

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

No. 21A

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

N° 21A

1st Session
44th Parliament

Tuesday
3 June 2025

1^{re} session
44^e législature

Mardi
3 juin 2025

Speaker: Honourable Donna Skelly
Clerk: Trevor Day

Présidente : L'honorable Donna Skelly
Greffier : Trevor Day

Hansard on the Internet

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

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

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

<https://www.ola.org/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7400.

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7400.

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
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
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

ISSN 1180-2987

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 3 June 2025 / Mardi 3 juin 2025

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Safer Municipalities Act, 2025, Bill 6, Mr. Flack / Loi de 2025 pour des municipalités plus sûres, projet de loi 6, M. Flack

Hon. Rob Flack	1195
MPP Robin Lennox	1196
Mr. Ted Hsu	1197
Ms. Jessica Bell	1197
Ms. Lee Fairclough	1198
Ms. Aislinn Clancy	1198
Mrs. Karen McCrimmon	1199
Mr. Adil Shamji	1199
Third reading vote deferred	1199

Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025, Bill 17, Mr. Flack / Loi de 2025 pour protéger l'Ontario en construisant plus rapidement et plus efficacement, projet de loi 17, M. Flack

Hon. Rob Flack	1200
MPP Catherine McKenney	1201
Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon	1202
Ms. Aislinn Clancy	1202
MPP Lise Vaugeois	1203
MPP Stephanie Smyth	1203
Mr. Adil Shamji	1203
Third reading vote deferred	1204

Wearing of pins

Mr. Anthony Leardi	1204
--------------------------	------

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉES ET DÉPUTÉS

Long-term care

Mr. Anthony Leardi	1204
--------------------------	------

Health care funding

Mr. Jeff Burch	1204
----------------------	------

ALS Awareness Month

MPP Tyler Watt	1205
----------------------	------

African Caribbean Council of Halton

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos	1205
--------------------------------------	------

Children's mental health services

Ms. Catherine Fife	1205
--------------------------	------

Événements divers à Glengarry–Prescott–Russell

M. Stéphane Sarrazin	1205
----------------------------	------

Government's record

Mr. John Vanthof	1206
------------------------	------

Baycrest Bike for Brain Health

Mrs. Michelle Cooper	1206
----------------------------	------

Victim Services Awards of Distinction

Mr. Lorne Coe	1206
---------------------	------

Nathan Skoufis

Mr. Mike Schreiner	1206
--------------------------	------

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEUSES ET VISITEURS

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy	1207
Ms. Chandra Pasma	1207
Hon. Graydon Smith	1207
Hon. Stan Cho	1207
Ms. Catherine Fife	1207
MPP Tyler Watt	1207
Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady	1207
Hon. Jill Dunlop	1207
Mr. Terence Kernaghan	1207
M. Guy Bourgouin	1207
Ms. Stephanie Bowman	1207
Hon. Sylvia Jones	1207
Mr. Sol Mamakwa	1207
Mr. Stephen Blais	1207
Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria	1207
Hon. Todd J. McCarthy	1207
Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy	1207
Hon. Vijay Thanigasalam	1207
Mr. Logan Kanapathi	1207

QUESTION PERIOD / PÉRIODE DE QUESTIONS

Government accountability

Ms. Marit Stiles	1208
Hon. Victor Fedeli	1208

Government accountability

Mr. Sol Mamakwa	1208
Hon. Greg Rickford	1208

First Nations consultation

Mr. John Fraser	1209
Hon. Victor Fedeli	1209

Government accountability

Mr. John Fraser	1210
Hon. Victor Fedeli	1210
Hon. Stephen Lecce	1210
Mr. Ted Hsu	1211

Government accountability	
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	1211
Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria	1211
Affaires francophones	
Mme Lucille Collard.....	1211
L'hon. Caroline Mulroney	1212
Hon. Stan Cho.....	1212
Highway tolls	
Mr. Lorne Coe.....	1212
Mr. Ric Bresee	1212
Endangered species	
Ms. Sandy Shaw.....	1213
Hon. Todd J. McCarthy.....	1213
Hon. Greg Rickford.....	1213
Protection of privacy	
Ms. Lee Fairclough.....	1213
Hon. Sylvia Jones.....	1213
Government accountability	
Mr. Mike Schreiner.....	1214
Hon. Greg Rickford.....	1214
Hon. Victor Fedeli.....	1214
Indigenous economic development	
MPP Paul Vickers	1214
Hon. Greg Rickford.....	1215
Government accountability	
Mr. Chris Glover.....	1215
Hon. Victor Fedeli.....	1215
Hon. Stephen Lecce	1215
Government accountability	
MPP Stephanie Smyth	1216
Hon. Victor Fedeli.....	1216
Rural Ontario	
Mr. John Jordan.....	1216
Hon. Lisa M. Thompson	1216
Notice of dissatisfaction	
The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly).....	1217

DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

Time allocation	
Motion agreed to	1217
Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025, Bill 24, Mr. Bethlenfalvy / Loi de 2025 sur le plan pour protéger l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires), projet de loi 24, M. Bethlenfalvy	
Third reading agreed to	1218
More Convenient Care Act, 2025, Bill 11, Ms. Jones / Loi de 2025 pour plus de soins commodes, projet de loi 11, Mme Jones	
Third reading agreed to	1218

Protect Ontario Through Free Trade Within Canada Act, 2025, Bill 2, Mr. Fedeli / Loi de 2025 pour protéger l'Ontario en favorisant le libre-échange au Canada, projet de loi 2, M. Fedeli	
Third reading agreed to	1219
Safer Municipalities Act, 2025, Bill 6, Mr. Flack / Loi de 2025 pour des municipalités plus sûres, projet de loi 6, M. Flack	
Third reading agreed to	1219
Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025, Bill 17, Mr. Flack / Loi de 2025 pour protéger l'Ontario en construisant plus rapidement et plus efficacement, projet de loi 17, M. Flack	
Third reading agreed to	1220
Members' birthdays	
Hon. Kevin Holland	1220
Ms. Marit Stiles	1220
Mr. John Fraser	1220
House sittings	
Mr. Steve Clark	1220

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEUSES ET VISITEURS

Mr. Tom Rakocvic.....	1220
Hon. Graham McGregor	1220

INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS / DÉPÔT DE PROJETS DE LOI ÉMANANT DU GOUVERNEMENT

Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act, 2025, Bill 40, Mr. Lecce / Loi de 2025 pour protéger l'Ontario en garantissant l'accès à l'énergie abordable pour les générations futures, projet de loi 40, M. Lecce	
First reading agreed to.....	1221
Hon. Stephen Lecce.....	1221

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

9-1-1 Everywhere in Ontario Act, 2025, Bill 41, Mr. Bourgouin; Mme Gélina; Mr. Vanthof; MPP Vaugeois / Loi de 2025 sur le 9-1-1 partout en Ontario, projet de loi 41, M. Bourgouin; Mme Gélina; M. Vanthof; MPP Vaugeois	
First reading agreed to.....	1221
Mme France Gélina	1221

Justice for Soli Act (Stop Criminalizing Mental Health), 2025, Bill 42, MPP Lennox; Mr. Mamakwa; Mrs. Stevens; MPP Wong-Tam / Loi de 2025 exigeant la justice pour Soli (arrêter la criminalisation des problèmes de santé mentale), projet de loi 42, MPP Lennox; M. Mamakwa; Mme Stevens; MPP Wong-Tam	
First reading agreed to.....	1221
MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam	1221
Consent Awareness Week Act, 2025, Bill 43, MPP Gilmour; Ms. Pasma; Ms. Sattler; MPP Wong-Tam / Loi de 2025 sur la Semaine de sensibilisation au consentement, projet de loi 43, MPP Gilmour; Mme Pasma; Mme Sattler; MPP Wong-Tam	
First reading agreed to.....	1222
Ms. Peggy Sattler	1222
Healthcare Staffing Agencies Act, 2025, Bill 44, Mr. Gates; Mme Gélinas; Mrs. Gretzky; MPP West / Loi de 2025 sur les agences de recrutement de personnel de soins de santé, projet de loi 44, M. Gates; Mme Gélinas; Mme Gretzky; MPP West	
First reading agreed to.....	1222
Mme France Gélinas	1222

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Services for the hearing-impaired	
Ms. Aislinn Clancy	1222
Public transit	
Ms. Marit Stiles.....	1222
Endangered species	
MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam	1222
Social assistance	
Ms. Aislinn Clancy	1223
Education funding	
Ms. Marit Stiles.....	1223
Environmental protection	
Mr. Mike Schreiner	1223
School facilities	
Ms. Marit Stiles.....	1223
Environmental protection	
Ms. Aislinn Clancy	1223
Installations scolaires	
Mme Chandra Pasma	1223

Environmental protection	
Ms. Stephanie Bowman.....	1224
School facilities	
Mr. Mike Schreiner	1224
Consumer protection	
MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam	1224
Endangered species	
Ms. Chandra Pasma.....	1224
International trade	
Mr. Anthony Leardi.....	1225
Social assistance	
Ms. Chandra Pasma.....	1225
Endangered species	
Mme France Gélinas	1225

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act, 2025, Bill 10, Mr. Downey / Loi de 2025 pour protéger l'Ontario en rendant les rues plus sûres et les collectivités plus fortes, projet de loi 10, M. Downey	
Hon. Doug Downey.....	1225
MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam	1226
Mme Lucille Collard	1228
Mr. Mike Schreiner	1228
MPP Monica Ciriello	1229
Mrs. Karen McCrimmon	1230
Third reading vote deferred.....	1231
Notice of dissatisfaction	
The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott).....	1231
Resource Management and Safety Act, 2025, Bill 27, Mr. Harris / Loi de 2025 sur la gestion des ressources et la sécurité, projet de loi 27, M. Harris	
Hon. Mike Harris	1231
Hon. Kevin Holland	1236
Mr. Guy Bourgouin.....	1239
Hon. Greg Rickford.....	1240
Mme France Gélinas	1240
Ms. Aislinn Clancy.....	1240
Hon. Todd J. McCarthy.....	1241
Mr. Guy Bourgouin.....	1241
Second reading debate deemed adjourned	1246

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 3 June 2025

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 3 juin 2025

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Good morning.
Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SAFER MUNICIPALITIES ACT, 2025 LOI DE 2025 POUR DES MUNICIPALITÉS PLUS SÛRES

Mr. Flack moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act, 2025 and to amend the Trespass to Property Act respecting sentencing / Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2025 visant à restreindre la consommation en public de substances illégales et modifiant la Loi sur l'entrée sans autorisation en ce qui concerne le prononcé des peines.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the minister.

Hon. Rob Flack: Good morning.

Speaker, our government has been clear from day one: Enough is enough. We've heard the frustration, we've seen the headlines and we've listened closely to our municipal partners right across this great province. They're all asking for help. They're asking for tools and most importantly, Speaker, they're asking for action.

Families don't feel safe walking through their own neighbourhoods. Local businesses are losing customers and front-line officers say their hands are tied. Frustration abounds, Speaker. This is unacceptable to this government. Parks are for fun, not for fear. Business needs peace in order to thrive. Encampments in public spaces are and continue to be a public safety concern. This is not right. This is not acceptable, and under this government and under our Premier, it is not going to continue.

This is why we are taking action here today. We ran on a clear promise to return public spaces to the public because public parks should be just that: for the public. They should be places for seniors to stroll, for parents to push strollers, for children to play safely, without fear, without barriers and without threats.

Encampments are not a solution to homelessness. Again, I repeat: Encampments are not a solution to homelessness, they are a public safety concern. There is no compassion in letting people remain in these encampments. It merely accepts the unacceptable. And every day we fail to act is another day we fail the people we serve.

Speaker, this issue is not about political correctness. This is about principle. This is about safety. This is all about the rule of law. This is about doing the right thing for the people we serve.

We are acting now because we must, because for far too long, governments have tiptoed around this very issue. For far too long, public officials have allowed public parks to become makeshift camps, unsafe for everyone, especially those living in them.

Let me be clear: It is neither compassionate nor responsible for anyone to live in unsafe, unsanitary and insecure conditions. A tent in a park is not a home. Again: A tent in a park is not a home. It's not shelter and it's not dignity.

That's why our government is bringing forward the Safer Municipalities Act. We are giving law enforcement the tools they've asked for. We're making it clear that public safety matters. And we're putting municipalities back in the driver's seat.

This legislation strengthens the Trespass to Property Act. It empowers local police and municipal law enforcement to take appropriate action. And it ensures that everyone—residents, workers, families—can feel safe in their communities once again. When a mom has to cross a street to avoid a park or when a senior is too scared to sit on a bench or when front-line workers are overwhelmed and under-equipped, something is broken. We're here to fix it.

Let me also be clear: Compassion and enforcement are not mutually exclusive. We're not just clearing encampments. We're creating real pathways from homelessness. This action builds on more than \$75 million in targeted investments—investments in programs that help people transition out of encampments and into stable housing, investments that provide safe, temporary accommodations and long-term solutions. We're connecting vulnerable Ontarians to supports—mental health care, addiction treatment and job programs. Cleaning up a park does not solve homelessness, but ignoring encampments doesn't help anyone either. It is a false choice to suggest that we have to pick between safety and compassion—this government chooses both.

We're also delivering nearly \$550 million to create 28 homelessness and addiction recovery treatment centres, or HART hubs, nine of which were in place by April 1 of this year. These are not band-aid solutions. They are life-changing, wraparound service centres designed to meet people where they're at—housing, detox, rehab, skills training, peer support—all under one roof, all in one place, all in real time. These hubs will help break the cycle. They will reduce the need for encampments. And they will get people the help they need when and where they need it.

That's what Ontarians deserve. That is what the people of this province voted for in February—dignity, stability and safety.

Speaker, every Ontarian deserves to feel safe in their community. That is a basic principle of the communities we all live in, and we're here to uphold it. And we're here to continue to invest in those who need it most. But we also must be fair to those who follow the rules—to those who pay taxes, follow bylaws, raise families and run businesses. Their voices matter. Their safety matters. Their right to enjoy a clean, safe and welcoming community matters.

While we will never stop investing in critical social services, we will also never shy away from enforcing the law. Without order, there is no opportunity. Without safety, there is no dignity. And without action, there is no progress.

This bill is part of a broader vision—a vision for safer streets, safer cities and safer futures.

We are also delivering on our plan to build more homes faster because we know that one of the best tools to prevent homelessness is a front door and a set of keys.

Bill 17, the Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, will help unlock new builds. Bill 17 complements Bill 6 by creating the conditions to build all types of housing, including supportive housing in Ontario. We're cutting red tape. We're supporting municipalities that get shovels in the ground faster and smarter—because housing is part of the solution; so is treatment; so is enforcement. We are moving on all fronts, without apology and without delay.

To the people of Ontario: You have asked for action. You voted for action, we're delivering it. You have asked for safety, we're restoring it. You have asked for hope, we're building it one law, one investment and one life at a time.

Encampments are not compassionate. They are not solutions. And they are not the future of this province. We will not look away and pretend they do not exist. We will protect our parks, protect our neighbourhoods and protect the people who enjoy them day in and day out. Every child deserves a safe place to play. Every parent deserves peace of mind.

I might just pause here, Speaker, to talk about one of the towns in my riding, St. Thomas, who have done an outstanding job of exactly what we're talking about in this bill: removing encampments but providing people dignified, safe, wraparound support in that town.

0910

Let me tell you about Indwell with supportive housing. Let's talk about the INN, where people can come out of acute conditions and be served and be treated fairly with compassionate support, moving on to Indwell—it's worked, Speaker. We've seen it in full glory in St. Thomas, and we continue to thank the St. Thomas Police Service for the job they play in it. The city invested in this—invested in it heavily—and it's paying the dividends.

I would encourage all communities throughout this province, large and small, to follow the example of St.

Thomas, because every child deserves a safe place to play, every parent deserves peace of mind and every community deserves a future they can be proud of.

Let me just conclude again by saying I think this bill is timely. It's needed. The people of this province asked for it. We're delivering it. Most importantly, we're going to see results because of it, not only to keep safer spaces for the people that want to enjoy those parks, but the wraparound services those that need it most can get for sure, day in and day out.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

MPP Robin Lennox: It's a very difficult day when we have a bill like this about to be passed into law. The minister across has said that parks are not housing, and on that, we would fully agree. Parks are not housing, but jails are also not housing. The only form of housing that we should all be seeking is permanent, dignified housing for every single person across this province. Only housing will end the crisis of homelessness that we see in our communities. That is not an impossible goal.

Across the world, across this country and in our communities, we see people fighting every single day to try to help their unhoused neighbours. We see movements forming to try to end homelessness—not just visible homelessness—and it is possible. We can look to our next-door neighbours in Manitoba, where the New Democratic government is actively housing people and ending encampments, not by punishing people, not by criminalizing people, but by offering them a path into supportive housing, which we know works.

We need a government who will lead with vision, with daring, with courage. But all we are hearing from this government and from the minister today is that we are legislating out of fear. You are so scared. You are so scared of people in this province who are living in poverty. You are scared of people in this province who are living outdoors. But you have nothing to fear in them—you should only be fearing for them. They are the people in this province who are most at risk of dying every day, who are most at risk of being the victims of violence themselves. There is nothing to be afraid of. The only thing we should all be terrified of is continued inaction on the part of our leaders on this crisis.

All we are hearing from our minister is that our public spaces are for some, not for all. We agree, again, that parks and encampments are not the solution to the homelessness crisis, but this bill does not contain any solutions. Offering someone a \$10,000 fine or threatening them with six months in jail will not move anyone forward, will not keep anyone safer, will not house one single person and will not offer treatment to a single person struggling with a substance use disorder. All we are hearing is dangerous rhetoric from this government over and over that attempts to turn neighbours against neighbours and make us afraid of each other. The people of Ontario will not fall for it.

The members of the Conservative government may have an empathy deficiency, but the people of Ontario do not. The people of Ontario see a way forward that is hope-

ful, that is solution-oriented, that is effective, that actually saves our system money while putting people in a position in order to thrive. That is what our province, our people, would like to see in their government, and we are not seeing it. Because being unhoused is not a crime, living in poverty is not a crime, and we should not be treating people in those circumstances as if they are criminals. It is not their failures that we should be hearing about; it is the failures of the people in power who are meant to be caretakers over all of us, who are meant to spearhead solutions in our housing sector, who are meant to invest in community health so that everyone can get the mental health supports that they need when they need it. We are the ones that people are turning to for answers and all they are seeing is a government too afraid of the people in its own communities to actually push forward real change.

So while I acknowledge that this bill will likely pass and the government has the votes, I hope that there are some members on the other side who would demand more of themselves and who would strive to actually enact change beyond this legislation that will actually accomplish our shared goals.

Thank you and I would like to share my time with the member.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Mr. Ted Hsu: In Kingston, where Rideau and Railway streets meet Montreal Street, you'll find the Wise Stop and Quattrocchi's grocery store across from what has come to be known as the Integrated Care Hub, the site of low-barrier services for those struggling with addictions, mental health and homelessness.

It's not easy living and working in the area. I've spoken with neighbours who've had to endure property damage, theft and even violence. They bear a great portion of the burden of the community. I agree that people should feel safe and cities should be clean and livable, but Bill 6 is about punishment and penalties and appearing tough on crime. Think about it. Look at the people in the encampments. What kind of a threat is the \$10,000 fine in Bill 6?

Bill 6 won't work. It won't make us safer. The government is ignoring the housing crisis—the lack of modest-priced housing—and the health crisis—the lack of primary care—which has left much of our population in very poor physical and mental health. These are the root causes, and these are not a priority for this government. If you break up an encampment, there has to be a place for people to go to live, but deeply affordable housing is what we lack the most across the housing spectrum.

If the police are going to pick up people for petty crimes, there has to be a place in provincial detention centres and programs there to point people in a better direction. With none of these in place, this government is failing and we will continue to fail. Bill 6 is not a solution. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Ms. Jessica Bell: We've been watching this bill. It was introduced before the election and now it's being intro-

duced and it's very close to being passed in the next few days, maybe today, and it's very concerning. The Conservatives' move to issue \$10,000 fines and up to six months of jail time to clean up and to clamp down on illegal public drug use and encampments is inhumane, it is expensive and it is futile.

Now, I hear the minister talk a lot about hope and action and how parks are not a place for people to live and encampments are not a solution to homelessness. We agree. We agree: No one wants to live in a park. Parks are dangerous. It is miserable. You're exposed to extreme weather and frequent harassment. We all know that that is not a solution. But when we're talking about hope and action, we also need to talk about what is the most effective way to deal with the issues of homelessness and addiction and mental health challenges that we're facing in Ontario. Bill 6 is no solution to any of these issues.

This lock-them-up-and-throw-away-the-key approach might be good political theatre to some of your voters, but it is not going to solve the issues that we're facing in our parks, in our towns, in our cities all across Ontario—it's not. We cannot arrest our way out of a homelessness and an addiction crisis, and a fine is not very effective if the person cannot afford to pay it, and moving people out of one park is just going to have people move to another park. It's not a solution.

0920

I was also struck by how expensive these measures are that the government is proposing. It costs approximately \$100,000 a year to house an adult in a prison. It is much cheaper to provide supportive housing to that same individual. So why not choose the cheaper option? It's also more humane. It's also extraordinarily expensive for governments to have an individual who is homeless. It is actually cheaper to provide supportive housing than it is to have someone who is homeless and living on the streets.

I also think it's a bit rich listening to this government talk about how they have solutions to the homelessness crisis when so many things you've done over the last seven years have created the homelessness issues that we are facing right now. We have 80,000 people homeless. It's on track to go up to 300,000 if we enter an economic recession. Time and time again, this government continues to pass policies or look the other way when it comes to addressing real issues.

We could be investing in supportive housing. We should be investing in supportive housing. We should be investing in affordable housing. We should be bringing in vacancy control and strong rent control so that people are not priced out of their home into homelessness. We should be doing a whole lot more to provide people with access to mental health and addiction services when they need it, instead of people being forced to pay or go without, which is the reality for a majority of people today.

I looked at this latest budget, and I looked at it from a lens of how is this budget going to be addressing poverty in Ontario? My conclusion is that it's not. I would have liked to have seen—I think many of us would have liked to have seen—a doubling of social assistance rates so that

people can afford to live in Ontario. That will also address the homelessness issues that we are facing. I don't see any of that in this bill. I see nothing of that in the budget that was introduced. In fact, what I see in the budget when we're looking at housing is cuts to municipal affairs and housing.

I am urging you to put forward solutions in this Legislature that address the biggest issues that we face instead of introducing cheap, angry little bills like this one that are not going to solve anything; it's just going to make the crisis worse.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Ms. Lee Fairclough: There are two bills that I've heard the most about through thousands of emails or through people just literally stopping me on the street in my community to say that they oppose them—that's Bill 6 and Bill 5. They are writing to say stop Bill 6 because the solution to homelessness is not incarceration, it is housing and support.

Today, the government has put this motion to time-allocate debate, which means to shut down debate on Bill 6 without the opportunity to go to committee, to hear from experts and stakeholders or to receive suggested amendments. This bill won't make anyone safer. It won't make any community safer. Housing is the solution to homelessness.

Last week, the member for Kitchener Centre from the Green Party and I co-sponsored a private member's bill, the Homelessness Ends with Housing Act, because we need to work across party lines and across all levels of government to bring solutions like housing-first policies to solve this challenge and to measure and manage the situation.

AMO predicts that we will go from 80,000 homeless to 300,000 in 10 years without a real vision and plan to end homelessness. This is solvable, doable and affordable. Beyond effectively helping people, economically it makes sense too. The government knows this. Their own procured study shows an annual return on investment of a minimum of \$1.60 for every dollar that is invested in supportive housing for those who need mental health or health care supports. Those investments save costs in our health and social services.

But this government has chosen a different path—a path that the courts have already said does not work because people have a right to shelter. The government is out of step with the people of Ontario, too. They get it, actually. A public opinion poll cited 80% of respondents see the solution to homelessness governments need to “prioritize providing housing, mental health and addiction services to help individuals transition out of homelessness and find long-term stability.”

Given our economic precarity and high unemployment, homelessness is something that a majority of Ontarians are concerned about and want meaningful action on. If we can't stop this motion, perhaps they will consider supporting Bill 28 as the necessary addition to really address homelessness.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I do believe, like my colleague from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, that housing is the solution to homelessness. Right now, there just isn't housing. There's nowhere to go.

In my region, there's a 0% vacancy rate—0%—of affordable housing. I have seniors, newcomers—25% of the people homeless are children. We're creating generations of folks who are faced with trauma. And 95% of our affordable housing was built before 1993, so we're on the face of a precipice of the buildings we do have falling into a state of disrepair, and we're losing them.

In the member for Cambridge's and my region—and the member for Kitchener South–Hespeler's and my region—for every affordable unit we build, we lose 39 units of affordable housing. That's not a great ratio, and we're not keeping up.

We need a plan that is fiscally responsible. We know that a year in jail costs over \$130,000, and we know it doesn't work. Last time I checked, Maplehurst down the street was overcrowded and dubbed to have inhumane conditions. So, people, if we're tough on crime—people's sentences are getting shortened because of these inhumane conditions. We do not have enough space. So while it's a bed, it's not a humane bed. It's not a cost-effective bed.

And actually, I don't know if we even have those beds right now, so we need to do some math: \$40,000 for supportive housing; to double ODSP shelter allowance is \$6,000 to \$7,000. Keeping people housed is humane, it's cost-effective, and we can do it right now. We don't need to go running around and waiting for years as we build. We do need to build to fill this gap, but we need to start doubling the shelter allowance for the people on Ontario Works and ODSP. Lots of the people who use food banks are on ODSP. This is legislated poverty, and we need to give that a look.

We need a plan that works. Look at Manitoba; Premier Kinew is doing it properly. He's creating a system to move people from an encampment to supportive housing with wraparound supports. They don't end up back onto the streets.

The problem with jails is, if you go in in the summer, you come out in the winter, you end up popped out in January with a T-shirt and no bus ticket to get back home. So let's do something that works.

AMO has done a lot of studies. I know the ministers looked at that study and I know that there's a plan in there. I give the minister credit for having an open mind. Thank you for receiving the plan—between the MPP from Etobicoke–Lakeshore having a look at it—because I think that's how we're going to do this. We're going to measure. We're going to create a plan that's informed from the people with lived experience and experts, and we're going to invest in the right ways to address the root causes.

I do believe in housing benefits. I believe in supportive housing as the answer because I know that housing is the answer to homelessness. We can do this right.

I'm a little worried right now, to be honest, if this bill passes. There was an encampment removed in my riding. It was a moral injury—a moral injury to front-line workers and to our community when that encampment was bulldozed.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: This bill will fail, just like everything else this government touches: licence plates, housing, health care, stickers on a gas pump. It will fail because of their ideological lens: Instead of using data, evidence and learned experience to create good policy—the needed steps have been identified; they just refuse to do it.

Time and time again, we see that municipalities and jurisdictions that pursue housing-first strategies with integrated support can actually solve the problem. When you move people from encampment to encampment, to jail, back to an encampment, you're not solving the problem. You are not even trying to solve the problem. Other options are more humane, more effective and less expensive. I can't think of one smart reason to take this route.

Stupidity and cruelty often go hand in hand, and this bill is cruel—a cruel and contemptuous bill, a bill of epic incompetence that shows no intention to actually address the problem.

This bill will cost Ontarians a lot of money and will only serve to make the situation worse, but this government will have been able to pretend that they actually took the situation seriously, for appearance's sake. It's shameful and beneath us.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

0930

Mr. Adil Shamji: There's no denying the fact that here in Ontario, we face a crisis of epic proportions as it relates to homelessness. On any given night here in Toronto, 10,000 people sleep on our streets; across the province, at least 14,000.

I know that everyone in this House is agreed on the fact that something desperately needs to be done about that. The question before the House, however, is: What is that urgent action? And I use the word "action" very deliberately, because that is a major point of difference. The members on the other side of the House have introduced Bill 6, a piece of legislation that, if passed, commits this government to talking more about the problem, and those of us who are on this side of the House are committed to actually acting upon it.

We heard from members on the opposite side of this chamber that they think this bill walks a balance between addressing criminality and delivering compassion. The truth is that it does neither. It seeks to criminalize and penalize people who show signs of mental health and addictions challenges. What those people need is our compassion, and that bill offers nothing for them.

For those individuals who are struggling, living on the street or in an encampment, struggling with an addiction,

this bill purports to send them to jail—mind you, there are no spaces in jail. It purports to fine them for \$10,000, but they're obviously homeless because they don't have that kind of money.

