/or come upon an accident where you are having to treat some of the most terrible things that can be seen by a human being. And then they go back to work for the next call. I have to tell you, that takes pretty brave and pretty special people to do that.

Imagine being that paramedic, that firefighter or that police officer who comes upon that scene, and he or she has to see that and process it after. Now, we do know that in some cases it turns to PTSD. There’s been a lot of work done by my colleague who sits right behind me, from Oshawa; from Andrea Horwath, our leader; and others in this House in order to advance the ability for first responders to be entitled to PTSD entitlement under the Workers’ Compensation Act.

I know, as you do, Mr. Speaker, because I’m sure you speak to your fire chief and your firefighters, your police chiefs and your police officers, and your paramedics, that there are a number of these people who are off on stress leave in regard to what they have experienced, and sometimes—I always remember talking to this one individual who had been a firefighter for 25-some years, had seen all kinds of things and never really thought about it, then one day snapped. Something went off, and he was not able to function anymore. He became suicidal and went through one heck of a situation in his personal life as a result of it. But that’s sometimes what happens: You contain it within you before it manifests itself in the most horrific ways that are manifested.

And what about our police officers? A lot could be said about the Canadian policing. We are so fortunate that our police officers, when it comes to training and how they deal with individuals in this province and in this country, have a very different training and a very different approach to how they approach policing. Good proof of that is what happened here in Ontario over the last while. People have the right to protest. I think we all agree in this House. Anybody who is upset with a government decision, a

decision of this Legislature, a decision of cabinet has the right to object, has the right to protest, and police officers often have to be there in order to be there to make sure that people keep the peace, that things are done, as we saw today.

We all drove into work and we saw metro police officers, along with our legislative security people, who were here making sure that if something happened, it would be contained way before it got to the grounds of Queen’s Park. I think we can thank our police officers for the work that they did and they’re doing every day to make us safe and to make sure that we are able to live in a civil society.

Imagine living in a society where the police officers aren’t doing the kind of work that they are now. The old term “the old Wild West” would be alive and well. Nobody wants to live in that type of society.

We look at what happened in Ottawa this weekend. I think most of us, quite frankly, were quite shocked. We didn’t want to see that. I don’t think there’s a member in this House who wanted to see what happened in Ottawa, where the police had to go in and do what they had to do. I’m sure the police didn’t want to do that either, for all kinds of reasons. Who wants to do that kind of work? But they went in and did it, and they did it professionally. Yes, people were mad; yes, people got arrested; and yes, there will be, after this, many people who will complain about the police doing whatever they did. But we have processes to deal with that.

The police oversight actually said on the weekend that they would be investigating, and that’s good. You have to have checks and balances in the system in order to make sure that we learn from experiences like this and we do them in a way that doesn’t cause harm to people and keeps the peace.

You know, I’ve been part of many a protest over the years. I used to organize protests; I was a union organizer. I had plenty of strikes organized. I went and mounted the blockades in Timiskaming, when my good friend Mr. Vanthof—back in the day, I didn’t even know who he was and he didn’t know who I was.

Mr. John Vanthof: Stay away from my speech.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I’ll stay away from your speech.

But my point is, we nonetheless understood when we did this that the police had a job to do. So when we used to have a picket line out in front of, let’s say, the McIntyre mine or the Hollinger or whatever happened to be the mine that was without contract and on a legal strike, we would try to hold up individuals, meaning management, from crossing the picket line and operating that line. We would hold them up as long as we could, but it didn’t take long that they were in the courts to get an injunction. And then an injunction would come out and say, “Okay, you can hold them up for 10 minutes. You can hold them up 15 minutes or 20 minutes or whatever.” And our job, as the union organizers—I was the strike chairman on that one particular big strike—was that you had to make sure that your men understood not to hold up beyond what the court

order had given. We didn't like it. We were upset. Boy, I'll tell you, we felt that our rights were being violated, no question. But you have to have a mechanism by which you can't just hold up people from being able to have access to their own property.

So yes, it was a tough one. We've all received the phone calls and we've all been calling back our constituents and I acknowledge the pain, the frustration, the anger that has come out on the part of citizens in this country, this province and communities in regard to what happened in Ottawa. But we also have to do a shout-out to our police and to say to them thank you for doing a professional job of doing what you had to do. Nobody wanted you to do it. The protesters certainly didn't want those police officers to do that. I'm sure the police didn't like having to do it either, but they did so in a professional way.

If this act is able to recognize the work that our police and all of our other first responders do for at least one day a year, it's the least that we can do to say to them thank you for your service and a job well done.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to speak in the House on behalf of the residents of Timiskaming-Cochrane and today to speak on First Responders Day, on a bill brought forward by the member from Whitby—fully in support of this bill.

1630

I would like to focus on a couple of groups of first responders, and the first one I think of is—we've heard of paramedics and police officers, whom I'll focus on second, but what I'd like to focus on for a second are volunteer firefighters, people who have another job. They have a full-time vocation, and they truly do this out of the—all first responders have a calling, but volunteer firefighters have a special calling because they do this on top of their regular job. It's incredible.

I actually have a meeting with many volunteer firefighter chiefs in my riding on Friday—and I think the member from Whitby will welcome this. They're concerned. They're concerned because the certification for firefighters—there's a proposal that it be changed, and many volunteer firefighters are worried that this certification might force them to walk, might force them to leave. I'm not saying that that's the case, but they feel it could be. I think we want to work with the Solicitor General to make sure that this doesn't happen.

I'll give you an example why. On Highway 11, the Trans-Canada Highway, you know who does the jaws of life? Do you know who is actually, in many cases, first on the scene at the accidents, who really suffer the PTSD, who suffer—we'll just go down Highway 11. The Marten River fire department, the Temagami fire department, the Latchford fire department, the Coleman fire department, the Temiskaming Shores Fire Department, the Harley fire department, the Armstrong fire department, the Englehart fire department, the Round Lake fire department, the Kenogami fire department, the Matheson fire department,

the Iroquois Falls Fire Department and the Cochrane fire department: all volunteers who are the first on the scene on the Trans-Canada Highway.

They are right now worried that they might have to leave their calling because perhaps the people who are making the rules don't understand what it's like being a volunteer fire department or a volunteer firefighter in northern Ontario or many other rural places. So I'm calling on the Solicitor General to work with us to make sure that that doesn't happen. I'll be meeting with them on Friday to find out what the real issues are. I'm meeting with the Solicitor General too, and I'm hoping to try and get this fixed because we can't afford to lose first responders on Highway 11.

We have enough problems on that part of the Trans-Canada Highway, on Highway 11. We just can't afford to lose any volunteer firefighters. We can't, Speaker.

Those are the first ones I'd like to focus on. I think this is an issue, and it's great to be talking about it on a day we're going to pass First Responders Day because this is an issue they're facing right now, that we're all facing in the north, and there couldn't be a better day to talk about it.

Another issue I'd like to touch on is the incredible work that our police forces do throughout the province, particularly in the last little while. Police officers are human. We all have faults but, as a force, as the training—it's pretty incredible.