And it does offer an alternative, an alternative that supposedly gives this government a get-out card and allows them to save face by making it look like they're offering compassion. It says that those individuals can be taken to a hospital or some sort of mental health support or services centre, but those don't exist. If one of those patients comes to me in the emergency department, there is very little that I have to offer them, because our ERs are not set up that way.

And if the solution from this government is to give them access to a HART hub, the reality is that we know that HART hubs, as they exist right now and will continue to exist, are underfunded, underdeveloped, immature and already failing in their mandate. We know that the rates of overdoses and deaths in the areas around currently existing HART hubs have gone up, revealing that they have failed in their mandate.

And so, in the absence of addressing real criminality like the predatory behaviours of drug dealers who force my mental health and addictions patients to purchase drugs; in the absence of offering real compassion in the forum of mental health and addictions challenges, Bill 6 is not the solution to the housing—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 2, 2025, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Flack has moved third reading of Bill 6, An Act to enact the Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act, 2025 and to amend the Trespass to Property Act respecting sentencing.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until the next instance of deferred votes.

Third reading vote deferred.

PROTECT ONTARIO BY BUILDING FASTER AND SMARTER ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN CONSTRUISANT PLUS RAPIDEMENT ET PLUS EFFICACEMENT

Mr. Flack moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 17, An Act to amend various Acts with respect to infrastructure, housing and transit and to revoke a regulation / *Projet de loi 17, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'infrastructure, le logement et le transport en commun et abrogeant un règlement.*

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the member to start the debate.

Hon. Rob Flack: This bill, Speaker, says enough is enough. One of the most significant reforms in this legislation is a simple one: ensuring that the Ontario building code is the standard for building in Ontario.

Speaker, let me just point out—before I get started, I would like to thank Minister Calandra for the hard work he provided on our legislation prior to me being in the ministry. He did a great job. I want to thank Deputy Greenberg and the team at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the great work they did as well, as well as Robert Dodd, my chief of staff, and our entire ministry office team. It has been a labour of love and of focus, and we're really feeling this bill is going to hit the mark to get more homes built smarter and faster.

I rise today in support of a bill that cuts red tape, streamlines approvals and clears the runway for more homes to be built right across this province. The Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025, is more than a legislative initiative, it is a clear, coordinated and credible response to the challenges facing our housing sector. It is about one thing, Madam Speaker: getting homes built faster and smarter.

Our government has always believed that we don't need more barriers, we need more bulldozers. We don't need more paperwork and red tape, we need more projects. We don't need more studies, we need more shovels. Speaker, we need to cut red tape, and we need action—and action today. This bill tackles the very systems, delays and inconsistencies that have been slowing down housing starts for far too long.

Let me be clear: The status quo is no longer acceptable. I think we all know this in this Legislature. We are building on a legacy of successful reforms, but more work needs to be done, and we're doing that work now.

Right now, builders are stalled by redundant studies and procedural hurdles. That is a process that has failed. We've all heard about these processes. They've stacked up on top of one another over the years. It has caused serious delays, and time is money. And when homes cost more because of municipal inefficiencies, that's a cost Ontarians should no longer have to bear.

This bill says enough is enough—again, as I said at the beginning. Ensuring that the Ontario building code is the standard for building in Ontario needs to finally be resurrected and put in place—not hundreds of local preferences, not hundreds of iterations by our municipal partners, just one clear, consistent standard for building safely and effectively in this province.

With this legislation, we are clarifying that municipalities do not have jurisdiction to impose construction requirements that go beyond Ontario's building code, period. It has always been the case: The code is king. The code has to stay king. This change will deliver uniformity, reduce costs and help get homes built faster in every part of this great province.

Another key component of this bill is aimed at reducing the study burden on development applications. We've heard the stories: builders submitting plans, only to be told they need to commission study after study after study,

often with no basis in official policy or consistent guidelines. That's not planning, Speaker, that's paralysis. This has to end.

So we're taking action. This bill proposes that municipalities will no longer be able to require new reports or studies that are not already listed in their official plans. That means fewer unnecessary hurdles. That means greater consistency across Ontario. And most importantly, it means faster approvals and lower costs for the homes we need now.

We also know that the development charge system has become one of the biggest contributors to the cost of housing, so we're reforming it. While they're needed, we need to reform it.

First, we're allowing DC deferrals for all residential developments, not just rentals and institutional builds. Builders will be able to pay their development charges at occupancy, not at the permitting stage—again, at occupancy, not at the permitting stage. That gives builders more flexibility and frees up cash flow that helps get projects off the ground faster and smarter. This is a practical, targeted reform that will deliver real impact.

We're also eliminating development charges on long-term care—gone, Speaker. They're gone in long-term care. We know we need 36,000 to 40,000 new beds in this province, and this will help deliver that goal in a meaningful way.

0940

Seniors built this country. They built this province; they built our communities. This change will allow them to stay there as more long-term care across Ontario gets built where seniors want to live, and that's in their home communities. They took care of us. We're now taking care of them.

Finally, we're increasing transparency and accountability around how development charges are spent. We're expanding the requirement for municipalities to spend or allocate 60% of their DC reserve funds right across the services on roads, water and waste water. There is at least \$10 billion in reserves across this province. We have to make sure it's allocated. We have to make sure it's deployed because without the meaningful infrastructure, we cannot get shovels in the ground. That means, for those funds allocated—more libraries, more recreation centres, child care and more.

That's why the Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act includes measures specifically designed to address infrastructure and service gaps that often stall housing growth in underserved communities. Take water and sewage servicing, for example. In many rural and low-density areas, access to traditional municipal water systems simply does not exist. That's a major barrier to building. These changes and the many more in this bill will bring clarity, consistency and forward-looking alignment right across Ontario's planning system.

In addition to fixing what's broken, we are modernizing what is outdated. Let's be honest: Planning approvals in Ontario still rely heavily on paper-based manual systems. That slows down everything.

This government is committed to bringing land use planning, development approvals and building code administration into the digital age. AI is part of our future. That's why we're launching a comprehensive exploration of provincial IT and data solutions to create a standardized, province-wide digital platform that tracks planning data, automates workflows and improves transparency.

We will also digitize the Ontario building code itself so that planners, builders and inspectors can access up-to-date information instantly. This is modernization with purpose, to reduce delays, improve efficiency and support better housing outcomes.

Another important piece of this legislation is how municipalities calculate development charges. Right now, when a municipality builds infrastructure, part of the cost must be attributed to the benefit it provides to existing residents. That share, called the "benefit to existing," is deducted before calculating the development charge on new growth.

This is a government that does what it says it will do. We're delivering. We said we'd create conditions to build more homes, and that's exactly what we're doing. We said we'd speed up long-term care. We are. We said we'd cut red tape. We are. We said we'd protect Ontario, and that is exactly what we are doing.

This bill is just the latest proof of why we are not backing down and we're tackling the tough challenges that face us. We're embracing them because Ontario is not defined by the problems it faces; we are defined by the way we solve them.

This is our time to lead—not to postpone, not to wait, but to build Ontario. The Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act is a clear signal to every Ontarian: We're not just watching what happens in the world, we're making things happen here at home. We're doing this for families, for workers, for seniors, for the next generation. Ontario is ready, Ontario is moving and, most importantly, Ontario is building. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

MPP Catherine McKenney: Thank you for the opportunity to rise to speak to Bill 17 and to raise a number of questions. These are questions that many municipalities and Ontarians have been asking as this legislation moves rapidly toward royal assent.

Let me begin by saying that I think we all agree that Ontario is in the midst of a serious housing crisis. The need for more homes—affordable, climate-resilient and connected to infrastructure—is urgent, but how we meet that need matters. We must do it in a way that protects our environment, supports affordability over the long term and respects the role of local governments.

In that spirit, I want to offer not just a critique but a request for clarity and for consistency, because as it stands, Bill 17 does raise a number of questions that remain unanswered. If we were sitting down together—government, opposition and municipal leaders—these are the questions that might be asked.

First, will municipalities retain the ability to enforce green development standards, particularly non-prescriptive, incentive-based ones like the Toronto Green Standard, which, as we all know, is one of the leading examples in Canada of a municipal climate solution that works? It's flexible, it's tiered and only the base tier is mandatory. Yet Bill 17 introduces legal ambiguity, and that language in the bill would actually prohibit municipalities from using general powers to pass bylaws "respecting construction and demolition of buildings." This raises real concerns about whether site plan tools could be constrained—even though they operate outside of the building code. This is particularly pressing for the city of Toronto, which, under their City of Toronto Act, has broad, constitutionally protected powers to act on climate change and environmental well-being. These powers deserve clarity and not legal uncertainty.

Second, what is the status of the long-promised regulation that would enable municipalities to use green standards through a standardized framework? In 2023, the former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing publicly committed to passing a regulation under the City of Toronto Act and the Municipal Act to allow municipalities to use green development standards through a provincial lens. This was supposed to be the compromise: local flexibility, provincial consistency. But that regulation has not materialized. And now, with Bill 17 moving forward before the close of public consultation, municipalities are left in limbo. They are left wondering if that commitment still stands or if it has been quietly set aside.

Third, what is the government's position on rental replacement bylaws under this bill? These bylaws are a vital tool for ensuring that as our communities grow we don't displace people who are already living there, particularly renters. In cities with rapid redevelopment, rental replacement policies ensure that when older buildings are demolished tenants are not pushed out. But it is unclear whether Bill 17 affects the ability of municipalities to require rental replacement through demolition permits.

Fourth, what powers are being granted to the Minister of Infrastructure under Bill 17? The government's background materials hint at a potential new authority, perhaps similar to an MZO, a minister's zoning order. If the Minister of Infrastructure is receiving new zoning powers or expanded authority to enter into transit-oriented communities agreements without cabinet approval that needs to be communicated transparently. Municipalities and residents deserve to know what level of oversight exists over land use decisions tied to infrastructure planning.

Finally, will Bill 17 limit municipalities from using their site plan powers or climate authority to promote sustainability in new developments? Because if that is the intent, or even the unintended consequence, it stands in stark contrast to the government's own Housing Affordability Task Force.

Madam Speaker, I do want to be clear: We all want to reduce red tape but red tape isn't the same as local policy. Red tape is arbitrary and inconsistent. Local green development standards are targeted and they're tested.

This isn't about playing politics with housing, it's about making sure we're building the right housing in the right way with the tools that cities need to lead on climate, affordability and infrastructure planning.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: It's beautiful to be in the chamber with you, but not so great discussing Bill 17 and what you're trying to do to the green development standards.

I notice that the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs says the building code is king. Well, I would argue it could be queen if you left the green development standards in there, and I'm going to encourage you to do the right thing because it's smart, it's logical, it's innovative, it's cost-effective and it's resilient—building resilient infrastructure.

0950

We'll start first off with the fact that out of your 74 actions to accelerate housing in your affordable housing task force report, none of those recommendations recommended removing municipal green standards—point number 1.

Point number 2, the green development standards, especially the Toronto Green Standard, have not slowed down housing starts, okay? The fact that you think they have is arguable. Toronto has exceeded its housing starts by 51%, including 96% of those housing starts being subject to the Toronto Green Standard. That's number 2.

Number 3, you have developers who support it. EllisDon, Tridel, Minto, Tribute—even ResCon supports removing the parking minimums, so who are you listening to to remove this?

Number 4, your own former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing—

Interjection.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: There he is. Good morning, good sir. How smart were you back in 2023 when you wrote the letter everyone has a record of?

“Ontario municipalities have been developing green standards that have introduced leading practices in North America for promoting energy efficiency, environmentally friendly landscaping, bird-friendly design and other important sustainable design measures.

“We have heard from municipalities, building owners and occupants, design professionals and the general public about the importance of these green standards”—wow. So proud of that Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing right there. I need an autograph on this letter, I think. “The innovative approaches being implemented through the site plan control process will help move Ontario sooner to the goal of net-zero emission communities.

“It was not the intention of the government through Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, to prevent municipalities from using the site plan control to promote green standards. One of the objectives was to focus site plan reviews on health and safety issues rather than architectural or decorative landscape details....”

All of that to say, your municipal affairs and housing minister at the time supported it, so why don't you now?

The last thing I will say is that the Premier of Ontario voted yes to the Toronto Green Standard when he was a Toronto city councillor with me in the good old days.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I appreciate this bill in one sense because it aims for consistency. Consistency is what all the developers, small or large, have been asking for across the province. But I push back and say let's lift the bar up, not push the bar down.

One of the ways we can lift the bar up: zoning—70% of the province is zoned for single-family dwelling. This is not going to get housing online faster. We need to build within the city limits where we already have the pipes and the schools and the parks and the benches and all that stuff. Let's open up zoning so it's not illegal to build housing in the province of Ontario.

It is very much illegal. The process, if you want to build a fourplex across the province, is a nightmare. Missing middle housing, midrise housing developers have come to me and said, “You can't believe what I went through to get this beautiful fourplex midrise to be built.” The fastest way to bring housing online is to start to cut that red tape on exclusionary zoning—again, 70% of the province is zoned for single-family dwellings.

Let's also lift the bar up when it comes to our housing. We're losing affordable housing. I'm not sure what the rate is in the minister's riding, but in my riding, in this area, for every affordable housing unit built, we lose 39. All of these older homes are getting demolished, and in Kitchener we did pass a bylaw to say, when it is five units of so many, you replace those units. Let's be sure that when we tear someone's home down, when we build it back, there's a place for them there. So let's lift the bar up—also when it comes to green development standards.

I know that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing might want to be a grandpa one day. I think we all have kids or we want to be grandparents. Every bit of gas we burn right now is a debt we leave to our kids. We are locking all of us, right now, and future generations into American dependency. Our “natural”—a.k.a. not-so-natural—gas comes from the United States. So why are we building homes that are gas guzzlers? We're getting Crown Victorias. We get these big, old, inefficient boats. We're saddling homeowners with massive bills by having gas-guzzling homes being put on the market.

It is this government that stayed out of the national building code in the energy sector. I know you guys love Enbridge, but it's time to start dating again and find other ways to power our homes, instead of growing the dependence on American not-so-natural gas that only jeopardizes all of our clean air and future generations.

So I urge you: Let's lift the bar up, not put the bar down. Make sure we replace affordable housing—

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Here we are again, using time allocation to eliminate public hearings on a government bill because, what, we are running out of time?

I think the public would be shocked to know that the Conservatives limited legislative time to seven weeks between last summer and the election in February, then called for another six-and-a-half-week break, and limited this current session to a mere six weeks, with bill after bill pushed through, with public feedback completely eliminated, supposedly because there's no time left for fulsome public debate.

Bill 17 is a case in point. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance told the Minister of Housing in a letter last Wednesday that Bill 17 is harmful to Ontarians with disabilities—people who are plagued by Ontario's desperate shortage of housing that is both affordable and accessible. David Lepofsky, chair of the non-partisan grassroots AODA Alliance—a group that campaigns to tear down disability barriers in society—stated very clearly: “Bill 17 makes things worse, not better for us. It's a crushing irony that the Ford government voted to skip public consultation during current National AccessAbility Week!” The AODA Alliance asked for an urgent meeting with the Minister of Housing to address how the bill harms people with disabilities and to propose an amendment during the expected public hearings. Unfortunately, no one responded to their letter.

So let me be clear: This bill threatens the constitutional rights of Ontarians with disabilities. Nobody should be surprised. This is coming from a government that has ignored the recommendations of its own hand-picked adviser commissioned to review the disabilities act; a government that failed to meet the Legislature's 2025 deadline to make Ontario fully accessible to people with disabilities; a government that has stolen billions of dollars from workers who became disabled as a result of being injured or made ill on the job.

As the bill stands, it reduces the power of municipalities to set accessibility requirements for building construction, including housing, and overrules any municipal bylaw that has higher accessibility standards than the weak and inadequate Ontario building code.

Instead of reducing municipal power to fill the huge gap that the province has left, as they do in this bill, the government needs to strengthen the Ontario building code's accessibility provisions and spearhead the creation of substantially more homes and apartments that are accessible. A simple amendment could make a very big difference—for example: “Notwithstanding section 4 of schedule 1, nothing in this statute reduces or limits the power of any municipality to have bylaws that promote the accessibility of buildings to people with disabilities.” In other words, where a higher standard exists, that should be allowed to be there.

People with disabilities are not red tape. They matter. We matter. I believe that had public consultations been available, members of all parties might well have supported the amendment asked for by the AODA Alliance. We are foolish indeed if we think that it won't ever be one of

us who is faced with the daunting task of finding an affordable, accessible place to live. Every one of us is only one step away from being disabled. This matters. The government needs to do better.

1000

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Well, the minister today rose and said enough is enough. I'll say.

Bill 17 is yet another example of the government centralizing power under the guise of cutting red tape. While this bill claims to speed up housing infrastructure development, what it really does is it strips municipalities of their ability to plan for their communities and hands even more authority to provincial ministers behind closed doors.

Speaker, local councils know their communities best, but under this bill, their hands are tied. The Building Code Act amendments prevent municipalities from setting higher construction standards and standards that might address environmental sustainability or local safety needs.

Let me take you back to last July, which is fast approaching. Remember the deluge of rain several times? Remember the widespread flooding? Do you remember the billions of dollars in damage? Do you also remember that only about a billion dollars was covered by insurance? The minister said the bill clears the runway for the building of housing. Do you remember that—speaking of runways—Pearson airport had to be closed because of the flooding?

Do you know what? Does Mother Nature know about going beyond Ontario's building code that the minister just talked about? Planning versus paralysis—just wait. We have to plan environmentally. Freak floods are not going away. There will be more. And this is not fear-mongering; we've been watching it. The green roof initiatives are not a waste of time, yet they might go the way of the dodo bird with this bill.

Yes, improved infrastructure is needed as well, absolutely, but environmental advocates insist this bill will deeply undercut green standards in Toronto, and if the developers aren't forced to do it, they will not do it. This is not smart planning. It's one-size-fits-all policy that ignores local realities.

And talking about transparency or the lack thereof, Bill 17 gives ministers sweeping new powers over zoning, development charges, infrastructure data, with little to no oversight. The government can now rewrite the rules by regulation, without meaningful debate in this chamber.

I urge this government to respect local democracy and work with the municipalities, not against them.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Further debate?

Mr. Adil Shamji: Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity for allowing me to speak in this House regarding the housing crisis that we face in Ontario—one that threatens the well-being of so many people. It has led to a growing epidemic of homelessness and encampments,

which this government and, frankly, all members in this House share a commitment to address.

And so, on the one hand, we do welcome this most recent piece of legislation that has the potential to address the policy chaos that we are currently seeing in the housing and home building sector. Indeed, home builders, who we need to tap into to address many of the shortages that we face, are struggling. They don't have confidence that they can start projects that will pencil at the end.

We have people who are being renovicted and demovicted, people who are struggling to pay their rent but have no access to a fair rent control scheme nor any ability to seek justice in the Landlord and Tenant Board, which is now so dramatically backlogged that both landlords and tenants feel as though they have nowhere to turn.

There are elements of this legislation that are a good thing. It is good to streamline the building code and reduce duplicative and redundant processes. I welcome the deferral of development charges and adjustments in the way that they're calculated. And suggestions like looking at a modular housing strategy are a good thing as well.

But at a time of dramatic housing unaffordability, why is this all that we get? Where is the implementation of the HATF recommendations? Where is the elimination of land transfer taxes for not-for-profits, for first-time homebuyers, for seniors? Why aren't we eliminating development charges? Why aren't we taking more concrete action? Why, at a time when so many people are struggling, are we leaving so many important cards on the table?

And so, while there are elements of Bill 17 that are welcome, that have an opportunity to address the housing crisis that we face, at a time when the situation is so dire, why does it fall so short in treating this crisis with the seriousness that it deserves?

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 2, 2025, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Flack has moved third reading of Bill 17, An Act to amend various Acts with respect to infrastructure, housing and transit and to revoke a regulation.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I hear a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until the next instance of deferred votes.

Third reading vote deferred.

WEARING OF PINS

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): I recognize the member from Essex.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Madam Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow members to wear a pin in recognition of the month of June being ALS Awareness Month.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): Agreed? Agreed.

Orders of the day? I recognize the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Rob Flack: No further business.

The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell): This House stands in recess until 10:15.

The House recessed from 1006 to 1015.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I have more great news about great things happening in Essex county. The first project is a project in the town of Belle River, which is a lovely town located on the shores of Lake St. Clair. This is a 160-unit long-term-care facility. It is going to be state of the art and it's going to allow people to stay in their town and stay close to their loved ones and their families.

The second project is in Amherstburg, a historic town located on the Detroit River. This project is another 160 units, a long-term-care home which will allow people to stay in Amherstburg and stay close to their friends and their family. This project is going to be very welcomed and it's currently under construction as well.

These long-term-care projects are very important to the people in Essex county. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Ministry of Long-Term Care and also the Ford government for putting funding behind these projects and having a part in helping construct these very, very important facilities for the people of Belle River, Amherstburg and Essex county.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Jeff Burch: Health care underfunding is having devastating consequences across the province, and I want to take a moment to tell Celia Krampien's story. Celia is a resident of Welland and just turned 37. She's been healthy and active all her life and was diagnosed with a rare idiopathic condition which causes scar tissue to build up in her airway. There's a simple treatment for this, a surgery that can remove the extra tissue and open the airway. However, she cannot get this surgery because while diagnosing this breathing issue, doctors also discovered a large aneurysm in her brain. The aneurysm was discovered in January. Brain aneurysm ruptures result in immediate death 50% of the time. Of those who survive a rupture, 25% will suffer severe life-altering complications.

Celia says, "It's now June and I have yet to receive any treatment or even a proper assessment for this brain aneurysm. I cannot receive treatment for my breathing issue because of risk of rupture. I pay out of pocket for a therapist to help cope with the grief. I'm alarmed by what seem to be cynical moves by this government and other Conservative parties to defund our health care system and

move toward privatization and a predatory American-style system.”

Ontario must urgently strengthen the public health care system by recruiting more health care workers and doctors, expanding resources and improving infrastructure, so people like Celia don't have to endure months of waiting for critical treatment.

Thank you for sharing your story, Celia. We can do better.

ALS AWARENESS MONTH

MPP Tyler Watt: This is a very special and rather emotional moment for me. June is ALS Awareness Month, a time to honour the strength and resilience of those living with ALS, their families and the tireless advocates working towards a cure. Today, members of ALS Canada are here at Queen's Park to remind us that this fight is urgent.

Imagine losing your ability to drive, to walk, to bathe yourself or even breathe. That is what living with ALS looks like. It is relentless, and it robs people of their independence and their dignity, piece by piece.

For me, this is personal. My father, Randy Watt, was diagnosed with ALS in December 2022, and unfortunately, just two years later, we lost him. Watching him face this disease with courage while his body failed him was the most heartbreaking experience of my life. But he never lost his spirit, and neither will we.

Dad, if you're watching right now, know that I miss you every single day, and I hope that I'm making you proud.

Let this month be a call to action to invest in research to support families and to never stop working towards a future without ALS.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'm sure your father is very, very proud of you.

1020

AFRICAN CARIBBEAN COUNCIL OF HALTON

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: I rise today to recognize the fifth anniversary of the African Caribbean and Black Excellence Scholarship Awards presented by the African Caribbean Council of Halton. These awards celebrate exceptional students of African Caribbean and Black descent who have demonstrated academic excellence, leadership and a commitment to community service. From organizing Black History Month events to mentoring and volunteering, these young leaders uplift all of those around them. Their achievements inspire all of us.

In recognition of their success, each award-winning student received a certificate from me on behalf of the government of Ontario, and each year I've been honoured to support this initiative by offering a summer job in my community office to one student, helping to build their experience in government and public service.

Ontario shares the goals of the ACCH through the Youth Mentorship Program, which offers culturally relevant mentorship opportunities for Black children and

youth aged six to 25, and through the Black youth action plan, where over 10,800 Black children, youth and their families are supported annually in elementary and secondary school, post-secondary education and employment.

To the African Caribbean Council of Halton, thank you for your vision and leadership and investing in the next generation of young leaders.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Catherine Fife: Results from a 2022 survey show that over four years, students' mental and physical health have plunged across Waterloo region. The leading culprit? Social media platforms. University of Waterloo professor Dr. Dillon Browne, who specializes in child mental health, says there are “significant correlations between the amount of child engagement with social media and things like anxiety and depression.”

This is a trend across the province, with several Ontario school boards launching lawsuits against social media platforms claiming they hurt students by interfering with their mental health and their learning. Addictive design features like endless scrolling, algorithmic content and notifications are deliberately engineered to keep users engaged, especially vulnerable youth. Ontario's public health units have a role to play by implementing clear evidence-based warnings about the health risks of excessive social media use, similar to warnings we see on tobacco and alcohol.

That is why I am putting forth a motion calling on this government to investigate the harmful impact of social media on youth and to implement stronger protections across the province. Our children's well-being must come before corporate profits.

I call on all members of this House to support this motion to protect Ontario's next generation from the harms of social media, and I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Allison Young for her leadership and bringing forward this issue. Let's get this done together.

ÉVÉNEMENTS DIVERS À GLENGARRY-PRESCOTT-RUSSELL

M. Stéphane Sarrazin: Alors que nous entamons notre dernière semaine parlementaire avant la pause estivale, j'aimerais prendre un moment pour souligner l'importance de la saison estivale dans nos communautés. L'été dans Glengarry-Prescott-Russell est une période d'enthousiasme et de rassemblement. Partout dans la circonscription, des festivals, des foires agricoles, des célébrations culturelles et des événements communautaires auront lieu.

Ces événements ne sont pas seulement des occasions pour les familles et les voisins de se retrouver. Ils offrent également un soutien précieux à notre économie locale. Les petites entreprises, les artisans, les agriculteurs et les acteurs du secteur touristique bénéficient tous de l'énergie et de l'engagement que l'été apporte à notre région. C'est

un rappel de la vitalité et de la résilience de nos communautés.

Je tiens à remercier sincèrement tous les organisateurs, comités, bénévoles, ainsi que les partenaires municipaux et communautaires qui rendent ces événements possibles, année après année. Leur travail se déroule souvent dans l'ombre, mais leur contribution est essentielle à la vitalité de nos communautés.

Cet été, je serai présent sur le terrain, rencontrant des résidents, des entreprises locales, des élus municipaux et divers intervenants. Ces échanges sont inestimables, car ils me permettent de mieux comprendre les réalités locales et de porter leur voix ici à Queen's Park.

Je souhaite à tous mes collègues une saison estivale remplie de moments significatifs partagés avec leurs concitoyens.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. John Vanthof: In the last few days in the House, in the last few weeks, we've been talking a lot about Bill 5, how it was going to be such a massive government overreach. But what does that actually mean? Let's talk about a couple of examples.

When the Ford government was elected the first time, they were going to balance the budget by holding public servants at 1%. When that bill was rescinded, or beaten in court, that actually ended up costing the people of Ontario billions of extra dollars.

The housing crisis: The first thing the Ford government did was open up the greenbelt—or try to—with Bill 23. That was going to fix the housing crisis. What happened? No houses were built. They had to rescind that bill. But even more importantly, developers who were trying to do the right thing, their reputations were ruined. It actually slowed the housing industry down.

Now the government is doing the same thing with their special economic zones, which they say are for mining companies. Be careful, mining companies, because what's going to happen is your reputation—we all know the great job mining companies do dealing with First Nations, dealing with the environment—is going to be tarnished by this massive government overreach.

Please, please, to the Premier and his government: Pull Bill 5. Keep the part about the concierge for mining, but pull the rest.

BAYCREST BIKE FOR BRAIN HEALTH

Mrs. Michelle Cooper: This past Sunday I had the privilege of joining 10,000 riders in the Baycrest Bike for Brain Health event right here in Toronto, where I rode 50 kilometres alongside my son Ryan. It was an inspiring experience, not just for the rare chance to ride along the Gardiner and the DVP car-free, but for the cause we were riding for: promoting brain health and raising funds for Baycrest's world-renowned research and care in aging and cognitive health.

Baycrest is a global leader in brain health, and I'm proud to say it's located in my riding of Eglinton–Lawrence. It's not only a source of groundbreaking innovation, but also a place of compassion and care for families facing the challenges of aging and dementia.

Let's keep working together to make Ontario a place where healthy aging is possible for all.

VICTIM SERVICES AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

Mr. Lorne Coe: Recently the 2024-25 Attorney General's Victim Services Awards of Distinction were announced. This award recognizes the dedication and achievements of individuals and organizations working to support people who have experienced victimization due to crime, and to raise awareness of victims' issues in Ontario.