I've also organized a few protests in my life. I've actually organized—and I think a lot of people are missing this. In my riding, a lot of people are very angry at me, and that's fine. Maybe I'll pay a political price, and that's fine as well, because if you're fundamentally opposed to something, the way to do it is to vote. That's the way to do it.

There is a fundamental difference between a peaceful protest and a blockade. I've organized both.

I organized a blockade. We blocked the Ontario Northland railway for two hours with 80 tractors, and we knew it was illegal when we did it. I told the farmers that it was illegal when we did it. When the police came and told us to get off, because it was illegal, and we refused—we told them when we were going to leave, but it wasn't when the police wanted us to leave—it almost got pretty ugly, because, quite frankly, tractors are as big as police cars. To the policeman's credit—one of them stepped up and said, "You promised to be off by 12. Does that deal hold?" We agreed, and we also agreed that I would get charged and none of the other people would. I paid a fine, and rightfully so, because I knowingly broke the law.

There were lots of people from my riding in Ottawa who were well-meaning, who don't agree with everything they were wishing for; some do. But the organizers knew that they were breaking the law. They said to everybody, "It's a peaceful protest," but it wasn't. It was a blockade. It doesn't matter if you sweep the street; if the grader can't get there and you're cleaning the street, it's still a blockade.

When we were on that train track—we were on there two hours—we didn't break a thing, and we didn't leave any garbage. You would never have known we were there.

But it was illegal—I was charged, and I paid the fine—because it was a blockade. That is a fundamental difference.

Regardless of how long it took and what steps were taken—at some point, everyone who has ever been involved in a protest or a blockade knew that those steps were going to have to be taken. What legislation had to be passed to do that is a whole different discussion and a whole different debate. It was not a peaceful protest; it was a blockade.

When I watched, as we all did, on TV how the police interacted with the protesters, the people who were involved in the blockade—how they continually asked them to leave—they used as little force as possible.

When I get messages on Facebook saying, “This is a dictatorship, and this is”—if this was a dictatorship, no one ever would have made it to Ottawa. You wouldn’t have been able to drive to Ottawa and sit there for three weeks. If this was a dictatorship—and we know countries like this, Speaker—you never would have got there, and if you did, there would be water cannons and tanks waiting for you.

We may disagree, philosophically, fundamentally, on many issues, but let’s all agree that where we solve that is in Legislatures like this, or elections. We don’t solve it by blockades and demands. Let’s all agree on that. And let’s all understand the difference between a peaceful protest—which I fully support—and a blockade.

We did a blockade to get attention from the Toronto Star, believe it or not. Back then, nobody talked about mainstream media—we wanted attention from the Star, and by blocking that train, we got it. That’s what we did, but we knew there was a price to be paid.

1640

I would like to thank the police officers across this country who came to Ottawa and, on our behalf, paid the price for us living in a civil society. I really would like to thank them for that. And I hope we all understand that, living in a civil society, we also have responsibilities to, at some point, obey the laws that are created in Legislatures, which are elected in free, open and fair elections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I’m honoured to speak on behalf of Bill 51, to establish September 11 as the Provincial Day of Service, and I want to thank the MPP from Whitby for bringing this forward.

Speaker, so many lives were so tragically lost on September 11. The victims were just living normal lives, at their offices, in their businesses, in the towers, working to support their families. Many lives were later lost heroically, although no less tragically, for so many first responders on that day. First responders ran towards the danger and did not run away from it. They rushed in where angels could have feared to tread. When one tower collapsed on the firemen and -women that went in to save their lives, the world, already horrified by that day’s events, was shocked even further.

Many other first responders were present that day: police, ambulance, members of the New York port authority and many others. The exposure to the toxic air that those injured endured through the course of their duties later caused some to die because of the injuries sustained or because of the illnesses related to that exposure. They were treated by doctors and nurses who tirelessly worked to save and heal in New York’s hospitals.

Speaker, we must honour the memory and significance of those events and all who put their own lives on the line to save another’s. Remembering through a Provincial Day of Service brings honour, comfort, respect and a sense of justice to all the families that continue to feel the painful loss of their loved ones so acutely.

Through this bill, Ontario will honour those lives so tragically lost in the September 11 terrorist attacks, but many others should be recognized. Though they may not be first responders, we remember their actions no less than others. We remember the ordinary people who provided comfort and aid; the generosity of the people of Gander, Newfoundland, who have been immortalized in a play called *Come From Away*. This is one of the largest civilian responses because of the number of people that were stranded in Gander. But so many others mobilized to help wherever they could: Service and community groups and many others did what they could do to send aid, any aid. That generosity must be honoured.

However, this day will do more than honour a day frozen in our memories; the Provincial Day of Service will honour the service workers who, in your communities, play a vital role in ensuring the health, safety and well-being of us all every day while they are routinely and selflessly putting their own safety at risk. We recognize within Ontario the over 25,000 members of our police services, the 30,000 firefighters and over 9,000 paramedics who all give their time to serve and protect those in need. Speaker, these are the people who have, for the past two years of the seemingly endless pandemic, stood on the front lines for all of us and battled this global pandemic. These are also our hospital doctors and nurses, support staff and PSWs of long-term-care homes and other places where care is rendered. These are the people who have sacrificed time from their families so that they could ensure others could be with theirs.

Our police, fire services, paramedics and all the 911 services have performed well beyond all reasonable expectations and deserve this day to be about them. They deserve to be immortalized for what they have done for us and thanked through this bill. This bill is for them, in their honour and in their name.

Speaker, the coordinated terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, have remained etched in the world’s memories as one of the most horrendous tragedies of the 21st century. All we could do at the time was watch on our televisions and listen to our radios as this incident occurred in Manhattan. As many have said in this House, we all know where we were that day. It is etched in our minds. I was in this very building—my office was just down the

hall—with the TV on. It was a time when we didn't all have cellphones; very few of us did. There wasn't social media. It was just what we watched on TV. And it wasn't just that day; it continued for weeks afterwards. We remained glued to our TV sets—similar to what we did over the weekend; we remained glued to our TV sets to see how things unfolded in Ottawa. Weeks after, we were still trying to figure out what happened and who was responsible.

Following that experience, a friend of mine and I went to Manhattan, to actually see the location of the terrorist attack. We saw the twisted metal, the buildings dark with ash, windows blown out. It was something you'll never forget. You could see all these buildings surrounded with an American flag that was draping down to cover the holes in the windows. Around the perimeter, you could actually feel where the blast when the building fell even ripped through the concrete. All along the street, there were letters that people posted, looking for their loved ones. It was quite sad, and it always remains in my mind. On the corner, there was a small church where you could sign your name and give your respects for those who were missing or lost. I was able to sign that piece of paper, as was my friend. It was a day I'll never forget.

Twenty years later, this incident continues to incite anger and sadness for the loss, for anyone who witnessed it in real time. The entire world watched in stunned disbelief. Mr. Speaker, 3,000 innocent civilians from 93 countries lost their lives, and their families lost their loved ones. And 24 Canadian citizens never returned home.

Many people stepped forward to recognize and remember that loss on that fateful day.

My colleague from Whitby mentioned Maureen Basnicki and said that she is watching today. Hello, Maureen. I met Maureen four years ago, and she told me the story of the loss of her husband, Ken. She has worked tirelessly to advocate for this bill today. So I congratulate the member. She has also honoured him and the countless victims through her advocacy, creating the Canadian Coalition Against Terror. She was also involved with the creation of the Canadian Bill of Rights.

Another member from Etobicoke, Cindy Barkway, lost her husband, Dave. She has honoured his memory by establishing the David Barkway Memorial Scholarship, and she is involved with organizations like Victims of Crime and the Canadian Coalition Against Terror.

These people pushed forward, they fought, and they are making a true difference for all of us.

Canadian first responders volunteered in large numbers to help with this cause. Many firefighters, police and others crossed the border and immediately got to work helping those they didn't know. Thousands of others raised funds for families of firefighters and those who fell when the towers came down on top of them while they tried to save lives. Our first responders always answer the call. We all must remember the multiple risks that they face every day, from pandemics to out-of-control fires to violent offenders to guns on our streets.

Speaker, we all witnessed how our police forces came together over the weekend, and we thank them for their service. I want to thank all of our first responders for their service. I want to thank them for keeping us safe. I want to thank them for the job they do each and every day.

1650

I also want to thank the member from Whitby for bringing this bill forward and all the advocates, all the grieving families out there who have lost loved ones. Through this bill, we will always remember the past, the present and the future work of our first responders.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. John Fraser: I'm pleased to speak in support of Bill 51 today, An Act to proclaim the Provincial Day of Service, and I want to thank the member from Whitby for bringing this forward.

It is really important that we recognize the risks and the sacrifices of so many on September 11. That's 20-some-odd years ago that we remember that. We're kind of at that point right now if we look around the world and what's happening in our own communities and happening in Ottawa, in Ontario, but before I say anything about that, I want to say thank you to all the police officers from Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, the paramedics, everyone who was essential in bringing the occupation of Ottawa's downtown to an end. They did it with professionalism. No one was seriously injured. Injuries were minimum. It was a very, very bad situation in Ottawa that came to a close, and the risks to those officers, those paramedics and all those people who were involved in that were great. There were threats of violence; there was aggression, and it takes a lot to end something like that peacefully. You had to be on the ground to see it, to know it and know how it felt in Ottawa. So it's appropriate that this bill has been brought forward today.

We realize that, just like September 11, we were glued to our TVs this weekend, as the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore said, kind of the same way. I know if you were in Ottawa, the people were on CBC Newsworld, CTV or any other station that was streaming what was going on, not just for Saturday and Sunday but for weeks or more.

Just like on September 11, there's something that's tearing at the fabric of who we are, that's pulling us apart, and we need the trust and support of those people who enforce the law, the paramedics who come when there's an injury or somebody needs help, firefighters. We have to have trust in them, and we do. That's why we should celebrate them.

But we can't ignore our role in what's going on right now. I'm going to say this because it needs to be said out loud. There are people who are taking advantage of people's exhaustion and weariness and anger over COVID. We're all angry. We're all tired. We're all sick of it. But there are people who are using that for their own ends, to raise money, to troll for votes, and it's a dangerous game. It's a very dangerous game, and we saw that unfold in Ottawa, in Windsor, in Sarnia, in Niagara and here in Toronto.

So what people are expecting of us is exactly what we know that first responders give us, and people who serve. They work together as a team. We have to listen to people. We can't let people take anger and turn it on ourselves. Because that's what's happening.

I don't want to say much more about this other than that I have to say over the last couple of weeks I've been deeply concerned about what's happening here and the fact that the people in Ottawa didn't see what we know we get from the people in service, which is everybody getting in the same room and working together to solve a problem.

Do you know what? I joked last week, but it wasn't a joke: I think for people—in Ottawa, anyway, and maybe in Windsor as well—“jurisdiction” is a four-letter word. They don't care who's responsible. We're all responsible, and that includes us over here: all of us. That's what they see.

I want to thank the member for bringing this forward. I think it's really important to recognize the risks, the contributions that happened on September 11, that happen every day here in Ontario, that happened over the last three weeks in Ottawa and Windsor and Niagara. But I also wanted to highlight the last part of this bill. It says that “on this day every year, Ontarians will rekindle the spirit of kindness, generosity and goodwill that unified us on September 11, 2011.” That is what we need now. Today, that part of the bill, at least to me, is the most important.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. Dave Smith: I'd like to thank the member from Whitby for bringing this bill forward.

Those who are watching this at home right now are probably saying, “Why? What's this all about?” This was a private member's bill that was put forward because it was something that the member from Whitby felt very passionate about. When you think about September 11—I'm in my 52nd year. There are certain dates where you remember where you were and what you were doing when something happened.

I know we talked a little bit about it during second reading, but I think it's worth repeating. On December 8, 1980, I was in grade 4, sitting in class, when the principal interrupted school. The news report of John Lennon being assassinated was something that was broadcast in the school. Then, the following year, in grade 5, our principal interrupted again, on March 30, 1981, because someone shot Ronald Reagan.

On January 28, 1986, I was in grade 10. We were in the library watching what had become something that was routine, and that was the space shuttle launch. Then the Challenger blew up.

On November 9, 1989, I was in my first year of university. We gathered at Crawpaddies Pub—it was the local pub for Lady Eaton College—and we were watching as they were tearing down the Berlin Wall.

Then, of course, on September 11, 2001, I was at home. My daughter had recently been diagnosed with cancer. I was off work and I turned on the radio and I heard the radio report. They were talking about it and it just didn't seem

real. So I turned on the TV and I saw the one tower burning. I watched the TV footage of the second airplane crash into that building, and it seemed surreal. How could something like this happen? Then the TV footage down at street level, things falling from the building. There were people who, rather than burn to death, jumped out of the building.

1700

Why is Ontario doing this? This is something that happened in New York state, that happened in New York City. Why is Ontario doing something like this? We're doing it—and the member from Whitby has brought this forward—to recognize the service of first responders, to recognize the service of our servicemen and women who fought against that terrorism and to remember the 11 people from Ontario who perished in that building: Dave Barkway, Ken Basnicki, Jane Beatty, Joseph Collison, Arron Dack, Albert Elmarry, Ralph Gerhardt, Bernard Mascarenhas, Colin McArthur, Donald Robson and Vladimir Tomasevic.

Those 11 individuals from Ontario were serving. They had gone in that morning to work, expecting it to be just another day. Their lives were destroyed, their families' lives were destroyed—and it was such a selfish act. A selfish terrorist act. The first responders ran into that building, when the elevators weren't on, because they had to shut them down because of the fires, and they ran up the stairs, and many of them didn't return. What this day will do is it will set aside a day where not only will we remember that terrorist act and those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for it, but we will honour all of our first responders—because there are things that they do that we don't have to. It's been said many times: when people are running away from the danger, they are running into it.