Speaker, I am pleased to highlight two recipients from the region of Durham. They include Krista MacNeil, from Whitby, who has spent over two decades advocating for victims of human trafficking and sexual violence, pushing for systemic and legislative change; and Karly Church, from Oshawa, who is a human trafficking coordinator and community engagement manager at Victim Services of Durham Region. She's been a driving force behind the Monday Night Project, a drop-in program to support women experiencing exploitation or human trafficking. Karly also helped develop the helping alliances with law enforcement to end trafficking model, which provides immediate coordinated support for trafficking survivors.

Congratulations to Krista and Karly on your well-deserved awards and the difference you make in the region of Durham.

NATHAN SKOUFIS

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's my honour to welcome to the gallery up here and recognize an inspirational athlete and leader from my riding. Nathan Skoufis is a lifelong Guelph resident, world champion martial artist and mentor. Sensei Nathan was recently crowned Canadian open martial arts champion for a record-breaking 12th consecutive year. The 23-time world champion once again qualified for Team Canada and will represent Canada at the world championships this fall.

I've known Nathan for many years and have witnessed first-hand the impact of his leadership in Guelph. Ten years ago, Nathan, along with his family, founded the Guelph martial arts school with the goal of empowering youth and adults through martial arts. Last year, Nathan was awarded the difference maker of the year award by the Guelph Chamber of Commerce.

Recently, Guelph Family Martial Arts hosted a free self-defence workshop for hundreds of women in Guelph. Nathan had the idea for the workshop after a string of assaults in our city. He stepped up, offered this free workshop to give women not only self-defence skills but a space to talk about what they were experiencing.

1030

I ask all members in the House to please join me in thanking Nathan for his work and wishing him good luck at the world championships.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: I'd like to welcome to the House today the Honourable Erin O'Toole and his wife Rebecca O'Toole. The Honourable Erin O'Toole is a former member for Durham in the federal Parliament, the former Leader of the Opposition and a former cabinet minister federally. They are here to visit their niece, page Emilie Trainor.

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I'd like to welcome the team from the Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada to Queen's Park today, and in particular, Scott Papp, Carlo Mangliochetti, John Fata, Steve Gilbert and Maz Jamil. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Graydon Smith: I just want to welcome two summer interns from my office that are joining us at Queen's Park today, Michayla Weber and Torin Peters-Millar. Welcome to Queen's Park and thank you for all the great work you do.

Hon. Stan Cho: I have two constituents visiting me here today. I have Eva Teng and Lialing Zhao, who are the proud parents of Leo "the Lion," who works at the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. Welcome to the Legislature.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Good morning. The Ontario Road Builders' Association and the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel Association are here today—I'm looking forward to meeting with them—James McVeety from Colas Canada, Afra Shokraei from Black and McDonald, Jim Petrella from Dufferin Aggregates, Chris Galway from Lafarge Canada Inc. and Regan Cox from Cox Construction.

Also, I want to welcome my constituency assistant Shel Secrett, from Waterloo. Welcome to your House today. Let's have some fun.

MPP Tyler Watt: It's my honour to welcome members of ALS Canada to Queen's Park today. ALS Canada was essential in helping provide the necessary care and resources for my father during his adventure. To Tammy Moore, the CEO; Ilayda Ulgenalp, senior manager, advocacy and stakeholder relations; and Steffi Burgi, the coordinator, advocacy and stakeholder relations, welcome to Queen's Park and thank you.

Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady: I'd like to welcome Emma Rogers to Queen's Park this morning. Emma is the talented CEO of the Norfolk General Hospital Foundation. Although she's from Guelph, Emma fits in so well in Norfolk county and is a shining star when it comes to raising the funds at our local hospital.

Hon. Jill Dunlop: I am pleased to welcome Sabrina Farrace and Dr. Oliver Shaw, who are here to join me for lunch and a tour. Welcome to Queen's Park and thank you for making the trip.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It gives me great pleasure to welcome the Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada. I want to let all members know that they'll be hosting a reception for MPPs in rooms 228 and 230 at 5 o'clock. I'm also looking forward to meeting with Sandy MacLeod, Rahim Shamji, Andrea Gondova, George Lloyd and Jim McAughey. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Je veux souhaiter la bienvenue à Mario Villeneuve. Mario, bienvenue à Queen's Park. J'espère qu'on va avoir la chance de se croiser, se dire bonjour puis aussi de parler de certains sujets.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: I'd like to welcome Haaris Kafeel. He's a valued student volunteer in my constituency office at Queen's Park. Welcome.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: As we begin ALS Awareness Month, I would also like to welcome members from the ALS Society of Canada to Queen's Park today. Welcome.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: From Neskantaga, we have Ben Sakanee, Dorothy Sakanee, Marilyn Waswa, Liz Moonias, Coleen Moonias, and also, from Kingfisher Lake, Janna Kakegamic, Emily King and my sister, Esther Sakakeep. I think my mom sent her down. Meegwetch.

Mr. Stephen Blais: I'd like to extend a warm welcome to representatives from the Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada, in particular Scott Papp, Carlo Mangliochetti, John Fata, Steve Gilbert, Maz Jamil, Perry Chao, Bill Eade, Chris Hann, Peter Messenger and John Hurley. I'm looking forward to our meeting later this afternoon.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I would like to welcome Walid Abou-Hamde, Malcolm Croskery, Dwayne MacKenzie, Rick Tamburro and Graziela Girardi, all with the road builders' association of Ontario. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'm going to add a little extra time to the clock because we were a little slow on the uptick.

The Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: I want to welcome to the House today my cousin Dan McCarthy, who is more like brother than cousin.

Mme Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I'd like to welcome, from my constituency office, Daniel Goutovets and Elias Tzanis, who is our summer intern. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Vijay Thanigasalam: Speaker, I would like to welcome two interns from my constituency office, Rahavie Gnanachandran and Daniel Valtchanov.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: I rise today and am so happy to welcome Mrs. Sarathambal Paranirupasingam, a celebrated Tamil poet and the author of the collection [*remarks in Tamil*], a heartfelt tribute to motherhood and Tamil heritage.

Joining her is her daughter, Ms. Shiyamali Paranirupasingam, an emerging Ontarian Canadian woman entrepreneur and founder of L'Amour Pearls, known for promoting elegance and craftsmanship in the jewellery industry. Welcome to Queen's Park.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: This question is for the Premier. Yesterday, the lawn of the Legislature was full of people. First Nations leadership from all across the country, rights holders, supporters, folks from Dresden to Ottawa and all across Canada actually showed up yesterday to register their opposition to Bill 5. The government has so far refused to listen to those voices. They are cutting public hearings. They've stalled debate.

But there is clear consensus: The government has gone too far. The legislation is unlike anything we have ever seen. It is a massive overreach. So to the Premier: Will he do the right thing and scrap Bill 5?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Economic Development.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Yesterday, the member didn't even make it out of the chamber before the NDP blasted a fundraising email out to their supporters. It goes to show you exactly where their priorities lie. They don't care about protecting and growing Ontario's economy. They continue to fearmonger about this legislation so they can sell a few more memberships and raise a little more money.

While they can do that, Speaker, serious leaders of all political stripes are in agreement that we need to move faster. We need to get projects approved faster, get shovels in the ground faster and get good-paying jobs created faster. Speaker, that's why we're moving forward with Bill 5.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, I'd like us to zoom out for a little while and look at what this legislation actually would allow the government to do. It goes beyond legislation that has been proposed pretty much anywhere else in the world. It is really an extraordinary overreach, suspending any laws—and that could include property rights, treaty rights, safe drinking water, protection for farmland and, yes, even child labour laws. With the stroke of a pen, every law wiped away. That is not fearmongering. That is a fact.

So I want to know why the Premier wants to have the power to suspend all laws.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Well, Speaker, let's zoom in instead. This isn't about the NDP's opposition to legislation. If it was, they would have criticized their NDP friends in BC who just passed very similar legislation to fast-track approvals.

For the NDP, it's all about political reaction. They staged one of their own members getting kicked out of the House yesterday so they could fundraise on it seconds later. The NDP and the Liberals can keep playing their political games.

1040

While they do that, Premier Ford and our government will remain laser-focused on what we were elected to do,

and that is to ensure that Ontario's economy comes out of—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

Ms. Marit Stiles: Facts will never get in the way of this government trying to distract from this terrible law. Good, responsible governments are able to make things happen without breaking the law, within the letter of the law.

Instead of being afraid to debate the people, you could listen to the people and you could make this bill stronger. Instead of overriding treaty rights, you could work with First Nations leaders and rights holders and get development moving the first time, without getting us caught up in the courts.

Why will the government not do the right thing and scrap Bill 5?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: There are two sets of priorities very clearly on display here.

The NDP are focused on political stunts, rallying their activist base and boosting their fundraising efforts. Yesterday, their member was removed from the Legislature by his own choice. Within minutes, the NDP's fundraising email had already gone out to supporters—the door was barely closed—highlighting how he was kicked out of the Legislature.

While they focus on shenanigans, our government will continue to focus on ensuring that Ontario comes out of this situation stronger than ever before. We need to do things faster. It cannot take, under any circumstances, 15 years to get a shovel in the ground for a project. We know this. Canadians know it too, and that's why we're moving forward with Bill 5.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Yesterday, hundreds of rights holders—not activists—travelled across Ontario to stand together and oppose Bill 5. National Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak and former National Chief Phil Fontaine were here yesterday. They joined our leaders, elders and youth to speak out against Bill 5. Our rights are not for sale, and our lands are not for sale.

To the Premier: You respect First Nations and rights holders. Will you scrap Bill 5?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

Hon. Greg Rickford: Yesterday was a great day for the Premier, the other First Ministers across the country and the Prime Minister, where they explicitly signed a statement to fulfill the duty to consult to increase Indigenous partnerships in major legacy infrastructure projects and resource projects.

In those discussions, one Premier in particular, my friend Premier Wab Kinew, said it best yesterday with respect to major projects being proposed across Canada. He said they represent “a generational opportunity for some of the poorest communities in our country.”

I agree with Premier Kinew. I applaud the Prime Minister of Canada and the First Ministers yesterday in recognizing explicitly a commitment to fulfill the duty to

consult and to commit to ensure that First Nations are full partners in community and economic opportunities across this country.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member from Kiiwetinoong for the supplementary.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Bill 5 is more than just legislation, it is history repeating itself. One of the people who spoke was the sister of Dudley George. Dudley George was a land defender who was killed by the Ontario Provincial Police for participating in the occupation of Ipperwash Provincial Park. If this government does not rescind Bill 5, First Nations are united and ready to defend their rights on the land.

I ask the Premier: Is your government ready to face the disruption that Bill 5 will cause?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Madam Speaker, I don't think that we can advance meaningful debate in this province or across the country when, if what the member is saying suggests that there will be that kind of confrontation. Nobody is interested in that. It doesn't serve any purpose, not to mention the fact that it loses public support.

People don't mind peaceful protest, and the rally yesterday reminded us of the importance to various First Nations leaders to make sure that the duty to consult is protected and enshrined in that bill, but that after the duty to consult, we ensure that full, meaningful economic partnerships and community partnership agreements offer the kind of prosperity for First Nations communities they rightly deserve.

Nothing is advanced through the threat of physical confrontation, Madam Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Kiiwetinoong.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Speaker, when you throw me out of the chamber, you are throwing out all First Nations people.

I speak as a messenger to share what I've heard from First Nations rights holders across Ontario but also many of the thousands of people who have spoken against Bill 5.

Speaker, to the Premier: It's not too late. So I ask again: Will the Premier scrap Bill 5 and start over?

Hon. Greg Rickford: What we will start and what we hope to start, Madam Speaker, is the duty to consult and ensure that First Nations become full partners in economic and community-based opportunities—and there's a very good reason for that. Because it is simply unfair that isolated and remote First Nations communities live in the kind of poverty that they do currently, that young people wake up limited to a job at an education authority, a band authority, the North West Co. or the health authority—that represents somewhere around 20% of the employment opportunities in those communities. Young people are leaving in droves and they're going to Thunder Bay, and things are happening to them that this member persistently rises in this House to highlight, and they are tragic. They are unacceptable and they have to stop, Madam Speaker.

Economic prosperity is the next big chapter of economic reconciliation for First Nations. I ask this member to be

reasonable about it and move forward with us together in that partnership.

FIRST NATIONS CONSULTATION

Mr. John Fraser: Yesterday the Premier was out in Saskatoon and he was singing Love Is in the Air. Isn't that special? Well, I know for the First Nations leaders and the elders and the many people who travelled thousands of kilometres—some of them—to be here at Queen's Park to send the Premier a message, they didn't feel the love. They haven't been feeling the love since Bill 5 came out.

Their simple message is: Listen to us. Consult with us. Respect truth and reconciliation. It's a simple, clear message. It's not getting through.

So will the Premier kill Bill 5, go back to the drawing board and get it right?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Minister of Economic Development.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: The Liberals had four weeks to prepare and file amendments if they thought the legislation needed to be strengthened. Here's what they put forward instead: A motion to assure that no exemptions are made to the requirements of the Milk Act. Their next motion was to ensure no exemptions are made to the requirements of the 2015 Ontario Bike Month Act. Then they put a motion to ensure no exemptions are made to the requirements of the Nikola Tesla Day Act.

So they keep showing the people of the province how unserious they are about making real amendments to this.

We'll continue to focus on the people that we're elected to protect. We'll grow our economy and we will fight this greatest threat that we have, Speaker.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the leader of the third party.

Mr. John Fraser: The thing that we're serious about is Bill 5. It's unjust, it's undemocratic and it's an insult to First Nations. That's what we're serious about. So I hope you got the point with all the amendments, Minister.

It's evident that this Premier is not listening to First Nations. In fact, his response to them was, don't be left behind—translated: "We know what's good for you." For centuries, First Nations have heard that, often with very tragic consequences. My colleague mentioned one today: families ripped apart.

So if you want to understand why First Nations are upset—you keep saying the same thing: "We know what's good for you." No wonder they're angry.

Will the Premier kill Bill 5, go back to the drawing board and get it right?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, 2,000 frivolous amendments—they have had four weeks to prepare and forward real amendments if they believe the legislation needed to be strengthened.

Let's look at a couple more of their amendments: a motion to ensure that no exemptions apply to the requirements of the Motorized Snow Vehicles Act. This is what they want to do in this. They have a motion not to exempt

the requirements of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. That's what they put in this. A motion to ensure that no exemptions apply to the Nutrition Management Act—Speaker, the Liberals keep reaffirming to the people of the province of Ontario that they aren't serious, they cannot be taken seriously about this.

We're going to remain focused on this critical issue at hand: the generations of threat we face from south of the border.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the leader of the third party.

Mr. John Fraser: The question that I delivered was about generations of hearing the same thing: “We know what's good for you.” It's clear that in the drafting of this bill First Nations weren't included. So maybe with the number of amendments—and trust me, there's more coming, Minister; there's a lot more coming—you'll get the message and kill Bill 5.

The Premier should be listening to First Nations; he's not, and his message is—and it's actually to all of us in Ontario—“I'm going to do whatever I want, wherever I want, with whoever I want, and you know what? You don't get a say. I make all the rules.”

This bill is undemocratic, and it's unjust. The Premier needs to kill Bill 5, go back to the drawing board and get it right. Will he do it?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: This week, Prime Minister Carney was focused on getting big projects approved faster. The federal Liberal government is promising two-year approvals for projects that could include critical mineral production, ports and pipelines—sounds familiar. This is a Prime Minister who Bonnie Crombie went out of her way to endorse in the federal election, even though he refused to return the favour with the endorsement for the Liberals in the Ontario election.

So let's be honest with the people of Ontario: The Liberals do not care about growing Ontario's economy. Just like the NDP, the Liberals want more bureaucracy, more red tape and more taxes. Our government wants more investment, more jobs, and that's why we are moving forward with Bill 5.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: Let's look at when this government went really fast: the greenbelt, MZOs, the “notwithstanding” clause, Bill 124—that's a great record of success. As I said yesterday, when this government gets in a hurry, it leaves a steaming pile behind it, and Bill 5 is going to be in that list.

My colleague from Kingston and the Islands put forward hundreds of amendments—more to come, Minister, I promise—and he did that for a reason: to give the other side a chance to think about what it is they're doing. We'll get through the whole thing—

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: Yes, filibuster—I heard that. Nothing wrong with that. It's a tool. It gives you guys time to make the right decision.

He put them forward so the government will do the right thing on Bill 5. That's simply just to kill the bill, go back to the drawing board and get it right. Will the Premier do that?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Minister of Economic Development.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, our government is focused on moving our province towards prosperity, while the opposition would rather let the Americans outbuild us and bully us into retreat.

At this week's First Ministers' conference, the big theme is nation-building projects. The Liberal Prime Minister and Premiers of all political stripes have emphasized a single, clear message: We need to get construction under way and accelerate the projects that will drive our economy forward. Everyone knows that we need to do things faster. It cannot take 15 years to get shovels in the ground for a manufacturing plant, a mine or any project, for that matter.

The federal Liberals agree. The NDP Premiers from Manitoba and BC agree. When will the Liberals and NDP in Ontario agree?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The leader of the third party.

Mr. John Fraser: He wants to talk about bullying. Well, Bill 5—who's bullying First Nations? Who's bullying the people of Dresden? Thanks for mentioning it, Minister.

My colleague from Kingston and the Islands put forward these amendments, which we'll have the pleasure of reading later on today—or some people will—because he wanted to put them forward for the people of Dresden and for the people who don't want the Premier to put a dump willy-nilly in their backyard, because some of his friends want it. He put them forward for First Nations, because the government is not respecting truth and reconciliation, and he put them forward for all those Ontarians who are going to end up paying \$400 each at some point so a foreign company can build a luxury spa in downtown Toronto.

The minister may make fun of those amendments, but the point is, you need to take the time and listen. Will the Premier kill Bill 5, go back to the drawing board and get it right? Yes or no?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Energy and Mines.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Madam Speaker, the true agenda of the Liberal Party is on display. In a futile attempt to mainstream yourself and not be the activist left of the former Premier, you're attempting to moderate, and yet here you are, opposing resource projects that build an economy that even the federal Prime Minister would agree with. You are so offside the political mainstream.

And so, Madam Speaker, when they had the chance—there was a project, a chromite mine, and Cliffs Natural Resources froze a \$3-billion investment because the former Liberals, when they were in power—“uncertain timeline and risks associated with the development of necessary infrastructure.” They literally killed the project.

We launched a critical minerals strategy; since then, a 41% increase year over year in production here at home. We announced a plan, by my predecessor, that has seen a 55% increase in mineral production continue to grow. That's the difference. We're enabling economic growth, we're ensuring we do it in partnership, but we're not going to stand up for President Trump or our adversaries abroad by keeping our resources landlocked here at home.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member from Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I submitted a large number of amendments not to delay for delay's sake, but to defend our democracy. This government does not get unlimited power.

Will the government kill Bill 5, take the summer to think and consult properly, especially with First Nations, and come back with a better bill for Ontario?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Madam Speaker, we need to look at the record of the former Liberals and their moral indignation today, as they say we need to—

Interjections.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: The former Liberal Party, when they were in government—look at their record. Let that be informative of our future.

When you had the ability to approve mines and a project in the province, you literally sat on permits to the point that you deterred billions of dollars of economic investment that would have supported Indigenous communities and the entire prosperity of Canada. You sat on the sidelines, because it was politically easy to go along to get along, instead of standing up for what's right.

And the Liberals should know better, because the federal Liberals—to the credit of the Prime Minister, for which we don't share political parties, even he can get to yes on nation-building projects that build an economy and create jobs here at home. The question, fundamentally, for the Liberals is: Why are they against all resource development in this province?

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Jennifer K. French: My question is to the Premier. The terribly heavy-handed Bill 5, rammed through this Legislature, will allow the province to designate special economic zones that will not be subject to provincial laws or protections.

1100

This Premier usually favours bulldozing the province, but in the case of his 401 tunnel, it seems the Premier will be digging himself into a very deep hole. The 401 is one of the busiest highways in the world, and ostensibly while still in operation, this Premier wants to bore a tunnel underneath it. This 401 tunnel plan is apparently going to be one of these special economic law-free zones.

Why does the Premier think digging under the 401 should be exempt from labour, safety, planning, environmental and any other provincial laws?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Madam Speaker, every step of the way, the opposition—whether it's the NDP or Liberals—have doubted our plan to build. Whether it be the Scarborough subway extension, the Ontario Line, the Eglinton West extension, the Finch or the Hazel McCallion lines—every single time, the members opposite have stood up and said we couldn't get it done, we couldn't get shovels in the ground. Guess what? Shovels are in the ground and we're building for the future. The NDP and Liberals have no vision for this province. They don't want anything to get built.

But I'll guarantee you this, Madam Speaker: We're going to get shovels in the ground. We're going to build that tunnel because that is what the people of this province have elected us to do. Whether it's the 413, whether it's the Bradford Bypass or removing tolls across the province, that is what we're committed to doing, that is what we're going to do and we're going to get those shovels in the ground.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Back to the Premier: The Premier's team wants us to imagine that an underground tunnel from Brampton to Markham is nation-building. For what will surely be a trillion dollars by the time the digging starts, we could have built the homes we need, built practical transit, ensured people have access to medical care and fixed our education system.

The Prime Minister asked for a list of nation-building projects, and this Premier has offered a list of Ford Nation-building projects. Why is the Premier's 401 pipe dream the number one priority for this government?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: This is the plan we took to the people of this province, who returned Premier Ford and this government to a historic and landmark third majority government. That is why we will continue to push forward and move forward these amazing and incredible projects: whether it be the 413 that is going to employ thousands of people across the province; the Bradford Bypass, which is going to save over 30 minutes each way; or whether it's our historic investments in transit—the Ontario Line, moving 400,000 people every single day.

Guess what, Madam Speaker? Whether it's the NDP or the Liberals—the Liberals, who did nothing for 15 years; built upside-down bridges and couldn't get a transit project off the ground—we'll take no lessons from them. We're going to build for the future. We're going to get those subways running. We're going to ensure the future generations of this province can ride on subways, LRTs and—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Ottawa–Vanier.

AFFAIRES FRANCOPHONES

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Madame la Présidente, le budget du gouvernement coupe de façon importante le financement des affaires francophones, qui passe de 14 millions

de dollars à 11,3 millions de dollars, alors que les dépenses augmentent dans d'autres ministères.

Les affaires francophones jouent un rôle essentiel, non seulement pour assurer le respect de la Loi sur les services en français, mais pour le soutien aux événements culturels, les initiatives communautaires et la protection de la langue et du patrimoine francophone partout dans la province.

La ministre peut-elle expliquer comment cette réduction est compatible avec l'engagement du gouvernement à soutenir la communauté francophone de l'Ontario?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Francophone Affairs.

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: Je remercie la députée d'Ottawa–Vanier pour sa question, parce que ça me donne la chance de parler directement aux Ontariens et aux Ontariennes de la communauté francophone concernant l'ampleur et la portée des investissements que nous faisons pour la communauté francophone, non seulement au sein du ministère des Affaires francophones, mais aussi avec les autres ministères.

Alors, madame la Présidente, le budget du ministère des Affaires francophones a doublé depuis 2018, lorsque nous avons pris le pouvoir. Le budget du ministère des Collèges et Universités—maintenant, nous avons des milliers de dollars que nous consacrons non seulement pour la construction mais aussi le fonctionnement des institutions postsecondaires francophones, comme l'Université de l'Ontario français. Le budget du ministère de l'Éducation contient plus de 2 milliards de dollars pour l'éducation francophone ici en Ontario.

Madame la Présidente, ça continue à travers le gouvernement. Le soutien de notre gouvernement pour la communauté francophone est fort et va continuer à être fort.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Ottawa–Vanier.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Madame la Présidente, au-delà des chiffres, la réduction réelle du budget cette année a des conséquences qui sont très concrètes et, en fait, la communauté francophone les ressent déjà.

Je vais parler du Festival franco-ontarien, qui est un exemple concret qui souffre vraiment d'une coupure importante. Comment expliquer que leur budget a passé de 235 000 \$ à 55 000 \$ en quelques années? Cette année, le Festival franco-ontarien célèbre 50 ans et aucun financement provincial n'a encore été confirmé. Le festival est la semaine prochaine.

La ministre peut-elle nous dire, en toute transparence, si son gouvernement entend réellement appuyer cette célébration emblématique de la communauté franco-ontarienne?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Tourism

Hon. Stan Cho: I'm glad that the member opposite brings up this very important festival, Festival franco-ontarien. It's something that has been around for 50 years and is an important festival, for sure in her riding but also to Franco-Ontarians.

That's why this government, since 2018, has supported that very festival with over \$1 million in funding. That

includes \$155,000 from Ontario Creates for live music, over \$170,000 in Ontario Trillium funding and nearly \$65,000 in Ontario Arts Council funding.

There's no doubt about it: The Experience Ontario program is a highly popular program. We've dedicated \$20 million to fund 356 festivals throughout the province. That's just the tip of the iceberg.

When it comes to Franco-Ontarians, we've dedicated \$135,000 this year alone in five festivals—throughout that very festival; \$4.3 million for projects benefiting Franco-phone communities. Like I said, it's a highly competitive program, but we are supporting Franco-Ontarians throughout this province. We encourage all Ontarians to get out there to their communities and celebrate everything Ontarian and Franco-Ontarian.

HIGHWAY TOLLS

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Ontario families and businesses are feeling the impacts of global inflation and higher costs. They need help and financial relief.

But the NDP and the Liberals love tolls and taxes. In fact, it was the Liberals who brought tolls to Highways 412, 418 and the provincially owned section of the 407 east. These tolls made life harder for drivers.

People in my riding are happy to see the tolls are gone. They want to know that our government will keep fighting for them.

Speaker, can the minister please tell us how our government is making life easier for drivers by removing tolls and putting money back in the pockets of hard-working families?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Hastings–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Ric Bresee: I thank the member for Whitby for that question.

The Liberal tolls of the provincially owned section of the 407 are officially gone. Ontario's publicly owned highways are now 100% toll-free. This will save regular commuters up to \$7,200 per year. That's amazing, Speaker.

Since day one, we've been focused on keeping costs down for families and for businesses. We removed the tolls that the Liberals put on both Highways 412 and 418. We froze fees on driver's licence renewals and photo ID cards that just kept escalating under the previous Liberal government. On top of that, we've scrapped the licence plate sticker, we scrapped Drive Clean fees and we permanently cut the gas tax.

For years, Liberals have raised taxes and tolls on hard-working families, but under this Premier, we will put money back in their pockets.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Whitby.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I want to thank the parliamentary assistant for his response. Families in my riding are proud that our government is standing up for drivers.

The Liberals made life harder for everyone by bringing in tolls on the 407 east, Highway 412 and Highway 418.

When asked about removing tolls on the 407 east, Bonnie Crombie said she “can’t make that commitment.” We all know tolls cost drivers more money every day, and some Liberal members even support putting more tolls on roads. For example, the member from Orléans openly supported a \$5-a-day toll on Highway 174. That would cost local drivers hundreds of dollars a month.

1110

Speaker, can the parliamentary assistant please tell this House how our government is fighting the Liberal push for more tolls and putting money back in drivers’ pockets?

Mr. Ric Bresee: Thank you again to the amazing member from Whitby. We know that tolls only make life more expensive. We have the history—we know that the Liberals and the NDP love their tolls.

So I find it ironic that the Liberal member for Ajax had fought to remove tolls on the 407 east. The Liberals are the ones who introduced tolls on the 407 east, and it was the Liberals who introduced tolls on the 412 and the 418. The member from Ajax ran for the party that put tolls on highways in Durham. In fact, his Liberal colleague the member from Beaches–East York described herself as a big believer in road tolls.

There’s only one party that continues to cut tolls and taxes. Under the leadership of this Premier, the Liberals’ tolls on the provincial roads are officially gone.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Ms. Sandy Shaw: This government is once again eradicating any protections for species at risk and their habitats. Ontario’s Auditor General has reported that under consecutive Conservative and Liberal governments, the number of approvals for projects that harm protected species has increased by over 6,000%. Bill 5 will further this harm by politicizing the process to water down species-at-risk classifications. Environmental Defence says this bill will “declare open season in Ontario on species that are listed as endangered, threatened or of special concern.”

So my question: Why does the Premier think that politicians—and not experts—should decide which species are considered at risk?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: Madam Speaker, through you: I’m glad the member opposite asked about species at risk, because we are transforming the protection and recovery of species at risk with a new Species Conservation Act. We are quadrupling the funding to protect, preserve and recover species—\$4.5 million annually, increasing now to \$20 million annually.