I want to touch on two friends of mine who are first responders in Peterborough and how they just react, because that's what they do. The one in particular—there was an attack in Peterborough. A young gentleman, high on magic mushrooms, and who had also done acid, broke into his parents' house, stabbed and killed his father and stabbed his father's girlfriend in the neck. The police arrived very quickly afterwards. This one officer, a friend of mine, shoved two fingers into the hole in her jugular to keep her from bleeding out. I don't know that I would have the wherewithal to do that to save that person's life, but he saved that person's life.

Another police officer friend of mine, responding to somebody who was high, who had threatened people, ended up having an SIU investigation because he shot this individual after the individual stabbed him twice. He stepped in front of another person who this individual was trying to stab and took the knife in him, because he was thinking more of that innocent person than he was of his own well-being.

The third officer friend of mine, this past—actually, it was a year and a half ago now—was responding to something that seemed like it was routine, and she was stabbed in the back by this individual.

They put their lives on the line. They go in every single day, knowing that something could happen that they have to respond to, knowing that they're putting themselves in a position where they may not be able to come home to their loved ones.

What this day of service will do is give us an opportunity so that we can share with everyone what these officers have done, what these first responders have done, what these members of the service, the armed forces, have done for us, the selfless acts that they do.

September 11, 2001, is almost 21 years ago. There's an entire generation of kids growing up who have gone through school, who don't know the story, who didn't live through it, who didn't see it. It's just another date. What this bill will do, if passed, is set aside that day as a day to remember what all of those first responders have done, what those service members have done; to remember the war in Afghanistan, where over 2,000 Canadian soldiers were injured and 159 soldiers actually were killed, one of them in particular from my riding, Nick Bulger. He was killed by an improvised explosive device on the roadside on July 3, 2009.

The reason I bring him up, and I brought up the point that we've got kids in school who wouldn't have known anything about it: Nick had two daughters, Brooklyn and Elizabeth. Brooklyn was four and Elizabeth was two at the time of their father's death. Neither of them were alive when September 11 happened. Neither of them would know why their father went to Afghanistan. Neither of them would have any memory of their father. He paid the ultimate price to fight back and push back on terrorism so that we don't have to deal with those things, trying to make the world a safer place.

This bill, if passed, is a very small thing that we can do so that Nick Bulger's memory remains alive, so that those 11 people from Ontario who were in the twin towers and died as a result of that terrorist attack, their memory will stay alive.

I can't thank the member for Whitby enough for the effort he put in on this, for the research that he did and for the strong advocacy that he's put forward to make sure that the memory of all of those people stays with us.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate? Further debate?

Mr. Coe has moved third reading of Bill 51, An Act to proclaim the Provincial Day of Service. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Orders of the day? I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, I think if you seek it, you'll find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The government House leader, Mr. Calandra, is suggesting that if I seek it, I will see the clock at 6. Are we agreed? Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

LIFEJACKETS FOR LIFE ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR LE PORT OBLIGATOIRE DU GILET DE SAUVETAGE PAR LES ENFANTS

Mr. Norman Miller moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 76, An Act to enact the Lifejackets for Life Act, 2022 / Projet de loi 76, Loi édictant la Loi de 2022 sur le port obligatoire du gilet de sauvetage par les enfants.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Pursuant to standing order 101, the member has 12 minutes to make his presentation. I turn to the member from Parry Sound—Muskoka.

Mr. Norman Miller: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about my private member's bill, Bill 76, the Lifejackets for Life Act.

I want to begin by talking about where the idea for this bill came from. My good friend Dan Mulligan is a retired OPP helicopter pilot. On one of our annual canoe trips, he mentioned the impact that searching for missing boaters had had on him, in particular the searches for children. Far too often, he said, the search ended in tragedy. This trauma is compounded by the knowledge that many of these deaths could have been prevented if the deceased had simply been wearing a life jacket. Every single one of these deaths is heartbreaking, but I'm particularly saddened when I hear that a child was killed in a boating accident.

When I tell friends, constituents and even some of my colleagues here in the Legislature about this bill, many are shocked that it's not already the law for children to wear life jackets or personal flotation devices, PFDs, on small vessels. They have a hard time believing that we're not already doing all that we can to protect children from these preventable tragedies.

Accidents are the leading cause of death for children in Canada, and not wearing a life jacket is the number one risk factor for drowning while boating.

In 2021, the Drowning Prevention Research Centre Canada found that 80% of people who died in boating-related accidents between 2008 and 2017 were not wearing a life jacket, and another 5% were not wearing one properly.

According to the 2018 Canadian Drowning Report by the Drowning Prevention Research Centre Canada, 67% of children aged five to 14 who died from drowning were not wearing a personal flotation device.

Behind each of these statistics is a life lost that leaves a family and community broken.

Cara McNulty is far too familiar with this type of tragedy. Her 11-year-old son Joshua died in September 2018 when the boat he was on with his father, brother and

two other children capsized near Rockport, Ontario. Joshua was not wearing a life jacket. Since then, Cara has been advocating for governments to make wearing a life jacket mandatory for children in small vessels through her initiative Life Jackets for Life. So far, more than 10,000 people have signed her petition. She said about Bill 76, "We're thrilled to hear about this bill. Any progress on mandatory wear legislation is a step in the right direction." I'd like to thank Cara for her advocacy, for her support of this legislation, and for lending me the name of this bill, Lifejackets for Life Act.

The Parry Sound–Muskoka area chair of the Lifesaving Society, Meghan Kirk-Steele, said, "I believe it's a great idea to ensure that children under 12 must wear a PFD when on a boat. We consistently teach all our swimmers to make sure they are all wearing a PFD by the time they get on the dock. Our hope in teaching the children is that they bring it back to their parents so that everyone wears a PFD. Education is the first step to prevention; the more we educate, the more we will see a decline in drownings."

A local organization in my riding, Parry Sound–Muskoka Safe Quiet Lakes, has been surveying people about water safety issues for many years. They have seen a sharp increase in recent years in the number of people willing to support mandatory PFD regulations. The board of Safe Quiet Lakes recently passed a resolution supporting mandatory life jackets for children 12 and under.

Greg Wilkinson, a former board member of Safe Quiet Lakes, said, "The fact that 87% of drownings in Ontario involve people who were not wearing life jackets tells us all we need to know."

Another local organization in my riding, the Georgian Bay Association, gave their "strong support for the passage of this bill."

Pamela Fuselli, the president and CEO of Parachute Canada, said, "Evidence shows that legislation, and the enforcement of legislation, is an effective approach to prevention." Parachute's *The Cost of Injury in Canada 2021* report showed that drowning was the third-leading cause of death in children aged 14 and younger.

The Lake of Bays Association gave their support for this legislation, saying, "The Lake of Bays Association supports private member's Bill 76, the Lifejackets for Life Act, which would require all children aged 12 and under to wear a life jacket while on a small pleasure craft in Ontario. We commend MPP Norm Miller for his work on this bill, which will help prevent injury and death to our most vulnerable water lovers."

Dr. Suzanne Beno, a pediatric emergency physician at SickKids and chair of the Canadian Paediatric Society's injury prevention committee, also lent her support for this bill, saying, "Life jackets are proven tools for saving lives. Age- and size-appropriate government-approved life jackets should be worn by anyone on a pleasure boat, regardless of age, but are particularly vital for children and non-swimmers."

The Ottawa Drowning Prevention Coalition says online that "drowning is one of the leading causes of injury-

related incidents for Canadian children under the age of five.... Many drowning victims never intended to get wet in the first place. Children under five are especially at risk because they are mobile, very curious and the least capable to self-rescue of any age group."

I'd now like to talk about the bill itself, explain some of the details and describe how this bill will protect children from accidental drowning while boating. If passed, Bill 76 would make it mandatory for any child aged 12 years or younger to wear a life jacket or PFD while on a pleasure boat nine metres in length or less that is under way, or while being towed behind a boat: for example, water-skiing, wakeboarding or tubing. A pleasure boat is defined as any vessel used or designed to be used in navigating water, propelled by any kind of power, including human power, sail or motorized power, that is used exclusively for pleasure.

The federal rules that lay out what safety equipment is required on boats are based on the length of the boat, and there are different requirements for boats of six metres, six to nine metres, and nine to 12 metres etc. I chose to have this legislation apply to boats nine metres or less because this would cover most runabouts and water-skiing/wakeboarding boats. Personally, as the owner of a 24-foot or 7.3-metre boat that would fall under this requirement, I believe that vessels of this size should be included in the legislation. I know that even on boats of this size, accidents can happen, and despite the operator's best efforts. I simply could not imagine taking my grandchildren out on this boat without wearing a life jacket.

Under Bill 76, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that their child is wearing a PFD or life jacket. If the child is under the supervision of another person 18 years of age or older who is not their parent, then that person is responsible for ensuring the child wears a life jacket. Failing to ensure that child is wearing a life jacket or PFD would result in a fine of no more than \$200 on conviction.

This responsibility is consistent with other provincial safety legislation. For example, the laws surrounding the use of seat belts in cars make it the responsibility of the driver to ensure that all passengers under the age of 16 are wearing seat belts, and the law requiring young cyclists to wear a bike helmet puts the responsibility on the child's parent.

The proposed bill allows for an exception for children in an enclosed cabin, where there is no danger of falling overboard. I have also included a clause to give the government, through the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the ability to create exemptions. I did this because life jackets can interfere with some activities. Life jackets and PFDs have come a long way, but for athletes involved in competitive paddling or rowing, life jackets could get in the way. So, if the bill passes, I would encourage the government to work with groups like Row Ontario to create an exemption for young athletes involved in formal, supervised training or competition.

I mentioned the federal rules around boat safety. Some people might question whether this bill is within provincial jurisdiction. To that I would say that protecting the health and safety of our children is the responsibility of all levels of government. I would also point out the city of Calgary's water safety bylaw, which requires any person in a vessel or other device used as a means of water transportation to wear a life jacket while they are within the boundaries of the city. When this bylaw was challenged based on the idea that waterways fall under federal jurisdiction, Judge Judith Shriar ruled that the bylaw was constitutional.

Looking beyond our borders, this legislation is extremely similar to laws that have been enacted by our neighbours in the United States. In fact, in New Hampshire, the only state in the United States with no laws requiring a driver to wear a seat belt, where you can legally ride a motorcycle without a helmet and where the state's motto is "Live Free or Die," children aged 12 or younger must wear a life jacket in a boat while under way.

All 50 states have laws mandating life jacket use for children, and at least 30 of these states specifically require children aged 12 and under to wear a life jacket while in small recreational vessels. This includes California, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming, among others.

In Ontario, this law could be put in place with no additional cost to boaters. It is already required under the small vessel regulations that boat operators ensure that there is an appropriately sized life jacket or PFD for every passenger. No law-abiding boater should have to go out and purchase additional life jackets. The only difference is that instead of being stored somewhere on board, the child's life jacket is already on their body and that could make all the difference in the world. In an emergency, there is not always time to grab a life jacket and put it on properly, and this is especially true of children.

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As the president and CEO of the Canada Safety Council said, "Too frequently, we see people drown without intending on even dipping their toe in the water, and these types of tragedies are entirely avoidable." If you're in a boat and accidentally fall into the water, there's not always time to locate the life jacket you have on board and put it on. Between 2008 and 2017, 34% of the people known to have not been wearing a PFD when they drowned had one present in the boat, but were unable to put it on at the time of the incident.

At the heart of this bill is children's safety. I love boating on the waters of Parry Sound–Muskoka, and it brings me great joy to share this love with my grandkids. When I do this, it is my responsibility to keep them safe.

Parents, guardians and all adults are responsible for protecting the health and safety of children. This bill, if passed, would clarify that ensuring children in their care wear a life jacket or a PFD while on a small pleasure boat is part of that responsibility. This bill won't prevent all

drownings, but I see this as a common-sense law that would reduce the chances of children drowning in boating accidents.

Every child we lose because they were not wearing a life jacket is a tragic and preventable loss of life. It permanently scars parents, families and communities, and it has a terrible impact on our first responders. That is why I'm asking my fellow members to protect children from avoidable harm by supporting Bill 76, the Lifejackets for Life Act.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I know we have a number of speakers who want to speak to this, so I'm not going to take too much time, other than to say that common sense—you would hope that parents and those people in charge of children would actually do what is being proposed in this bill as a matter of course. It's the responsible thing to do. As an adult, when you're in charge of children who are in your care, you should make sure that they're safe; and one of the ways you do that is to make sure they have a valid life jacket on that would, should the occasion arise, allow them to survive being thrown in the lake or river or whatever it might be as a result of whatever incident caused that. So obviously, we're going to support it.

I want to take a couple of minutes to tell a bit of a personal story about what happened to my dad. My dad drowned. He drowned right in front of the cottage—somewhere that he would go to on a regular basis for 40 years. He would get in his boat and he'd go fishing.

You met my dad. I know that Mr. Miller, the member from Parry Sound, knew my dad quite well. The story is, he was wearing a life jacket, but my dad had a life jacket that I used to wear as a child. My dad died when I was in my forties, probably, if not my fifties. My dad had these life jackets that were bought in the early 1960s and decided that they were good enough: "I don't need to buy another life jacket because I've got these life jackets. They're perfectly good. I bought them and I paid good money for them." I used to say, "Dad, you've got to replace those life jackets. If you ever fall in, it will never keep you up." Sure as heck, one day, he gets in his boat—there's a whole other story to this, but I don't have enough time to get into it. He has a great supper. My mother made probably the best spaghetti sauce ever, and whenever she made that spaghetti sauce, everybody would go running over.

But the point is, he got in his boat and he went out in the front of the lake—I'd say about 600 yards, where we go fishing in front of the cottage—and he sits in his boat. He had one of those folding chairs, those lawn chairs he used to sit on in the boat. I used to say, "Dad, what are you doing? You can't stand straight. You have a problem. You're always sort of doing one of those."