In addition, we have the strongest investigative powers available to our environmental compliance officers now, to detect and investigate, recover evidence and prosecute those few bad actors who would harm species at risk. We’re getting it done in a balanced and transformative way. I’m proud of our government’s initiative in this regard.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Was it transforming species or eradicating species, because that’s what we know you’re doing.

First Nations have been very clear: Bill 5 is a violation of their inherent treaty rights and is also a direct threat to First Nations’ lands and waters. Bill 5 will exclude First Nations from the species-at-risk process and will certainly deepen environmental harm.

Attawapiskat First Nation says they are deeply concerned that Ontario is seeking to purely politicize the protection of these species and the habitats that they and, ultimately, we rely on to survive.

Again, why is the Premier allowing politicians to decide which species and habitats are considered at risk, instead of listening to experts like First Nations communities?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

Hon. Greg Rickford: As stewards of the pristine lands in the Far North, as somebody who has lived there for quite a long time, I have a deep appreciation for what it means to First Nations people and their communities, living on the water and off the land. I think that this bill does nothing to infringe on those rights whatsoever. In fact, I think our commitment to consult on this bill in schedules that pertain and give rise to a duty to consult will be in there.

If we can move away from some of the silly amendments that the Liberal Party has put forward, get to the substance of matters, ensure the duty to consult is protected in every way—forget the Milk Act—let’s make sure we’re full partners with First Nations and protect species at risk in those beautiful lands.

PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Ms. Lee Fairclough: There’s a troubling theme running across legislation from this government. They consolidate power in the hands of few, they reduce individual rights and they erode oversight—all of this while ramming through legislation without the opportunity for public comments, scrutiny or amendments. So it is with Bill 11, schedule 6.

My question is for the Minister of Health. Why is she determined to push through this legislation that, according to the Information and Privacy Commissioner, would diminish patient access rights to their own records and grant the minister new powers, including overriding individual consent?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Let’s be clear: What Bill 11 will do is actually empower patients to ensure that the individuals who see their records—the clinicians who have access to their records—are chosen by the patient. It’s empowering the individual so that if they decide that their primary care provider wants to—they want to give access to their records, they can do that. Perhaps they don’t want another clinician that is also assisting them to be part of that access. That is patient empowerment. That is what we are doing.

We'll continue to work with the Information and Privacy Commissioner. They are a valuable input. But at the end of the day, we have to be ready to react and ensure that patients have access to their medical records. That's what people expect, and that's what we're going to give them.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: That's interesting, because last time I asked that question on this bill, you said you were working with the IPC. But her publicly posted letters say otherwise, and she's been ignored three times now.

So many bills of this government bundle disparate pieces of legislation most members can get behind with a schedule that is a power grab—Bill 5 is the most egregious example—and so it is with Bill 11. It contains schedules on French-language rights for home care, reporting on the cost of nursing agencies, scope of practice changes for nurse practitioners. All these things, I support.

Since 2007, I've been a strong advocate for patient access to their electronic health records, but this bill can and must be fixed to protect people's health privacy.

People deserve access and control over their records. Will the minister do the right thing and just fix it?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: We're absolutely fixing it. We're ensuring through Bill 11 that we have patients who can actually access their medical records. Why do we do that? Because people deserve to be part of their medical procedures and know exactly what's happening in their treatment pathway. You can't do that if you cannot access your records.

Bill 11 will allow us to do that. The Information and Privacy Commissioner and the ministry have a different view on how individuals can access—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Liberals will come to order.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: We want individuals to be able to use their health card to access their health records. Shocking, I know, but that is how we are going to ensure that people have the access that they deserve and have been asking for.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Mike Schreiner: My question is for the Premier. Tens of thousands of people have signed petitions against Bill 5. Over 100 organizations wrote a letter to the government asking them to kill Bill 5, the spokesperson calling it the worst bill in a generation. Farm organizations like the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the National Farmers Union have expressed concerns about Bill 5. Yesterday, many First Nations chiefs and thousands of allies stood on the front lawn calling on this government to kill Bill 5.

So, Speaker, instead of dividing people and attacking Indigenous rights and environmental protections and environmental oversight, will the Premier actually listen to the people of Ontario and kill Bill 5?

1120

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

Hon. Greg Rickford: The member opposite can talk about doom and gloom and griseous skies, Madam Speaker. We're focused on prosperity. We're focused on partnerships with First Nations so that we can help lift those communities out of poverty.

Madam Speaker, we have an extraordinary opportunity here: Get this right by proceeding to the duty to consult once the bill is passed and create the kind of prosperity for young First Nations people that they've never seen before but they have deserved for a very long time. That's our focus, and that's how we intended to proceed.

Let's get to the duty to consult. Let's get to building Ontario. Let's get to building shared prosperity.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Guelph.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Speaker, the only thing extraordinary about this bill is the unprecedented power grab that the government is implementing.

Creating special economic zones inspired by countries like Russia and China is not how you build prosperity in Ontario. Attacking First Nations rights, democratic oversight, environmental protections and labour laws is not how you create prosperity.

Even mining companies who have expressed support for the bill, like Glencore, have come out and said they are concerned about how this bill overrides the rule of law because rule of law is vital to creating prosperity in a democratic society like Ontario.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Will the government actually listen to First Nations and the people of Ontario—bring us together, unify us by killing Bill 5 and starting over again so we can get it right?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Economic Development.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, we heard from the Ontario Association of Architects. They have a new report showing that delays in site plan applications are costing Ontario's economy \$3.5 billion every single year. In the coming years, the competition to land these job-creating investments is going to be unlike anything we've ever seen in the past. We cannot have site applications that are supposed to be processed in 60 days take 23 months. That's what their report told us.

If we continue down this path, we are going to see jobs and investment leave our province. We won't even make the short list for companies to look at Ontario for their investments and expansions. Speaker, we need to move faster. That's why our government is preparing Bill 5.

INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MPP Paul Vickers: My question is for the Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation. We know that working with Indigenous communities is key to building a stronger Ontario. Indigenous

communities bring leadership, knowledge and a vision for a better economic future for their communities.

Our government knows that building roads, energy lines and training programs is more than just projects. It's about unlocking opportunity for everyone. Speaker, we have seen progress with the Northern Road Link. We have seen the Greenstone-area letters of confirmation. We have seen the shared prosperity agreement with Aroland First Nation. These partnerships bring jobs for Indigenous youth and workers. They bring investment. They bring training too.

Speaker, can the minister share how our government is working with Indigenous communities to lead economic growth?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I want to thank the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

A couple of weeks ago, I had an opportunity with some of my colleagues to announce \$3 billion. Now, check this out—through you to my colleagues: \$3 billion so that First Nations businesses, First Nations communities would have the access to the kind of capital that's required to build roads, to build transmission corridors, to participate in resource development, to give business the reality that the new way business is done here in Ontario is in full partnership with First Nations.

It was very well-received, not just by the Indigenous business leaders but by the business communities writ large, including over in London, England, where myself and Indigenous business leaders gathered at the London Stock Exchange, not just to celebrate the prospect of increased access to capital—but attracting new investments around the world to help build Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

MPP Paul Vickers: We know that economic reconciliation is more than just words. It's about building partnerships that make a real difference for Indigenous communities.

Our government is working with First Nations to build roads, energy lines and training programs. These projects unlock economic opportunities. They also support community goals. We've seen that with the shared prosperity agreement with Aroland First Nation. We've also seen it with an investment in the Greenstone energy transmission line. These projects mean more jobs, they mean more skills training, they also mean ownership opportunities for Indigenous youth and workers.

Speaker, can the minister explain how our government's economic development commitments are helping Indigenous communities lead the way?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Speaker, we have some experience with success when it comes to building legacy infrastructure, particularly in northern Ontario, or, frankly, transmission infrastructure, battery storage power—name your project.

Battery storage in southern Ontario, Greenstone gold, Côte gold, the Berens River bridge, the northern link—all of these major projects have one central feature to them: partnerships with First Nations and First Nations busi-

nesses. It is the reason why, in the first four years of this government, we were able to move resource projects like mines in record time, in stark contrast to the previous government—because First Nations businesses and First Nations communities were full partners—not impact benefit agreements of the past, but real involvement in the activities, whether it's the environmental assessment process or the business of building the future with partnerships with First Nations.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Chris Glover: The Conservatives say that Bill 5 is supposed to protect Ontario from Trump's tariffs by making, in part, Ontario Place a special economic zone.

So my question to the Premier is, how is a mega spa with a \$2.2-billion taxpayer subsidy to an Austrian spa protecting Ontario from Trump's tariffs?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Minister of Economic Development.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, again, this is a once-in-a-generation crisis. President Trump wants our jobs. He wants our industries. We could not be more clear about that.

If the NDP and the Liberals think we should just sit back while our jobs and investments go elsewhere—just say no.

We've seen what happens when these good projects are paralyzed by bureaucracy: communities suffer, workers pay the price.

It cannot, under any circumstances, take 15 years to get a shovel in the ground. Every delay is a lost opportunity. We owe it to the people of the province to get things done.

That's why we're moving forward with Bill 5. It will ensure that Ontario's economy, our powerhouse of Ontario, will be that powerhouse for decades to come.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Spadina-Fort York.

Mr. Chris Glover: I love that the minister's response to a once-in-a-lifetime crisis is to build a taxpayer-subsidized mega spa at Ontario Place.

Bill 5 is an attack on our democratic rights. It allows ministers to break any municipal, provincial or treaty law anywhere, anytime in Ontario. Bill 5 isn't protecting us from Trump's tariffs, it's importing Trump-style politics to Ontario.

We know that the Premier celebrated when Trump was re-elected in the United States.

So, my question, again, to the Premier: Does the Premier realize that to fight Donald Trump he doesn't have to become Donald Trump?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Energy and Mines.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Madam Speaker, let me tell you about legislation that creates provincially significant zones; legislation that gives cabinet the authority to exempt permitting; legislation that streamlines approvals and cuts it by half; legislation that reaffirms the duty to consult—this is the legislation of the NDP of BC. But I

can appreciate why you'd be slightly confused—so many parallels to what we're doing here.

I know it frustrates New Democrats and Liberals to recognize you are offside from the truth. You know how to lead a protest; you don't have a clue how to lead a modern economy.

1130

The Premier of this province is working around the clock—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'm going to ask the minister to withdraw.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Next question.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Speaker, through you to the Premier: We heard the ministers say earlier about the focus being on prosperity, but at what expense? This government is rushing Bill 5 through committee under the cover of night and refusing to consult properly with Indigenous communities, municipalities or the people directly affected. Why? Because consultation brings scrutiny and scrutiny brings accountability.

If this Premier truly believes this bill benefits Ontario, why not open it up to public consultation, public debate, instead of forcing it through a rigged process? Isn't this just the greenbelt scandal in a new disguise, another power grab—not powerhouse—dressed up as progress?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Economic Development.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: The Liberals and the NDP would rather have an Ontario where red tape bureaucracy continues to stall our job-creating projects. We simply cannot wait. The threat to our economy is too great. Inaction results in stagnation.

I've said this many times in this Legislature: President Trump wants our industry. He wants our jobs. He even wants our country. It's about time we get action and get our projects built.

It's unsustainable for a project to take 15 years to get shovels in the ground. I don't know how many times that has been repeated in this Legislature. If we don't act to get these land-creating projects approved, we are going to lose out on tens of billions of dollars.

Look, we've landed \$70 billion already. All of that \$70 billion that we've landed is under threat. That's why we're putting Bill 5.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Toronto—St Paul's.

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Speaker, we have seen this movie before, it's called The Greenbelt Grab—hand-picked developers, secret backroom deals and a total lack of accountability. But now, with Bill 5, this government is opening the door to more of the same economic zones with no transparency rules, no public consultation and no independent oversight.

Why should Ontarians believe this Premier won't once again reward his insiders while cutting out the public?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, we've seen this movie before too. We've sat in this Legislature and watched 300,000 manufacturing jobs leave the province of Ontario. We've seen this movie before. We have seen this, Speaker. They would rather have—in one of their bills earlier, in 2017, they shifted the economy from manufacturing in Ontario into the service sector. They were happy to lose those 300,000 jobs.

This Premier, Premier Ford, fought hard to bring that industry back here into Ontario. We've created a million jobs since we've taken office. All of those million jobs are at risk. That's why we're bringing Bill 5, Speaker.

RURAL ONTARIO

Mr. John Jordan: My question is for the Minister of Rural Affairs. Rural Ontario matters. It's home to 2.5 million people, myself included, who work hard, raise families and build our economy. They farm, they build, they create and they export, but they face big challenges as well. Tariffs from the US and other threats are hurting our rural families and our businesses.

We know the Liberals ignored rural Ontario for years. They talked down to and dismissed our communities' needs. Under the Liberals, rural Ontario was forgotten—no plan, no support, just neglect. Our government is showing respect and real support.

Speaker, can the minister share how our government is protecting rural Ontario from economic harm and tariffs and how we're proving that rural Ontario is valued, not ignored?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: We're very proud to support rural Ontario. Unlike the Liberals and opposition, who deemed rural Ontario a no man's land, I'm proud to call rural Ontario home, and it's through the leadership of Premier Ford and our government that we value the 2.5 million people who also call rural Ontario home.

Do you know we're generating \$113 billion towards Ontario's GDP, and we're exporting \$75 billion of manufactured goods, creating over 1.2 million jobs? Speaker, we have limitless potential for rural Ontario, and we plan to unleash it. That is why we announced at ROMA this past January the very first-ever strategic plan for rural economic development in Ontario.

We're going to get the job done. We're enabling opportunity, and we have bold plans to move forward—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Question?

Mr. John Jordan: Thank you, Minister.

We know that rural Ontario is diverse. Every community has its own opportunities and challenges and every voice matters. That's why local leadership is so important. We've seen first-hand how the Liberals ignored local voices and left rural Ontario behind—no plan, no investment, just neglect.

But our government is taking a different approach. We are listening to rural leaders. Frontenac county is waiting in my office as we speak. We are investing in their priorities. We are working together to make sure every community has a real chance to grow and prosper.

Speaker, can the minister share how the Rural Ontario Development Program is helping rural communities build capacity, attract opportunities and ensure a stronger future for generations to come?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Over the fall of 2024, I travelled the province twice over. We listened, we asked questions to understand and we moved forward with a collective vision with communities and municipal leaders that we met with. We recognize that every rural community has their unique opportunities as well as challenges.

In the spirit of listening, we were very pleased at ROMA to announce that we've revamped a funding program to be known as the Rural Ontario Development Program. We've doubled the funding. Over two years, we'll be investing \$20 million into projects that make sense and build safe and strong communities, develop business and also make sure that we have a strong workforce.

Speaker, part of our plan is working across ministerial responsibilities to make sure—

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa South has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to the question given by the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade regarding Bill 5. This matter will be debated today following private members' public business.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We have a deferred vote on government notice of motion number 5 relating to allocation of time on Bill 5, An Act to enact the Special Economic Zones Act, 2025, to amend the Endangered Species Act, 2007 and to replace it with the Species Conservation Act, 2025, and to amend various Acts and revoke various regulations in relation to development and to procurement.

Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1139 to 1144.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Members, please take your seats.

On June 2, 2025, Mr. Clark moved government notice of motion number 5 relating to allocation of time on Bill 5, An Act to enact the Special Economic Zones Act, 2025, to amend the Endangered Species Act, 2007 and to replace it with the Species Conservation Act, 2025, and to amend various Acts and revoke various regulations in relation to development and to procurement.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	Gualtieri, Silvia	Rickford, Greg
Anand, Deepak	Hamid, Zee	Riddell, Brian
Babikian, Aris	Hardeman, Ernie	Rosenberg, Bill
Bouma, Will	Holland, Kevin	Sabawy, Sheref
Bresee, Ric	Jones, Sylvia	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Jones, Trevor	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Jordan, John	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Cho, Stan	Kanapathi, Logan	Saunderson, Brian
Ciriello, Monica	Kerzner, Michael S.	Scott, Chris
Clark, Steve	Khanjin, Andrea	Scott, Laurie
Coe, Lorne	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Dave
Cooper, Michelle	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, David
Crawford, Stephen	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Graydon
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McCarthy, Todd J.	Smith, Laura
Denault, Billy	McGregor, Graham	Surma, Kinga
Dixon, Jess	Mulroney, Caroline	Tangri, Nina
Dowie, Andrew	Oosterhoff, Sam	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Pang, Billy	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Jill	Parsa, Michael	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fedeli, Victor	Pierre, Natalie	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Firin, Mohamed	Pirie, George	Vickers, Paul
Flack, Rob	Quinn, Nolan	Wai, Daisy
Ford, Doug	Racinsky, Joseph	Williams, Charmaine A.
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Rae, Matthew	

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	French, Jennifer K.	Rakocevic, Tom
Begum, Doly	Gates, Wayne	Sattler, Peggy
Bell, Jessica	Gélinas, France	Schreiner, Mike
Blais, Stephen	Gilmour, Alexa	Shamji, Adil
Bourgouin, Guy	Glover, Chris	Shaw, Sandy
Bowman, Stephanie	Hazell, Andrea	Smyth, Stephanie
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Hsu, Ted	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Burch, Jeff	Kernaghan, Terence	Stiles, Marit
Cerjanec, Rob	Lennox, Robin	Tabuns, Peter
Clancy, Aislinn	Mamakwa, Sol	Tsao, Jonathan
Collard, Lucille	McCrimmon, Karen	Vanthof, John
Fairclough, Lee	McKenney, Catherine	Vaugeois, Lise
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Watt, Tyler
Fraser, John	Pasma, Chandra	Wong-Tam, Kristyn

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 71; the nays are 42.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

PLAN TO PROTECT ONTARIO ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2025

LOI DE 2025 SUR LE PLAN POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 24, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes / Projet de loi 24, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1148 to 1149.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): On June 2, 2025, Mr. Oosterhoff moved third reading of Bill 24, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes.

All those in favour of the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	Hamid, Zee	Riddell, Brian
Anand, Deepak	Hardeman, Ernie	Rosenberg, Bill
Babikian, Aris	Holland, Kevin	Sabawy, Sheref
Bouma, Will	Jones, Sylvia	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bressee, Ric	Jones, Trevor	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Calandra, Paul	Jordan, John	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Cho, Stan	Kanapathi, Logan	Saunderson, Brian
Ciriello, Monica	Kerzner, Michael S.	Scott, Chris
Clark, Steve	Khanjin, Andrea	Scott, Laurie
Coe, Lorne	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Dave
Cooper, Michelle	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, David
Crawford, Stephen	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Graydon
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McCarthy, Todd J.	Smith, Laura
Denault, Billy	McGregor, Graham	Surma, Kinga
Dixon, Jess	Mulroney, Caroline	Tangri, Nina
Dowie, Andrew	Oosterhoff, Sam	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Pang, Billy	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Jill	Parsa, Michael	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fedeli, Victor	Pierre, Natalie	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Firin, Mohamed	Pirie, George	Vickers, Paul
Flack, Rob	Quinn, Nolan	Wai, Daisy
Ford, Doug	Racinsky, Joseph	Williams, Charmaine A.
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Rae, Matthew	
Gualtieri, Silvia	Rickford, Greg	

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): All those opposed to the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	French, Jennifer K.	Rakocevic, Tom
Begum, Doly	Gates, Wayne	Sattler, Peggy
Bell, Jessica	Gélinas, France	Schreiner, Mike
Blais, Stephen	Gilmour, Alexa	Shamji, Adil
Bourgouin, Guy	Glover, Chris	Shaw, Sandy
Bowman, Stephanie	Hazell, Andrea	Smyth, Stephanie
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Hsu, Ted	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Burch, Jeff	Kernaghan, Terence	Stiles, Marit
Cerjanec, Rob	Lennox, Robin	Tabuns, Peter
Clancy, Aislinn	Mamakwa, Sol	Tsao, Jonathan
Collard, Lucille	McCrimmon, Karen	Vanthof, John
Fairclough, Lee	McKenney, Catherine	Vaugeois, Lise
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Watt, Tyler
Fraser, John	Pasma, Chandra	Wong-Tam, Kristyn

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 70; the nays are 42.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): 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.

MORE CONVENIENT CARE ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025

POUR PLUS DE SOINS COMMUNES

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 11, An Act to enact or amend various Acts related to health care / Projet de loi 11, Loi visant à édicter ou à modifier diverses lois en ce qui concerne les soins de santé.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We have a deferred vote—

Interjection: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Same vote? Same vote.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 70; the nays are 42.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): 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.

PROTECT ONTARIO THROUGH FREE TRADE WITHIN CANADA ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN FAVORISANT LE LIBRE-ÉCHANGE AU CANADA

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 2, An Act to enact the Buy Ontario, Buy Canadian Day Act, 2025 and the Ontario Free Trade and Mobility Act, 2025 and to amend various other Acts / Projet de loi 2, Loi édictant la Loi de 2025 sur le Jour « Achetons ontarien, achetons canadien » et la Loi ontarienne de 2025 sur le libre-échange et la mobilité et modifiant diverses autres lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1153 to 1154.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): On June 2, 2025, Mr. Fedeli moved third reading of Bill 2, An Act to enact the Buy Ontario, Buy Canadian Day Act, 2025 and the Ontario Free Trade and Mobility Act, 2025 and to amend various other Acts.

All those in favour of the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Rakocevic, Tom
Anand, Deepak	Gates, Wayne	Rickford, Greg
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Riddell, Brian
Babikian, Aris	Gilmour, Alexa	Rosenberg, Bill
Begum, Doly	Glover, Chris	Sabawy, Sheref
Bell, Jessica	Gualtieri, Silvia	Sandhu, Amarjot
Blais, Stephen	Hamid, Zee	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Bouma, Will	Hardeman, Ernie	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Bourgouin, Guy	Hazell, Andrea	Sattler, Peggy
Bowman, Stephanie	Holland, Kevin	Saunderson, Brian

Brady, Bobbi Ann	Hsu, Ted	Schreiner, Mike
Bresee, Ric	Jones, Sylvia	Scott, Chris
Burch, Jeff	Jones, Trevor	Scott, Laurie
Calandra, Paul	Jordan, John	Shamji, Adil
Cerjanec, Rob	Kanapathi, Logan	Shaw, Sandy
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kernaghan, Terence	Smith, Dave
Cho, Stan	Kerzner, Michael S.	Smith, David
Ciriello, Monica	Khanjin, Andrea	Smith, Graydon
Clancy, Aislinn	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Laura
Clark, Steve	Lecce, Stephen	Smyth, Stephanie
Coe, Lorne	Lennox, Robin	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Collard, Lucille	Lumsden, Neil	Stiles, Marit
Cooper, Michelle	Mamakwa, Sol	Surma, Kinga
Crawford, Stephen	McCarthy, Todd J.	Tabuns, Peter
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McCrimmon, Karen	Tangri, Nina
Denault, Billy	McGregor, Graham	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dixon, Jess	McKenney, Catherine	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dowie, Andrew	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Tibollo, Michael A.
Downey, Doug	Mulroney, Caroline	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Dunlop, Jill	Oosterhoff, Sam	Tsao, Jonathan
Fairclough, Lee	Pang, Billy	Vanthof, John
Fedeli, Victor	Parsa, Michael	Vaugeois, Lise
Fife, Catherine	Pasma, Chandra	Vickers, Paul
Firin, Mohamed	Pierre, Natalie	Wai, Daisy
Flack, Rob	Pirie, George	Watt, Tyler
Ford, Doug	Quinn, Nolan	Williams, Charmaine A.
Fraser, John	Racinsky, Joseph	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
French, Jennifer K.	Rae, Matthew	

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): All those opposed to the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 113; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): 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.

SAFER MUNICIPALITIES ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 POUR DES MUNICIPALITÉS PLUS SÛRES

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act, 2025 and to amend the Trespass to Property Act respecting sentencing / Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2025 visant à restreindre la consommation en public de substances illégales et modifiant la Loi sur l'entrée sans autorisation en ce qui concerne le prononcé des peines.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1158 to 1159.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): On June 3, 2025, Mr. Flack moved third reading of Bill 6, An Act to enact the Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act, 2025 and to amend the Trespass to Property Act respecting sentencing.

All those in favour of the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Rickford, Greg
Anand, Deepak	Gualtieri, Silvia	Riddell, Brian
Babikian, Aris	Hamid, Zee	Rosenberg, Bill
Blais, Stephen	Hardeman, Ernie	Sabawy, Sheref
Bouma, Will	Holland, Kevin	Sandhu, Amarjot
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Jones, Sylvia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Bresee, Ric	Jones, Trevor	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Calandra, Paul	Jordan, John	Saunderson, Brian
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kanapathi, Logan	Scott, Chris
Cho, Stan	Kerzner, Michael S.	Scott, Laurie
Ciriello, Monica	Khanjin, Andrea	Smith, Dave
Clark, Steve	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, David
Coe, Lorne	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, Graydon
Cooper, Michelle	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Laura
Crawford, Stephen	McCarthy, Todd J.	Surma, Kinga
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McGregor, Graham	Tangri, Nina
Denault, Billy	Mulroney, Caroline	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dixon, Jess	Oosterhoff, Sam	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dowie, Andrew	Pang, Billy	Tibollo, Michael A.
Downey, Doug	Parsa, Michael	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Dunlop, Jill	Pierre, Natalie	Tsao, Jonathan
Fedeli, Victor	Pirie, George	Vickers, Paul
Firin, Mohamed	Quinn, Nolan	Wai, Daisy
Flack, Rob	Racinsky, Joseph	Williams, Charmaine A.
Ford, Doug	Rae, Matthew	

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): All those opposed to the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Rakocevic, Tom
Begum, Doly	Gélinas, France	Sattler, Peggy
Bell, Jessica	Gilmour, Alexa	Schreiner, Mike
Bourgouin, Guy	Glover, Chris	Shamji, Adil
Bowman, Stephanie	Hazell, Andrea	Shaw, Sandy
Burch, Jeff	Hsu, Ted	Smyth, Stephanie
Cerjanec, Rob	Kernaghan, Terence	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Clancy, Aislinn	Lennox, Robin	Stiles, Marit
Collard, Lucille	Mamakwa, Sol	Tabuns, Peter
Fairclough, Lee	McCrimmon, Karen	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	McKenney, Catherine	Vaugeois, Lise
Fraser, John	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Watt, Tyler
French, Jennifer K.	Pasma, Chandra	Wong-Tam, Kristyn

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 74; the nays are 39.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): 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.

PROTECT ONTARIO BY BUILDING FASTER AND SMARTER ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN CONSTRUISANT PLUS RAPIDEMENT ET PLUS EFFICACEMENT

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 17, An Act to amend various Acts with respect to infrastructure, housing and transit and to revoke a regulation / Projet de loi 17, Loi modifiant diverses lois en

ce qui concerne l'infrastructure, le logement et le transport en commun et abrogeant un règlement.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1203 to 1204.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): On June 3, 2025, Mr. Flack moved third reading of Bill 17, An Act to amend various Acts with respect to infrastructure, housing and transit and to revoke a regulation.

All those in favour of the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Rickford, Greg
Anand, Deepak	Gualtieri, Silvia	Riddell, Brian
Babikian, Aris	Hamid, Zee	Rosenberg, Bill
Blais, Stephen	Hardeman, Ernie	Sabawy, Sheref
Bouma, Will	Hazell, Andrea	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bressee, Ric	Holland, Kevin	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Calandra, Paul	Hsu, Ted	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Cerjanec, Rob	Jones, Sylvia	Saunderson, Brian
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Jones, Trevor	Scott, Chris
Cho, Stan	Jordan, John	Scott, Laurie
Ciriello, Monica	Kanapathi, Logan	Shamji, Adil
Clark, Steve	Kerzner, Michael S.	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Khanjin, Andrea	Smith, David
Collard, Lucille	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Graydon
Cooper, Michelle	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, Laura
Crawford, Stephen	Lumsden, Neil	Surma, Kinga
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McCarthy, Todd J.	Tangri, Nina
Denault, Billy	McCrimmon, Karen	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dixon, Jess	McGregor, Graham	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dowie, Andrew	Mulroney, Caroline	Tibollo, Michael A.
Downey, Doug	Oosterhoff, Sam	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Dunlop, Jill	Pang, Billy	Tsao, Jonathan
Fairclough, Lee	Parsa, Michael	Vickers, Paul
Fedeli, Victor	Pierre, Natalie	Wai, Daisy
Firin, Mohamed	Pirie, George	Watt, Tyler
Flack, Rob	Quinn, Nolan	Williams, Charmaine A.
Ford, Doug	Racinsky, Joseph	
Fraser, John	Rae, Matthew	

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Schreiner, Mike
Begum, Doly	Gilmour, Alexa	Shaw, Sandy
Bell, Jessica	Glover, Chris	Smyth, Stephanie
Bourguin, Guy	Kernaghan, Terence	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Bowman, Stephanie	Lennox, Robin	Stiles, Marit
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Mamakwa, Sol	Tabuns, Peter
Burch, Jeff	McKenney, Catherine	Vanthof, John
Clancy, Aislinn	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Vaugeois, Lise
Fife, Catherine	Pasma, Chandra	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
French, Jennifer K.	Rakocevic, Tom	
Gates, Wayne	Sattler, Peggy	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 82; the nays are 31.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): 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.