Sure as heck, he gets a bite. The neighbour next door saw him. He got a bite, he stood up in his boat in order to wind in the fish, fell into the lake and drowned, because the life jacket was not sufficient to keep him afloat. My neighbour a couple of doors down, Darcy, jumped on his

pontoon boat and was out there as quick as he could be, but 700 yards, 800 yards from his cottage, there was no way he was going to get to him before it was time.

I think one of the things that we have to remember is, if you have a life jacket, you need to make sure that it's current, that it's a proper life jacket for your weight. Don't put a little life jacket on a child if it's not able to hold them up. If you've got a child who's 10 or 11 years old, you've got to make sure that that life jacket is going to be sufficient for that child to be able to survive. I would argue the same for adults.

Let's be wise. Let's make sure that people do the right thing. When it comes to staying safe, please keep a life jacket that will keep you afloat. Don't let happen to you what happened to my dad.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I want to thank the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka for bringing this initiative forward. One of the comments I'll make is, why didn't I think of this? Norm is always a step ahead of me.

I've had the pleasure of having Dan Mulligan and Norm at my house to watch a hockey game at one time, so I can certainly appreciate Dan's influence on Norm in this regard.

Earlier today we had Bill 51, on which so much time—properly so—was focused on talking about the tremendous and terrible loss of life. Now we have a bill, Bill 76, brought forward by my friend Mr. Miller, that gives us an opportunity to do something that will absolutely save lives—absolutely save the lives of our most vulnerable children in boating circumstances.

I don't know how many people have walked through cemeteries much. I happen to live beside one, so I've spent a lot of time—I'll probably spend more time when my time comes, but as of now, I've spent a lot of time in cemeteries. I've always taken our kids and our grandkids, because there's great education in a cemetery. If you look at the stones in cemeteries, oftentimes, the stones of the old days will say so and so died in 1926, drowned, aged 12 years, aged seven years, aged six years. We lost so many children to drowning at a time when—it wasn't necessarily boating; it was a result of the fact that they didn't know how to swim, possibly.

My grandfather was an undertaker. I have his ledger that records the cause of death for everybody—he was an undertaker from 1910s to the 1950s—and so many children died from drowning. It was probably, other than infant mortality from something else, one of the most common causes.

We have an opportunity here today to pass a bill that will substantially reduce the odds of anybody's child dying from drowning. It's 12 years or younger, nine metres or shorter in a boat—some really, really good parameters. I want to thank Norm for that and also for bringing in the potential for reasonable exemptions, such as competitive operation of a kayak, racing, rowing, that type of thing. We don't want to lose the opportunity for our premier athletes to be exactly that: premier athletes.

When we talk about why this hasn't happened before, it is really actually surprising. I was a canoe ranger in Algonquin Park. Canoe ranger: That was my job. We spent the whole summer there. I never had a life jacket on. I always had one but never put it on. I think about it now and I say, "John, what were you thinking?" Now, I'm older and hopefully, in some ways, I've gotten wiser, and I ask myself, "How could you do that?" I spent the whole summer paddling around in a canoe and never had a life jacket on. But we do learn, and we've learned from all of the tragedies that have befallen us.

So I want to thank Norm. A great example: All 50 states have something that either mirrors this or, if it's not legislation, the Coast Guard themselves have a regulation in place.

We have an opportunity here today that I think will go down as some point in history. I also want to thank Norm for bringing this history, because this will be my last opportunity, I know, to speak to a private member's bill brought forth by my friend Norm Miller from Parry Sound–Muskoka. It's a great way for Norm's last private member's bill to really do something that will impact us all for generations to come. Thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Ian Arthur: I'd like to thank the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka for bringing this bill forward. To echo the response outlined by the member opposite, this was one of the times when I heard a piece of legislation being introduced into this House and I wondered how this could not already be law. That's not a critique of anyone in this room or even those who came before us, but more an instance where you're glad to see something like this corrected going forward.

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I know everyone here has heard me say this before, but I grew up in the country, and being on and around water was a huge part of my life. I spent tons of time as a kid outdoors, canoeing, kayaking, powerboating occasionally, on all the wonderful waterways that we have in south-eastern Ontario. My parents, among many others—Scout leaders, swimming instructors and lots of other folks—always instilled in me a respect for the water and the critical importance of water safety. Whether it was teaching us how to swim as early as possible, teaching us to keep our distance from the water when parents or adults weren't around, and of course wearing life jackets when we were on the water, be it in tubes, in canoes, whatever it was—out fishing. It was perhaps my parents' inflexible insistence on the life jackets when we were in the boats that led me to believe that this was already the law, at this point, in the Legislature. Their insistence had reason behind it. It was like sunscreen, or bike helmets, seat belts, car seats. The benefits of life jackets are irrefutable.

There are a couple of stats I want to talk about. They're a bit old, but I'm sure they have not changed—although I do hope this bill is going to change many of them. In 2016 and 2017, there were 54 boating fatalities in Ontario. According to the OPP, life jackets could have been the

difference in 42 of those drownings. Either they weren't wearing life jackets or they weren't wearing them properly. That's 78%, Speaker. Nearly four out of five of those deaths would have been preventable with an appropriate life jacket on the person who tragically died.

As an adult, I still continue to spend a lot of time on the water, both recreationally and as a coach for the Queen's rowing team—although I haven't been able to do that for a few years. Water safety is always paramount, but it's easy to forget that that was not always the case for everyone else around you. It's something I grew up with, it's something that is second nature, but for so many in this beautiful province, it's not that.

This brings me to my next point: I think this bill is particularly timely due to the pandemic and COVID and the kind of unexpected effects that the lockdowns and the changes that we have seen over the last two years have had on us. Children have missed, over the last two years, all of the swimming lessons that they would normally go into. That's two full years, and so the consequences are only really being realized now. The Lifesaving Society reported preliminary research—this is still preliminary—that indicated a 13% increase in drownings in 2020, and directly related this to the cancellation of swimming lessons in communities and schools. So it's a particularly timely bill for the member to bring forward, both for COVID and other reasons.

I want to touch on one last point here, before I conclude my remarks, and that is that newcomers are five times more likely to say they can't swim, even though 93% of them also say that they participate in activities in or around the water. This, again, is from 2016, but I expect because of the pandemic this would have only become worse.

So these are just a few of the reasons that this bill is both timely and needed. A life jacket is the difference between a recovery and a rescue. No parent wants to be part of the former. This bill will help ensure that when accidents do happen, the consequences are not, quite so often, dire. I want to thank the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka for bringing this forward. We look forward to supporting it. It's timely and needed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's truly a pleasure here to speak today in support of my colleague from Parry Sound–Muskoka's bill. He was elected in 2001, and here it is in 2022. As my colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke said, it's truly an honour to speak to perhaps the last piece of legislation he'll pass. I'll note that he's wearing the Royal Stuart tartan, which his father also wore in this House many times while debating legislation and also a budget or two. He has followed his dad, the former Premier, Frank Miller, into this House to help people in our great province.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation does it again, and I'm going to digress just for a minute because, if not, I'll run out of time. But my colleague and friend the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke talked a little bit about cemeteries. I just want to get on record, Mr. Speaker,

that I hope it's a long time. I hope he can walk that cemetery for another 100 years. But he's a bit of a theatrical fellow. He considers himself a singer. I didn't get the whole undertakers thing, but if you really look at him, I think he might have missed another calling. Maybe there was a hope there: Yak the undertaker.

But at the end of the day, when he said—and he said it, I think, with great reverence—this is a piece of legislation, which is why MPP Miller has brought it to this House, to save lives; that can be preventable, Mr. Speaker. How many people have got the example where those life jackets were under the seat of the boat, or they were in the cabin of the boat, or they were over there. You don't get that extra 25 seconds when something happens in a tragedy to be able to do that, Mr. Speaker.

And I stand here with a bit of self-confession, because I'm a bit of a boat anchor, frankly. I'm a non-swimmer. One of the first things my wife, Michaela, and I did when we had our boys, Zach and Ben—I let them do pretty much whatever they want, because that's who you're supposed to be as a parent: Let them learn and grow. But I was adamant that they had to take swimming lessons. I didn't care if they played hockey, I didn't care if they went into figure skating; I didn't care, really, what they did, but they had to take swimming lessons. Part of that was that I've almost drowned three times. In fact, in the armed forces, I almost drowned with a life jacket on, and that's not a proud thing to say—and that was in a pool, Mr. Speaker, not out in the middle of a lake, where you could have all these other things. So, to me, it was absolutely critical.

When I saw Norm doing this, I was like MPP Yaka-buski, saying, "Why didn't I think of this?" This is such a profound but simple piece of legislation that is going to have such impact for the rest of people's lives—the preventable death of a child. And I want to acknowledge, as MPP Miller did, Cara McNulty, founder of Lifejackets for Life, who, obviously, had the saddest happen to her: "We're thrilled to hear about this bill! Any progress on mandatory wear legislation is a step in the right direction."

Mr. Speaker, we know that you have to have the life jacket, but how simplistic is it that you don't have to wear it? And if people won't do that, then that's the time sometimes that we have to put legislation in place to say, "We'll do that because it's the right thing to do." We'll prevent deaths. We'll make sure that those tombstones don't have any more or the undertaker's record doesn't have any more "death by drowning" when a person didn't wear—particularly a child—a life jacket.

At the end of the day, I am hugely honoured to be here to support such a, I think, fabulous piece of legislation. Norm, it's a tribute to what you've done your whole career here. You have always looked for things to help people. I know it's why you and your father got into public service. I've been honoured to serve with you, I'm honoured to support this and I certainly hope everyone in the House will do it. And thank you, at the end of the day, for saving lives. Thank you, Norm.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm also a person who thought that was the law before, until he introduced that law.

Let me explain: When I was going to university, I worked for a national park. I used to bring American tourists on canoe trips. It was the regulations of the national park that everybody wears a life jacket. When we would take kids on canoe trips, then it was that they had to wear them all the time, even if they were in the rescue boat or whatever. So I always thought that was the law.

I now live on a lake. We have three kids, seven grandkids. I told every one of them, "It is the law. You have to wear your life jacket," and they all did. I go even further than this. If they don't know how to swim, they're not allowed to come out of the car without me putting a life jacket on them. They keep the life jacket through the whole visit to Grandma, because if they ever go close to the water, I don't have to go out of my mind. And it works—it works.

You all know that I'm also a health care worker. Drowning has been the second or third cause of death in children, forever. We have an opportunity right here, right now, to change this. Every summer, children drown because they're not wearing a life jacket, and we have an opportunity to change this.

My other story is that my husband bought this jet boat. This thing has two motors. You can have one go forward, backward. It turns on a dime. It does all sorts of stuff. We have visitors at our house, so he wants to show off his new boat. Of course, everybody has to put a life jacket on, because France thinks that it's the law that everybody has to wear a life jacket.

France is sitting in the bow. My husband shows them all, "Look, this thing turns on a dime," and it ejected me out of the—no. First he says, "Hold on tight because I'm going to show them." So I'm holding on tight. I'm sitting in the bow of the boat, and this thing turns on a dime and ejects me right out of the boat. I'm now still holding onto something, but I'm underwater, and I'm thinking, "What the heck just happened?" But I had a life jacket on, so I popped up to the front—everybody in the boat was saying "Ah." Everybody went home really quickly. My husband and I put the boat up for sale. We do not have this jet boat anymore. Nobody will be ejected out of the boat anymore.

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I am also a competitive rower. I appreciate the fact that there will be exceptions for rowers. But I must tell you that whenever we train, even if we have a rescue boat with us, we all wear a special life jacket made for rowers. The only time that we should be excluded from wearing a life jacket is when we compete. During the competition, there is always a lifeboat that follows us and we could be exempt from wearing a life jacket. The rest of the time, when kids train and adults train, we should always wear a life jacket.

I will take the last few minutes to say a huge thank you to the member from Parry Sound—Muskoka, the MPP who represents just south of my riding—I'm always a little bit confused where my riding ends and yours starts, but we make it work—for bringing very meaningful pieces of legislation forward. I know for a fact that this bill will save

lives. It will protect children. It will avoid real tragedy for many families. Losing a child destroys a family. We don't want anybody to ever have to go through this.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. Dave Smith: I want to thank the member for Parry Sound—Muskoka, as well, for this bill. It has been said here a number of times already—I didn't realize that this wasn't the law. When he approached me about it and asked if I would be willing to speak on behalf of it, I'm sure he was thinking, "MPP Smith, you're in Peterborough—Kawartha. You've got more than 100 lakes in the Kawarthas. It's a great thing for you to do."

Interjection.

Mr. Dave Smith: Yes, there are swamps. If you ever come into God's country, we've got two things: We've got drumlins and swamps. There's lots of swampland.

I didn't grow up in Peterborough. I actually grew up in Wellington, Prince Edward county. Being around the water, being involved in boating is something I've done my entire life.

Just to put into perspective what boating has been for me, when I passed kindergarten, the present I got from my father—

Interjection.

Mr. Dave Smith: It was the best seven years of my life.

When I passed kindergarten, the gift I got from my father was a 14-foot cedar punt. From age five on, I've had a boat; I don't have one at the moment. I never realized that you didn't have to have your life jacket on. I always had the life jacket in it.

The first boat I remember of my father's was a 16-foot Sunfish with a 35-horse. I remember this one, really, because my mother's birthday is June 10—and Dad had always wanted to upgrade the motor to a 50-horse from a 35-horse. We were leaving church one Sunday afternoon, and my father pulled up in his red pickup and said to Mum, "I have your birthday present in the back." It was June 10. He pulled down the tailgate and there was a 50-horse Merc that he bought for her birthday for his boat.

When we were boating, though, all of the life jackets were either shoved up in the cubby underneath or under the seats. I never thought about it.