MEMBERS' BIRTHDAYS

Hon. Kevin Holland: I'd like to take this opportunity to wish our great Minister of Colleges and Universities a happy birthday.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I know everybody will join me in wishing the member from Ottawa Centre a very happy birthday as well today.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Happy birthday.

There being no further business—oh, I recognize the leader of the third party.

Mr. John Fraser: I can't be left out. I want to wish the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore a belated happy birthday, because I missed it yesterday. There we go.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1208 to 1500.

HOUSE SITTINGS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I understand that the government House leader rises on a point of order.

Mr. Steve Clark: Yes. Thank you, Speaker. Point of order: I'd just like to advise the House that the night sitting scheduled for this evening has been cancelled.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We can change that.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I'm proud to introduce and welcome my long-time friend and an incredible organizer, Jessica Pointon. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Graham McGregor: The member for Vaughan—Woodbridge once told me that if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together. So I have some friends joining us. They're not quite here in the gallery yet. They'll be joining us later today—some friends here together with us from the traditional Chinese medicine community: Thomas Wu, David Liu, Danny Li, and Ethan Guo.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS

PROTECT ONTARIO BY SECURING AFFORDABLE ENERGY FOR GENERATIONS ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN GARANTISSANT L'ACCÈS À L'ÉNERGIE ABORDABLE POUR LES GÉNÉRATIONS FUTURES

Mr. Lecce moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 40, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to energy, the electrical sector and public utilities / Projet de loi 40, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'énergie, le secteur de l'électricité et les services publics.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Would the minister like to briefly explain the bill?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: The Protect Ontario by Securing Affordable Energy for Generations Act, 2025, if passed, will help build an affordable, secure, reliable and clean energy system that powers the strongest economy in the G7.

The legislation will enshrine economic growth, job creation and strong governance as core objectives of Ontario's energy system, ensuring decisions align with Ontario's economic priorities and benefit local communities. It will strengthen Ontario's energy security by limiting adversarial foreign participation and enable more buy-Canadian policies that prioritize domestic investment, supply chains and jobs here at home.

In short, this legislation delivers clean, affordable energy for generations, powering our economy and people's lives.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

9-1-1 EVERYWHERE IN ONTARIO ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025

SUR LE 9-1-1 PARTOUT EN ONTARIO

Madame Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 41, An Act to enact the 9-1-1 Everywhere in Ontario Act, 2025 and to amend the Ombudsman Act to create an Assistant Ombudsman responsible for the oversight of 9-1-1 operations / Projet de loi 41, Loi édictant la Loi de 2025 sur le 9-1-1 partout en Ontario et modifiant la Loi sur l'ombudsman pour créer le poste d'ombudsman adjoint chargé de surveiller les activités du système 9-1-1.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Does the member wish to explain the bill?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Absolutely. Speaker, I will bring you back about seven years ago, on Lake Wanapitei, close to Capreol, where you used to live. There was a boating accident. In that boating accident, Stephanie Bertrand, Matthew Humeniuk and Michael Kritz died. There was an investigation by the coroner, who made multiple recommendations in the coroner's report. One of those recommendations has to do with bringing 911 everywhere.

As you know, if you dial 911 in most of my riding, you get, "This number is not in service. Please try your call again."

We are the only province that does not have 911 everywhere.

The bill will make for the Solicitor General an obligation related to the provision and the infrastructure for 911 everywhere in Ontario, as well as establish a position of ombudsman so that people who have issues with 911 service can make a complaint to the ombudsman.

JUSTICE FOR SOLI ACT (STOP CRIMINALIZING MENTAL HEALTH), 2025

LOI DE 2025 EXIGEANT LA JUSTICE POUR SOLI (ARRÊTER LA CRIMINALISATION DES PROBLÈMES DE SANTÉ MENTALE)

MPP Wong-Tam moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 42, An Act respecting the use of correctional facilities and mental health crises / Projet de loi 42, Loi concernant l'utilisation des établissements correctionnels et le traitement des crises de santé mentale.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Does the member wish to explain the bill?

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Yes, I would. Thank you very much, Speaker, for the opportunity.

The title of the bill is Justice for Soli Act (Stop Criminalizing Mental Health).

The bill aligns with the first recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Coroner's inquest into the death of Mr. Soleiman Faqiri, also known as Soli to many of his friends. The inquest report offered 57 recommendations to the provincial government to improve mental health resources in the criminal justice system. Mr. Soleiman Faqiri was a man with schizoaffective disorder who was subjected to restraints, pepper spray and isolation while in prison, which ultimately led to his death. During this time in correctional facilities, he was awaiting a medical evaluation. He was not able to see a psychiatrist, nor was he given access to hospital resources despite experiencing an acute

mental health crisis. The inquest deemed his death tragic and preventable.

It is with distinct honour and humility that I submit this bill once again to the House for consideration.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'm going to remind all members that it is a brief explanation, not a debate of a bill—a brief explanation.

Introduction of bills.

CONSENT AWARENESS WEEK ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 SUR LA SEMAINE DE SENSIBILISATION AU CONSENTEMENT

Ms. Sattler moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 43, An Act to proclaim Consent Awareness Week /
Projet de loi 43, Loi proclamant la Semaine de sensibilisation au consentement.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Does the member wish to briefly explain the bill?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I want to recognize my co-sponsors on the bill: the member for Toronto Centre, the member for Parkdale–High Park, and the member for Ottawa West–Nepean.

The bill proclaims the week beginning on the third Monday in September in each year as Consent Awareness Week.

As the preamble to the bill points out, sexual assault is one of the most under-represented and under-reported forms of violence in Canada. Typically, only 6% of sexual assaults are reported to the police. So ensuring that there's a clear understanding of consent and how to practise it is a key strategy if we are going to be able to end sexual assault.

Currently, only 45% of Canadians are estimated to fully understand what consent entails, and as we watch the Hockey Canada trial unfold in London, we're seeing the consequences of that: 45 universities and colleges are—

1510

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I'm just reminding members, this is not a time to debate the bills. This is a brief explanation of the bills.

HEALTHCARE STAFFING AGENCIES ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 SUR LES AGENCES DE RECRUTEMENT DE PERSONNEL DE SOINS DE SANTÉ

Madame Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 44, An Act respecting healthcare staffing agencies /
Projet de loi 44, Loi concernant les agences de recrutement de personnel de soins de santé.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Does the member wish to briefly explain the bill?

Mme France Gélinas: The bill is presented in collaboration with the members from Niagara Falls, Windsor West, and Sudbury.

The bill would require that every community with a population of over 8,000 people put a plan forward to limit the spending on health care staffing agencies.

If a health care staffing agency receives over \$400,000, they will be covered by the Auditor General, the Patient Ombudsman, the Ontario Ombudsman and the Integrity Commissioner.

Poaching from agencies is also outlawed, so that if somebody who was working in the health care system started working for a health care agency—they couldn't work within the same Ontario health teams.

PETITIONS

SERVICES FOR THE HEARING-IMPAIRED

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: This is a petition about Canadian Hearing Services. I've had many people in my riding come to the office with concerns about the spending of the organization, their treatment of their workers, fair and democratic—fair competition in the industry. They're being impacted by strikes right now, and deaf people are being impacted by their access to health care.

I will sign this petition. I fully support it. And I will hand it to Abd-Ur-Rehman.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm pleased to present this petition on behalf of the Lappin-Antler community in the Junction Triangle, in my riding of Davenport. They collected these signatures at a rally on May 29. It is addressed to the Legislative Assembly, to demand that Metrolinx proceed with the tendering of the Davenport Greenway project. It has been a real concern, a preoccupation for the community for some time that Metrolinx has not proceeded with this—particularly the Antler-Lappin connection, which many people think would be a really important community-building opportunity and was certainly committed to by Metrolinx quite a few years ago.

I'm very pleased to add to the hundreds of signatures here with my signature, and I do support this petition.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I am honoured to rise in this House to present this petition. It's entitled "Withdraw Bill 5—Maintain the Endangered Species Act," and it's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Endangered Species Act, 2007 ... has been instrumental in protecting Ontario’s biodiversity by providing science-based assessments, automatic species listings, and comprehensive habitat protection; and

“Whereas Bill 5 proposes to repeal the ESA and replace it with the Species Conservation Act ... which introduces discretionary species listings, narrows the habitat definitions, and removes mandatory recovery strategies, thereby weakening protections for at-risk species...;”

“The proposed legislation concentrates excessive decision-making power in the hands of a single minister, reducing transparency and accountability” to protect these species.

The undersigned of this petition call on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to defeat Bill 5, or withdraw it, “maintain the Endangered Species Act, 2007, while ensuring economic growth does not come at the expense of biodiversity and ecological integrity.”

I’ll be happy to sign this petition and send it back to the centre table with page Julia.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I have a petition here about raising social assistance.

We know that OW and ODSP is inadequate. CERB stated that a basic income was \$2,000 a month. This petition calls to double OW and ODSP.

I fully support this petition as a way to improve the lives of people with disabilities and living in abject poverty. I will sign my name and pass it to page Isabela.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Marit Stiles: I’m very pleased to present this petition on behalf of families who were at the Carleton Village Junior and Senior Sports and Wellness Academy fun fair on the weekend. They asked me to present this. It’s a petition entitled “Invest in Our Schools.”

This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario for the province to fix the funding formula once and for all, so that we can have schools hire more staff and put more qualified educators in classrooms and invest in the mental health and special education needs of our schools. This is an issue that matters a lot to families in that community, a wonderful public school.

I’m very happy to affix my signature, and there are hundreds of signatures here. I’ll be passing it along to page Vish.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I continue to receive lots of petitions, which I’m reading in the Legislature, to stop Bill 5, to protect Ontario’s future.

The signatures of these petitions are noting that they see Bill 5 as a sweeping attack on Indigenous rights, environmental oversight, democratic accountability, and labour laws.

They’re calling on the Legislature to call on the government to stop Bill 5.

I support this petition. I will sign it and ask page Nathan to bring it to the table.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Ms. Marit Stiles: I’m very pleased to present this petition on behalf of families at Carleton Village Junior and Senior Sports and Wellness Academy, a public school in Davenport, my riding. It’s entitled “Fix Our Schools.” This was signed by hundreds and hundreds of people this weekend at the school fun fair. They’ve asked me to present this here.

Basically, it petitions the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to develop and implement a standard of good repair for our schools, particularly since we’ve seen such an extraordinary repair backlog—over \$16 billion right now—with TDSB schools requiring \$4 billion, at least, in repairs. It’s urgently needed.

I’m very happy to support this petition by signing it and passing it along to page Calvin to table.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I, too, have a petition to stop Bill 5 and protect Ontario’s future.

Hundreds and hundreds of people showed up at Kitchener city hall this weekend and signed these petitions because they’re concerned about democracy, Indigenous rights, and a pro-sprawl and anti-community agenda that’s a replica of the greenbelt. They don’t believe in the weakening of the Endangered Species Act, and they believe that we need to stop Bill 5 and start over again.

I fully support this petition. I thank the people of Kitchener Centre for putting their name forward. I will sign it, and I will pass it to page Noah.

INSTALLATIONS SCOLAIRES

M^{me} Chandra Pasma: J’ai l’honneur de présenter une pétition aujourd’hui qui a été créée et circulée par les élèves du Comité 73 de l’École secondaire catholique La Citadelle à Cornwall.

Nous savons que, trop souvent, les élèves franco-ontariens sont dans des vieux bâtiments usés que les anglophones n’en veulent pas, tandis que les élèves anglophones juste à côté ont une belle école toute neuve. Cette situation nuit au droit constitutionnel des élèves francophones de recevoir une éducation de la même qualité que les élèves anglophones en Ontario.

Ces élèves à La Citadelle sont dans un édifice qui a été construit en 1948, qui a besoin des réparations importantes. Ils devraient avoir un édifice moderne, sécuritaire et équitable, mais le gouvernement conservateur n’a pas fourni les fonds nécessaires, et le député conservateur pour la région ne répond même pas à la demande de ces élèves. Donc, ces élèves demandent à l’Assemblée le financement nécessaire pour construire

une nouvelle école secondaire catholique de langue française à Cornwall.

Je dois vous prévenir : ces élèves ne reculeront pas jusqu'à ce qu'ils gagnent. Ils ont une fière histoire derrière eux—c'était une grève par les étudiants francophones en 1973 qui a mené à la création de La Citadelle. Je suis sûre que ces étudiants seront également victorieux.

Je remercie les élèves du Comité 73 pour leur initiative, y compris leur premier ministre Jacob Pilon. J'appuie cette pétition. Je vais ajouter ma signature et l'envoyer à la table avec le page Abd-Ur-Rehman.

1520

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: I have a petition today from residents in my riding regarding Bill 5, the Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act. Residents are concerned that it will unleash unchecked ministerial power, sacrificing environmental, cultural and legal protections in order to fast-track politically favoured developments by designating special economic zones that run afoul of current laws, dismantle the Endangered Species Act and deny the treaty rights of First Nations people.

They're asking the Legislative Assembly to consider withdrawing the bill to ensure that we protect Ontario's resources and we do it the right way, with transparent planning, environmental stewardship, consultation with First Nations and long-term benefits for residents.

With all the petitions on this topic, I certainly support it, and I will affix my signature and give it to page Isabela.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I have a petition that came to me from residents of Parry Sound who are deeply concerned about a mega-school, grades K to 12, there, partly because of having so many students in the same building of different ages—but also that the school will require portables even when it's built.

They're calling on the Legislative Assembly to instruct the government to go with the community's preferred model, which would be a new high school in Parry Sound for grades 7 to 12, and to maintain the existing community-supported McDougall Public School for kindergarten to grade 6 students.

I support this petition. I'll sign it and ask page Shreyas to bring it to the table.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I'm proud to rise in this House to present a new petition. This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. The title of this petition is "Protect Ontario Consumers: Stop the Sale of Stolen Palestinian Land in Ontario."

Real estate events, as you may be aware, are being held across Ontario that promote the sale of foreign real estate in Ontario and to Ontario consumers, which further illegal

Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian land. These activities are prohibited under international law. These events are happening behind closed doors, with no transparency about who is selling the real estate, how it's obtained, whether it's legal, or what financial risks there are to Ontarians. These real estate sales violate the spirit of Ontario's Consumer Protection Act and raise very serious concerns about international humanitarian law.

The government of Ontario is being called upon to do everything they can to protect Ontario consumers from misinformation and illegal activity.

They are calling on this House to end the sale and expansion of illegal settlements, a long-recognized barrier to international lasting peace.

They are also calling to take action to protect consumers as quickly as possible, to require public disclosure of this information, and to issue a province-wide warning about these real estate events under the Consumer Protection Act.

I'm pleased to sign this petition and to send it back to the centre table with page Emma.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Ms. Chandra Pasma: It's my pleasure to rise today to table this petition, which was created and circulated by Pam and Andrea of Greeley.

The petitioners are calling on the assembly to withdraw Bill 5 and maintain the Endangered Species Act, 2007, because they note that the Endangered Species Act has been very important to protecting species in Ontario, especially because it's based on science-based assessments and comprehensive habitat protections.

The petitioners note that Bill 5, in repealing the Endangered Species Act, takes away that scientific assessment of which species actually need to be protected and no longer protects the whole habitat, and in not protecting the whole habitat actually puts these species at risk.

They note that although we need to support our economy, it should not come at the irreversible cost of losing species that we would never be able to get back, along with natural ecosystems.

Thank you to Pam and Andrea and all the signatories. I wholeheartedly support this petition. I will add my name to it and send it to the table with page Vish.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I have a petition from constituents in the riding of Essex—specifically, from River Canard. They are talking about Donald Trump's tariffs causing chaos in the market, in the auto sector and in the global economy. They also talk about how factories are being shut down, not only on the Canadian side, but on the American side of the border as a direct result of these tariffs.

They're calling on the Ontario government to continue working with the United States to lift tariffs for the benefit of both countries and to protect Ontario businesses and

workers who are being negatively affected by these unjust tariffs.

I endorse this petition, and I will sign it and send it with this good page, Jessica, to the Clerks' table.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thank you to the tireless Dr. Sally Palmer of McMaster University for this petition.

The petitioners note that many people in Ontario are living in poverty because their incomes are well below the Market Basket Measure.

We've seen during the pandemic already that there was a standard set for what people need for basic survival in Canada, and that's \$2,000 a month.

The petitioners are asking that the Legislative Assembly please double Ontario Works and ODSP so that we can lift everybody above the level of poverty in Ontario and everybody can live a life of dignity in our province.

I wholeheartedly endorse this petition. I will add my signature to it and send it to the table with page Nathan.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm glad to present this petition called "Withdraw Bill 5."

Whereas the Endangered Species Act has been instrumental in protecting Ontario's biodiversity by providing science-based assessments, automatic species listings and comprehensive habitat protections; and

Whereas Bill 5 also proposes to repeal the ESA and replace it with the Species Conservation Act, which introduces discretionary species listings; and

Whereas the proposed legislation concentrates excessive decision-making in the hands of a specific single minister;

They acknowledge the importance of supporting Ontario's economy during turbulent times, but such efforts must not come at the irreversible cost of our most vulnerable wildlife and natural ecosystems.

I support this petition. We want to maintain the Endangered Species Act and ensure economic growth does not come at the expense of biodiversity. I will affix my name and send it to the table with page Calvin.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECT ONTARIO THROUGH SAFER STREETS AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES ACT, 2025 LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN RENDANT LES RUES PLUS SÛRES ET LES COLLECTIVITÉS PLUS FORTES

Mr. Downey moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill 10, An Act to enact the Measures Respecting Premises with Illegal Drug Activity Act, 2025 and to

amend various Acts with respect to public safety and the justice system / Projet de loi 10, Loi édictant la Loi de 2025 sur les mesures visant les lieux où se déroulent des activités illégales liées à la drogue et modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne la sécurité publique et le système judiciaire.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Doug Downey: I'm pleased to rise in the House today to continue debate on the Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act.

I'll be splitting my time today with the parliamentary assistant to the Attorney General, the member from Hamilton Mountain.

If passed, Bill 10 would strengthen our justice system, protect our communities, and keep repeat violent offenders behind bars.

The proposed Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act builds on the previous work of this Legislature, including the Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act passed by the Legislature at the end of last year. It is part of this government's ongoing commitment to do what it takes to keep our communities safe.

Just two months ago, our government received a strong mandate from the people of Ontario to protect Ontario. It's a mandate to protect our workers and businesses from tariffs and economic uncertainty, but it's also a mandate to protect our communities and make our streets safe.

The changes and related measures that we're proposing today build on our government's ongoing work to strengthen public safety and protect Ontario communities.

We hear too many stories about people feeling unsafe with the growing threat of crime across the province. We know more needs to be done to protect communities and keep people safe.

That's why we're proposing measures in this act to hold offenders accountable, recover stolen vehicles, dismantle organized crime rings, and support victims.

As part of this legislation, the Major Auto Theft Prosecution Response Team launched in 2023 is now a permanent resource to help combat auto theft. This team provides dedicated prosecutors and legal supports within communities with the highest rates of auto theft, including the greater Toronto area, Ottawa, London, Windsor, and beyond. They work directly with the OPP to provide advice and to help prosecute cases.

1530

I've heard directly from leaders, communities and victims, many who have asked for change, and most notably, to our bail system.

That's why we are introducing a three-pronged tough-on-crime strategy to strengthen our justice system and improve the existing bail system. We are giving prosecutors the tools they need to hold violent and repeat offenders accountable, and that means stronger bail teams, tighter monitoring and faster action in the courts.

Madam Speaker, just over a year ago, we launched new bail teams made up of special prosecutors, and they are

already producing real results. These teams have been involved in more than 3,000 cases, helping people accused of serious crimes stay behind bars, and helping resolve those cases faster than ever before. That's why we are introducing changes to make these dedicated Intensive Serious Violent Crime Bail Support Teams permanent across Ontario.

We've heard the federal government—with the new Prime Minister, in his very first public speech—talk about the importance of strengthening the bail system. The Premier, just yesterday, was meeting with the Premiers and territorial leaders from across the country, and the Prime Minister—and it's not just in Ontario; it's something that has to be dealt with across the country, and I'm pleased to hear it is a priority for the federal government. We'll be pressing them to make sure that it's real and not just performative, to make sure that we get the supports in our communities to keep our people safe and to keep criminals behind bars.

Madam Speaker, you know that as the pressure on the courts continues to grow, we have to do something about that. We need to support our judiciary by taking important steps to help keep pace with the complex and rigorous work being done by prosecutors and the courts to hold offenders accountable. We need to do more to help protect victims and uphold the law.

That's why we are introducing new tough-on-crime measures to help strengthen the justice system.

We are proposing new changes to the Courts of Justice Act to streamline the judicial appointments process and speed up the appointment of judges to the Ontario Court of Justice. Shifting to a pool-based recommendation process would increase the number of candidates available to be selected for various judicial positions.

Last year, our government made history by significantly increasing court capacity at the Ontario Court of Justice with a \$29-million investment to add at least 25 new judges to the court. This year, we're going further by allocating an additional 17 judges to the Ontario Court of Justice to ensure courts keep pace with a growing number of complex cases. That is 42 new judges to a system, with the Ontario Court of Justice, that currently had 300, so we've moved from 300 to 342. But we know we can do more.

With more resources, we can meet the challenge faster, and that helps everybody. If somebody is innocent, we want them to get to trial and be found innocent. If they're guilty, we want them found guilty and held accountable. So adding resources is important.

On top of those 42 judges, in the budget that Minister Bethlenfalvy tabled, it indicated that we're complementing that with an additional 10 judges over three years, for a total of 52 new judges. This is historic progress as we work to reduce the pending cases before the courts and ensure they're resolved in a timely manner.

Madam Speaker, when we add a judge, it isn't just a judge; it's the seven staff who go around them—the victims' services, the system navigators, the prosecutors. We are adding resources across the system and not just in

one spot. It's all part of our plan to increase court capacity to protect Ontario.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to further discuss this legislation.

Premier Ford's commitment to public safety is unwavering, and our government will never rest when it comes to protecting Ontario.

If passed, the initiatives in the Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act will help keep Ontarians and communities safe by tackling crime and strengthening our justice system. I look forward to engaging further with the people of Ontario and our valued partners on this important legislation.

I'll now turn things over to the member from Hamilton Mountain. Thank you. Merci. Meegwetch.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): It's rotation now.

The member from Toronto Centre.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Thank you, Speaker. I want to say it's a rookie mistake.

I'm honoured to rise to speak to Bill 10 and to speak in this House for the second time to this bill. Although we desperately need to see reforms and improvements to the justice system, this bill does not advance these meaningful reforms that we are looking for. This bill has now been subject to time allocation, and it is not being permitted to go to committee for line-by-line review. More importantly than that, there's no public input allowed.

Speaker, as you can imagine, for a bill as important as one that reforms the justice system and how justices are appointed, that leaves many troubled—and specifically, the legal community has submitted a number of communications which I will now have to share here, because they were not allowed to be heard in committee.

The Ontario justice system is indeed in crisis. We are desperately needing more capacity, more funding and more staffing in our courts, to ensure that those cases are not thrown out due to unconstitutional delays. We've heard that delays do come, and we also have learned that when charges—even serious ones and violent offenders, repeat offenders—are stayed, then they're back out on the streets. Survivors have seen their cases tossed out. We've seen human traffickers—where the charges have been stayed, largely because of unconstitutional delays.

Innocent people are spending an exorbitant amount of time in the detention and justice system. Over 80% of the current population there has not been convicted of a crime—only charged of a crime.

Headaches and economic upheaval for families abound for all sides.

And yet, this government refuses to hear from these community members, and they have been ignoring the esteemed justice advocates. They have been ignoring legal experts who this government should be listening to, because we can all benefit from their advice.

Legal organizations, crown attorneys, judges do not feel like they have the freedom to speak out publicly or criticize the government, which I do understand.

Even the Ontario Chief Justice had to say something, despite the fact that justices don't generally comment publicly on matters of political policy—but they had to even call out the Premier for his remarks about wanting to politicize the judiciary and wanting to subject them to elections. Of course, as we know, that American-style system does not work and has oftentimes created huge challenges in the American justice system.

I want to share feedback from the Advocates' Society, a dedicated group of members from the bar who actively work to ensure the rights and privileges of Ontarians are upheld. They have a very noble and necessary mission. I'm going to specifically quote directly from their letter that went straight to the Attorney General:

"The Advocates' Society strongly urges you not to proceed with Bill 10's proposed changes to the process for appointing judges to the Ontario Court of Justice under the Courts of Justice Act. These proposed amendments create a threat to judicial independence and will weaken public confidence in the justice system in Ontario."

Judicial independence is the cornerstone of the Canadian justice system. People, corporations and governments go to courts to resolve their disputes with one another. Judges determine these disputes, and they can also then determine whether they deny someone bail, convict someone accused of a crime. They can sentence them, and they can decide who has the custody of children after parents separate. These judges make life-altering decisions, and we need those decisions to be based on evidence presented before them—and it has to be applied evenly against the law, without any influence and without being seen to be influenced by any other consideration in their decision-making. This is the very cornerstone in the principle of judicial independence, and it is something that's now under threat with Bill 10.

As the Supreme Court of Canada has succinctly observed, "Litigants who engage our judicial system should be in no doubt that they are before a judge who is demonstrably independent and is motivated only by a search for a just and principled result." The right to have these disputes decided by an independent judiciary has been enshrined in Canada's Constitution as a right enjoyed by every single Canadian. This last point bears repeating, Speaker: The right to judicial independence does not belong to the judges, but to litigants, the parties who appear before the courts.

1540

Bill 10 is setting out a proposed set of recommendations where the Attorney General can now change the evaluation criteria or even the review for the judicial appointments. Of course, this is incredibly troubling, which is why the legal community is listening to what the Attorney General has said about how he wants to appoint more judges to share his specific personal values. They have listened to what the Premier has said about politicizing and getting more US-based judges. What they've heard is alarming, and that alarm is causing the legal community to reverberate, which is why we are receiving so much communication in opposition to Bill 10, which may explain

why this government doesn't want to go to committee, which may explain why this government is truncating any opportunity for debate—because they simply don't care about what the public input is, and they don't even care about what the legal community has to say about a specific bill that's going to radically change the justice system, especially as it relates to judicial appointments.

The Advocates' Society is extremely troubled by the proposed abandonment of any type of short-list mechanism in favour of a pool-based system of appointments. They are calling on this government to halt this process and to ensure that any recommendation and advice coming forward is going to be based on the merits and the experience of the candidates, and not necessarily on political decision-making. The impartiality and the equality and the independence of the judges—have to uphold the confidence of the people. And the Advocates' Society fears that this process is going further to undermine public confidence in the government and the way they're handling the justice system.

The Advocates' Society concludes—and I have to say that they wrote this, but I entirely concur: "There are many areas of the justice system that require the government's resources and attention for improvement. The judicial appointments process is not one of them." The selection process already is transparent, already is independent. The delay to the appointments of the judiciary is primarily due to a resource issue that the government could address by allocating more funds, more staff and more capital to the justice system. That is what they want to see, not what is contained in Bill 10.

Speaker, I would like to move on to comments from the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario, a specialty legal clinic that goes far and beyond to support their clients. They work specifically with people who are precariously underhoused and homeless.

Their best legal advice coming forward to this government is that there are many problems within the justice system—and once again, echoing what was said by the Advocates' Society, the solutions to the problems in the justice system are, again, not contained in Bill 10. What they have to say—specifically, about schedule 8—is that Bill 10 claims to target illegal drug activity, but its language is so vague, and the powers that it gives police and landlords now risk deepening the housing precarity of Ontario's most vulnerable residents. Those most likely to be impacted include tenants in informal arrangements, shared accommodations, housing not covered by the Residential Tenancies Act, or those with unclear tenancy status. I will translate all of that for you: It means tenants who are living in supportive housing or housing with supports. Those are the tenants who are now at greater risk of being unhoused because of the way schedule 8 is written. So there's too much room for interpretation.

ACTO now fears that evictions will be based on suspicion rather than evidence, and that occupants will now be facing further and deeper homelessness. There will be confusion, based on the way Bill 10 is written today, between the victims and the perpetrators in situations

where tenants are being exploited, particularly in the context of housing takeover. Housing takeover is when you have a vulnerable resident in a home who has somebody from the outside, not on the tenancy, who takes over their unit and carries out illegal activity. But the tenant on the lease is the one who's on the hook. There is no protection or even consideration in schedule 8 on how that will play out, and so in the absence of a process that allows for the committee consultation for public feedback, they are coming out in full force, saying that this bill is going to do more harm than good.

The government has promised guidance for landlords, but that landlord guidance is unclear. This bill is clearly not ready to be passed. We live in a profit-driven housing market. Landlords may treat police involvement as justification for eviction, leading to backdoor evictions and reduced tenant security, something that will further deepen the housing crisis in Ontario. If you think that there are enough encampments in your community and you think that it's going to stop with this bill, this bill does nothing to help your local community with respect to ending the homelessness and encampment crisis.

I want to thank ACTO for their feedback. I know that it's been very frustrating for legal observers to not be able to speak directly to this government or even directly to the committee, who had the responsibility to review this bill, and that responsibility that we take very seriously at committee has now been stripped away. This is the only opportunity I have to bring their voices into the House. I really wish that we could do so much more, including sending this bill to committee where we can have a thoughtful deliberation, review the consideration and feedback from the legal experts to make sure that amendments move forward in a manner that will improve and strengthen the bill and even have the opportunity to ask government and the minister—the Attorney General in this case—what was his true intention behind the bill. We are not able to do any of that.

It is with sadness that I cannot recommend that we support this bill because there's just so much in here that is wrong, and the government has taken that responsibility away from us.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): Further debate?

M^{me} Lucille Collard: I rise today to speak to Bill 10, Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act. While there are parts of the bill I support, especially efforts to stop illegal drug trafficking, I am concerned about the changes to how judges are appointed in Ontario. The most troubling part of this bill is how it gives the Attorney General more control over the Judicial Appointments Advisory Committee, those committees that were specially created to keep politics out of the appointment process. This bill goes back on that principle because giving a politician more influence over that process weakens the independence of our courts, because even the appearance of political interference damages trust in our justice system.

Ontario's current process works. It's fair, transparent and based on merit. That's how we ensure that everyone,

regardless of background or income, gets equal treatment in court. Yes, we do need to appoint more judges to avoid delays, but efficiency shouldn't come at the cost of judicial independence. I urge the government to take a step back and consult with legal experts before moving forward with such a big change. Unfortunately, we won't be able to do that because we're not going to committee, so, hopefully, the government will take it upon themselves to do that.

I do want to acknowledge what the bill gets right, which is more funding to fight human trafficking. This crime targets vulnerable people, especially women, youth, newcomers and Indigenous people, and leaves deep scars. As you may know, I introduced a bill that passed unanimously to help survivors erase debts forced on them by traffickers. In fact, I know you know; you co-sponsored that bill. It's time to bring that law into force so survivors can get a fresh start. I welcome the new funding for victim support, and I urge the government to ensure that front-line local organizations, the ones helping survivors every day, receive those resources.

I also support schedule 8 of this bill. It requires landlords to make sure their properties aren't used for drug production or trafficking. It gives municipalities and police more tools to shut down dangerous operations and recover cleanup costs. In communities like Ottawa–Vanier, this matters. Illegal drug activity in residential buildings puts everyone at risk: tenants, neighbours and emergency workers. It also impacts those facing poverty or housing challenges. But we must be cautious. These new powers should never be used to unfairly target people struggling with addiction or those in vulnerable housing situations.

1550

Speaker, this bill is a mix of good ideas and overreach. I support the fight against human trafficking—obviously—and illegal drug operations, but I cannot support giving politicians more control over judicial appointments. Our courts must remain independent, not shaped by political agendas. Ontario's justice system belongs to the people. Let's keep it that way.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I rise to offer a few comments to debate on Bill 10. Like the previous member, there are elements of this bill I find positive, like addressing child trafficking. But Speaker, one of the cornerstones of our judicial system in Canada that makes it one of the best in the entire world is the fact that we do not have political interference in the appointment of judges. We don't have American-style politicalization of our judiciary. We've had a system for generations now in Ontario where there has been an independent process around how judges are selected. This government continues to chip away at that process—Bill 10 being the latest and which gives the Attorney General far too much power over the selection of justices in our judiciary. I think we've seen the motivation of why the government wants to politicize the judiciary by the comments the Premier has made attacking judges, which I think undermines trust and confidence in the independence of our judiciary.

If you want to look at why that is so problematic, we only have to look south of the border to see how the politicalization of the judiciary undermines confidence in institutions, undermines confidence in the criminal justice system and people's access to justice in an independent and impartial way. We see how the judiciary can be abused for political reasons. I don't even think we want to open the door to that in Canada or even crack the door open for that in Canada. That is the primary reason I do not support this bill.

If the government wants to have conversations about the appointment process of judges, then, you know what, let's have committee hearings. Let's have experienced justices of all political persuasions come to committee and actually give us recommendations. That has not happened with Bill 10. I find that deeply problematic and deeply concerning, given some of the other things, like Bill 5, that are happening in this House right now. Let's keep that out of our judicial system. Let's maintain the impartiality of our justices. Let's continue with the process that has worked so well to maintain such confidence in our judicial system.

Speaker, I want to close by a few comments around bail reform. I think it is wrong that people who have offended get out. But the primary reason that is happening in Ontario is that we have so many court delays that people's trials aren't happening, and because their trials aren't happening, they're being released. As a matter of fact, 80% of people in provincial jails right now in Ontario are just awaiting trial. Why don't we invest in the judicial system and speed the process up so people get their hearings and so those who committed crimes receive the punishment they deserve and the public remains protected and safe? But unfortunately, this government has under-invested in that criminal justice system.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): Further debate?

MPP Monica Ciriello: I'm grateful for the opportunity to rise today and speak to the Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act. I'm proud to share the latest measures in our government's plan to strengthen the justice system and protect our communities.

The Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act proposes a comprehensive set of practical reforms. These measures are designed to:

- reinforce our bail system;
- crack down on serious and organized crime;
- combat auto theft;
- address intimate partner violence;
- tackle human trafficking;
- target illicit drug operations;
- enhance funding for police services;
- modernize the judicial appointments process; and
- strengthen both our justice and correctional systems.

Through this legislation, we are proposing changes to make sure our law enforcement, our courts and all justice system partners have the tools and resources they need to address serious crimes and to find solutions to strengthen public safety within Ontario.

Speaker, I want to start by talking about how our government is supporting victims. We've heard disturbing stories about the rise in human trafficking here in Ontario and across the country. There is no place for this in Ontario. To combat human trafficking in hotels, our government will bring to force the Accommodation Sector Registration of Guests Act on January 1, 2026. This will provide police with the tools they need to help investigate human trafficking, as they could more easily obtain related information obtained by hotels and other prescribed businesses.

We are also proposing to proceed with the consultation on the implementation of Bill 41, Protection from Coerced Debts Incurred in relation to Human Trafficking Act. This act would reduce the financial hardship survivors face because of human trafficking and allow them to make progress on their path to recovery.

Speaker, I want to turn attention to a more troubling topic. As we know, gun and gang activity is on the rise in Ontario. We need to take significant steps to combat this disturbing reality. Drug, human and gun trafficking are fuelling gang operations, and gangs continue to recruit at-risk youth and young adults. We will spare no expense to keep our communities and our kids safe for today, tomorrow and for generations to come. That's why we've invested in initiatives under the Guns, Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy to further expand our dedicated guns and gangs unit in targeted regions across this province.

In the same breath, we are announcing measures to address the pervasive problem of auto theft across this province. Drivers and families across Ontario need to have the peace of mind of knowing that their vehicles will be where they have left them. As mentioned by the Attorney General, we hear too many stories about people feeling unsafe with the growing threat of auto thieves in communities across the province. We know more needs to be done to protect communities and keep people safe. That's why we're proposing measures that build on our ongoing work to tackle auto theft, stop criminal activity before it even happens and support victims in this province.

And whether it's on the streets or in the digital world, our government is doubling down on our commitment to protect Ontario and keep our communities safe. Every day, there are new reports of data breaches and new kinds of online fraud. That's why we're creating the first cyber crime and cryptocurrency prosecution team in Canadian history, right here in Ontario. We're the first among the provinces to lead the charge, and we're setting an example for the rest of the country.

We are also working to establish a new user fee system for people who are ordered by court to wear an ankle monitor as a condition of release or sentence. Our plan will have those accused or convicted of serious crimes cover the cost of these monitors, rather than putting the cost on taxpayers. The proceeds will cover the cost of the ankle monitoring program and will also support victims of crime. We're doing whatever it takes to make sure our streets, our homes and our communities are safe again.

Speaker, if passed, the Protect Ontario Through Safer Streets and Stronger Communities Act will build on our government's record investments in law enforcement, prosecution teams, border and bail enforcement. These changes reflect our commitment to a justice system that puts public safety first, supports victims and gives law enforcement the tools they need to do their jobs effectively.

With this legislation, Ontario is stepping forward with strength, purpose and clarity, making it clear that we will protect our streets, stand up for our communities and do what it takes to build a safer, stronger province for all.

1600

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): Further debate?

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: I have serious concerns about this bill and how it inserts politicians and, specifically, ministers into our law enforcement and legal systems. This bill exerts extra influence on the selection of OPP detachment commanders. And we've gotten no answers about what the minister plans to add as regulations.

This bill allows the minister to designate people as special constables with the right to wield a firearm—the minister. Deciding who can wield a firearm is a deeply important responsibility entrusted to our chiefs of police. They are the officials with the experience, training and knowledge to make these responsible decisions. Also, police chiefs are directly answerable to their communities—not so a minister, who might be from another part of the province. Our communities deserve local decisions as to whether more firearms on their streets is what will make them feel safer, and also who will be entrusted to wield these firearms.

Speaker, after my time in the Canadian Armed Forces, I know that service in uniform is a deeply personal relationship to your mission, to your community. Your integrity is central to that duty.

Political interference, political additions and insertions, political motives that aren't obvious but are rather hidden away in some ministerial directions are a burden and distraction from the clear and proper work that best serves our communities. Someone not on the ground interfering, getting in the way, handing down directions from on high—this interference always creates problems for those in service.

Decision-making power must be left to those with the knowledge, experience and training to make these very consequential decisions.

I don't want politicians deciding who should be allowed to carry a firearm. If you tried this with the Canadian Armed Forces, there would be backlash. This is no less significant.

All of these political intrusions have been made with no process at all. This government has used their power to push this bill forward without committee review—that means no chance for communities to tell the government whether they want new armed special constables, no chance to ask the government what new requirements they will ask of our OPP commanders.

This bill allows the ministers to step into our communities and directly influence policing decisions. Policing should be one of our most vitally, fiercely independent institutions. This bill undermines this independence.

A cautionary tale that is on everyone's mind these days is the constant and unprecedented abuses of power south of the border. Not only has President Trump railed against judges and accused them of bias, much like our Premier, but he has inserted political appointees into law enforcement positions and uses them to serve political purposes. What is happening in the US is the logical extension of this government's actions in Ontario.

Any attempt to politicize, influence and insert ideology into justice and policing does a grave disservice to those who serve.

These days, every single possible action should be taken to inspire confidence in our justice system. Putting more power in the hands of ministers, into the hands of any politicians, is the absolutely wrong step to be taking to strengthen our legal and law enforcement systems. The independence that is the backbone of democracy is more at risk today than it has been in decades. Pushing this bill forward without committee and centralizing the powers of law enforcement into politicians' hands is a pattern of undemocratic action that this government seems to repeatedly fall into.

Speaker, this bill has deep flaws and is the type of negligence that risks our democracy. I strongly hope that the government will reconsider. I cannot support this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): Further debate? Further debate? Further debate?

Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 29, 2025, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Downey has moved third reading of Bill 10, An Act to enact the Measures Respecting Premises with Illegal Drug Activity Act, 2025 and to amend various Acts with respect to public safety and the justice system.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

I believe the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until the next instance of deferred votes.

Third reading vote deferred.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): I beg to inform the House that the late show scheduled for this evening, standing in the name of the member for Scarborough Southwest, is cancelled.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
AND SAFETY ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 SUR LA GESTION
DES RESSOURCES ET LA SÉCURITÉ

Mr. Harris moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 27, An Act to enact the Geologic Carbon Storage Act, 2025 and to amend various Acts with respect to wildfires, resource safety and surveyors / Projet de loi 27, Loi édictant la Loi de 2025 sur le stockage géologique de carbone et modifiant diverses lois concernant les incendies de végétation, la sécurité des ressources et les arpenteurs-géomètres.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): The Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. Mike Harris: Good afternoon, colleagues. I hope everyone is ready for a riveting one-hour leadoff in debate on this bill.

I'd just like to let you know, Madam Speaker, that I will be sharing my time with the esteemed—I don't know who wrote this—Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products.

Interjection.

Hon. Mike Harris: Thank you. Yes, he is very esteemed, and he's ready to go too.

I'd also like to give a shout-out—I believe my wife might be watching.

Hi, Kim. It's good to see you.

Interjection.

Hon. Mike Harris: Minister Cho says hello as well.

Everyone says hello.

Can you tell I'm trying to waste an hour? Isn't this good?

Interjection.

Hon. Mike Harris: It's good. Thank you. I appreciate it.

Madam Speaker, let me be clear: This bill is about doing the right thing for Ontario families, for our communities, and for the workers and industries that keep our province moving.

If passed, this legislation will:

—let us store captured carbon dioxide safely underground, cutting emissions while protecting industrial jobs;

—strengthen how we prevent and fight wildland fires, because Ontario families deserve to be safe in their homes and businesses;

—give us the tools to address aging oil and gas wells, fixing safety risks quickly, without unnecessary red tape; and

—modernize the land surveying profession, making sure we've got the skilled people we need to support housing and infrastructure growth across this province.

Speaker, our government is reintroducing this bill at a time of new economic uncertainty. We are all familiar with the situation at hand with our neighbours to the south, and we are all in agreement that we need to work together to protect Ontario.

We faced unprecedented economic uncertainty in our first term due to the pandemic crisis, and Ontario emerged from that with a strong, positive outlook.

We are a resilient and hard-working province, and we come together, as Canadians often do, to overcome challenges as they arise.

1610

Today, we are working diligently to build a more competitive, resilient and self-reliant economy, and we are doubling down on our plan to build.

Together, the measures in this bill will help the government to protect Ontario and strengthen communities by preserving and creating jobs in Ontario's industrial heartland, protecting public safety, and providing our province with the resources we need for growth—all good things.

Let's talk a little bit about the different sections of this bill.

This year's wildland fire season is already well under way. I would like to thank ministry staff for the vital work they are doing to protect this province—work that protects the people, communities, infrastructure and economic activity of this province from the impact of wildland fires.

While last year the ministry managed 480 fires in Ontario, which was well below the 700 fires managed the year before, other parts of Canada faced a severe wildland fire season. Ontario provided critical support to six provinces and the Northwest Territories by deploying our staff and resources.

Across Canada, wildland fires are a frequent and rising concern, and Ontario is not immune. Our government is investing in and modernizing our wildland fire program to meet this growing threat.

To strengthen our ability to prevent, mitigate and manage wildland fires, the government is proposing to amend the Forest Fires Prevention Act. This act is the primary provincial legislation for managing wildland fires in our province. It outlines obligations for preventing wildland fires, authorizes enforcement measures, and includes provisions for offences. If this bill is passed, the Forest Fires Prevention Act would be renamed the Wildland Fire Management Act, and a purpose clause would be added to reflect a stronger focus on all aspects of wildland fire management, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. This stronger focus is necessary if we are to combat the growing risk and impact of these fires. We need to ensure that people and businesses are aware of and comply with rules designed to prevent human-caused fires.

It may come as a surprise to some here, but over 50% of wildland fires are caused by human interaction. We need to make sure that we're prepared and ready, and doing everything we can to make the people of the province aware.

The amendments we propose in the act would help our ministry manage the expected increase in wildland fire activity, thereby reducing the risk that wildland fires pose to people, communities, infrastructure, and economic activity. Reducing that risk is a shared responsibility.

The amendments in this bill would strengthen collective responsibility for managing wildland fires; enhance all aspects of wildland fire management, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, as I mentioned before; and strengthen compliance and enforcement measures.

My ministry's long-term goal is an Ontario that works together to minimize the impact of wildland fires, creating safer and more resilient communities.

To that end, this bill proposes to clarify the types of wildland fire management agreements my ministry can undertake. The act, as it stands now, enables my ministry to enter into agreements for the prevention, control and extinguishment of grass, brush or forest fires. Bill 27 would enable my ministry to enter into agreements on all aspects of wildland fire management, such as an agreement on training with a municipality or a First Nation community, or an agreement to support activities for the prevention and mitigation of wildland fires. In summary, this amendment would facilitate increased collaboration among all parties involved in wildland fire management.

My ministry also aims to intensify its collaboration with municipalities and industries in the fire region to enhance wildland fire management. We are proposing an amendment to the act that would require these partners to maintain wildland fire management plans. These plans would need to meet prescribed standards set out in a regulation under the act, should this bill be passed. These standards would define required prevention, mitigation and preparedness activities. Meeting requirements for wildland fire management plans may involve updating an existing plan or creating a new one altogether. My ministry would consult with municipalities and industry on the regulations for this proposal, as well as on potential resource needs. Ministry staff would provide technical support to ensure adequate plans are in place to address the escalating risk of wildland fires.

During a wildland fire emergency, my ministry draws on resources from the private sector, including equipment and sometimes equipment operators. This enables the ministry to respond to wildland fires quickly using the resources at hand. We have 41 arrangements with companies in the forest industry that set out terms for the use of their equipment. Each agreement has its terms, conditions and remuneration rates.

In this bill, we propose to provide for the making of regulations that would standardize these terms, conditions and rates to reduce the amount of administrative work they now require and make it easier to mobilize the closest equipment in an emergency. Industry strongly supports the clarity that standard terms and conditions would provide.

This amendment would also expand the circumstances under which my ministry could request industry assistance, adding other wildland fire-related emergency events, such as evacuations.

By strengthening the act's enforcement and penalty provisions, this bill would provide my ministry with the necessary tools and powers to hold accountable those who fail to comply with or contravene the act itself. At the same

time, Bill 27 would give my ministry increased flexibility in certain circumstances, enabling the exercise of judgment in determining how best to proceed, depending on the circumstances of each case. In short, the question is whether to resort to the court system, as the act currently requires, or to consider alternative measures instead.

As I said, almost half of wildland fires are caused by people. Charges are laid when there are contraventions of the act, including some instances where a human-caused fire results from a violation. And yet, we recognize that alternative solutions may be preferable in certain circumstances.

This bill would enable my ministry to make regulations for the issuance of administrative monetary penalties for non-compliance with the act—a penalty that can be issued without pursuing charges and launching prosecution. This approach could be used to penalize activities that could start a wildfire or impede its suppression and extinguishment, such as operating equipment without the required spark arresters or failing to have a fire extinguisher on a work site as required. Forest industry companies are already subject to these penalties under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994. This proposed measure would apply to all industries and persons subject to the newly named Wildland Fire Management Act—a fair and equitable approach, with modern regulatory principles, including progressive compliance.

I know you're all very riveted by this.

Hon. Graham McGregor: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mike Harris: Thank you. It's going to get good.

This bill would also enable my ministry to make regulations allowing the issuance of a remediation order without initiating a prosecution, enabling us to resolve some issues outside the court system, which I think we all agree is a good thing. A remediation order could require a person to plant trees or participate in wildland fire education. A regulation under the act could specify the circumstances under which a remediation order might be considered.

The bill would also address recovering the costs of wildland fire suppression incurred by the ministry—and that can be substantial. Under the act, as it stands, for human-caused wildland fires, the costs of suppressing or extinguishing a fire are automatically a debt to the crown. This obliges my ministry to seek recovery costs from individuals or companies that have caused a wildland fire. Yet, in some cases, cost recovery may not be possible, or it may impose a hardship or not be in the public interest.

I'll give you an example. Let's say a driver pulls over when their car catches fire, igniting weeds on the road shoulder and accidentally causing a wildland fire. Under the act, as it stands, this driver would receive an invoice from the ministry for the costs of suppressing or extinguishing said fire. An invoice would be issued, and a payment would be pursued. Bill 27 would give my ministry discretion in determining whether or not to seek recovery costs for the damages. This would enable the ministry to take into consideration the specific circum-

stances involved, such as the circumstances of that unlucky driver.

The bill would also clarify the minister's power to prohibit activities during wildland fire emergencies and their authority to exempt persons from such orders in certain circumstances.

My ministry is also modernizing the wildland fire program to increase our collaboration with municipalities, Indigenous communities and industry through policy, program and public service improvements that complement the legislative changes proposed in this bill.

1620

I'll give you another example, Madam Speaker: We are enhancing wildland fire hazard and risk assessments, and stepping up our wildland fire awareness campaigns to better inform Ontarians of the risks and dangers associated with wildland fires. We need to educate members of the public and increase their awareness of the actions they can take to reduce fire risk. We rely on efforts of the public and our partners at the local level to take the necessary steps to break the link between spark and a flame. It will take all Ontarians working together across the fire region to reduce the risk of wildland fires, and the collective efforts of all our partners to fulfill this vision of safer, stronger and more resilient communities.

My ministry also aims to work more closely with Indigenous communities in natural hazard management by enhancing support for the traditional use of fire, including cultural burning, and enabling wildland fire management led by Indigenous communities. We would consider the unique needs, values, cultures and voices of Indigenous communities under this approach to better manage wildland fires and develop fire-resilient communities.

While human activities often cause wildland fires, they also occur naturally. These naturally occurring fires, often ignited by lightning strikes, play a crucial role in renewing our boreal forest. Every wildland fire is assessed. My ministry then responds based on the situation and condition of the fire.

When wildland fires threaten communities, properties, our timber supply and the infrastructure we rely on, our fire crews are at the ready, acting as quickly as they can to contain the threat. Other wildland fires are managed to limit their adverse effects and, when it is safe to do so, some fires are only monitored. This enables us to use these fires to regenerate the forest. We also occasionally use prescribed burns to decrease fire risk in some vegetated regions, since vegetation can fuel wildland fires.

We see the potential to utilize vegetation management practices in complementing essential activities such as timber harvesting, land use planning and development. When done all together, these activities will support Ontario's growth, while protecting communities and our economy.

My ministry is a signatory to the Canadian Wildland Fire Prevention and Mitigation Strategy, adopted by Canada's forest ministers last year. This strategy is a call to action aimed at mobilizing all sectors of society to reduce wildland fire risk. The legislative changes

proposed in this bill, along with the program and service improvements I've outlined, would support my ministry in leading this work in Ontario, while also helping to build stronger, more resilient communities.

Speaker, we'll move on to the next section of the bill. This portion of the bill is looking to update the Surveyors Act, and it will address Ontario's rapidly expanding infrastructure and housing development needs.

The act grants authority to the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors, the self-governing body that oversees the licensing and governance of professional land surveyors in our province. Ontario land surveyors have been guiding the use of land in our province for generations. The work they do is the foundation of all that we develop. Without their efforts, our province would not be able to grow.

Ontario is on a steady trajectory towards growth, creating an ever-increasing need for professional land surveyors to meet rapid housing, infrastructure and industrial development needs. We rely on the information surveyors provide to build Ontario, its infrastructure, homes and communities. We also rely on surveyors to help communities recover from emergencies, such as flooding in urban areas and wildland fires, since boundary markers can be lost during these catastrophic events.

Many of the dedicated professionals who carry out this essential work are progressing towards the latter stages of their careers. This suggests to my ministry and their association that our province could one day face a barrier to growth due to a lack of surveyors. Already, surveyors are in short supply across northern Ontario. The measures proposed in Bill 27 would help to increase the availability of surveying services where and when they are needed. Our goal is to avoid delays in infrastructure and housing projects, as well as delays in property transactions.

These amendments would also enable survey firms to use modern technologies such as virtual meeting technology and cloud computing in their practices, and enhance the professional oversight provided by the association. My ministry collaborated closely with the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors in developing these proposals, which the association has endorsed. To become a licensed Ontario land surveyor, a candidate must complete a four-year degree and have up to three years of experience. Given the aging demographic within the profession and the growing demand for survey services, Ontario needs to increase its supply of surveyors.

Bill 27 would allow for the introduction of a limited licence to achieve this goal. This type of licence would restrict its holder to participating in certain areas of competency, such as basic survey work within a new subdivision plan. Holders of limited licences would not be able to complete or sign off on more complex work such as expropriation, a highway plan or a plan under the Mining Act. Those holding a limited licence would work under the supervision of a fully licensed surveyor, very similar to an apprenticeship. The supervisor would be responsible for ensuring the limited licence holder is only assigned work they are competent to do.

The scope of work permitted would be specified in the licence itself, while the eligibility requirements for a limited licence would be outlined in the regulations. If this bill is passed, Ontario would be the first jurisdiction in Canada to adopt this innovative approach in the surveying profession.

In addition to increasing the supply of survey services, this amendment would provide another benefit, Madam Speaker. It would allow surveyors with less Canadian experience to undertake specific survey work under the supervision of a fully licensed surveyor, helping internationally trained surveyors begin practising in our province.

This bill would also allow the association to issue a temporary licence to a person holding a licence equivalent to a full Ontario licence from another jurisdiction. The association has a labour mobility agreement with other Canadian jurisdictions, allowing a surveyor from outside a jurisdiction to obtain membership in another, demonstrating knowledge of local law. A surveyor coming to Ontario from another jurisdiction must pass an exam on Ontario law as it applies to surveying in our province. This can take a significant amount of time. In other professions such as engineering, qualified practitioners can be brought into Ontario from other jurisdictions for emergency projects.

The Surveyors Act, as it's currently written, does not provide for this. To recover from an emergency such as a wildland fire or a flood in an urban area, a community urgently needs surveyors. These professionals assess damages and survey lost boundaries. This is critically important to affected communities as it allows them to rebuild and recover. A temporary licence program would enable Ontario to respond more rapidly to those types of emergencies: helping a family return home, an essential service to be restored or a washed-out roadway to be rebuilt as quickly as possible. Surveyors with a temporary licence would also be required to work, as I had stated, under the supervision of a licensed surveyor in Ontario.

If this bill is passed, Ontario would be the first jurisdiction within Canada to adopt the use of temporary licences within the surveying profession. This approach is being successfully used in related licensed professions as well. This bill would also enable survey firms to use new and innovative technologies to deliver survey services. Firms would no longer be required to operate a physical consultation office or maintain a schedule of posted hours. These amendments would enable firms to benefit from the efficiencies provided by modern business practices. Finally, this bill would enable the association to provide increased oversight on the surveying profession. This would strengthen its governance and build greater trust and confidence within the surveying industry.

Ontario is the largest economy in Canada, boasting a vast and varied geography as well as rapidly growing population, making growth and development essential to our future. Homes, hospitals, schools, roads, highways, subway lines, factories, mines, sawmills, infrastructure: You name it, we need it, Madam Speaker, and we need

surveyors to get the job done. A UK-based survey association notes that surveying has been part of construction since the earliest recorded days of history, for as long as humans have been building infrastructure. Over the centuries, the technologies used within this essential profession have evolved with the times, through ongoing innovation. In 1892, Ontario land surveyors used a plumb bob and a chain and a compass. Today, they rely on GPS and magnetic bar detectors. This bill would bring about equally essential innovations to the licensing, operation and governance of the survey profession.

1630

Now we're going to get to the part everybody's been waiting for—I can tell. Bill 27 would also amend the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act to enable my ministry to promptly repair certain oil and gas wells that pose a public safety risk when the operator is unable to do so.

The history of oil and gas extraction in Ontario dates back to the 1850s, Madam Speaker. Over the many years that have passed since then, tens of thousands of oil and gas wells have been drilled here, primarily across southwestern Ontario. When a well is not properly maintained, it can deteriorate over time, and this makes it more likely to leak. Gas from leaking wells can contaminate drinking water or pose other hazards that affect people in the environment. We need to prevent those events from occurring.

Ontario's Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act enables my ministry inspectors to order well operators to address hazards related to wells. However, in some cases, an operator may be unable to respond to an order due to compliance issues. This can occur in cases of insolvency or when a sound operator passes away. My ministry does not want to stand by when hazards need to be maintained, and we need to be able to address them immediately. That's why Bill 27 would enable my ministry to address a hazard without the consent of an operator, but only in limited circumstances: when an operator who is bankrupt, insolvent or deceased fails to, or cannot, comply with an order. My ministry would seek consent from the landowner to gain access to the land where the hazardous well is situated. When that is not possible, we would seek a judicial warrant to enter the premises without the landowner's consent. This would allow us to remediate the hazard in a very timely fashion to protect the public, property, the landowner and the natural environment in these limited circumstances of non-compliance. It would also allow my ministry to pursue a non-compliant well operator for the cost of that remediation.

The provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia already have similar powers, and we need this capability here in Ontario. This measure would be welcomed by the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs and our municipal partners.

My ministry's Legacy Well Action Plan is also addressing the challenges arising from historical oil and gas wells. Under this plan, we aim to increase our understanding of the risk, develop risk management

strategies and support emergency planning and preparedness.

In industrial processes such as steelmaking, oil and gas refining, cement production and fertilizer and lime production, a significant amount of energy is consumed. As a result, these industrial processes release large amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Additionally, these energy-intensive industries also possess significant fixed assets, such as manufacturing and processing facilities, that have long lifespans and considerable complexity. These conditions make it difficult for industries to reduce their carbon emissions cost-effectively and quickly, and that is why they are considered hard-to-abate industries.

But the story doesn't end there. These industries can capture the carbon dioxide they create during production and store it underground instead of releasing it into the atmosphere. Here in Ontario, these hard-to-abate industries are telling the province that they want to be permitted to do this, and our government is listening. That is why this bill includes the proposed Geologic Carbon Storage Act. This act focuses on the underground storage of carbon dioxide, which is part of the process that falls under my ministry's jurisdiction.

What could a legislative framework to permit geological carbon storage mean for our province? It would mean a lot: keeping industries and the jobs they create invested here in Ontario; attracting new investments to our province; lowering industrial carbon emissions; and developing Ontario-based expertise in a "tomorrow" technology.

While geologic carbon storage would be new to Ontarians, it has been successfully implemented in other regions. We currently don't allow it in our current framework. More than 40 carbon capture, utilization and storage projects are now operating worldwide: in western Canada, Australia, Norway, the UK and the United States. The technology has a 50-year track record. It is attracting growing interest and investment around the world. According to the International Energy Agency, some 700 carbon capture projects are in various stages of development across 50 countries. Implementing carbon capture technology in a large plant is a significant undertaking.

So, why are Ontario's energy-intensive, hard-to-abate industries interested in carbon management, given its complexity and cost, Madam Speaker? Well, I'll tell you. In Canada, industries pay a price on the carbon they emit, creating an economic incentive to lower emissions. And in Canada, an industry that invests in a carbon capture, utilization and storage project may also qualify for federal investment tax credits. Ontario's industrial sector is a vital component of the province's economy. Many communities rely on the jobs and economic activity that energy-intensive, hard-to-abate industries generate, nowhere more than in southwestern Ontario, where I call home, Madam Speaker.

If carbon management options such as geological carbon storage are not available in Ontario, industries may consider relocating to jurisdictions that already permit this

activity or to countries that don't have a price on carbon. This would have serious consequences for Ontario's industrial heartland and could result in the deindustrialization of entire regions. Now more than ever, we must protect Ontario, including its industrial base, by creating conditions that attract and retain these key job creators.

As the government works to transform Ontario's economy into the most competitive place in the G7 for investment, job creation and business, we are proposing the Geologic Carbon Storage Act to support this initiative and attract these investments. This bill would help secure the future of industry-reliant communities while increasing the resiliency of Ontario's industrial base. The numbers speak for themselves: If this bill is passed, the initial development of commercial carbon storage projects in southwestern Ontario could sustain as many as 2,400 existing jobs in Ontario's manufacturing, oil and gas, and utility sectors and create up to 4,000 short-term jobs associated with the development of carbon capture and storage projects. This bill could also help industries remain competitive by reducing the price they pay on carbon by as much as \$1.2 billion per year. These initial benefits may increase if carbon storage technology continues to advance and the development of carbon storage facilities in other parts of the province becomes commercially viable.

Should industries be permitted to develop commercial-scale carbon storage projects in Ontario, the economic impact could be substantial. According to Natural Resources Canada, three large-scale carbon capture and storage projects could lead to a \$2.7-billion increase in GDP based on a four-year construction time frame. And should this technology continue to advance and expand across the province, these benefits would only grow.

We've touched on the economic prosperity this proposal could deliver, but what about the environmental benefits? These benefits could be very significant to our province. As it stands, approximately 30% of Ontario's greenhouse gas emissions originates from industrial sources. Bill 27 would enable hard-to-abate industries to permanently store the carbon dioxide they emit in suitable underground formations. In just the initial phase of this development, commercial-scale carbon storage projects could reduce annual industrial carbon emissions by 11% to 15% here in Ontario. That's the equivalent of taking roughly two million cars off the road.

The most suitable underground geological formations for carbon storage in our province are saline aquifers and depleted oil and gas reservoirs. These are mainly found in southwestern Ontario, right where many of these hard-to-abate industries are clustered. This would be an advantage in developing a carbon management sector in our province.

I mentioned that one of the benefits from the proposed Geological Carbon Storage Act is the development of expertise in this tomorrow technology. Fortunately, Ontario has a solid foundation to begin with. Ontario has a long history of regulating the oil and gas industries in the southwest, and valuable experience in managing underground resource storage safely and responsibly. Our

ministry already oversees the storage of natural gas and hydrocarbons underground in salt caverns. Additionally, compressed air is used for electricity generation in Goderich. This expertise will help guide the development of geological carbon storage projects in our province. This bill would enable proponents to implement carbon storage projects safely and responsibly, following best practices from other jurisdictions.

1640

The Geologic Carbon Storage Act would provide the necessary legislative framework to enable the responsible design, construction, operation, and closure of carbon storage facilities. It would also specify the requirements for post-closure management and ensure the long-term safety of these projects. The act would also clarify the ownership of pore space in Ontario and facilitate access to suitable underground formations for this carbon storage.

The transition to a net-zero future will occur at varying paces across different sectors of the economy. It will take considerable time for hard-to-abate industries.

Both the international panel on climate change and the International Energy Agency have concluded that the path to net-zero 2050 depends on the widespread deployment of carbon management technologies, including geologic carbon storage. These respected global bodies each recognized the challenges facing hard-to-abate industries in reaching this conclusion—and our government agrees.

Geologic carbon storage would help these industries meet their climate targets and ensure key sectors of our economy can continue to operate and grow. This technology would ensure Ontario's industrial base can contribute to a cleaner, more sustainable world, while preserving and creating thousands of high-value jobs, attracting significant investment, helping industries based in our province to remain globally competitive, protecting vital sectors essential to our economic prosperity, and ensuring we stay ahead in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

I'm going to touch just a little bit on some of the forestry pieces of this bill—but I know that the associate minister will go a little bit more in-depth, so I think maybe I'll skip over them. I'm getting the nod from him—I think he's going to go over it. So I think we'll wrap up at this point.

I just want to say thank you to everybody who has put the hard work in in designing this legislation. As I mentioned before, it is a bill that was introduced into the Ontario Legislature before the previous election. So thank you to the previous minister, Graydon Smith, for all the work that he has done and, of course, the team at the office who helped put all this together.

With that, Madam Speaker, I'm going to turn it over to the associate minister.

Thank you, everybody, for your time this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): Further debate?

Hon. Kevin Holland: I want to thank my equally esteemed colleague, Minister Harris—

Hon. Mike Harris: The same person must have written your remarks.

Hon. Kevin Holland: Yes—and it wasn't me who wrote those remarks, just for the record.

It is truly an honour to rise today to speak on the second reading of Bill 27, the Resource Management and Safety Act.

Our province and, indeed, our country face new challenges and opportunities every day. Our government is committed to the continued success of Ontario as we strive to remain global leaders across all sectors.

This bill, if passed, will not only create jobs but also protect our communities, allowing our resource sector to grow and thrive. We are committed to protecting Ontario, and that starts with Bill 27.

I speak today not only as the Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products, but also as a proud northern Ontario member of provincial Parliament. Representing Thunder Bay–Atikokan and having volunteered as a firefighter for more than 21 years, I have first-hand knowledge and experience with many of the actions this bill supports.

The 2025 fire season is under way, and we must continue to protect the dedicated, hard-working front-line workers who bravely safeguard our forests and communities.

I have stood on the front lines alongside fellow volunteers, career firefighters and aviation fire rangers, whether deep in the forest during intense wildfire seasons or in the aftermath of community emergencies. I have witnessed first-hand the bravery, strength and sheer perseverance it takes to protect our forests, homes and communities. Through these experiences, I have come to deeply understand the urgent need for legislation that equips our responders with the right tools, supports sustainable economic opportunities, and embraces innovation in protecting our environment.

I want to take a moment to thank both ministry staff and firefighters and rangers as we continue through this fire season.

Bill 27 reflects that understanding. It is a comprehensive approach that strengthens our ability to manage wildland fires, supports our vital forestry sector, enables groundbreaking carbon storage technology, and modernizes surveying to meet the needs of a growing Ontario.

Northern Ontario is more than just a region on a map; it's home. For many of us, it's a way of life, shaped by vast forests, abundant wildlife, and tight-knit communities.

In places like Kenora, Red Lake, Atikokan, Sioux Lookout and Nipigon, wildland fires aren't just distant news stories; they're real lived experiences that impact families, schools, businesses, and the very fabric of our communities.

Just this past wildland fire season, there were 480 wildland fires across the province. That represents about 43% of the 10-year average for hectares burned and only 20% of the destruction we saw in 2023. But don't let those numbers fool you. Each fire tells a story of risk, loss and resilience—many threatened homes, caused evacuations, and tested our firefighting crews. Some were near communities in my riding, reminding us all that fire season is

not just a summer concern—it can touch our lives deeply and unpredictably.

This bill honours that reality by modernizing the Forest Fires Prevention Act for the first time in 25 years. The world has changed, and so must our approach.

Our government is moving from reactive firefighting to proactive fire management.

Bill 27 empowers the ministry to form partnerships for every aspect of wildland fire management, from prevention and preparedness to suppression. It introduces new enforcement tools, such as administrative monetary penalties and remediation orders, to ensure compliance with fire safety standards. Importantly, it recognizes and respects Indigenous communities by clarifying the authority for agreements on fire management, encouraging collaboration based on shared knowledge and stewardship.

Having witnessed the devastating power of wildland fires and the courage of those who fight them, I cannot stress enough how critical these legislative changes are. They will help protect families, safeguard communities, and support firefighters in their life-saving work.

Fire is just one part of northern Ontario's vast natural resource story. Forestry is not only an economic cornerstone; it is the cultural heartbeat of the north. It sustains livelihoods in communities from Kenora to Temiskaming, Huntsville to Nipigon, and across our great province, supporting thousands of workers in mills, transportation, and wood product manufacturing.

Our forests are a renewable resource, managed sustainably to preserve ecological functions for future generations. And yet, the sector is also embracing exciting innovations shaping its future.

One such innovation is advanced wood construction. Technologies like cross-laminated timber allow us to build mid-rise and even tall buildings using Ontario wood. This supports jobs across the forest sector industry and helps reduce emissions by replacing more carbon-intensive materials like steel and concrete.

Our government's \$3.46-million investment in Element5, a local cross-laminated timber manufacturer, is already creating affordable, supportive housing projects, bringing real benefits to our communities.

Programs like the forest biomass program further demonstrate our commitment by finding new uses for forest biomass and wood chips, turning what was once unused by-products into mulch, energy, and new products.

I see the impact every day—the pride of forestry workers and the hope of young people entering a sector that respects the land and invests in the future.

Bill 27 supports forestry sustainability by ensuring the right legislative tools are in place to keep the sector strong amid climate change and economic shifts.

The fight against climate change demands not only commitment, but bold, innovative solutions that address the complexity of our modern economy.

One of the most promising innovations is geologic carbon storage, and I am especially proud that Bill 27 enables this cutting-edge technology in Ontario. Geologic carbon storage involves capturing carbon dioxide

emissions from industrial processes and permanently storing them deep underground in suitable geological formations. This is not just a theoretical concept; it is a practical, proven technology that offers a lifeline to some of our hardest-to-decarbonize industries.

Industries such as steel manufacturing, cement production, lime processing, fertilizer factories, and oil refining are vital to our economy but face significant challenges in reducing their emissions through traditional means. Their processes rely on chemical reactions and energy inputs that produce carbon dioxide as an unavoidable by-product. For these sectors, eliminating emissions entirely using current renewable energy technology is extremely difficult.

1650

That's where geologic carbon storage steps in. By capturing carbon dioxide at its source and injecting it deep underground into depleted oil and gas reservoirs or saline aquifers—natural formations found in southwestern Ontario—we can effectively prevent these emissions from entering our atmosphere. Ontario is uniquely positioned to lead this effort because of its geological advantage. These underground reservoirs have been tested and proven over millions of years to securely contain fluids, making them ideal for safely storing millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide for centuries.

The environmental impact of this initiative is significant. Estimates suggest that geologic carbon storage could reduce Ontario's greenhouse gas emissions by approximately five million to seven million tonnes per year. To put that in perspective, this reduction is the equivalent of taking between 1.5 million and two million cars off our roads annually—an impressive step toward meeting our climate targets.

But this initiative doesn't just help the environment; it brings substantial economic benefits to Ontario. During the development phase alone, it could create up to 4,000 jobs, providing meaningful employment in construction, engineering, and technical fields. Furthermore, by reducing carbon emissions, industries can save an estimated \$850 million to \$1.2 billion annually in carbon pricing costs—money that can be reinvested in growth, innovation, and competitiveness.

We've already heard strong support from key industry players. The Canadian Steel Producers Association has publicly welcomed this legislation, recognizing it as a crucial step towards achieving their long-term decarbonization goals.

By including geologic carbon storage in Bill 27, Ontario is sending a clear message, and that is that we are committed to being leaders in environmental technology and stewardship. We are balancing the need to protect our environment with the equally important goal of maintaining and growing our economic opportunities.

This legislation is about protecting jobs, attracting investment, and demonstrating to the world that Ontario is serious about sustainable growth and climate responsibility. It is a model for how innovation, environmental protection and economic development can and must work

together as we build a cleaner, greener future for all Ontarians.

When we think about managing natural resources or building vibrant communities, surveying might not be the first thing that comes to mind. Yet it is one of the most fundamental and essential professions that underpins everything that we do. Accurate surveying is the backbone of natural resource management. It defines property boundaries, identifies environmentally sensitive areas, and guides the responsible use of land. Without precise surveys, we risk mismanaging our resources or building infrastructure that is unsafe or poorly planned.

Surveying is also absolutely critical to community development. Whether it's constructing homes, roads, bridges, or critical infrastructure like water and sewer systems, surveyors provide the measurements and data that ensure these projects are designed and executed correctly. Their work ensures that the communities Ontarians depend on every day are safe, functional and sustainable. Recognizing this, Bill 27 proposes important changes to the Surveyors Act to modernize the profession and address current challenges. One key aspect is attracting new professionals, including internationally trained surveyors, and speeding their entry into the workforce.

Ontario faces a shortage of qualified surveyors, which can slow down development projects and limit services in certain areas, particularly in the north and rural communities.

By streamlining certification processes and providing clear pathways for international professionals, Bill 27 helps Ontario bring in the talent it needs to support growth and development.

The bill also encourages innovation within the surveying profession. It provides greater flexibility for survey firms to adopt new technologies—such as drones, satellite imaging, and advanced mapping software—that can increase accuracy, efficiency and safety.

Furthermore, it allows for the rapid deployment of surveyors from other provinces during emergencies. This is especially important for northern Ontario, where vast distances and harsh weather conditions can complicate responses to wildland fires, floods, or other natural disasters. Imagine, for example, a major wildfire threatening a remote community far from major urban centres. Surveyors play a crucial role in mapping evacuation routes, assessing damage, and planning recovery efforts. With the ability to quickly bring in skilled professionals from other parts of the country, Ontario can respond faster and more effectively. For northern Ontario, these changes mean not only safer and faster community growth, but also increased resilience in the face of emergencies.

Bill 27's reforms ensure that surveyors can continue to support Ontario's economic development and environmental protection, building a future that is smart, sustainable, and ready for the challenges ahead.

It's more important now than ever to ensure Ontario has the tools and technology to protect communities from the risk of wildland fires and hazardous oil and gas wells, as

well as to enable new opportunities for businesses and communities.

If passed, the Resource Management and Safety Act, 2025, would address the growing risks of wildland fires by modernizing the ministry's wildland fire program, and strengthen the government's ability to expedite action and address certain hazardous oil and gas wells. If passed, the act would also increase the availability of land surveyors to help accelerate infrastructure and housing development, and support new ways to manage carbon dioxide emissions by enabling geological carbon storage.

The proposed legislative changes include a new Geologic Carbon Storage Act, amendments to the Forest Fires Prevention Act, amendments to the Surveyors Act, and amendments to the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act. These changes are just another step in our government's plan to protect the economy while fostering safe, strong and resilient communities in which Ontario families can thrive.

Ontario is protecting communities by addressing the growing risk of wildland fires with proposed changes to the Forest Fires Prevention Act, as I mentioned, and modernization of the ministry's wildland fire program. To help keep communities safe, the Ministry of Natural Resources is working with municipalities, Indigenous communities and industry to reduce the risk and impacts of wildland fires. These proposed changes seek to expand prevention and mitigation activities and ensure stronger rules and consequences are in place for those who don't follow wildland fire laws.

If passed, the bill would:

- clarify authority for the minister to enter into agreements on all aspects of wildland fire management;

- require municipalities and certain industries in the fire region to have a wildland fire management plan that meets prescribed standards as set out in the regulation;

- clarify the minister's order power to prohibit activities in areas that have been declared a wildfire emergency area, and provide the minister with the authority to issue a permit allowing certain activities in certain circumstances;

- create a new power for the minister to issue a remediation order;

- enable the minister to set out standard rates, terms and conditions when privately owned equipment and operators are used to respond to wildland fires and wildland fire emergency events;

- enable administrative monetary penalties to address non-compliance;

- revise the provision on cost recovery for human-caused fires, to eliminate the automatic establishment of debt to the crown; and

- modernize and update enforcement provisions, including powers and authorities of different groups of officers under the act.

Through the proposed Resource Management and Safety Act, 2025, the government is focused on protecting Ontario by building resilient, safe and innovative communities ready to respond to challenges.

1700

If passed, the bill would also strengthen the government's ability to address certain hazardous oil and gas wells; allow the ministry to expedite actions to prevent, decrease or eliminate a hazard when an operator of a well is not complying with a ministry order in certain circumstances, such as death or bankruptcy; allow the ministry to recover the costs associated with any such action taken on the well.

The proposed Geologic Carbon Storage Act contains provisions related to the design, development, operation, maintenance, decommissioning, closure, remediation and restoration of carbon storage sites, as well as activities associated with carbon storage. Ontario's approach to regulating and enabling geologic carbon storage would help energy-intensive industries manage their greenhouse gas emissions and create local jobs and investment, while ensuring safety to the public and the environment.

The proposed new legislation would support innovation and help manage emissions by enabling the regulation of geologic carbon storage in the province. The government is committed to developing a framework that will ensure it is done responsibly, with measures in place to safeguard people and the environment.

The Surveyors Act has not substantially changed since 1987 and requires updating to attract new surveyors to the profession to reflect today's modern technologies, and to reflect the needs in some areas of the province that are under-served, particularly in northern parts of Ontario. The ministry is seeking approval to amend the act to:

- attract new surveyors to the profession;
- improve the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors' governance structure and professional oversight
- modernize surveyors' operations by introducing a limited licence to allow technically competent surveyors with less Canadian experience to undertake basic surveyor work;
- introduce a temporary licence to provide Ontario with flexibility to bring in surveyors from other jurisdictions to respond to emergency surveyor needs;
- provide survey firms with more flexibility to better use new and innovative technologies to deliver survey services, and enhancing the accountability of survey firms; and
- simplify the Association of Ontario Land Surveyors' processes.

These legislative and regulatory amendments would help attract new surveyors to the profession, support housing and infrastructure development, and modernize surveyor operations.

Bill 27 is more than just a piece of legislation. It represents a bold and forward-looking vision for Ontario's future, one that is resilient in the face of growing environmental challenges, sustainable in its stewardship of our natural resources, and prosperous in the opportunities it creates for all communities across this province.

This bill is a comprehensive plan that supports the dedicated individuals who work tirelessly every day to protect our environment and build strong, thriving com-

munities. It honours the bravery and commitment of our firefighters who stand on the front lines battling wildfires that threaten lives and homes. It respects the deep connection and wisdom of Indigenous partners, whose stewardship of the land has been central to its health and vitality for generations. It empowers forestry workers whose livelihoods depend on sustainable practices and innovation. It supports surveyors, whose precision and expertise enable safe and effective development across Ontario.

Through my experiences, I understand the importance of preparation, partnership and perseverance. These qualities are the foundation of success, not only in emergency response but in building policies that truly make a difference. Bill 27 embodies those principles. It is a call to action; a call for all of us in this House to come together, putting aside differences, to pass legislation that will protect our people, support our economy and safeguard the environment for generations to come.

Passing this bill means investing in the safety and prosperity of northern Ontario and all of Ontario. It means recognizing the unique challenges faced by communities large and small, providing the tools and resources they need to thrive. It means fostering innovation that creates good jobs and strengthens our position as leaders in climate technology and sustainable development. But most importantly, it means reaffirming our commitment to each other as neighbours, as partners and as stewards of this great province.

Together, we can build a future that reflects our shared values: respect for the land, opportunity for all and resilience in the face of change. Let us seize this moment to act decisively and with purpose. Pass Bill 27 and send a clear message that Ontario is ready to lead with courage, vision and determination.

Thank you, Speaker. I look forward to working with all members of the House to make this important legislation a reality.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: To the minister: I represented, as you know, workers, and also a lot of owner-operators. Speaking to owner-operators about this bill, they're quite concerned. They don't mind going to help, of course, during forest fires, because that's part of the business and their livelihoods, and when they're cutting. But the question that they've been asking is, "Okay, what if my machine burns down? Who's going to be responsible for these liabilities? Yes, I have insurance, but that will increase my insurance if this machine burns because I've been asked."

In the bill, it talks about the rate, which is—that has to be addressed. But the liability that can come because they're being asked to fight this fire could mean the loss of pieces—and they're not cheap. We know that these pieces of equipment—we're talking \$1.5 million; it depends on the piece of equipment you have. But there is a huge cost to that, because usually these pieces of equipment are on 24 hours because they have to be on two

shifts to be able to make money, and they are paid when the wood comes in. But if their machine burns, you've got to find another piece of equipment. They don't grow on trees, like they say.

So I'd like to hear from you, Minister: What's the approach for the ministry if this situation happens to protect these owner-operators that are trying to do the right thing?

Hon. Mike Harris: It's a very good question. We obviously work very closely with a lot of community partners. These would be, say, like a bulldozer or an excavator, something along those lines, that we would ask community partners to come and help. Where it might take us a few days to be able to get that piece of equipment in there, there might already be something that's very close.

One thing that we want to do is make sure that everybody is made whole. If someone does have a catastrophic event where, say, a bulldozer catches fire and they have to leave it out in the bush and they're not able to reclaim it, we'll be working with those folks to make sure that they're paid promptly for their equipment and that there's no need to go through any insurance claims. We certainly don't want to see anybody penalized for doing a good thing.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Look, I just want to say from the outset, there are some very big and serious fires across northwestern Ontario. I want to have a special shout-out to all those forest fires—the administrators that are fighting in those places: Ingolf, clear across to Webequie First Nation, Kenora 20. We appreciate them. It's very real for us. The smoke is thick in Kenora today—which brings me to my question.

The Forest Fires Prevention Act is the primary provincial legislation that sets out the rules and regulations with respect to the management of wildfires in Ontario. No significant changes have been made to that act since 1999. We need this act updated to address the escalating and ongoing wildfires and wildland fires in northern Ontario, which is why, as I understand it, the proposed Resource Management and Safety Act proposes to amend it.

Can the minister tell us specifically what the amendments do to enhance and put in place proactive measures to prevent and prepare for wildland firefighters?

1710

Hon. Mike Harris: We need to modernize across government, and this bill will do that. I think one of the key pieces that I touched on a little bit during my remarks was that somewhere in the neighbourhood of about half of wildland fires are caused by humans, so it's being able to build awareness and to help people understand the dos and don'ts when it comes to how you interact with the landscape.

Obviously, what we've seen up in northwestern Ontario already this year is tragic. And we're under way with some investigations right now to understand how some of these fires have started. We want to be able to make sure that we're putting our best foot forward with that. This act will help bring a lot of awareness, be able to better communi-

cate with people, and it will also help us interact with multiple agencies to be able to make sure that we're able to fight these fires.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm happy that we're talking about forest fires, wildland fires, as they are becoming more and more common in more and more disasters in the areas that I represent. We've had many in the last few years. We have a big training centre in my riding for forest fires. During the pandemic, it closed down almost, but, since then, there are still very few new recruits being trained, although the demand is huge. I mean, you admitted that we have more need for more forest firefighters, yet Ontario is training very few. How do we reconcile the two?

Hon. Mike Harris: Listen, this government has increased funding to our wildland fire service by 92%. Somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$130 million is the set amount of base funding, and then anything that needs to be done additionally gets put on top of that. As far as I know, that's been the largest increase ever to that budget, under our government.

We also brought in last year a recruitment and retention bonus. We were able to bring in over a hundred new recruits and firefighters over the last year. So we're building up the forest; we're putting the money behind it; we're acquiring new assets—helicopters, water bombers. We're doing everything we can to make sure that we're protecting people, places, communities across this province.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question.

Ms. Aislinn Clancy: I have a question because, from my knowledge and conversations, carbon capture is not a proven technology. I hear great numbers over there, but I'm curious as to why the efforts to fight climate change—climate change wasn't mentioned in the budget. I do hear it in this bill; I appreciate the acknowledgement of climate change. But I'm curious as to why the path you're taking is carbon capture, which is a path that no environmentalist or scientist or expert in the field that I know of supports as a way to invest money to actually deal with the effects of climate change.

Hon. Mike Harris: Well, thank you to my neighbour, Kitchener Centre. Listen, we are probably not exactly aligned when it comes to how we view environmental policy here in the province. I would counter to say that there are many experts in many jurisdictions—and I named some of them—around the world who believe in this and who have seen a dramatic reduction in their carbon footprint and carbon that's being released into the atmosphere.

We will be, should this bill pass, developing the rules and regulations and the framework that will allow this. We'll still be doing some consultation, working with industry partners, working with environmental groups to better understand the needs. But this is something that

needs to be done here in the province, and I'm excited that we're going to be doing it.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question?

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: Half of wildland fires are caused, unfortunately, by human activity, and our provincial personnel have to respond accordingly. We've heard also that the proposed amendments to the Forest Fires Prevention Act included in this bill, if passed, would enable greater focus in the prevention and the mitigation of such fires. This suggests, I submit, that Ontarians may have an important opportunity at hand to join and work together to reduce the incidence of wildland fires caused by people and lessen the impact of those wildland fires that do occur.

I know that a lot of this work is already being done. Partnerships among municipal governments, First Nations, fire department, provincial staff within the aviation and forest fire branch, and emergency services are constantly working to improve communications. If passed, how would this bill address the human activity associated with wildland fires and the focus needed?

Hon. Mike Harris: Thank you very much. I'm surprised you weren't able to slip a comment about section 33 into the remarks there, but we've only got 20 seconds left.

I do just want to say that it's about building awareness. It's about making sure people understand the ramifications of leaving a fire unattended or having that brush burning on a windy day after your yard cleanup. We need to make sure that people understand when it's dry, when there hasn't been much rain—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I'll be sharing my time with the member from Toronto–Danforth.

I have to acknowledge that we had to modernize. The significance of Bill 27 will modernize the bill, but I think what happened is that they missed the mark. It seems like the bill acknowledges that the threat of wildfires is getting worse and worse every year, because the bill gives the minister the power to declare any time of year a fire season, yet it does not provide us the tools to adequately address this threat. Despite the growing danger of wildfires, the Ontario government is neglecting its responsibility to properly support and finance the wildland fire-fighting services or put forward a tangible plan to respond to this threat.

So far in 2025, the province has recorded 131 wildfires, significantly higher than the 87 reported the same time last year and above the 10-year average of 124. We currently have 19 active fires burning. They are reporting that they are seeing very dry conditions, creating hazardous situations across the province. In the northwest, 10 active fires are burning, including a major blaze near Kenora that has expanded to over 34,000 hectares.

In the northeast, we are up to four active fires, with some threatening the James Bay coast, putting more communities at risk, northeastern and northwestern: for

example, fires near Red Lake, Sioux Lookout, Timmins. Some 1,500 people have been evacuated from Deer Lake First Nation. Webequie First Nation has requested a phase one evacuation of 395 vulnerable community members. Fires are burning in the northeast around Attawapiskat, moving from flood evacuation right into fire watch.

I had the opportunity also when I was in Fort Albany—the deputy chief brought me on a helicopter ride to show me how close the fire the year before was to Fort Albany. It was a kilometre away by the time they put it out.

1720

We're seeing more and more fires threatening First Nations communities, but First Nations communities are not always equipped to fight fires. We had home fires where people died because of lack of equipment. In the wintertime, the fire truck wouldn't start. We're fighting just to get funding from the province to be having “une caserne,” or a fire hall. They have a brand new truck. They're trying to get a fire hall that they can put it in so that it will start in the winter, because the fire hall they have right now is too small for the fire truck they have now.

First Nations are dealing with these types of issues, not to mention the equipment. Some of the equipment is so old. We're sending First Nations fire equipment, like fire trucks, that is not good for other communities like Timmins and all that, because they have to upgrade their piece of equipment. But yet, we send it up north. Where does that make sense, Madam Speaker? Where does that make sense? We want that? Well, we'll have to fire fight.

But it's welcome, because they need this piece of equipment. They're still good, but communities have to upgrade. But yet, if they're not good for northern communities, they shouldn't be good for First Nations. They should have new equipment also. But they take it because it's better than what they have already. So we have to take that into consideration when we do these bills. If we're going to give the tools, we need to give the tools and the training. Training is also a huge issue.

We're seeing more and more the effects of climate change: hotter, drier seasons, lightning storms, from human activities. But the north is hit hardest by climate change. This is something we can't ignore. We're seeing the effects, whether it's intense and repeated flooding every year—we're seeing more and more flooding because when it melts, it melts really quick. Then you see the ice jams and then the flooding.

The shortening of the ice road season, we're seeing that also up on James Bay coast. The roads, unfortunately, melt faster now. They used to be able to extend them. We're seeing that is very problematic—and more and more out of control wildfires. We can't ignore the reality.

I want to speak also that just this winter, when I went to Fort Albany, we flew in and you could still see the rocks at the bottom of the river. When spring comes, it floats, but then it goes back down. First Nations have a hard time going to their traditional fishing holes because the river is so down now. Sometimes they have to fly in. Helicopters will bring them so that they can go hunting or fishing on

their traditional territories. They have to be flown now because the river is so low. We've never seen rivers so low. To see the bottom of the river—we're not talking small rivers here; we're talking huge rivers, big rivers.

Yet we're seeing the climate change effects. So when you see big rivers like that and you see the riverbed, you can just imagine how dry the territory is. If you have a chance to go up James Bay coast, go see. There's a lot of water. You see a huge river like that and you can see the riverbed, it's a rude awakening.

I've talked to elders, and they said, "We've never seen it that bad. We have never seen rivers so low that we cannot access our traditional hunting grounds." But this is a reality that we're seeing. Up north, when it comes to climate change, we're seeing that the reality hits harder because of climate change.

Cascading consequences of not having an appropriate and effective emergency response strategy; public health, when we think about smoke inhalation, respiratory issues.

Elders, when the fire was close to Fort Albany and Kash, were asking to get evacuated because of smoke. It's not enough that they get evacuated for floods, now they're facing more and more evacuations. Trust me, it's not pleasant that you have to stay in hotel rooms for months. These communities, the families that have to get evacuated—imagine staying in a hotel room for months. You would prefer being at home, but because—now you see it in the springtime. Now you're seeing more and more—look at what's happening. We have communities being evacuated for forest fires, and now there's some that are threatening the James Bay coast in my community, in my region, in Mushkegowuk—James Bay.

It's not fun being evacuated, I can tell you. People only get frustrated. They want to go back. They want to go back home. They're no different than we are. Imagine if I would say, "Well, we'll take you out of your home, and then you'll be, in the springtime, a couple of weeks in a hotel room. We'll feed you. We'll do all that." But you're not home. You can't do your things; you cannot go fishing, go hunting, do what you practise. You're stuck in a room. It's not healthy. It's not mentally healthy. But they're facing it, and they're seeing more and more now, not only because of flooding now, but also because of forest fires.

The ecologic impact of forest fires—we don't notice the biodiversity, carbon emission, destroying of habitat. When you think of the James Bay coast—and not only the James Bay coast, anywhere when there's fire—it destroys a lot of habitats. We have to be prepared for that. That's why this bill is so important. When I'm speaking about this bill, when I get to the section about the forest firefighters and how we've reduced the teams or firefighting crews, that's when you see the impact of the destruction of biodiversity, carbon, and also the destruction of habitat, because we don't have the boots on the ground to be able to control it anymore or try to minimize it.

Not to mention, my riding is huge—huge. We have a lot of sawmills. Forest wood fibre is our key resource, and when it burns—not good for business. Because if it burns, you have maybe one or two or three years to try to get it

before the bugs get it in. Once they're there, it's not worth as much money. That's why it's so important, when we talk about a bill that's just been modernized or reflects more of the times—but when you see what's in the bill, there are some huge concerns for forest industry because they don't want to see their fibre burn. They're saying, "That is part of our core business. We need that fibre." If we want to invest, if we want to create more jobs, that fibre is the reason that we can create more jobs.

I want to talk a little bit about—trying to watch the time here—the underfunding of wildfire firefighting. Despite this escalating danger, in 2024-25, in the Ontario provincial budget, the emergency forest firefighting allocation was reduced from \$216 million to \$135 million. That's a decrease of \$81 million. That's in 2024. But this reduction followed a previous cut in 2019, when the emergency forest firefighting budget was decreased by \$142 million. So, if you do quick math, we're talking a \$224-million reduction cut in the budget. That's a lot of money. That's a lot of money that we could use to put more teams or more crews on the ground, more boots on the ground—not only that but pay them adequately so we can keep them; give them full-time employment, because they're seasonal. It wouldn't take them long, if you put them full-time—because they're seasonal, it takes longer for them to get the pension and the benefits. But yet, we cut.

Bill 27 uses vague language around resource optimization without the financial commitment. Our preparedness and response capability are stifled by Bill 27, which failed to provide specific, increased funding for wildland firefighting capacity or offer a tactical strategy to get the boots on the ground to fight them. Ontario's wildfire program has not scaled to match fire severity or the size of the province's northern landmass. You have to realize how big Ontario is and how difficult it is to access sometimes.

1730

I'll speak about my nephew; he was that. But I'll speak a little bit further, because I think it's about to be more apparent when I get there.

The government could have used this opportunity to bolster our firefighting capacity, but instead this is a toothless bill that doesn't provide tangible solutions. We've seen how this government has reduced the crews of firefighters, the boots on the ground.

The minister has the ability now to declare longer times for forest fire season. He could expand it from April 1 to October 31. But the question you need to ask yourself is, "Where are we going to find these firefighters if they're seasonal?" If they're seasonal, they're laid off. So they're going to be working longer. Hopefully they work longer. Then we should be putting them full-time, and if you put them full-time, we need more crews. However, the wildland firefighters are employed seasonally, like I said, not full-time. This means they have to work twice as long to receive their pension or access to benefits.

So how do you attract—I heard the minister say, "Oh, no, we gave incentives last year, \$5,000 incentives. We got 100." Yes, they came in, worked the summer season, mostly students coming in to find a summer job. They

come and then they leave; they don't stay. We're losing people who should, if we pay and recognize them—instead of giving the lump sum, let's pay them a decent wage, put them full time and give them benefits and pension. That's how you retain people.

I've negotiated for 25 years, and employers said, "Guy, we're losing them." Yes, if you want to keep them, you're going to have to pay them. Give them the conditions to stay. People are not staying in this field.

Do you know how hard it is to be a forest firefighter? It's not an easy job. You jump off helicopters, and sometimes it's in swampy places, so your feet are wet all the time. You sleep in tents. You're by the fire line, so there's a lot of smoke. Your clothes are covered with—comment est-ce qu'ils disent ça? Carcinogènes? Cancérigènes—je vais le dire en français; c'est encore plus facile. But that's the line of work they are in. We recognize it for the municipal firefighters, but woodland firefighters?

We have to recognize that government did some good. They did recognize stuff for firefighters. The firefighters—but they did recognize it, so that was the right thing to do. But we need to do more here. We need to do more for firefighters because they are doing a hell of a hard job. It's not given to everybody to do it. I know, even in my younger years, I don't think I would have slept in a tent for 14 days, being wet most of the time, and then you have to get out the hoses, water pumps, pick them up. Sometimes you're evacuated and your stuff stays there; it gets burned down. That's the type of job they're in. It's not easy work, but yet we're not recognizing the work they do and we're not paying them accordingly.

When you think of it, we are already facing a severe shortage of wildland firefighters and a lack of expertise because workers are not encouraged to stay in the industry long enough to take positions of leadership because of the lack of supports, adequate compensation, benefits and health care coverage. We had 214 wildfire crews in 2005 and 143 in 2024. We went down 33%. We have more risk of forest fires now than we've ever had because of global warming and the conditions.

Look what's happening in Manitoba, Saskatchewan. Communities are burning. We've seen what happened in other communities. Communities burn, and to try to avoid that, we need the teams that we had. Why aren't we back at 214 crews? Why not? We're not because people are not staying. A \$5,000 signing bonus to come for a year—they took it, they went back, and then some of them went back to school, went back to train. They didn't come back as a firefighter. They didn't stay. The unions are telling us they didn't stay. Yes, some did come—100 firefighters. We need more than that. We need them to stay to build that expertise because the fire crew—if you're a crew boss, you need experience to tell other people what to do because it's dangerous work. You can be surrounded by that fire pretty quick, and if you don't have the experience, guess what? We could lose lives. People lost their lives firefighting.

This is not a very safe job, and they don't get extra pay for dangerous work. They don't get extra pay for living in

the conditions they live in. They don't get that. In other places, if you're far, you get compensated for that, and then the dangerous work—you get compensated for that. No, not for forest fires, but they are putting themselves at risk.

This is when we know that the number and severity of wildfires is increasing every year as climate change worsens. This industry is hemorrhaging qualified staff. In 2024, we were down 33% of wildland firefighters. We need boots on the ground but right now wildland firefighters who protect our homes, communities and vital resources are stretched thin, facing burnout, and left unsupported and unprotected.

I want to share some testimony. My nephew Travis calls me his favourite uncle. I asked him—because I called him, because he used to be a fire management technician, so he was responsible for many crews. I said, "Travis, why did you leave?" And then, "How long were you doing this? How long were you in this job?" He said, "Uncle, I did it for 12 years." And I asked him, "So why did you leave?" He said, "For the pay. For the work you do, you're not compensated enough." He said they did get a wage increase. He recognized that since he left, they got a wage increase, but even there, he said, "We're not compensated enough."

Il m'a dit—je vais le dire en français parce que je vais pouvoir m'expliquer beaucoup plus facilement. Il me disait : « Tu sais, mon oncle, quand j'étais obligé de sauter en bas d'un hélicoptère » et on s'entend que les conditions ne sont pas bonnes, « et tu travailles de longues heures—ce n'est pas une question de travailler de 8 h à midi. Non, très souvent tu fais du "overtime", beaucoup de "overtime" là-dedans. Tu étais là pour combattre un feu, Mais, après ça, tu ne reviens pas manger dans une cafétéria où c'est propre, où c'est "air conditionné"; souvent, tu manges puis tu travailles sur le terrain. »

C'est du travail qui est tellement exigeant. Puis il dit : « On n'est même pas compensé pour le travail dangereux qu'on fait. On n'est pas compensé pour "remote", de travailler dans des places isolées. Pourtant, il y a bien des travailleurs qui le sont. Puis on n'a pas les outils pour se protéger non plus. »

Je veux mentionner cela, qu'on le sait, puis le gouvernement le sait. C'est un travail qui est dur aussi. Pourquoi est-ce qu'on ne fournit pas l'équipement nécessaire? Quand on parle d'équipement nécessaire—quand tu combats, tu as la boucane. Il faut comprendre qu'eux autres, ils vont devant le feu. Ils ne vont pas derrière le feu. Tu sais, derrière le feu, ils vont le faire quand c'est éteint, mais pour combattre le feu, tu es en avant du feu. Puis il y a de la boucane, il y a de la chaleur. Tu sais, il y a des conditions qui ne sont pas les meilleures, là. Et on voit qu'ils ne sont pas compensés. Je leur ai demandé. J'ai dit : « Écoute, Travis, les 5 000 piastres, crois-tu que ça a fait une différence? » C'est exactement ce que je vous ai dit en anglais. Il dit : « Mon oncle, c'est sûr que ça a attiré du monde, mais ce n'est pas du monde qui reste. » C'est du monde qui cherche un emploi d'été ou c'est qu'ils ont

besoin d'argent pour retourner à l'école et ils viennent travailler—mais on perd toute cette expertise-là.

1740

Mon neveu qui était technicien, il avait 12 ans d'expérience. Il s'occupait de plusieurs « crews ». Mais lui, il n'était pas le seul qui était parti. Ils l'ont remplacé par qui? L'expérience ne reste pas, et ça, c'est dommage, puisqu'on sait que l'expérience dans un domaine comme ça doit être récompensée et payée pour les garder. Parce que, si on ne l'a pas, c'est là qu'on a la chance de perdre des vies.

Je trouve que c'est un exemple parfait que le gouvernement manque à l'appel de ces travailleurs forestiers, ces « firefighters »—les pompiers forestiers, comme on les appelle. Parce qu'ils font tellement un travail à haut risque, tellement difficile, et du moment—il faut que tu réalises que, quand on bat un feu et que tu sais que tu peux le perdre—« when you're at the point that you could lose the fire, that is stressful. » Parce que là, tout d'un coup, tu peux te faire encercler. Fait que, des fois, ils se font appeler et ils disent : « Non. We're evacuating. On vous évacue maintenant. Tu laisses tout tomber. Tu t'en vas à l'hélicoptère. Tu sautes dans l'hélicoptère, puis on te sort. »

Ça ne vous donne rien qu'un petit aperçu de comment ces travailleurs forestiers-là, ces pompiers forestiers-là, sont importants et pourquoi on a besoin des équipes de sapeurs de feu—c'est un autre terme qu'on use : un sapeur de feu, un pompier forestier. On a besoin de ces équipes-là, et on les réduit de 33 %.

Fait que, quand vient le temps de contrôler un feu—et je sais ce qu'ils vont nous dire. Je sais déjà la réponse du gouvernement : « On n'a pas le budget quand ça vient aux “emergencies.” » Je suis certain qu'on ne l'a pas. C'est là qu'on fait venir les travailleurs des autres pays ou des autres provinces pour venir nous aider. Mais le « base budget » dont on parle, qui a été coupé, là, depuis 2019—j'ai mentionné qu'il y avait 223 millions de dollars qui ont été coupés en 2024-2025, puis aussi en 2019, de 142 millions de dollars. Fait que, c'est de l'argent, ce sont des millions qu'on a coupés dans le « base budget ». Puis ça, ça vient nuire aux équipes, parce que là, tu n'as plus l'argent pour être capable de les soutenir.

J'ai hâte d'entendre le gouvernement, comment ils vont adresser ça. J'ai entendu dire que non, ils ont investi, quoi, 98 %? Mais sur un bord, on a les chiffres qui nous disent que vous avez coupé 223 millions de dollars, et sur votre bord, vous dites qu'il y a eu des augmentations. Mais je ne suis pas sûr que ça va couvrir les coupures qu'ils ont faites, par exemple, dans le « base budget ».

L'autre question—« just to get back »—puis aussi, ce qu'ils m'expliquaient—comment est-ce que ces pompiers forestiers-là font face à des risques d'être exténués physiquement, puis le taux mental auquel ils font face très souvent. Parce que je peux vous dire, quand tu gères deux, trois équipes, ou qu'ils perdent un pompier forestier, si tu perds un « crew member » au cours du feu, je peux te dire que c'est tragique. Veut, veut pas, ils se bâtissent des liens,

puis tu te fies tout le temps à ton compagnon à côté de toi parce que ta vie peut en dépendre.

So they are not in the career for the money, I can tell you. But this is a group who puts their lives in harm's way almost every single day during fire season and they are not even recognized as firefighters. We call them firefighters, but they don't have the recognition that they deserve or the protection.

I want to talk about the reclassification. All the wildland firefighters are provincially regulated. A technical decision in Canada's federal job classification system excludes them from jobs deemed to be in public safety. This affects their standing under the federal Income Tax Act and leads to lower pension and later retirements. Classifying woodland firefighters accurately would increase their potential pension accrual rates from 2% to 2.33% and lower their early retirement age from 55 to 50—benefits that can be available to municipal firefighters, but not to forest firefighters. Why do we do it for municipal firefighters and not forest firefighters?

Because so many firefighters work a lot of overtime, for example, much of their work does not count towards their pension. But the risks are much higher than municipal firefighters. Wildland firefighters are exposed to six times the carcinogens as municipal firefighters. Think about this: They're exposed six times more, but they don't have the equipment that municipal firefighters have. It's called—I'm trying to find the word. Not CPAP. I'm thinking CPAP, where the air is pushed by an oxygen thing. But when you're a firefighter, all they have is—they say to use a bandana when exposed. But there are better masks that can be available. They should be supplying those masks to these firefighters. They need the protective equipment to protect these firefighters.

I know sometimes, the way they work and the conditions, it's hot. When it's hot outside and you're firefighting, just imagine the heat that you can feel. You can faint because of the heat. So they're subject to a lot of conditions that we fail to understand. They don't have adequate equipment. The government does not provide adequate respirators, and they can't clean or swap out their equipment at the same rate as municipal firefighters.

Because we met all firefighters. Municipal firefighters, when they were lobbying here, bought pieces of equipment to be able to clean their suits, to remove “les cancérigènes”—j'ai de la misère à le dire en anglais; je vais le dire en français—les cancérigènes sur leur linge. But think about it: We know that they're buying special equipment so they're not exposed to the “cancérigènes” from their clothes, but yet the firefighters are exposed longer, so that's why they're there for six times more.

Noah Freedman, vice-president of Local 703, the Ontario Public Service Employee Union, OPSEU, and a forest fire crew leader with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry said, “They still advise firefighters to cover their faces with a dry fabric covering even though this was proven to be an ineffective way to protect yourself from toxic or chemical emissions.” We've got to do better

than that. We need to do better than that. We've got to make sure that at least they have masks that will help them. There are masks that have containers. There are all kinds of available technology.

If they don't, then we have experts like—I'm trying to think—Sudbury university that has—comment ça s'appelle, France? CROSH. They do testing. So if we can't find them, we should hire CROSH to go do these tests for them right on the field: test different masks; test different systems that can help them and alleviate these chemicals or toxins that they're breathing in.

Now, the government is asking these firefighters to do more, and we're relying on them for our wildland fire strategy, but they're not providing them any support. They're on the front line constantly. Deployment can be as long as 14 days, but specific assignments may mean going out and not returning to the base for days. They are sleeping on the fire line. They can't escape the carcinogens. So again, they're being exposed to carcinogens and these firefighters deserve better.

1750

How does this government plan to fight wildfires in November or March with an unemployed workforce which is hemorrhaging staff because this government won't reclassify them as firefighters?

Ça revient encore qu'on a un « workforce » à temps partiel ou saisonnier, et on va avoir le ministre qui peut dire : « Bien, là, on va donner des extensions. » Pourquoi? La planète se réchauffe puis les saisons de feu sont beaucoup plus sévères et durent plus longtemps. On a des feux à l'automne. On a des feux beaucoup plus de bonne heure le printemps. On le vit, comme c'est là, dans le Nord-Ouest, que les feux sont beaucoup plus actifs ce printemps.

Fait que, je pense qu'il faut qu'on pense sérieusement à engager plus de pompiers forestiers à plein temps, puis rebâtir les équipes, les ramener à un niveau qu'on sait—à la place d'aller chercher de l'aide dans les autres provinces ou dans les autres pays, qu'on ait notre propre force. Créez de l'emploi—ce gouvernement se pète les bretelles; ils disent qu'ils sont tellement bons pour créer de l'emploi. Mais ça, c'est une façon de le faire en même temps que protéger la population ontarienne quand ça vient aux feux de forêt, puis les Premières Nations, pour qu'on puisse avoir des équipes qui sont prêtes à déployer pour venir protéger la population ontarienne.

Why doesn't this bill include anything to address the retention crisis and labour shortage before adding responsibility to these jobs?

Pourquoi est-ce que le projet de loi n'adresse pas ça? Ils ont une obligation de le faire. On doit les garder. Ce n'est pas en donnant un petit 5 000 piastres chaque été pour attirer du monde pour venir—non. On a besoin du monde à plein temps puis de créer des emplois permanents. C'est de même qu'on va les attirer—puis qu'on les rémunère adéquatement. La clé, c'est de les rémunérer puis de leur donner de bons bénéfices puis une bonne pension. Là, on va attirer du monde dans le domaine.

On en avait avant. On les avait avant. Pourquoi? Ils étaient à plein temps. Mais pour couper, on sait comment ça marche : on va les mettre à temps partiel. Tu sais, pour les pensions, ça va prendre plus de temps. Ça va coûter moins cher. On va couper. Puis là, on sait comment ils ont coupé—je l'ai dit : 223 millions de dollars.

This bill is an opportunity to take the threat of wildfires seriously and advance a concrete action plan to respond. But instead, this government is leaving us unprepared. The cost of unpreparedness is more displacement and outsourcing limited response resources.

We see evacuations year after year due to fires and flooding—I spoke about that at the beginning. These evacuations are costly and take massive tolls on the communities that have to be evacuated year after year, as well as the communities that host them. This is not a long-term plan. It's not a long-term plan. We keep relying on contingency funds—what is that, five minutes left?—and when we know the situation is getting worse every year. We need a plan that takes the growing threat of wildfires seriously.

I just wanted to say a quote before—but I'm just going to finish this. "Inaction has a cost. In the face of the crisis, provinces are increasing their reliance on other provinces, foreign firefighters and even Canadian Armed Forces, despite warnings from a strained military that this practice is not sustainable."

In 2024, "5,500 international firefighters came to Canada to support strained provincial efforts." The province has to foot the bill for this. Why not invest more in our resources, in our people, create full-time jobs?

Downloading responsibilities to municipalities: Every municipality must have a wildland fire plan. Municipalities have been asking for assistance with building their fire management plans for years. The federal-level initiatives like FireSmart and the disaster mitigation fund are underused in Ontario.

In 2022, the Auditor General, in a value-for-money audit, Management of Hazards and Emergencies in the Environment, 2022, stated that while British Columbia had over 150 FireSmart communities when the report was published, Ontario only had one. I believe now it's two, but I could be corrected. But still, two is not much compared to BC.

Ontario had only budgeted \$1 million into the FireSmart program over the three years that led up to the audit, and in that time, only \$452,000 was spent. This is because the ministry does not employ expert staff to assist municipalities with the FireSmart program or to create fire management plans, unlike other provinces like BC. This is another instance of the government downloading their costs and their responsibilities onto municipalities.

Think about these small, rural municipalities, the northern municipalities, who really need to plan the most, but they have less amounts of resources to implement them. With smaller populations who cover vast areas, their resources are already stretched thin. It is a totally unrealistic expectation to ask these municipalities, the ones who are

most vulnerable to wildland fires yet who have the least resources to prepare for them, to take on the responsibility of researching and implementing effective wildland fire management plans.

I want to mention Guylaine Coulombe, from Mattice:

« Notre municipalité est de toute petite taille—population de 600—avec peu de ressources humaines—cinq employés à temps plein—et un tout petit budget. Cependant, le territoire que l'on couvre est immense—deux cantons—et est majoritairement recouvert de forêt. Les chances qu'un feu de forêt survienne sur notre territoire et à proximité des régions habitées de la municipalité sont grandes mais cela ne nous donne pas pour autant les moyens, humains et financiers, de gérer de façon adéquate. »

En vertu de la Loi sur la protection civile et la gestion des situations d'urgence, les municipalités sont déjà tenues d'avoir en place un plan d'urgence, un comité de gestion d'urgence, un coordonnateur des situations d'urgence, etc.

« Dans les petites municipalités, il n'y a personne de dédier uniquement à la gestion des urgences. C'est tout simplement un autre chapeau qui doit être porté par la personne en place. »

Les municipalités ont besoin d'avoir recours à des experts dans le domaine des feux de forêt pour créer un

plan d'urgence selon les exigences de la nouvelle loi. Ces experts se trouvent au sein du ministère des ressources naturelles qui, ironiquement, est celui qui nous ordonne de préparer un tel plan.

Quels soutiens ou ressources ou aide financière vont être fournis par le ministère pour que les municipalités puissent créer ces plans d'urgence?

Prenons le temps, quelques minutes, pour réfléchir à combien de petites municipalités comme Mattice il y a qui font face à cette situation financière-là. Il y en a beaucoup, madame la Présidente. Je peux vous dire que dans les municipalités comme on voit dans le Nord, si on regarde la route 11/17, elles vont avoir besoin d'aide financière, de l'aide du ministère.

The ministry has not employed expert staff to assist municipalities with the FireSmart program or creating fire management plans, unlike other provinces like BC. How does the minister expect these municipalities to take on these responsibilities, especially—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): Thank you.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Laurie Scott): The clock being at 6 o'clock, we'll now call for orders of the day.

Report continues in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Edith Dumont, OOnt

Speaker / Présidente de l'Assemblée législative: Hon. / L'hon. Donna Skelly

Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Deputy Clerk / Sous-Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Julia Douglas, Meghan Stenson,

Christopher Tyrell, Wai Lam (William) Wong

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Tim McGough

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Allsopp, Tyler (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Bowman, Stephanie (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Deputy Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de parti reconnu
Brady, Bobbi Ann (IND)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Bresee, Ric (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Président du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Cerjanec, Rob (LIB)	Ajax	
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	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et des Jeux
Ciriello, Monica (PC)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Clancy, Aislinn (GRN)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds— Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Cooper, Michelle (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Crawford, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	Oakville	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises et de l'Approvisionnement
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Darouze, George (PC)	Carleton	
Denault, Billy (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Dixon, Jess (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Dowie, Andrew (PC)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
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 Emergency Preparedness and Response / Ministre de la Protection civile et de l'Intervention en cas d'urgence
Fairclough, Lee (LIB)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Firin, Mohamed (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Premier / Premier ministre Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Leader, Third Party / Chef du troisième parti
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gilmour, Alexa (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Gualtieri, Silvia (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Hamid, Hon. / L'hon. Zee (PC)	Milton	Associate Solicitor General for Auto Theft and Bail Reform / Solliciteur général associé responsable de la Lutte contre le vol d'automobiles et de la Réforme relative aux mises en liberté sous caution
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hazell, Andrea (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Holland, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin (PC)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products / Ministre associé des Forêts et des Produits forestiers
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Trevor (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et de l'Agroentreprise
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon. Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Kusendova-Bashta, Hon. / L'hon. Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Energy and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie et des Mines
Lennox, Robin (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	Minister of Sport / Ministre du Sport
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)	Durham	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
McCrimmon, Karen (LIB)	Kanata—Carleton	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
McGregor, Hon. / L'hon. Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques et du Multiculturalisme
McKenney, Catherine (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Oosterhoff, Hon. / L'hon. Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries / Ministre associé des Industries à forte consommation d'énergie
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	Deputy House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pinsonneault, Steve (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)	Timmins	Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement et de la croissance économique du Nord
Quinn, Hon. / L'hon. Nolan (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security / Ministre des Collèges et Universités, de l'Excellence en recherche et de la Sécurité
Racinsky, Joseph (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	
Rae, Matthew (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation / Ministre des Affaires autochtones et de la Réconciliation économique avec les Premières Nations Minister Responsible for Ring of Fire Economic and Community Partnerships / Ministre responsable des Partenariats économiques et communautaires pour le développement du Cercle de feu
Riddell, Brian (PC)	Cambridge	
Rosenberg, Bill (PC)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Saunderson, Brian (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Chris (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shamji, Adil (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Skelly, Hon. / L'hon. Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	Speaker / Présidente de l'Assemblée législative
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, David (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Smyth, Stephanie (LIB)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario
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 / Ministre associée des Petites Entreprises

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon. Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué à la Santé mentale et à la Lutte contre les dépendances
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Attorney General / Procureur général associé
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	Deputy Speaker / Vice-Présidente Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Tsao, Jonathan (LIB)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Vickers, Paul (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Watt, Tyler (LIB)	Nepean	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes
Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	