When I was water skiing, Dad was always adamant that we had to have the ski belt on—just a foam belt that wrapped around your waist because it would help you float while he was getting ready to take off to pull you up. It wasn't that it would save you if you fell; it helped you float at the waist so that you could get out of the water easier when you were learning how to ski.

The only time I wore a life jacket as a kid was when it was cold. You put the life jacket on so that you weren't cold while you were going to wherever you were going fishing. I just can't imagine why we've never done this. Why is it in 2022 that this is being introduced? How come nobody ever thought of this before? This really should be a no-brainer.

The member from Kingston and the Islands talked about how 84% of the deaths from drowning could have

been avoided. My uncle is an OPP officer. He served on the marine unit, and the one thing he said to me that has always stuck out in my mind is that most of the time, when you pull somebody out of the water and they've drowned, their zipper is undone. If you were wearing a life jacket and you fell out while you were standing there taking a leak, you would've lived. It's really simple things like that that make a big, big difference.

So I thank the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka for bringing this bill forward, because this is something that actually will have a legacy, that will mean something. We can't measure the number of people who are not going to die, but we know there will be people who will live when they fall in the water because as a kid they were forced to wear a life jacket, and then as an adult they will continue wearing it. There was pushback on seat belts when they first came out; all of us wear seat belts as a result of it. This is the same type of thing. As you start as a kid wearing a life jacket, you'll wear it for the rest of your life.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The member for Parry Sound–Muskoka has two minutes to respond.

Mr. Norman Miller: Let me begin by thanking my OLIP interns, who have been working on this. I'm lucky enough to have two interns this year. Clare Simon, who is my current intern, wrote that speech—I was doing a bit of speed-reading to get through it, but an excellent job with the speech—and Melody Greaves did most of the research on this bill. Thank you to both of them for doing a great job.

As well, I'd like to thank Cara McNulty, who gave us the name for the bill, the Lifejackets for Life Act. She was also very kind and sent over doughnuts to my office this afternoon, some of which are in the side room for those who want to eat them, so thanks, Cara. And my good friend Dan Mulligan was the one who brought up the idea of this bill and was fairly persuasive that this is something that needed to be done, from the perspective of an OPP helicopter pilot.

But I also want to thank all of the members who spoke. You brought up some good points, the members from Timmins, Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, Kingston and

the Islands, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Peterborough–Kawartha and Nickel Belt. I like your rules for your grandkids. I grew up around a lake, and having been rescued a few times before, at a young age when I couldn't swim, it then became that I had to wear a life jacket all the time, no matter what, for when I happened to walk off a dock etc. Anyway, I really appreciate your support.

I did have the opportunity to take the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound flying in a seaplane this year. I had a life jacket on him, and only after the flight he tells me that he can't swim. He should've warned me about that before the flight, but he did have a life jacket on for that seaplane flight.

Anyway, thank you all for your comments. I really appreciate it—some good thoughts there. I appreciate your support on this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

Mr. Miller from Parry Sound–Muskoka has moved second reading of Bill 76, An Act to enact the Lifejackets for Life Act, 2022. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Pursuant to standing order 101(h), the bill is referred to the Committee of the Whole House, unless the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka has another preference for a committee. I turn to the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Mr. Norman Miller: Regs and private bills, please.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The member from Parry Sound–Muskoka wants to refer it to regulations and private bills. Is the majority in favour of the bill being referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills? Agreed? Therefore, the bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, this House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow, February 23, 2022.

The House adjourned at 1750.

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Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Arthur, Ian (NDP)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Baber, Roman (IND)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Legislative Affairs / Ministre des Affaires législatives Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	Associate Minister of Transportation (GTA) / Ministre associé des Transports (RGT)
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	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)	Milton	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiles et du Multiculturalisme
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
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	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hillier, Randy (IND)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Solicitor General / Solliciteure générale
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda C. (NBP)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutla (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	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries / ministre des Industries du patrimoine, du sport, du tourisme et de la culture
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, Hon. / L'hon. Jane (PC)	Burlington	Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues / Ministre associée déléguée au dossier de l'Enfance et à la Condition féminine
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (IND)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (IND)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	Associate Minister of Digital Government / Ministre associé délégué de l'Action pour un gouvernement numérique
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines, des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Hon. / L'hon. Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (LIB)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurattan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction / Ministre associée déléguée aux Petites Entreprises et à la Réduction des formalités administratives
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	
Vacant	Ajax / Ajax	
Vacant	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Randy Pettapiece
Teresa J. Armstrong, Toby Barrett
Lorne Coe, Rudy Cuzzetto
Goldie Ghamari, Randy Hillier
Christina Maria Mitas, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Michael Parsa, Randy Pettapiece
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Ian Arthur
Ian Arthur, Will Bouma
Stephen Crawford, Catherine Fife
Ernie Hardeman, Mitzie Hunter
Logan Kanapathi, Sol Mamakwa
Jeremy Roberts, Dave Smith
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Michael Bushara

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Logan Kanapathi
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Mike Schreiner
Jill Andrew, Robert Bailey
Will Bouma, Guy Bourgouin
Chris Glover, Mike Harris
Logan Kanapathi, Sheref Sabawy
Amarjot Sandhu, Mike Schreiner
Daisy Wai
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Gilles Bisson
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian
Deepak Anand, Aris Babikian
Gilles Bisson, Lorne Coe
Wayne Gates, Robin Martin
Norman Miller, Billy Pang
Amanda Simard, Marit Stiles
John Yakabuski
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tanzima Khan

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Daryl Kramp
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lucille Collard
Lucille Collard, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Natalia Kusendova
Jim McDonell, Suze Morrison
Randy Pettapiece, Gurratan Singh
Donna Skelly, Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Kevin Yarde
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Présidente: Laurie Scott
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: France Gélinas
Rima Berns-McGown, France Gélinas
Goldie Ghamari, Faisal Hassan
Jim McDonell, Sam Oosterhoff
Laurie Scott, Vijay Thanigasalam
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tanzima Khan

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Taras Natyshak
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Christine Hogarth
Deepak Anand, Toby Barrett
Jessica Bell, Stephen Blais
Stephen Crawford, Rudy Cuzzetto
Christine Hogarth, Michael Mantha
Taras Natyshak, Michael Parsa
Amarjot Sandhu
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Aris Babikian
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Fraser
Aris Babikian, Lorne Coe
John Fraser, Vincent Ke
Laura Mae Lindo, Paul Miller
Billy Pang, Jeremy Roberts
Dave Smith, Daisy Wai
Jamie West
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Présidente: Natalia Kusendova
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Bhutila Karpoche
Aris Babikian, Jeff Burch
Amy Fee, Michael Gravelle
Joel Harden, Mike Harris
Bhutila Karpoche, Natalia Kusendova
Robin Martin, Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Vanessa Kattar

**Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight /
Comité spécial de la surveillance de la gestion des situations
d'urgence**

Chair / Président: Daryl Kramp
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Tom Rakocevic
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
John Fraser, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Robin Martin
Sam Oosterhoff, Tom Rakocevic
Donna Skelly, Sara Singh
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell