

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Good morning. Please remain standing for the Lord's Prayer, followed by the Buddhist prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONS ACT, 2010 / LOI DE 2010 SUR LES PROFESSIONS COMPTABLES

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 24, 2010, on the motion for second reading of Bill 158, An Act to repeal and replace the statutes governing The Certified General Accountants Association of Ontario, the Certified Management Accountants of Ontario and The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario / Projet de loi 158, Loi visant à abroger et à remplacer les lois régissant l'Association des comptables généraux accrédités de l'Ontario, les Comptables en management accrédités de l'Ontario et l'Institut des comptables agréés de l'Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further debate?

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: That is funny. Good morning, everyone. How are we doing? I thought I was continuing-sorry, Speaker-the debate on the motion from yesterday. Sorry about that.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further debate?

Mr. Bentley has moved second reading of Bill 158. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?
Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Mr. Peter Kormos: No, say the New Democrats.

Hon. Carol Mitchell: I would ask that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? So ordered.

SECURITIES INDUSTRY

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 24, 2010, on the motion by Mr. Duncan to locate the new common securities regulator in Toronto.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: As I was just saying, good morning, everyone. I should have looked at my House sheet as I got up to speak, and realized that we were finishing up business from yesterday.

As I was saying yesterday on this particular motion, I think a couple of points need to be made. This is one of those motherhood-and-apple-pie kinds of statements for the larger part of it, which is: Should we move to one national regulator? I think there are a lot of arguments on all sides of the House that some of that is desirable. Should we locate here in Toronto this new sort of bureau, as we say in French, that was created by Mr. Flaherty, the Minister of Finance, who used to be the Minister of Finance in this Legislature? Well, if I was living in Toronto—a lot of people do, and they would say, "That's a great idea." I said yesterday that I believe that if there was a motion on just that issue, all the members of this House would vote in favour. It's kind of unfortunate that we are using a whole bunch of House time debating what is a motherhood-and-apple-pie thing.

But what this debate is all about is not whether we should have the national securities regulator coordinating office in Toronto; it's all about a wedge issue that the Liberals are trying to create with the Tories and with us, for two reasons; that is, they've also put inside the motion that all of the House supports the Open Ontario plan. As I was saying yesterday, there are a couple of problems with that.

First of all, I don't support the Open Ontario plan as presented by the government. I think that what this government has been doing for the last six or seven years has done a lot to close Ontario. For the alarm bell to ring all of a sudden in cabinet and in the Premier's office, waking them up to, "Oh my God, there's a problem in the economy of Ontario and we need to do something to attract investment in the province," seven years into the crisis—I think you guys have been sleeping at the switch for a little bit longer than you should have. So I say, better waking up late than never waking up at all.

Then you've got to look at the details of what Open Ontario is. Are we addressing the issues that are affecting people across this province, from north to south to east to west, when it comes to the local economies they work in? I say we are not. I look at the Open Ontario plan as it has been presented since the throne speech, and at what has ensued since the throne speech, and I ask myself, has the government of Ontario responded to the issues that are facing industry today in Ontario?

I will speak specifically to what's going on in my own backyard. Xstrata, a large multinational mining company that operates the former Kidd Creek mine in Timmins, has a smelter and a refinery that operate with 700 direct employees and probably a couple of hundred contractors. We're talking about upwards of 3,000 direct and indirect jobs in the Timmins area—Timmins, Smooth Rock Falls, Iroquois Falls and everywhere else—plus a whole bunch of supplies and services which come out of places like Toronto and other cities that supply the Xstrata metallurgical site. The company decided that they're closing this down. They're going to take the concentrated ore that's processed in that facility and, rather than adding value to it by putting it through the smelter refinery in Ontario, they're going to close down that facility and transfer production into the province of Quebec.

So you say to yourself, "Open Ontario?" It seems that you open the door and let people out; you don't let people in. There are a couple of reasons why Xstrata has decided to leave Ontario, but one of the huge parts of it is the price of electricity. They are using anywhere from 120 to 140 megawatts of electricity to

run that site. When you're buying that much electricity and you're the largest customer of the Ontario Hydro corporation, you'd think that if the doors are being closed and those 3,000 jobs are being lost and all the ensuing economic benefits from that plant will be gone forever, the government would say, "Oh God, is there something we can do to keep that operation here in Ontario?"

0910

Had the government decided to deal with electricity prices, I would argue that we would probably not be in the position of closing that plant. I think a whole bunch of other people-Mayor Tom Laughren, the members of CAW, the citizens of the city of Timmins, the business community and others-would say, "Yeah, if you were to deal with the electricity prices, that plant would not be shutting down."

Open Ontario, my eye. All you've done is opened the door and allowed them to leave. What's worse than the Xstrata issue is that when the Xstrata leaders, the president of the company, met with the Premier some two, three weeks ago, you'd think that the Premier would have said, "Listen, let's sit down and have a chat here about what we can do to keep the doors open in that plant and keep you operating here in Ontario."

What the Premier instead said was, "Well, listen. No, I guess there's not much I can do. Oh, my God, electricity prices are a big part of the problem. Ah, there's nothing we can do, and we'll let you guys close down." Some help; some Open Ontario. The only thing the Premier did was open the door and say, "Bye. Don't forget to turn off the lights when you leave Ontario." That has been the Open Ontario experience that I've seen so far.

I look at what is happening in the pulp and paper industry across the north and here in southern Ontario and places like Welland and Toronto where there are recycling plants. Electricity is a big part of the cost of their doing business. In fact, when it comes to operating a pulp or a craft mill, electricity prices will run you about 20% to 30% of your overall cost, depending on the plant and the design, but on average, 20% to 30%. The rate of electricity has gone down, but what has happened is that the global adjustment has basically turned that rate decrease on its ear, so that people are now paying much more for electricity than they did before.

I'll just give you a little example-Tembec, Kapuskasing, that particular operation. About a year ago, when you looked at the global adjustment, the global adjustment was a net benefit to them, because what the global adjustment does-for people to understand-is that Ontario can generate up to about 26,000 megawatts of electricity, but on average, probably only needs about 18,000 or 20,000 megawatts of electricity to run as a baseload. But because there are peaks in the day where there is a lot of electricity being utilized, you have to have the capacity to generate those 26,000 megawatts of electricity at any time, in case there is a peak.

What the global adjustment was supposed to do and what the DR1s and DR2s and DR3s-these are programs that the government has-were to do, was to say to industries like the pulp and paper industry, mining and others, "If you do not purchase the electricity during the peak and you flatten out the demand so that you don't need to generate the 26,000 megawatts, but you can generate, on average, 18,000 megawatts, 24 hours a day-that would be the most that we would demand-that will save you money as a company, because we will not charge you excessive rates during the peaks, and we will offset the electricity that you don't use and give you"-as they did in the pulp and paper industry-"a credit saying that we'll count you like a generator. If you don't use 10,000 megawatts of electricity in these times, we'll say that that 10,000 megawatts"-excuse me, that 10 meg. I've got to get my thousands and my megs right, because there is a big difference there.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Yes, be careful.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: "That 10 meg will counted as a credit on your hydro bill; we will pay you as if you were a generator." The effect of that was to manage down the demand of electricity, and if you can manage down the demand of electricity, it means that you don't have to have the coal-fired plants, and you don't need to rely on a whole bunch of other mechanisms of generating electricity that, quite frankly, are bad for our environment. And if you're able to conserve on the other side, in the plant itself, there are also efficiencies there, not only when it comes to money, but when it comes to the environment.

So a year ago, the global adjustment was, in effect, a net positive gain to those particular companies. This year, in February, the company Tembec, Kapuskasing, paid \$1.8 million in additional hydro charges because of the global adjustment. The effect is that the way the global adjustment is now being calculated makes it a disincentive for companies to conserve, because where you are working towards conservation and bringing down your demand, you are being charged the global adjustment to bring the electricity price back up above what it would be prior to your starting to do your conservation.

My God, what are you guys thinking of? As I said, was there an alarm clock in the Premier's office, in the cabinet room, that rang seven years later and he said, "Oh, we've got a problem. We're going to put Open Ontario in our throne speech and then put it in this motion"? Listen, these are real serious problems, and if you don't address those issues, such as the global adjustment in electricity, not only is that bad for the environment; it's bad for jobs. Timmins is seeing 3,000 direct and indirect jobs leave our area. Why? Because of the global adjustment. I would say it's 70% of the problem. There are other issues, but that's for another debate.

In the case of the pulp and paper industry, if this does not get adjusted, if the global adjustment is not fixed, there will be pulp and paper mills closing down within the year. The problem is, if you close down the pulp and paper mills in, let's say, Thunder Bay or Timmins or Fort Frances, it means that all of the sawmills that need those paper mills to sell their chips to—because when you cut a tree and make dimensional lumber such as two-by-sixes or two-by-fours, the residual waste is called chips. Those chips are then transported to a pulp and paper mill and converted to paper—a value-added process. They will not have a market, and all of those will shut down.

Here is the cumulative effect: The global adjustment will rise even more, because you're going to have to offset all of these contracts that we've signed on the green energy side and you're not going to have the customer base by which to pay for them. So you're going to be taking out the largest utility customers in the grid, and you're going to have fewer people standing, who are going to have to share a larger burden of the hydro bill and a larger burden of our green energy, and it's going to be a cumulative effect where plant after plant that needs electricity will find it increasingly more difficult to keep its doors open. Open Ontario? By all means. I, along with my colleague Mr. Tabuns and the rest of the NDP caucus, would love to see Ontario open for business, provided we do that in a sustainable way and we do that in a way that is socially responsible to our communities; no question. But what I see this government doing by way of what they've done up to now for keeping Ontario open for business is not real smart.

I'll say one other thing. I was really interested in the throne speech, because up to the throne speech, the government was saying that when it comes to the north and the undertaking on all of that land north of Highway 11, we were going to protect 50% of the territory in perpetuity. The government has been running on that for a long time now—about a year, a year and a half or two years. All of a sudden, because the government's alarm bell went off and they realized they have a jobs problem in northern

Ontario, they said "Let 'er rip. Ring of Fire, we're a-comin'. We're going to bring these mines on to production and they're going to fulfill the job needs in northern Ontario." I thought to myself, there's nothing wrong with the Ring of Fire if it's developed in a sustainable way. Of course everybody's in favour. But where is the government coming from? One moment they're the conservationists; the next day they're the brownfield developers. It's like they've gone from one extreme to the other in a period of 24 hours. So I say "open for business"? Come on, guys. You can't be open for business when you're sending out a whole whack of mixed messages to the business community here in Ontario and those that are looking at investing, with the kinds of moves that you've been doing for the past number of years.

For that reason, I would vote for the motion if it were not for the "open for business" statement inside that particular motion. I just say to the government, you'd better wake up and smell the coffee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. Charles Sousa: I'd like to speak to the government's original motion: "That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario endorses the need for a strong national securities regulator and endorses the Open Ontario plan to grow our financial services industry by calling on the federal government to recognize Toronto's role as the third-largest financial centre in North America and therefore"-

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Thank you. I'd just like to remind the honourable member that we're debating the PC amendment to the government's original motion, so you may want to include that in your remarks, too.

Mr. Charles Sousa: In respect to the amendment, I would still like to say that the Open Ontario plan is in keeping with the financial services requirement to put this national regulator in Toronto. The Open Ontario plan talks about a five-year plan to create new opportunities for jobs and growth. It's exactly about jobs and the economy. It's responding to the recession by infrastructure and retraining. It's about building new opportunities for jobs and growth through tax reforms, through clean energy, through the Green Energy Act and the Water Opportunities Act to create a cluster of water businesses that will be the lead in the world.

0920

Mr. John O'Toole: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Not to be obstructionist, but there is an amendment on the floor to the original government motion, and I believe he should be addressing the amendment which deletes "Open Ontario."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): It is a valid point of order, but in looking back at the debate on this motion the other day, it seemed to be fairly wide-ranging.

The honourable member has the floor.

Mr. Charles Sousa: Thank you, Speaker.

I indeed say that the Open Ontario plan is about the financial services industry. It's part of the Open Ontario plan, and it speaks to establishing Ontario as one of the primary financial services centres in North America.

It also talks about maintaining strong education. The five-year Open Ontario plan will build on a stronger economy by expanding opportunities in our schools, our colleges and universities and our trades. It's about full-day learning. It's about the 20,000 new students in colleges and universities this fall, and it's about developing a plan to have 70% of our workforce in post-secondary education.

I reinforce the Open Ontario plan, because it is in keeping with what we are trying to do to promote stimulus in our economy and ensure that we have a strong Ontario in our future.

It's about improved health care as well. The Open Ontario plan will improve patient care through new legislation that will ensure that our health care professionals work together in the best interests of the patient. It also speaks about new accountability rules for health care managers. It has new legislation that will require better integration of our health care professionals and hospitals. It's about funding that will allow patients to reduce their wait times.

It's also about debt reduction. Today's budget will lay out a plan to eliminate the deficit gradually and responsibly. Moving forward, we'll have aspects of the Open Ontario plan that will have following budgets ingrained to ensure that we have new opportunities for jobs and growth. That means having a plan to eliminate the deficit gradually.

I reinforce the Open Ontario plan as part of this motion-I am going to speak about the national regulator in a moment. Here's what people are saying about the Open Ontario plan; I think it's worth repeating.

"At a time of severe economic upheaval and widespread personal hardship, one thing that can safely be said about Monday's throne speech is this: The provincial government gets it.... The throne speech sketches out a prudent plan for an increasingly knowledge-based economy for the province." That comes from a Toronto Star editorial on March 9.

"Clear signs that the government is thinking creatively about economic growth. When dollars are scarce and international competition is fierce, sometimes the best innovation is an innovation in thinking." That's from a Globe and Mail editorial on March 9.

"The Open Ontario plan acknowledges some of the work already under way, including tax reform and efforts to reduce red tape, both of which the chamber has been looking for for years." That comes from the CEO of the Belleville chamber of commerce.

"We're pleased to see that the throne speech maps out this direction-especially in financial services where we are already significant players-and in green technologies, new resource opportunities and attracting the best foreign students. These will also be important in offsetting losses sustained in other areas during the recession." This is from the president and CEO of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario.

The last quote: "Today's speech from the throne, with its focus on creating the right environment in Ontario for investment, job creation and skills development, sets the right tone as Ontario prepares for the end of the global recession." That's from the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

Let me speak to the common securities regulator for Toronto. This motion endorses the need for a strong national securities regulator, with its principal office located in Toronto, where it belongs. As my colleague the parliamentary assistant to finance said yesterday, "Ontario's financial services sector is ... a world leader and a critical part of this province's economy. The sector ... employed some 365,000 people in Ontario in 2009, an increase ... of 60,000 jobs since 2003. In addition, the sector supports an

estimated 280,000 ancillary jobs in software design ... and similar fields....

"Toronto is home to globally successful insurance companies" and "investment and pension funds.... Toronto is also home to five of the largest banks in North America by market capitalization and is the third-largest financial centre in North America, behind only New York and Chicago."

It is clear that regulation and enforcement will improve with a common regulator. Capital markets are no longer provincial in scope; they are national, international and global. The Ontario Securities Commission is one of 13 provincial and territorial securities regulators in Canada. Different laws and different jurisdictions are individually interpreted and separately enforced. Multiple regulators can lead to duplication and restrictions on information sharing. In fact, Canada is currently the only major industrialized country without a national regulator. Our fragmented regulator structure puts this province and our country at a competitive disadvantage when we try to attract international investment.

Our government has long supported a single securities regulator for Canada. It would reinforce Canada's otherwise strong international reputation for excellence in the regulation of our financial institutions. We know that a Canadian securities regulator with the right structure would offer many real benefits for our economy. It would reduce the cost and increase the efficiency of the capital markets regulation in Canada.

While there have always been good reasons for the creation of a national regulator-improved investor protection, greater efficiencies in the capital markets and reductions in the cost of raising capital-recent developments have made structural reform more crucial than ever. Since 2007, international financial developments have altered the financial landscape substantially. It is now clear that financial risks move easily and quickly from financial markets to capital markets, and back to financial markets. The international financial market turbulence seen over the past couple of years has highlighted the need for regulators, including securities regulators, to have a structure to deal quickly and effectively with these systemic risks. The structure in Canada seems well suited for this in all respects except securities regulation. Jurisdictions around the world are striving to reap the economic rewards of enhanced competitiveness. No matter how much Canada improves its competitive position, we will still be at a competitive disadvantage if other jurisdictions move further and faster. It seems clearly counterproductive to enter this competitive race with the inherent handicap of an inefficient regulatory structure.

The Canadian Bankers Association has commented, stating that we should all focus on creating a Canadian advantage with our Canadian securities regime, not fuelling an archaic system. Does it really make sense to put Canadian companies, particularly small and medium-sized companies, at a competitive disadvantage and expect them to waste millions of dollars every year to meet repetitive and overlapping regulatory requirements?

The International Monetary Fund has said that Canada would attract more investment with a common regulator and that would help to reduce compliance and administrative costs.

The CBA also commented on the passport model, simply saying that it is a second-best solution. The passport model doesn't go far enough. Sure, it's an effort by the regulators to address the current problems and inefficiencies of the status quo, but it entrenches all the infrastructure and costs of the current fragmented system. It creates an overlapping set of home and host jurisdictional rights and responsibilities that will result in a very complex and confusing investor protection system. The system will continue to suffer from slow policy development. The last thing that we need is our fast-changing financial markets to be curbed by results of our regulators, and we still won't have a national voice that

can speak for Canada internationally and deal with the securities policy and enforcement effective here at home.

The formation of a Canadian securities regulator transition office is a good step forward, agreed to by many, and it indicates that the government's commitment to reforming the current inefficient financial system is there. The Canadian Bankers Association strongly supports the transition office's mandate to lead and manage the effective transition to a Canadian securities regulator. The key issue, however, is making sure we have an efficient securities regulator system that works for the benefit of investors, businesses raising capital and the strength of the economy as a whole.

We have a number of stakeholders in this situation: governments, small businesses, large businesses and investors. The CBA believes strongly in the need for a common securities regulator in Canada and has these quotes: "Entrepreneurs and businesses seeking capital to grow and create jobs" would benefit; "savers and investors seeking opportunities to build their financial future" would also benefit; "employees working for companies that depend on the capital markets for financing and growth" require a national regulator; and "policy-makers seeking an innovative and competitive economy" require a national regulator.

In Canada there are 13 sets of rules and regulations administered by 13 different regulators. There is nothing to gain and no good reason for Canada to maintain the status quo. An inefficient system that has a negative impact on the financial well-being of all Canadians is the issue at hand.

Canada is out of sync with other countries around the globe which are moving ahead in securities reform. The current system puts Canada out of step with the rest of the world, and I say that because The Economist highlighted the fragmented nature of the Canadian regulatory system, referring to it as "antiquated."

0930

Former Bank of Canada governor David Dodge has also weighed in on this debate, stating that international investors view the Canadian system of securities regulation as the "Wild West." He has said that efficiency dictates that Canada has a uniform system of securities legislation that applies to all.

Research with regard to SMEs has cited that the decentralized structure of securities regulations has a substantial negative impact on Canadian firms as they attempt to raise capital and that the burden falls disproportionately on small and medium-sized businesses. Research demonstrates there are clear scale economies in developing and filing securities offerings. Offering expenses decrease relative to the size of the offering as the offering size increases. A \$1-million offering incurs four times the costs relative to the amount of capital raised than does a \$10-million offering. If firms seek to raise capital in 13 jurisdictions rather than just one, it is estimated that regulation-related costs would double to 16% of capital in the case of a firm seeking to raise \$1 million, and to 4% of capital for a firm seeking to raise \$10 million.

In practice, these regulatory costs limit the number of jurisdictions in which firms seek to raise capital. Although some improvements have been made through the passport system over the last few years, the regulatory system still presents unnecessary costs and inefficiencies that are out of place in a modern economy.

Lastly, as regards some of the major banks in the country, the CBA has commented also on the passport model. They appreciate the efforts by the provincial governments and what we've done in terms of

trying to establish the existing system to more streamline regulatory harmonization and mutual recognition. It is their belief that the passport model simply cannot deliver the efficient, effective and consistent regulatory system that Canadian investors, entrepreneurs and financial providers need and want.

Moreover, their concern is that the passport model will actually create a more complex and duplicative regulatory environment than currently exists. It creates an overlapping set of home and host jurisdictions and things that I've spoken about, and the responsibilities are very complex and confusing for the investor. In all, the same infrastructure costs and fees of the current multiple regulatory systems remain in place under the passport model.

Stakeholders do not only include the big banks and mutual fund companies. They also include, on the most part, individual investors. Diane Urquhart is an expert in regulations; she's an independent financial analyst. She's also my constituent. We've met several times to discuss these issues. She spoke to the Standing Committee on Government Agencies on February 23, 2009, as part of the committee's review of the Ontario Securities Commission, with emphasis on public accountability and effectiveness. Recent American examples show the dangers of ineffective securities regulations and policies, as she cites.

On January 13, 2009, she sent me an email called "National Securities Commission Needs Public Accountability, and Securities Crime Policing Reform is Equally Urgent." She writes:

"The time is now or never to fix Canada's broken securities regulations and securities crime policing system.

"But we need to make sure that the reforms being done in this time of financial crisis are not superficial...."

Together with Gary Logan, a retired detective sergeant at the Toronto Police Services fraud squad, they write:

"We recommend the creation of a new Canadian securities crime panel with securities crime policing experts receiving and assessing securities crime complaints from the public and industry insiders. The police experts on this panel would interview the complainants, prepare the assessment files and allocate the investigations by pre-established jurisdiction protocols to the participating police forces. The participating police forces would be the RCMP, and the provincial, regional and municipal police forces.

"For criminal policing and criminal courts to be successful, there should be no direct connection between securities regulation enforcement by the new national securities commission and the new securities crime policing system. Securities regulation enforcement and securities crime policing must remain independent to satisfy the need for public confidence in the integrity of how their fraud complaints are received, investigated and prosecuted...."

"We need"-they say-"to be vigilant on the proposed design of both the single national securities commission and the new securities crime policing structure to make sure that they both have a robust accountability to the public."

They end by saying this: "We truly hope that our federal MPs have the wisdom to ensure that the new national securities commission and a new securities crime policing system are structured to be fully accountable to the Canadian public for investor protection. As the current financial crisis has proven to

us, not getting securities regulation and securities crime policing right costs us our pensions, our personal life savings and even our ability to create and preserve jobs."

To conclude, the best location: Toronto is the logical choice as home for a national regulator. Given the significant role Ontario's financial sector plays in Canada's capital markets, our government strongly believes that the principal office and centre of operations for the new regulator should be in Toronto.

Let me reinforce: All of our colleagues in this House have already stated that Toronto is the business and financial capital of Canada. It is the centre of the nationwide capital market and Canada's link to international capital markets that are becoming increasingly global in nature. Toronto is the securities industry capital of Canada, employing more people than in Canada's next five largest cities combined- and I believe that the parliamentary assistant for finance reinforced this. Between Montreal, Vancouver, Calgary, Ottawa and Winnipeg combined, Toronto is still the largest.

This city is home to some of the largest participants in Canada's capital markets, including the TSX, the eighth-largest equity market in the world, based on market capitalization. The six alternative trading systems operating in Canada are all based in Toronto, and of course, Canada's five largest banks are based in Toronto. Two of the largest 10 global life insurers, plus three of the four largest Canadian property and casualty insurers; 58 pension fund managers, including the CPP Investment Board; and 119 security firms are in Toronto. It's the headquarters and home for the senior management of national associations such as the Investment Industry Association of Canada, the Investment Funds Institute of Canada, Advocis and the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants. Toronto's chapter of the CFA Society is the second-largest chapter of this influential global organization. Toronto is the headquarters of two national self-regulatory organizations for the securities industry: the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada and the Mutual Funds Dealers Association of Canada.

Saying that, we should have the national regulator right here in Toronto.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Further debate?

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to respond, but also to put a position forward. Yesterday, our finance critic, the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka, Mr. Miller, made a very important contribution to this government motion. More importantly, he made an important amendment, and I think that's really what's on the table here.

I think we all agree with the arguments being made with respect to the financial capital of Toronto, the service capital of Toronto. Also, the member from Thornhill, who's our critic on the economy side of business, made a very good remark, and I would recommend that people refer to those comments.

Mine are kind of tied to that because of our amendment, which, if you look at the overall resolution that was put forward by the government, "that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario endorses the need for a strong national securities regulator"-and this is the wedge part-"and endorses the Open Ontario plan to grow our financial services industry by calling on the federal government"-now they're going to blame the federal government-"to recognize Toronto's role as the third-largest financial centre in North America and therefore locate the new common securities regulator in Toronto, where it belongs." I guess there's some substance in that, but the genesis of where all this comes from is really what's most important.

0940

If I look at the remarks made by our critic, Norm Miller, from Parry Sound-Muskoka, he was responding in a general sense to the state of the economy. But he recognized the motion by the government. It's kind of a waste of time, because we agree with the central theme. Why did they stick in the poison pill and waste the time of this Legislature during a time of the economic conditions in Ontario-and even pre-budget deliberations that should be going on? In respect to making progress and contributing positively, Mr. Miller moved an amendment: "Getting back to the motion ... I would actually like to move an amendment to the motion. I move that the motion be amended by deleting the words `endorses the Open Ontario plan ... by calling' and substituting the word `calls' therefore."

So he moved the amendment which moved out the portion to deal with this House endorsing the Open Ontario plan. Really, we fully agree with the rest of it. I think all parties-Mr. Bisson spoke this morning and yesterday as well, and agreed. The other side: Mr. Sousa is a qualified financial person with a successful history in banking, and I endorse pretty much everything he said.

I want to commend the Premier, which is quite unusual-not just for me, but for us to recognize that the real dilemma, the debate that we're in is bigger than us. By that I mean there's a committee that's now struck, and this is called the TFSA, the Toronto Financial Services Alliance. It's a forum. This forum was put forward in 2008. They had been working through 2009. Some of the leaders on this forum are quite distinguished, of no partisan affiliation, in our communities. I'm going to mention one of them: Don Drummond, who's senior vice-president and chief economist for the TD Bank Financial Group, and one of the most respected economists when we look at budget day here in Ontario. Who do we look to when we want an objective, informed opinion? We look to Don Drummond. He's on this committee.

This forum is led by the mayor of the city of Toronto, but its membership includes the president of RBC, Gordon Nixon; Gerald McCaughey, who's with CIBC; James Leech from the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan-the who's who list is here-the president of Mackenzie Financial, Charles Sims; Robin Spencer, who's with Aviva Canada; and Richard Waugh, who's with Scotiabank. These are all the shooters. They're on this committee. Who else is on the committee? There's the Honourable James Flaherty, the Minister of Finance for Canada; the Honourable Dalton McGuinty from the province of Ontario; Dwight Duncan, the finance minister-as he should be; David Miller, the Toronto guy; and Janet Ecker, the president of the Toronto Financial Services Alliance. I believe she was appointed by the Premier, or probably by the Premier and the Prime Minister, having been a former Minister of Finance-respectable.

So this is bigger than what's going on here this morning.

There are a few things that have happened that verify that this is already happening. The futility of all of this is to say our small contribution-certainly the very few of us here this morning-doesn't do justice to how important this really is. I'm going to bring it into a little larger model, here, of revealing how important this is. Let's not trivialize it. This is a presentation by the Toronto Financial Services Alliance: Ms. Ecker and Don Drummond, highly regarded amongst a group of leaders in this alliance, all of whom are esteemed.

I don't want to diminish its importance by mentioning the politicians, more so the organizations that are represented. Mr. Sousa mentioned that the head offices for most of the big banks and securities regulators-the OSC-are right here in this city. It's a couple of million people; we're the largest city in Canada. No one is anti-Toronto. In fact, we're pro-Toronto. A healthy Toronto is a healthy Ontario is a healthy Canada. Let's get over it.

This is the truth. The real thing is here: Ontario is struggling; there is no question. We have a higher unemployment rate than Michigan.

Mr. Michael A. Brown: We do not.

Mr. John O'Toole: He should withdraw that remark. It's true. We are in serious trouble.

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm trying to be polite. You're trying me.

Here's the deal, though: On January 29-

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: I won't aggravate them anymore. At least they're awake. This is important.

On January 29 this year, there was a presentation made by this august group to the federal pre-budget submission, which would include Mr. Flaherty and others-and all members, by the way, of all parties. Probably Jack Layton was there, if he was back from holidays.

My point being-I could digress-those leaders are hearing from the leaders of this province, not political. This submission here is-the references: The TSX is here; the OSC, the Ontario Securities Commission, is here. We're the eighth-largest trading group in the world, basically. Let's put this in a global context. See how much trouble is going on? Look at Greece and Portugal, Ireland, Iceland. This is not some trivial matter. This is huge.

Is there any lack of money? No. Money is moving rapidly and wealth is moving rapidly around the globe electronically. I have members of my family who are securities traders in London, England-my own family. They worked here at Cassels Brock in Toronto and were recruited there. They're securities lawyers with master's degrees and all this kind of stuff. They do all their trading from the Isle of Man, which is a financial capital in the world. It's a tax haven, actually.

My point being, let's not get bogged down in the politics of this and realize that there are huge capitals that are moving and running the world. We may not like that, but their specialty-the person I'm talking about; I won't mention any more details-deals specifically in resource acquisition in Argentina, Chile, China, Africa, and they're assembling capital to own those resources because there is a finite amount of resources in the world.

Pay attention. This is not trivial stuff. This presentation that was made was representative of this leadership group I've spoken of. In keeping with the theme, I would like to focus on their submission of some key aspects of the Toronto Financial Services Alliance. They've been working not just in Ontario; they're working with the Boston Consulting Group, Partnership and Action, mobilization for what they call the global advantage, which is sort of what I've been talking about here in a broad way.

I'm not going to have time-I should have really had an hour. Can I seek unanimous consent, Mr. Speaker, for more time?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): The honourable member seeks unanimous consent for more

time. Is it agreed? I heard a no.

The honourable member for Durham has the floor.

Mr. John O'Toole: Thank you very much. An hour; way to go. Excellent. That's terrific.

I'm going to get to the real essence here. I could share this with members of the Legislature, because they would all read it, I'm sure. On page 7 of this report, "Establishment of a Common Securities Regulator"-this is a presentation made months ago to the federal government, and here we are, talking-we're the junior hockey team here in this; the NHL is somewhere else.

0950

"The Canadian securities industry plays a vital role in the national economy by enabling businesses to access capital and ... providing investment opportunities for the Canadian public"-which includes pension funds.

By the way, all pension funds are in trouble. Why? You look at the market, because all pension funds are somewhere in the market. So pay attention. We've got the big debate going on about pensions, about how the CPP is in trouble, about how WSIB is in trouble, Nortel is in trouble. Hey, look, pay attention. This is moving faster than most people want to even think about.

Here's the critical thing: "Effective regulation of capital markets is crucial; lack of confidence in these markets can have economic repercussions" when particular participants withdraw from them. "Canada is the only major industrialized country without some form of a national securities regulator." This is critical. In Canada, each province regulates it. So if you want to file a prospectus in Canada, you've got to file 13 of them. The regulations are little minutiae details, and these are expansive documents with "this," "than," "may," "shall" "will"-all these legal words. These are keywords in law, and it takes thousands of hours and hundreds of thousands of dollars to file a prospectus. We're not even in the market. If we had one, we could have one set of rules: clear, transparent definitions of what constitutes a trust or what constitutes a leverage. So pay attention here; I'm going to go on. I really can't do all of this in this short period.

There are 13 different regulators, as I said. Canada's reputation for a strong regulatory structure for the financial sector is proven. Our banks are recognized worldwide.

We just appeared in Ireland. We just appeared at a big conference in Europe on this. It's called the Fintel. This is a group of financial securities people from around the world. Now, who's participating? Who is our voice? Actually, it's Janet Ecker. In fact, Janet Ecker appeared in May 2009 at the Fintel commission. I have her remarks right here. In fact, I've spoken to Janet recently. She's a wonderful person, committed totally to this. She's appearing in Ireland, actually in Dublin. She says, "One of our major initiatives"-she's speaking to Dublin and to the world, the European common market-"at the Toronto Financial Services Alliance, in co-operation with the government of Ontario, the city of Toronto" and the federal government "and the education community in the region, is to develop a centre of excellence in financial services education."

She goes on to say that Toronto has become a magnet for financial services companies. "Financial services companies are the largest private sector employers and the biggest contributors to the local economy. Around them, a thriving information and communications technology industry has

developed...." You see the layers in this clustering effect here? It goes down to software development, manufacturers, business professionals essential to the financial sector, as well as lawyers, accountants, business consultants and so on-the Boston group and others. "The centre will grow as long as it is fed and watered." This is what we're talking about. Let's get on with it.

We could call the vote now and I can assure you, anyone who is paying attention would vote yes. Why have you stuck in the poison pill of this Open Ontario? That's Mickey Mouse. I'm disappointed in the Premier by this sort of charade, destroying the importance of this debate. It undermines the integrity of the Premier. Why would he do that? To use the politics of this important debate to trivialize this discussion is insulting to all of us here.

I support Norm Miller's amendment to withdraw that Open Ontario, and let's get on with it. Let's show that Ontario has one vision, one plan for a prosperous Ontario. I don't sense that. I sense this petty politics: Who's winning and who's losing?

Here's a very important message for you. The Fintel group is meeting, and I have their invitation here. I wish I could go; I am Irish. I'd pay my own way, actually. The third annual Global Financial Services Centres Conference is being held in Dublin. It's April 27 and 28 at the Dublin Castle. The special speakers here-the list of speakers is quite remarkable, from all over the common market and other places.

Guess who one of the speakers is, right after Daniel Gallagher, co-director of the US Securities and Exchange Commission? The next speaker is Janet Ecker, former Minister of Finance for Ontario and head of the Toronto Financial Services Alliance. I have the summary, and it's quite amazing. It's a global network of financial centres. There's a session on the development of the European Union, the world's largest financial centre. The euro dropped about 8% yesterday. Watch the euro. It's in serious trouble-because they're going to have to bail out all these failing countries and failing economies that, for instance, Greece is going through right now.

I won't go on any more than that. But in my final summation remarks I will mention that I took the securities courses many years ago. I'm over 65, so I look at my children's future. My future-there's less of it than theirs. We, collectively, are looking to the young people and the uncertainty in the economy of Ontario now. We need steady hands at the helm. We need to support this movement.

I commend some of the work that's being done at all levels of government, including David Miller, who's probably going to be working on this. I think that when he leaves as mayor he has already been hired. I think it's a done deal, but I'm on my own talking about that.

In the context of today, being budget day in Ontario-and here is the important thing: Let's not trivialize the debate on the deficit. If you recall, in the 2003 election, they hemmed and hawed and screamed that there was a deficit of \$5 billion.

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: Whatever it was. They took three years to fix it. All of a sudden, from November until March they've paid off \$3 billion-almost \$4 billion against what their revenue and deficit was in November to today's statement; \$3.4 billion that they've saved on the budget. They wanted to blame Harris and Eves for three years, the first term, and say, "Look at the problem they left us." That's abusive politics. It's misleading, in my opinion, and I think this is why we're dysfunctional in this Legislature in

terms of serving the people of Ontario. I get so frustrated. I've been here for about 15 years. I chaired seven municipal budgets and I've run my own family, to some degree, successfully. I only say to you this-

Interjection.

Mr. John O'Toole: Take a look and you'll see what I'm talking about.

The only thing I can say to you is: Let's not trivialize this. Let's vote for the amendment and let's vote for the resolution, and we'll have finally found a compromise that serves the people of Ontario.

I see that one of my favourite people on the other side has just shown up, and I have to give him credit. Mr. Phillips, the member from Agincourt, is a great guy here. I served a little while when we were on the government side and he was the critic for finance. I have a lot of respect for his contribution as well to the province.

But this is important. I think we should vote on it this morning, and in fact, send a signal to the Premier that he has our-

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): Thank you. Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's a pleasure to rise today to discuss this resolution. First of all, I want to say that a resolution to call for a national regulator and to have that national regulator located here in Toronto is a useful resolution. It's unfortunate that the government did, as Mr. O'Toole said, put a poison pill in there asking for endorsement of its Open Ontario plan, something that I can't do.

The Conservative caucus has put forward a resolution essentially saying, "Yes, we need a national regulator, and yes, we need it located here in Toronto." That amendment makes sense to us. It expresses the interests and the needs of the people here in this province, and I think the people should be supporting that amendment. I would call on the government to support that amendment so there can be unanimity in the House.

I think that we need to understand, as we discuss this matter, that we are talking about very big issues and we are talking about a need for regulation that goes far beyond anything that's proposed in this resolution today. Unfortunately, as much as having a national regulator would be useful, it would not be adequate to deal with the problems that we faced in the financial sector in the last few-frankly, over the last few decades, but certainly not in the last few years. If we want to deal with those fundamental problems, we have to have a very different perspective on why we have a fundamental problem; we have to have a very different perspective on how you get at it, so that the foundations of any regulatory regime are based on something solid, not simply based on wishful thinking, not simply based on some hope that having a national regulator will deal with instability and financial bubbles that eventually pop, leaving a lot of people in very difficult situations.

1000

I have to say that it's extraordinary to me that this government, which in its Open Ontario plan is looking at the privatization of some of the most substantial assets that the people of this province own-Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation, the LCBO, Ontario Lottery and Gaming-hired the company Goldman

Sachs as their advisor. That's extraordinary to me. If you're talking about the need for financial regulation, stable capital markets and a level of confidence in the financial system in this province and you hire a company like Goldman Sachs, you have undermined your credibility.

My colleague from Durham talked about the difficulties that the European Union is facing, in particular, the need to deal with countries like Greece that have problems with their debt. If one looks at the history, if one looks at what Goldman Sachs did with Greece at the beginning of this decade-they went to that country; made them a loan through a currency exchange, masking the reality of that exchange; took in exchange the revenue from the state lottery and from their airports, in the end putting Greece in a situation where they got quick cash in exchange for a long-term loss of revenue to their public treasury; and at the same time, although it was within the letter of the law, did not disclose the real state of their national budget to the European Union regulators-that's the kind of company that was hired to advise the province of Ontario on dealing with some of its most critical assets: revenue-generating assets, assets strategically important to the development of the economy of this province. That's who was hired. How can you hire that company and say at the same time that you want strong regulation of the financial sector and credibility on financial matters?

The reality of Goldman Sachs is that if we look at the crisis that happened a few years ago, the crisis of investment decisions around financial instruments that most people don't know about or are not familiar with coming home to roost-asset-backed commercial paper, credit default swaps, collateralized debt obligations; financial instruments, tools that the bulk of the population has nothing to do with-it's an alphabet soup for us-the simple reality is that this firm that's been hired to do one of the most substantial restructurings of Ontario's economy seen in many decades was up to its armpits in the market of selling these asset-backed commercial papers that were based on sub-prime mortgages, and at the same time, they sold insurance on those documents and on those instruments. Essentially, they sold a house to someone and they sold fire insurance on that house to someone else. The person who bought the fire insurance made money if the house burned down. And when the head of Goldman Sachs went to speak to the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission in the United States, he was asked by the chairman of that commission, "How could you in good conscience sell these products, and at the same time, sell the insurance that you knew had a very good chance of being collected because those products were going to blow up? Was that improper?" In fact, the head of Goldman Sachs replied, "Yes, it could be seen as improper." Later that day, his company offered a clarification through a news release.

If, in fact, you're talking about dealing with the climate of confidence in Ontario's economy, in its securities markets, in its management of its finances, why would you hire a company that was and is at the heart of the financial crisis in Europe and in the United States, a financial crisis that has circled the world?

Why do we have unstable financial markets? Why do companies invest in these projects that are a bubble, that are illusory? A big part of that, the reality in the United States, is that with rising income inequality and with stagnation of incomes, if people are going to buy goods, buy homes and satisfy their needs, they have to borrow. The more difficult the terms you set for borrowing, the more difficult it is for them to access that money. However, if you make the loans very generous, then you can have a very large market for them. You inflate demand. You give people access to cash so they can buy goods and you pump up the economy. Eventually, though-because there isn't a foundation there-you get a bubble that bursts. That's what happened in the United States.

If we want stable capital markets here in Canada, here in Ontario, having a national regulator without addressing the underlying economic problems that we face of growing inequality, stagnation of the income of the middle class and a decline in the number of people in the middle class, then we are constantly going to be forced to deal with financing companies that, in order to make a dollar, are going

to do what some people call aggressive lending-risky lending, risky investment, risky bets in the financial market that allow them to show a good rate of return. But that rate of return is based on a foundation of sand.

If we're going to be talking about confidence and regulation, we need a more profound examination of the problems that we face financially and economically in this society, in this province. A national regulator is a useful thing. Locating it in Toronto is a logical thing. This is the home for the financial sector in Canada, the core of it. But it is not adequate to protect this society, this city and this industry from volatility and from crashes.

The United States has a national regulator. Because it has a national regulator, one can say, "Did it protect its financial sector? Did it protect its investors, its pension plans better than they were protected here in Canada?" I think you have to admit that they, in fact, did not. We had the financial sector centred on Wall Street, with outposts in Atlanta, Los Angeles and all over, go over a cliff a few years ago. If you get the opportunity-and every legislator in this House has the opportunity to go to the legislative library and borrow it. The book *Too Big to Fail* is an extraordinarily illuminating picture of what happened in the United States financial system in the years 2005 to 2008. The reality is that the regulators only really showed up when companies were failing. The regulators weren't moving forward to put in place a system that guarded the life savings of people who put their money in the stock market. They didn't guard those pension funds that depended on those investment houses. No, they stepped in-and they had to step in-at the point at which the system was so badly in crisis that banks wouldn't loan to one another for fear of being burned.

1010

Having a national regulator I think is a useful thing, but don't expect, don't dream, don't daydream that simply having a national regulator will protect us and our savings and our pensions from the sort of madness that went on at some of the highest levels of financial thinking that exist on this planet.

If you have an opportunity to read the book, a firm called Lehman Brothers is very much at the centre of it. There is a company called Bear Stearns that was in deep trouble; they were merged with another company. Lehman Brothers didn't get merged with anyone and came unglued far too quickly. In the course of becoming unglued, as their stock price dropped day after day, as their capital situation-as their ability to pay their debts declined and declined, they were in a situation where they couldn't honour the bets they had placed in the market because, Speaker, as you well know, many people who make these investments put in a dollar of their own money and borrow another \$29. If the bet they make goes sour, they don't just lose their dollar, they owe someone else the \$29 they'd borrowed. So these companies faced a huge cash flow crisis. Where was the regulator, saying, "You can't bet hundreds of billions of dollars on useless securities using other people's money." The regulator was nowhere until this was going over a cliff.

Again, a national regulator is useful. We should have one in Canada, but that is not going to be adequate to deal with the risk that is posed to us and our pensions and whatever income we get from deposits we make, the investments we make in this society.

Even more instructive than *Too Big to Fail*, for those who ever watch the American show *60 Minutes*, is a book that came out, *The Big Short*, by an American author called Michael Lewis. *The Big Short* is an analysis of who made money off the collapse of the financial system. There were a number of people a decade ago who started noticing that in the United States, loans were being made to people who couldn't pay back those loans-loans on their mortgages-and not just to buy homes, but the second mortgage so

they could go out and buy a flat-screen TV or a car.

Very few people examined these mortgages. The people who made money off that crisis actually went to the bonds and went through the individual loans, and some of the things they found were that there were an awful lot of mobile homes that were financed through these bonds that were sold on Wall Street. Not only were they mobile homes but, in many cases-and I forget the exact term, but it was really a copywriter's dream-it was a loan which people didn't have to pay back at any particular time. They could choose to pay it back when they wanted, and their unpaid interest and capital was rolled into the loan.

Those bonds were out there on the market in the billions, tens of billions, hundreds of billions. Big companies like Goldman Sachs would sell those bonds-that people who actually delved into them and looked deep to the base of the hundreds or thousands of loans that composed these pieces of commercial paper found that these loans individually were unsustainable, had very high default rates, were made to people who had terrible credit histories and, in the end, were not credible instruments, were not credible investments, and yet were being sold in huge quantities not just in the United States but around the world.

What was interesting was, one of the things that the financiers had learned was that if they made a loan and they had to collect, that was a very tough situation. If they made a loan and sold it to someone else who had to collect, they could make a lot of money fast.

If we want to deal with the state of securities and investment in Canada, let's have a national regulator, but let's have a far more profound debate about risk, its regulation, and protection of our pensions and our investments. That's the debate that has to happen.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jim Wilson): It being just about 10:15 of the clock, this House stands in recess until 10:30, at which time we will have question period.

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Peter Shurman: I am very pleased to introduce the family of page Sabrina Sukhdeo from my great riding of Thornhill: In the west members' gallery here in the Legislature today are her father, Roy; her mother, Nadia; her sister Sharon, and her brother Richard. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Monte Kwinter: I'd like to introduce, in the members' gallery, Rabbi Shimon Dadon of Israel and Rabbi Yurmi Cohen of my riding of York Centre. Welcome.

Mr. Khalil Ramal: I'd like to introduce Giulia and Stephan Marceau on behalf of my colleague the member from Vaughan. They are the parents of page Catia, and they're in the east gallery.

Hon. Carol Mitchell: It's my pleasure to introduce Bette Jean Crews, who is the head of the OFA. Welcome, Bette Jean.

We also have Kevin Eccles and his fine wife. He's the former warden of Grey county and the mayor of West Grey. Welcome to both of you.

Mr. Monte Kwinter: I don't see him here at the moment, but-yesterday we had the mother of page Diana Dubrovsky, and today we're going to have her father, Vladimir Dubrovsky. I'd like to welcome him.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the member from Niagara West-Glanbrook and page Neale Taylor, to welcome his mother, Nancy Taylor, and his father, John Taylor, to the west members' gallery today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SEVERANCE PAYMENTS

Mrs. Christine Elliott: My question is for the Acting Premier. The leader of the Ontario PC Party set out 10 ideas for 2010 that, if implemented now, will get Ontario's economy back on track. However, Premier McGuinty is ignoring our concrete ideas so that he can keep throwing money at priorities no one else shares. What motivated him to choose spending \$25 million on sweetheart bonuses to HST tax collectors over the emergency rooms that you closed in Port Colborne and Fort Erie?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: The Premier did address this yesterday, but I'm very happy to restate the facts of this.

There is a collective agreement in place for the employees of the province of Ontario. What was achieved in the last collective agreement was that for any new hires, this type of severance issue would not be the case.

However, we have been bound as a government by components of agreements that were forged by the previous government, the Tories. They put this clause in the collective agreement. We respect collective agreements on this side of the House. I would ask the honourable member if that-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: There are other choices this government could have made on that issue, and this question is really about priorities. If Premier McGuinty used the HST tax collector bonus money to reverse his cuts to the emergency rooms in Port Colborne and Fort Erie, he would still have \$10 million left over. But the Premier's priorities are mixed up. Why else would he have handed \$25 million in so-called severance to the HST tax collectors, who won't miss a day's work, instead of saving the 190 nursing jobs he cut in Ottawa?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: The question here is, why did you put this clause in the collective agreement when you were in government? There were two occasions when they could have removed it, as government-

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Members will please come to order.

Please continue.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I think that it might also be important to remind the honourable members, when they were-

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Minister.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: Let me remind the honourable members, when they were in government, they provided severances in the very same circumstances. I will remind them that in 1996, when jobs were transferred from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to the University of Guelph- these people did have jobs to go to- they paid severances because it was part of the collective agreement. We support collective agreements. They have-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Final supplementary?

Mrs. Christine Elliott: The fact of the matter is, this government had at least five different opportunities to change that and chose not to, and we'll be happy to clarify that in further detail. But what this is about is priorities and what this government chooses to spend money on. The Premier wasted \$1 billion on untendered eHealth contracts, but whenever we start talking about what the real priorities are for funding for Ontario patients, the Premier taps out. That's what he does.

What motivated his decision to cut 15 acute care beds at Brockville hospital when the money that he's paying over to the HST tax collectors would pay for those beds 10 times over?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: Let me remind the honourable member that when they were in government they had two occasions when they could have changed the collective agreement. They chose not to. However, again, in 1997, when jobs were transferred from the Ministry of Health to the Centre for Addiction-

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Stop the clock, then. Members should be in their seats.

Minister?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I know they do not like to hear their history on this. They think that if they shout loud enough, the people of Ontario will not remember the fact that they did the very same thing. They negotiated it into the collective agreement.

What I can say to the people of Ontario is that since we've come to government, we have changed that, and for any new hires, this type of provision would not prevail. So I say to the honourable members that they should look at their own record, look at what they did on three occasions in the very same circumstances when they were in government. We have changed that-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question?

SEVERANCE PAYMENTS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is for the Acting Premier. Premier McGuinty says the collective agreement with HST tax collectors left him no choice but to hand them severances, even though they are not losing their jobs or missing a day of work. But after six years of broken promises, Ontario families won't take the Premier's word any more. The McGuinty Liberals negotiated two collective agreements with the HST tax collectors in the past six years. So the question is a very simple one: How many more contracts will it take before accountability shifts from John Robarts to Dalton McGuinty?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I would again remind the honourable members on the other side of the House, who object to this clause in the collective agreement-why did you negotiate it into the-

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Continue.

1040

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Oxford, I just sat down and you just opened up.

Minister?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: Speaker, I think they think that if they yell loud enough, the people of Ontario won't hear the facts. And the fact is that when they were in government, they were the ones who introduced this clause into the collective agreement. The fact is, they did nothing. Tim Hudak sat in two cabinets when this clause was in a collective agreement and chose to do nothing. The fact is that when we came to government, we did change it, and new hires are no longer entitled to this. So it strikes me as very strange that today they're talking about why this is not good-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The Acting Premier wants to talk about facts? Well, here is a fact: Leona

Dombrowsky, Dalton McGuinty and Dwight Duncan sat in a cabinet where-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I remind the honourable member that she should be using ministerial or riding names.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The minister already used Tim Hudak's.

They sat in a cabinet where they signed off on five separate agreements that could have avoided the HST tax collectors getting a so-called severance without losing their jobs. He renegotiated the collective agreement with the HST tax collectors twice. He also negotiated the CITCA agreement, which was the foundation of the HST, as well as enacting the HST legislation itself. And in March, the McGuinty Liberals finalized the human resources agreement that transfers HST tax collectors to the federal government. So the question is, did the late John Robarts, our Premier from 40 years ago, influence Dalton McGuinty on that, too?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: This government respects collective agreements. The members of the Conservative Party are objecting to a clause that they authored themselves. They failed to remove it on two occasions. When we came to government, we did change that for new hires. We are a government that does respect collective agreements.

Actually, I have an interesting quote here that I would like to share with the members on the other side of the House: "There are a lot of people breathing a sigh of relief today.... This particular announcement just gives some certainty to the individuals who worked with the provincial sales tax and now realize they have an opportunity to keep on working." That came from the member from Oshawa, Jerry Ouellette.

The member from Oshawa obviously understands that workers there worked very hard to achieve a collective-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Final supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: That's why the best quote of the year has gone to the Liberals for saying that caucus morale is lower than a garter snake on a backcountry road.

Ontario families know who is accountable for the sweetheart bonuses Dalton McGuinty is handing to tax collectors. But even though he sat on his hands for six years while he negotiated five contracts, you can still do something to stand up for Ontario's families: You can clarify who gets severance and when they get it without touching the collective agreement whatsoever.

Will you amend the HST legislation and return the \$25 million in bonuses that HST tax collectors in Ontario are getting?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I would say that what would meet their standard for respecting a collective agreement on that side of the House does not meet our standard. We respect collective agreements. When we are asked what we will do, we have acted. We have changed that part of the collective agreement for new hires.

I guess the question for me is: They appear to object to it so vehemently today, so why did they put it in the collective agreement? Why did the leader of the official opposition, on not one but two occasions, affirm that part of the collective agreement? And now, today, they come to the House and they claim that it is so offensive.

We respect collective agreements. We work with the people who provide-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

Mr. Howard Hampton: My question is for the Attorney General. In mid-December, the McGuinty government announced that it was paying \$5 million to the mining company Platinex Inc. to settle litigation. Platinex had sued Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation for \$10 billion and had initiated legal processes that resulted in the jailing of Chief Donny Morris, members of the First Nation council and a number of elders from the First Nation.

My question is this: Since the McGuinty government is paying Platinex \$5 million to settle the litigation, will the government also pay the \$700,000 in legal costs incurred by KI First Nation in defending First Nation treaty and aboriginal rights against Platinex Inc.?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I want to start by saying that this government encourages much stronger relationships, not only with our First Nations-with aboriginal peoples-and the government but between businesses, communities, First Nations and aboriginal peoples.

We've turned the page on history. We're moving forward and strengthening relationships. Where there are, from time to time, lawsuits that have been commenced, whatever their origins, we always encourage the discussion and the resolution of those lawsuits. Whenever a lawsuit is concluded by means of an agreement, I am absolutely delighted that it has and am hopeful the parties can get on with their future productive dealings contributing to the society that is Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Howard Hampton: This was a recent announcement by the McGuinty government. The chief of the First Nation, who is guilty only of standing up for that First Nation's treaty aboriginal and constitutional rights against a mining company that I think everyone would agree behaved like a bully and engaged in tactics of intimidation, is merely asking: If the McGuinty government has \$5 million for Platinex Inc., a company that showed no respect for First Nation rights, no respect for treaty rights, will the McGuinty government do the fair, reasonable and decent thing and also compensate the First Nation, a very poor First Nation, for the more than \$700,000 in legal costs they incurred in defending their constitutional rights?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: As I say, I'm very pleased with the resolution of the lawsuit. If there were other issues pertaining to any action settled or still ongoing, I think the member knows that I wouldn't engage in discussions in this forum on those matters. I think he would know, as a former Attorney General, that there are appropriate ways and means to have those discussions, not speaking specifically

but speaking generally, and he would know that it would not be respectful of either the process or the parties to engage in debate in here about those issues or discussion of those issues. It wouldn't give justice, no matter where the question came from.

So I say to my friend that in recognizing the importance of issues that he raises when he asks questions, I'm not going to engage in a discussion of their resolution here, whatever they happen to be, when they pertain to specific lawsuits.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary.

Mr. Howard Hampton: I'm not seeking a discussion; I'm simply seeking a "yes" answer from a government that seems to have \$5 million-plus to give to a mining company that behaved like a bully and an intimidator but yet says to a poor First Nation that had to use money out of their housing budget, that had to use money out of their recreation budget, that had to use money out of their education budget to fight these legal battles-the government doesn't seem to want to talk to them.

You say and the Premier says that you want a new, positive relationship with First Nations. I simply say to you: If you could afford \$5 million-plus for Platinex, a company that behaved like a bully, can't you afford \$700,000 and do the right thing and pay the First Nation's legal costs-yes or no?

Hon. Christopher Bentley: I've given my friend the answer on that issue, but do you know what? We had a throne speech that spoke about the promise of economic opportunities throughout the province of Ontario for all peoples and for aboriginal peoples. We had a throne speech that focused on the Ring of Fire and the enormously important economic opportunities surrounding that for the First Nations communities. I see a much brighter future, and I know, working with my colleague the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, we see a stronger north for all people in the north. We see stronger economic opportunities for our First Nations, and we're going to work as hard as we can, not on the past but on the brighter futures for all people, First Nations and aboriginals in the province of Ontario.

1050

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Michael Prue: My question is to the Minister of Health. In the past year, this minister and her predecessor both have stated that Toronto East General Hospital was a model of excellent care, unparalleled in this province. Its CEO was sent out to help other hospitals that found themselves in financial difficulty.

We now know that our hospital in my community is at risk. The hospital's physiotherapy clinic will close next week, and 118 nurses throughout the hospital have been given pink slips.

Why is this government forcing the closure of the physiotherapy clinic and giving 118 registered nurses pink slips at a hospital which, by your own admission, has given and continues to give unparalleled excellent care?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'd like to take this opportunity to agree with the member opposite: Toronto

East General Hospital does do excellent work. The hospital's CEO, Rob Devitt, is a leader among leaders in our health care system. He, like those in all other hospitals, is working very hard to make sure we get the very best value for health care in this province. The era of year-over-year unsustainable, unaffordable rates of increase for hospitals-those days are over. We've built the foundation for health care in this province and now we must drive the very best value for the money we spend on health care. That's important for the patients because we need to continue to provide better health care for people in this province.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Prue: This is a hospital that gives absolutely excellent care. You stand in this place and you say that, and you say that Mr. Devitt is a great CEO. Nobody is disagreeing with that. My community does not disagree. But we have consulted with hospital staff and with members of the community who fear the worst-that the excellent care that Toronto East General Hospital provides to the community will be eroded and that the services that you are so proud of that are currently available in east Toronto and East York will be gone forever.

Why is this government shutting down essential community health care services at Toronto East General Hospital, which, by your own admission, provides the best?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: This is a government that values improving health care for the people of Ontario. We've demonstrated tremendous progress. In fact, there's a new report out today from CIHI that puts Ontario at the top of all provinces when it comes to wait times.

We need to continue to improve health care for the people of this province, but that does mean making some of the difficult decisions. I would welcome the advice and support of all members of this Legislature on how we can create the kind of health care system that will be here not just for us, not just for our generation, but for our kids and for our grandkids.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Final supplementary?

Mr. Michael Prue: The minister can speak her baffle-gab all she wants, but the community and its dedicated health care professionals know the truth. This government of Dalton McGuinty doesn't give a hoot about our local hospital or any of the local hospitals. We're being treated just as badly as you treat Fort Erie, Port Colborne, Burk's Falls and many other community hospitals.

This minister knows full well her government is forcing local hospitals like Toronto East General Hospital to make these drastic cuts because they won't increase funding by more than 1%. Will this government reverse its wrong-headed directive respecting our hospital and community and keep our health care professionals working in an excellent environment?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: We all await this afternoon's budget with great anticipation, and that includes our hospitals across this province.

Let me tell you about what we have done at Toronto East General Hospital. You might consider ignoring them or whatever: a nearly \$33-million increase in base funding since we were elected-\$33 million. I think that's pretty good. Over \$14.4 million in total funding to reduce wait times: That's

18,550 more procedures than they would have had otherwise without that wait times strategy.

We're also investing in services outside hospitals, in the community. Our aging at home strategy is one that is receiving attention internationally, because we know that by investing outside of hospitals in the communities, we can provide better care, and it's better care for patients-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: My question is for the Minister of Education. The bill that would create all-day learning is still before this House, yet your throne speech said, "full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds" starting at schools across the province this September.

The McGuinty government is clearly disrespecting the role of this assembly to make laws, by presupposing the outcome of legislation. I ask you: What are you going to do to correct this?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I will say to the honourable member that in fact this government very much respects the process of this place. That is why when we bring legislation into this House, we have full debate and then it goes to committee, and that is in fact the case that we have with Bill 242. It is going to committee; we are hearing many delegations on this. I have publicly stated on more than one occasion that we are listening to the points that are being made. So when we talk about respecting the traditions in this place, the role of ourselves as legislators, and the people of Ontario, their opportunity to impact our legislation, our government has a very solid record in doing so.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer: Again to the minister: Not only is the McGuinty government presupposing the outcome of a bill that is under debate and discussion in its throne speech, the McGuinty government is also going further and advertising its full-day learning program. The Ministry of Education website is presenting full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds as a fait accompli. One full-page ad says, "Starting in September 2010, the government will begin to phase in full-day learning."

These ads disrespect the role of this Legislature and the people who elected us. I ask you again: What are you going to do to show respect and correct it?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: Last fall, our Premier made it very clear that part of our government's plan, part of our plan for the future economy of Ontario, is to build a very best-trained, best-educated workforce. Our full-day learning does just that. By the way, we have allocated funding for this initiative. We are in a legislative process where we are bringing forward how we intend to implement what we said we would do. We are also listening to our stakeholders and the people of Ontario, something that they, I might remind the honourable member, when they were in government, very seldom did. There was no opportunity for people to come to committee and have an impact on the legislation.

We have a very solid record. We listen to the people of Ontario. This is something that the people of Ontario want. We know that on the other side of the House they are not in favour of full-day learning-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. Last week, the Sault Area Hospital had alternate-level-of-care patients occupying 44% of the hospital beds. The hospital was at 122% capacity. They had 319 patients admitted, but they only have 277 beds. Even the MPP from Sault Ste. Marie said, "It is completely unacceptable that the northeast region has the highest number of days that ALC patients wait for transfer to an alternate care setting in the province."

My question is simple: Can the minister explain why she is cutting 50% of the funding for the aging at home strategy for Algoma while the crisis is going on in this community?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I must confess I have no idea what the member opposite is referring to. What I can tell you, though, is that reducing the ALC pressures in our hospitals is a very high priority for us. In fact, the LHINs across this province are working; it's their top priority. How can they move people who are in hospitals but actually don't need to be in hospitals? Where else can they get the supports? Where can they be moved to? What are the community supports that would help move people from hospitals back home or into the community?

It's what we simply must do, and we're working very hard across the province to move to get people back home, to get people in the most appropriate places.

1100

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I think the crisis in Sault Ste. Marie is worth the minister looking into and finding out why 50% of the funding for aging at home is being taken away from the Algoma district. The alternate-level-of-care patients are presently at 121. The hospital is overwhelmed, but instead of ensuring that appropriate alternative care is in place, the government is actually cutting necessary programs.

To add insult to injury, the new and very well-publicized long-term-care facility will not add any beds to the system. The number of long-term-care beds will stay the same. This government is acting like there is no crisis in Sault Ste. Marie, like the minister doesn't know what is going on in Sault Ste. Marie.

What is the minister's plan to ensure that services that are desperately needed in Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma are put into place?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I must tell you that the member from Sault Ste. Marie has been very active helping me understand some of the challenges that are being faced in Sault Ste. Marie.

We are taking steps to support communities across this province. We're focusing on where the challenges are the greatest, and Sault Ste. Marie is one of those areas. In the Sault Area Hospital, we've

increased their base funding by over \$20 million since we were elected in 2003. We've invested over \$52 million in the North East LHIN for the aging at home strategy.

This is the way of the future when it comes to health care: putting those investments in the community so we can get people back home, where they want to be, where they are the safest and where they are amongst their friends and family. That's our-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question?

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Charles Sousa: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. Minister, as you're aware, the QEW runs through the riding of Mississauga South. It's an important transportation artery for my constituents. The Ministry of Transportation has recently completed new off- and on-ramps at the QEW and Highway 10. These improvements to Mississauga's infrastructure are appreciated by resident families and, I'm sure, by all commuters.

Minister, the people of Mississauga South are eager to see the QEW's next construction project get under way: the rehabilitation of the Credit River bridge. Not only is the bridge ready for restoration, but the supplementary lanes it will include will ease traffic congestion.

Would the minister tell the people of Mississauga South when the rehabilitation of the bridge will occur and how they can provide their input into the project?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'd like to thank the member from Mississauga South for his question. We know how important these projects are to families across the riding and across the province.

Since 2003, we've invested \$88.4 million in completed projects in the riding of Mississauga South. We know that the Credit River bridge is an important next step. That's why last fall we began a preliminary design and an environmental assessment to develop a strategy that will address the long-term needs of the Credit River bridge and the QEW from Mississauga Road to west of Hurontario Street. We'll be holding public consultations with the local community this summer to share information about the project as well as to get feedback from the neighbourhoods on this most important project, the Credit River bridge.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Charles Sousa: I know that many of my constituent neighbours look forward to being part of the public consultation process on this project.

Minister, our families in Mississauga rely not only on our network of roads to get where they need to go every day; they also rely heavily on our public transit system. Improvements to public transit help avoid gridlock and help reduce emissions. Whether commuting to downtown Toronto or vice versa to Mississauga for work or going to another part of Mississauga, public transit is a key form of transportation for many constituents.

I would like the minister to tell us just what investments have been made in public transit in Mississauga.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The story of public transit investment in the GTA today really is a good news story. For the Peel region alone, this means a \$352.6-million commitment since 2003.

We've delivered on our commitment to provide two cents per litre of the provincial gas tax to municipalities. Last year the city of Mississauga, under that plan, received almost \$16 million in gas tax money.

GO Transit travellers who ride the Lakeshore West line, which makes a stop at Clarkson and Port Credit, in the member's riding, can now ride 12-car trains. That means that 300 single-occupancy vehicles are off our roads because of the addition of those trains. That eases congestion and emissions.

In January, GO added new weekday and weekend bus trips between Milton and Union, which serve Mississauga en route and new bus trips on weekdays, weekends and holidays between-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

TAXATION

Mrs. Julia Munro: My question is to the Acting Premier. Over the last month, I have surveyed my constituents about the HST and asked them what message they have for Premier Dalton McGuinty. Clarence from Jackson's Point is 92 and writes that he cannot pay any more taxes than he does right now. James in Sutton says he is an old-age pensioner and just can't afford it. Eileen in Holland Landing asks why you give her cheques when you are taking money away from her; she wants you to remember that seniors are on a fixed income. How do you expect seniors like Clarence, James and Eileen to afford your new tax? They need every penny they have just to survive.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I'm sure the honourable member, when she meets with her constituents, reminds them that with the implementation of the HST, 93% of Ontarians are going to receive a tax cut. And that would apply particularly to those people who are on fixed incomes. I have to say that I know many people in my riding are very happy to understand. I'm even hearing back from people now who are doing their income taxes that they are receiving more than they did last year, and it is because of the tax cut.

I'm sure the honourable member would also remind her constituents that we are providing a \$260 sales tax rebate. For those who own property, I'm sure she's telling them that we are doubling the seniors--

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary.

Mrs. Julia Munro: Small business owners are scared of your new tax as well. One businessman in Innisfil wonders why, just when small business is starting to see the end of the slump, the government in its wisdom smacks them back down again. Steve, who is a small business owner in Queensville, does not agree that your tax increase will simplify his tax collection or that it's better for business. He says it will harm any economic recovery. What do you have to say to the small business owners in my riding

struggling to survive the recession?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: Again, I would indicate to the honourable member that I'm sure she would have taken the opportunity to remind the business owner in her riding that in fact we have cut business taxes. In addition to that, we have cut the tax that they have been paying. They will now be receiving- instead of a GST rebate, it will be an HST rebate.

What we do have here as well is that the Toronto Dominion Economics report says 80% of savings to businesses would be passed on to consumers, so that enables them to be more competitive. That means they will be able to hire more people. The HST initiative is about creating 600,000 jobs. Now, I know on the other side of the House that is not a priority. Their priority is just cutting taxes. We're about investing-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Acting Premier. Hamilton has suffered huge manufacturing job losses since 2003. Now, we're losing another 550 jobs at Siemens going south to North Carolina, jobs that this government should have been able to keep here. To make matters worse, there's a serious disconnect in the information from the government and the city of Hamilton. The people who lost these jobs and the people of Hamilton want to know, will the McGuinty Liberals at least tell us the truth about the negotiations with and about Siemens?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: This important issue was raised in the Legislature yesterday. I believe the response was appropriate, and I restate it today, that we do not speak about details of very sensitive negotiations. Obviously the members who have been involved in this are disappointed. We appreciate that corporations have the right to make their decisions. But what we can say to the people of Hamilton is that our government is absolutely committed to doing what we can to support their city.

1110

With the occasion of the Pan Am Games in the province of Ontario, the city is going to enjoy over \$200 million in investment. So I'd say to the honourable member, just as my colleague the minister of small business does so very well-she is a great-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Paul Miller: I can't believe this. City staff and the mayor's office have been very clear about this: They were not consulted, they were not informed. The local government was not invited to participate in the McGuinty Liberals' efforts to keep Siemens operating in Hamilton.

Why won't the Premier, the minister and this government come clean on the lost jobs in Hamilton at Siemens?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I can say to the honourable member that this government did work with the

local municipality, obviously a very important partner.

I think the real issue here is that we take every opportunity to bring good news to municipalities across Ontario, including Hamilton. Hamilton is going to benefit greatly from the investments that will come from the Pan Am Games.

Interjection.

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: When the honourable member speaks about what those investments might be—\$200 million. There's \$136 million in the new stadium that will host the athletes; \$52 million for the new Olympic-sized pool at McMaster University—I think that's a tremendous investment; \$1.7 million in improvements to track and field at McMaster University. These are examples where, because of initiatives of our government—

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr. Rick Johnson: My question is to the Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry. Minister, since becoming a member of this Legislature last year, I've heard opposition party leaders and members ask many questions about the ailing forestry industry. The opposition says that the forest industry is failing, not just because of the challenging economic times, but because, they say, the McGuinty government has ignored it for too long.

Minister, the forest industry is very important, as it affects more than 260 communities throughout Ontario. Of these, 148 are categorized as either very highly or highly dependent on employment in the forest sector to survive. An additional 163 are identified as being moderately dependent. This clearly is a sector that affects millions of Ontarians and many communities across the province.

Minister, could you please tell the House how you plan to revitalize Ontario's forest sector?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Thank you very much for the question. I know it's an important part of the economy in your riding. And certainly, may I say, having been raised in Thunder Bay and having had the privilege of representing the Thunder Bay area for the last 15 years, I'm acutely aware of the vital role that forestry plays in northern Ontario and all across the province.

There's no denying that these challenging economic times have hurt the forest industry over the past number of years. Workers have been laid off, mills have closed and communities and families have suffered. But indeed, amidst that bad news, our ministry has been working extremely hard to restore the competitiveness of the forest sector and support the communities across Ontario.

There are two initiatives that our government has taken as we work to restore this sector: the provincial wood supply competitive process, a very important process that will bring jobs back; and the review of the tenure and pricing system. I look forward to speaking more about that in my supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Please, let me do the supplementary, Speaker. I want to help.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member-

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): No, leave the clock running. The member from Timmins-James Bay will please come to order. Only one of us should be standing at any one time, and when I'm standing, you shouldn't be.

Supplementary?

Mr. Rick Johnson: Minister, thank you very much for reassuring the House of the McGuinty government's commitment to restoring the competitiveness of the forestry sector. Both of these initiatives, combined with our government's comprehensive tax reform package, which proposes tax relief for businesses, including those in the forest sector-

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Timmins will please come to order. You will have your opportunity through the normal rotation to ask a question. Please let the honourable member ask his.

Mr. Rick Johnson: -as well as our government's Open Ontario plan, will create a climate where businesses will thrive and jobs will be created-I think the forest sector could have a brighter future.

Could the minister tell the House more about how the wood supply competitive process and review of tenure and pricing will help create a brighter future for the forest sector-and calm my friend's nerves?

Interjections.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: It's an absolute shame that the members sitting opposite think this is something to laugh about. This is a very important issue.

The ultimate goal of the wood supply competitive process is to put our wood to work. Currently, a significant part of Ontario's wood supply is not being used. By launching the competition for about 11 million cubic metres of merchantable and unmerchantable wood, our government is going to be putting Ontario's wood back to work.

The review of tenure and pricing is equally important, as it is a critical step to putting the industry back on a solid economic footing. The review will enable the transformation of the forest sector, which will see prosperity through a new forest economy that is based on new products, new markets and new processes. These initiatives are viewed as bold steps, and I look forward to bringing them forward.

WIND TURBINES

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Acting Premier. On Monday night the council of the township of Clearview voted unanimously in favour of asking Premier McGuinty and his government to put a moratorium on new wind developments. Fifty other communities in Ontario have done the same, including Grey county, the city of Kawartha Lakes and in Prince Edward county in the Acting Premier's riding.

I ask the Acting Premier: Will the McGuinty government respect the decisions of these local councils?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: To the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker-

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Member from Lanark, your own member asked a question. I trust you would all want to hear the response.

Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: We recognize that whenever you're doing anything that's new, whenever you're on the cutting edge on any initiative, particularly in the energy sector, there is inevitably going to be some resistance. The fact of the matter is that we have to move forward in the green energy sector. We know that the opposition doesn't support that, but it does take a certain amount of intestinal fortitude to move forward on these issues. It does take courage. That's what the people-

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It wasn't me this time, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): It was just then.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): No, I'm not stopping the clock.

Minister?

Hon. Brad Duguid: When we came to office six years ago, we inherited an energy supply that was very reliant on dirty coal that was polluting our air and that was impacting our health, the health of our children and, in the future, the health of our grandchildren. Changing that-getting rid of coal-is not for the faint of heart-we recognize that. It takes courage. It takes political courage; it takes courage from the people of Ontario. The opposition lacked that. We don't. We're moving forward, because we have to-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: I say to the Acting Premier: You may not want to respond and be accountable to my constituents and to 50 other communities, but you should at least respond to the constituents in Prince Edward county in your own riding. I also say to the Acting Premier: This is exactly why we voted against your failed Green Energy Act. Ratepayers are concerned with the health effects of these wind turbines, and you're telling them, "Tough luck."

These communities have had enough of the Premier and his buddies in the political elite forcing their pet projects into the backyards of people in rural Ontario without any say from the local communities. In Clearview, people are sick and tired of the Premier, who lives in the tony neighbourhood of Rosedale, telling them how to run their rural community. So I ask the Acting Premier: What gives your government the right to ignore voters in rural and small-town Ontario?

Hon. Brad Duguid: Let me tell you that farmers across this province are extremely supportive of the Green Energy Act, and I'll tell you why: They're an important part of it. They know that our generation has to stand up to ensure that the health of our kids and grandkids is looked after; to ensure that we're applying a reliable and safer form of energy for the sake of our energy supply and our kids. Our farmers are standing up to that call, and so are our retailers and our residents. This green energy movement is something that each and every Ontarian is part of and can take some pride in.

We are moving from coal. By 2014, we will be out of coal. We have the lowest level of coal output that we've had in this province in 45 years. The benefit of that is the pollution that doesn't go into our air and the lungs of our-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. New question?

1120

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. On March 22, the city of Toronto held a public forum on the benefits of diesel versus electric trains. Electric won. Yet again, there was another standing-room-only crowd pleading with this government to implement clean train technology. The Toronto medical officer of health stated that electric trains are desirable from a public health perspective and that no one should be asked to trade public health for public transit. Metrolinx's response is that it continues to study the electric option but it plans to move ahead with dirty diesel.

I know the minister was at the meeting, so my question is very simple. Why won't the minister demand that Metrolinx wait for its own study on electrification before moving ahead with diesel trains?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I was at the meeting earlier this week, and it was very informative. I was very glad to hear from the community. Obviously, as the new Minister of Transportation, it's important for me to hear and understand the concerns of the community.

But I have to say that everything Metrolinx is doing suggests to me that they understand that

electrification is an absolutely important aspect of the future of transit in Ontario. All of the work that is being done is being done with a vision to the possibility of electrification in the future. So there is nothing that is being done now that would cut off that possibility.

What we need to have is the evidence. We need to look at the evidence and we need to make a decision based on the science, and that's what Metrolinx is doing.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: But that's exactly what the community is asking: that until the study is done, they shouldn't move ahead with dirty diesel. That is what the community is asking. What I'm asking of the minister is a commitment. The evidence is very clear. No studies actually need to be done; we know that electric is cleaner than diesel. Everybody knows that. The question really is one of political will and it's a question of the minister. So I ask again, will the minister commit to going clean and electric right now? Not then; right now.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The issue here is whether the work that is being done now could be compatible with electrification in the future. That's really the question. If we were doing something now in the building that's going on that would preclude electrification in the future, then the member's question would be relevant. However, it's not. The work that's being done now, the way the design is being done, the building that's being done, offers the opportunity for electrification in the future. There is nothing that is happening now that would preclude electrification.

So what we are going to do and what Metrolinx is doing-they're going to complete this study. We will receive the study in December 2010 and we will then know what the evidence is and will make our decisions using that as our guide.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation on the subject of the airport link at Union Station. Madam Minister, the GO expansion in rail service between Union Station and the airport link will be going right through my riding and it will start in 2015. As we all know, the Minister of the Environment had put very strict-

Interjections.

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: Now, hold on a second. The Minister of the Environment put very strict limits on these trains. As we heard the Minister of Transportation say today, she's not against electrification. She hasn't said that. So let's get this straight. Neither the minister nor our government is against-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to acknowledge the work of both the member for Davenport and the member for York South-Weston in working with the community and advocating.

We know that it's critically important to the GTA and to Toronto that we get people out of cars and into public transit, which is why we've made the biggest investment in public transit in a generation.

Electrification of both the Lakeshore and Georgetown line is proposed in the Metrolinx regional transit plan. That's why, as I've just said, Metrolinx is building all structures to accommodate electrification. Bridges and grade separations are being designed and constructed to meet the greater height requirements for electrification; track spacing is being designed to allow for the foundations and columns that will be required; signal systems are being upgraded to allow for an electrified train system. That work that is being done envisions the possibility of electrification.

Once we have the road map-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary.

Mr. Tony Ruprecht: It is true that all of us, or many of us here, attended that meeting at city council. And it was packed; it's true. One thing was clear, though: This was the first Minister of Transportation who attended a local meeting like this.

At the same time, my constituents want to be consulted on this issue, and I give all credit to the minister on this issue. The member from York South-Weston attended the meeting as well. One thing came across very clear, and that is, all of my constituents want to know: What's the time frame for electrification? That's really the issue. What is the time frame? I'm sure the minister will give us an answer to that question.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think that we have to be careful-

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Please continue.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think that we have to be careful that we don't do the public a disservice by having a false debate here. I'm really pleased that Metrolinx is studying the electrification of the entire GO system. This study will be comprehensive in scope and it will involve extensive public consultation, which has already been done, and there will be more.

The electrification study has a very ambitious mandate. They're going to be looking at capacity and service impacts, including reliability of service; environmental and health impacts, which was stated at the meeting at city council; community and land use impacts; economic impacts; and system cost funding, financing and delivery. We're scheduled to receive the report by December 2010.

CREDIT COUNSELLING AGENCIES

Mr. John O'Toole: My question is to the Minister of Consumer Services. Minister, with your record Ontario deficit, the entire McGuinty government should sign up for credit counselling. My question today is about credit counselling, the services in Durham region, as well as accredited counsellors throughout the province of Ontario.

Minister, in 2008-09, Durham region's agency assisted clients with \$20 million in debt reduction. Furthermore, in 2008-09, all 23 agencies across Ontario helped 123,000 clients cope with \$765 million

in debt.

Sandra Sherk, executive director of Credit Counselling Services of Durham Region, informs me that they have no direct funding. Minister, the agency itself, in 1992, was cut off any kind of provincial support. Would you look into-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: I thank the member for the question. It gives me a really great opportunity to talk about what consumer services does. We have a lot that we're proud of in this ministry. Last year, in fact, we had 55,000 complaints and inquiries in our ministry on a number of different issues, including some of the issues that the member has brought up. What I can tell you is that of all these consumer complaints that we have received, we had over \$528,000 in mediated refunds and cancelled or rescinded contracts for consumers. Our number one priority is the protection of consumers.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary.

Mr. John O'Toole: Your government's record of squandering public money on untendered contracts-the eHealth scandal is just one example. Why don't you take the time to support community-based agencies to help families stay out of bankruptcy?

The Ontario Association of Credit Counselling Services estimates that 80% of their clients' financial situations improved thanks to credit counselling. In 2008-09, agency programs helped clients repay \$40 million in the last 10 years, saving \$347 million; 98% of the people never returned for credit counselling.

1130

Minister, wouldn't you agree it makes more sense to invest in agencies that help families pay off their personal debt rather than hiring high-priced consultants like in eHealth? Why don't you help these people in this time of economic collapse in Ontario?

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis: I am so surprised that this member is asking me this question. We support them; you cut them-you cut them.

For the member, let me just tell you some of our great consumer protections here at the Ministry of Consumer Services. We have a lot of outreach. We have consumer education and outreach, which are central in prevention efforts; every year, we provide a Smart Consumer calendar in several languages-we're very proud of that one; we've delivered approximately 100 public education and community events, and we will continue doing those; and we distribute consumer-protection-focused articles in newspapers all across Ontario.

Our number one concern in the Ministry of Consumer Services is consumer protection, and we will keep doing that.

**JARDIN D'ENFANTS À TEMPS PLEIN /
FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN**

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la ministre de l'Éducation. Les écoles de langue française de l'Ontario offrent la maternelle et le jardin à temps plein depuis de nombreuses années. Pour ce faire, ils ont créé des partenariats qui ont développé et stabilisé des services et entreprises de langue française dans leur milieu respectif. Le projet de loi 242 aura pour impact d'augmenter l'assimilation des francophones.

Ma question est simple : pourquoi la ministre de l'Éducation veut-elle assimiler les petits Franco-Ontariens et les petites Franco-Ontariennes?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I have to say I'm very surprised by this question. I can confirm today quite unequivocally that that's certainly not the intention of Bill 242. This is about providing early learning opportunities for four- and five-year-olds in the province of Ontario in all four publicly funded school systems.

I'm happy to have this opportunity to make very clear in this Legislature that Bill 242 is about providing a groundbreaking experience. There is no other jurisdiction in North America that has made this commitment or this investment for the youngest learners in our school systems. I'm happy to have the opportunity to make that very clear today.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary.

M^{me} France Gélinas: La ministre peut dire que ce n'était pas ses intentions, mais le chemin de l'enfer est plein de bonnes intentions qui tournent mal. Les communautés de langue française sont fragiles, et les institutions doivent être protégées. Les associations des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques et catholiques francophones de l'Ontario craignent non seulement que le projet de loi 242 ne favorise l'assimilation des élèves francophones, mais qu'il ne mène également à la perte de services, d'entreprises de langue française, suite à l'annulation de partenariats pour les services avant et après les heures de classe.

Ma question : pourquoi la ministre de l'Éducation ne permet-elle pas le maintien des partenariats de langue française et de l'offre de service de garderie de programmes avant et après l'école-des modèles qui ont été conçus pour et par la communauté francophone?

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky: I want the members of this Legislature to know that this government, my ministry and I have been working with-I have met with the head of the trustees' association for the French-language boards, both English and Catholic. I have met with French-language teachers; I went to Ottawa a week ago to do so. I work very closely with my colleague the Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs as well.

We certainly respect the uniqueness of the French-language education system in the province of Ontario. We are committed to working with French educators and leadership in the French community to ensure that the quality school system that they have established for students' benefit in the province of Ontario continues to be the case. We believe that our initiative, Bill 242, the early learning initiative for four- and five-year-old students, is very important. It's something that parents are saying to us they want and want desperately-

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Thank you.

APPOINTMENT OF OMBUDSMAN

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table an order in council appointing André Marin as temporary Ombudsman for a period of six months commencing April 1, 2010.

On this matter, I beg the indulgence of the House for just a moment. The order in council just announced references a temporary appointment for a parliamentary officer. While I cannot compel them to do so, in a circumstance where an order in council deals with a matter of significance to this House, it is, in my view, incumbent on the government to ensure that this House is informed before it is made public. It is not appropriate for members of this House to be reading about it in the morning paper. There are a number of usual channels by which the government might do this, and I would recommend that they avail themselves of those in the future.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

Mr. John O'Toole: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'd like to correct the record, if I may. In the question to the minister this morning, the actual cancellation of credit servicing occurred in 1992 under the then Liberal Premier, Bob Rae.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): It is a point of order; the member can correct his record.

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Oshawa on a point of privilege, which he has provided notification for.

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: I have some strong concerns. Monday last, I brought forward a point that I had great concern with. Today, I intend to show how, as an elected official of this Legislature, our privileges appear to be circumvented. My issue is twofold.

Firstly, the Minister of Education has used government or ministerial funding to advertise and promote a program that does not have the approval of this Legislature. The issue is not the contents of the program but the process by which the commitment has been made prior to the introduction of the legislation.

Speaker Curling's ruling on February 22 specifically states: "In my opinion, the wording and the tone of the documents are not dismissive of the legislative role of the House." The previous ruling by Speaker Curling goes on to state that previous communication contained "conditional phrases such as 'intends to introduce legislation,' 'we are proposing' and 'legislation that, if passed.'"

The information produced by the Ministry and/or Minister of Education specifically states "full-day

learning is taking place this September." I would submit these. These are government documents that were distributed to each elected official's office. It clearly states full-day learning is starting in September 2010. It goes on to specifically show how it is the Queen's Printer that produced this information with no stated provision for the passage of the legislation.

In the explanatory note of the proposed legislation, it specifically states, "In particular, subsection 2(1) of the bill amends subsection 8(1) of the act by authorizing the minister to issue policies and guidelines respecting full-day junior kindergarten and kindergarten. Subsection 4(1) of the bill amends subsection 11(1) of the act by adding authority to make regulations respecting full-day junior kindergarten." This clearly demonstrates that legislation is needed to pass prior to the implementation of any actions that the ministry is allowed to do.

That was one of the key issues that I would ask you to review. Is it possible that the ministry can move forward and spend government funds on advertising promoting a program that has no provisionals listed inside that information?

Now, the second aspect that I wish to look at is asking for a ruling pertaining to the proposed legislation now before the House. Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to review the process by which the Ministry of Education is given authority to issue full approvals to implement the program prior to the passage of legislation.

On January 12, 2010, from the Durham District School Board: "Durham District School Board receives approval for full-day early learning sites 2010-11." I could go on and state the fact that there are no provisionals listed inside the information provided to the school board. This would allow the movement forward for all-day kindergarten learning. But this bill was not introduced into the Legislature until February 17. This provision and news release were issued on January 12 of the same year, prior to the introduction of the legislation.

1140

I, as an official, or an elected individual, as every one of us in this House, is given the opportunity to review legislation, to get input from our constituents, and to come forward and bring our perspectives forward.

By moving forward and giving boards the full authority to implement something with no provision, or by advertising the specifics that it is taking place, I believe that our ability as parliamentarians has been circumvented.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask for your ruling.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The government House leader on the point of privilege.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Mr. Speaker, I did write to you on March 23 with respect to the point of order that was raised by the member for Oshawa in the Legislature that day.

I would note that on October 27, 2009, the government announced that it would proceed with full-day early learning for four- and five-year-olds in the fall of 2010. We advised district school boards across the province that funding to support it would be provided to them outside of the annual school board funding regulations.

It's the government's opinion that the funding for this purpose is authorized, pursuant to the power of the Minister of Education under paragraph 24 of section-

Interjections.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Do you want the answer, member for Oshawa?

Interjection.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize.

Under paragraph 24 of subsection 8(1) of the Education Act, which authorizes grants to school boards for, among other things, "projects to promote the advancement of education." A number of district school boards in Ontario already offer full-day kindergarten programs—a number of our French boards, in particular. I know that in my riding of Nipissing, my Catholic school board is already providing full-day kindergarten.

While it is not required to implement full-day early learning this fall, the government has also introduced Bill 242, as was noted by the member for Oshawa. The bill, if passed in its present form, would establish the legal framework governing the long-term implementation of the government's full-day learning initiative and provide additional clarity to district school boards, teachers, staff, families and other stakeholders. It's not required but it will provide clarity and it will provide the framework.

As I stated, a number of schools in various districts and different boards across the province are already providing full-day learning. Full-day learning will start in September 2010, and this legislation will give us some more clarity around the details of that and will provide assistance in the implementation.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I thank the honourable member from Oshawa for providing the notice of his point of privilege, and I thank the honourable government House leader for her interjections.

As the honourable member from Oshawa knows, I have still taken under review and consideration his previous point of order. I will reserve decision on this point of privilege and take that into consideration as a whole.

I would appreciate the honourable member providing me with any documents that he has made reference to today. I understand that you have left them with the table; I thank him for that. We'll undertake a thorough review of the point raised.

ORDER-IN-COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Peter Kormos: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I stand on a point of order because I want to comply with the requirement that a point of order be raised in a timely manner. My point of order is with respect to the government's actions around the order in council that has just been tabled with the House.

I know that the Speaker cannot engage in statutory interpretation—statutory. That is the function of the

courts. I also know full well that the order in council, on its face, is valid. Therefore, there's nothing that could be done in this Legislature that would in any way upset this order in council.

However, the reason why I rise on a point of order-and I'm referring you now to Maingot, Parliamentary Privilege in Canada, Second Edition. It's an interesting observation by Maingot on page 223: "A failure to follow an established practice would invoke a `point of order' rather than a `question of privilege.'"

Because, you see, Speaker, I believe there may well also be an issue of privilege here, which requires written notice and which does not have to be raised in a timely way. I will be addressing that in due course.

I don't expect a ruling on the point of order because, with respect, although Maingot, amongst others, points out that a point of order is not a matter of privilege, this is one of those unique situations wherein we have a point of order, as well as, I submit, a point of privilege intertwined. The two go hand in hand.

Just one more reference very briefly, page 225 of Maingot, referring of course to Erskine May: May distinguishes between breaches of privilege and contempts in the following way, but the important thing is, "When any of these rights and immunities, both of the members, individually, and of the assembly in its collective capacity"-so we're talking about a point of privilege now-"which are known by the general name of privileges, are disregarded," then you have a breach of privilege.

I want to simply put my marker in in terms of timeliness of the point of order. I don't want to be accused of or be exposed to the argument that I'm barred from pursuing this point of order because I'm not being timely.

Of course, the issue is around the government acting unilaterally when there is a practice that has been developed here and especially within the context of the Ombudsman Act and the nature of that statute of course, which requires that the appointment of an Ombudsman be upon the address of the assembly. There is no provision in the Ombudsman Act for an interim Ombudsman as there is, for instance, in the Members' Integrity Act for the Integrity Commissioner. There is no need in the Auditor General Act because of course the Auditor General in that statute enjoys his or her office after the expiration date until such time as a successor is in fact appointed on the address of the assembly.

This refers back, of course, to your comments earlier in this last few minutes about these being officers of the assembly, officers of the assembly, officers of the assembly who are accountable to us as a collective body, who are non-partisan, who are politically independent. It's my respectful submission-again, look, am I calling for anybody to be sanctioned here at the end of the day? Of course not, and I'll be dealing with the matter of privilege in more detail after giving written notice.

It's not a matter of sanctioning anybody. It's a matter of you, sir, having the opportunity to help us understand what an officer of the assembly is and what sort of protocols must be followed in the course of appointing or reappointing an officer of the assembly. I leave it at that for the moment, with respect. I suspect it will be after our Easter break because we'll be preoccupied with the budget and, with respect, I suspect it'll be after the Easter break that we'll be pursuing the point of privilege with the appropriate material. I'm pleased to do so then. So I don't expect a ruling of any sort now, but I simply wanted, as I say, to make my point of order in a timely way, knowing full well I have to give written notice of a point of privilege.

Mr. John Yakabuski: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker: We share the concerns that have been

laid out by the House leader for the third party in the way that this notice was received by the official opposition and, in fact, all members of this assembly, which you have commented on yourself and have opened that door.

We'll be dealing with this in the point of privilege and questioning the actions using section 7 of the act as the justification for making this decision at this time, because none of the criteria that are cited in the act in section 7 actually apply in this case, and we will deal with this in much more detail when we deal with the point of privilege, but there are specific things that have to occur for the government to use section 7, and it is our position that none of those apply here, as cited in the act.

1150

So we will be dealing with this, and we share your view that by convention and tradition in how this has been done in the past in appointing officers of the assembly, the actions of the government in this case, on this occasion, certainly did fly in the face of that tradition and did not respect the convention that has been the case in this assembly for some time now.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The government House leader.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I would note that a letter went from the Speaker to all three parties on March 24, which was yesterday, advising that there was concern that agreement would not be reached in time for the Ombudsman's appointment prior to the termination of his term, which is March 31. That was also raised verbally with me by the other two House leaders.

As cabinet was sitting yesterday, an order in council was passed appointing the temporary Ombudsman. This is in complete alignment with section 7 of the legislation, which reads, "If the Ombudsman is unable or neglects to perform the functions of his or her office, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint a temporary Ombudsman, to hold office for a term of not more than six months...." This has been done time and again in the past.

I would first of all note that this is actually not a point of order or privilege. I look forward to hearing the point of privilege from my colleague; I don't believe that it actually is either, but I do want to address the issues that were raised. I would note the precedents, Mr. Speaker-I'm sure you have them available to you-of temporary appointments by order in council in March 2005; January 2000; September, June, April and March 1989; and February 1984.

There were a number, obviously, in alignment with section 7 of the act, and, appropriate at that time, there was no consultation that I know of prior to those orders in council being made. While I have taken the opportunity this morning to apologize to my fellow House leaders for not advising them at 5 o'clock yesterday when this order in council was approved by the Lieutenant Governor, I do not feel that this is in any way a violation of the privilege or the standing orders of this Legislature.

I do note that my colleague has noted that it is valid. I also note that my colleague's leader has noted in a very public way that her view was that the incumbent Ombudsman should automatically keep his job until a successor is named; that is to say, there should not be an interim or short-term appointment. Unfortunately, that's not what the legislation provides, but that is in fact what is happening in this case. I believe we have taken a judicious approach, in that the appointment was going to expire next Wednesday. I don't know what time of day it would expire, but we would have been very close, given that cabinet sits on Wednesday.

Mr. Speaker, I have already verbally apologized, and to this House I apologize, through you, to the members and to the House leaders for not advising them at 5 o'clock yesterday, but I feel that what has happened is completely appropriate.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Welland.

Mr. Peter Kormos: Look, nobody's angry with Ms. Smith, and nobody expects her to apologize. Ms. Smith has been diligent in her own right in her capacity as House leader. Of course, orders in council are determined by cabinet; Ms. Smith doesn't prepare them. The Speaker knows, because I sent the Speaker a letter on March 24, with a copy to Ms. Smith, in response to the Speaker's letter the same day warning House leaders about the imminent end of Mr. Marin's term, saying that New Democrats proposed that the House leaders, the Speaker and the Clerk meet promptly to address this matter. The New Democrats took that clear position.

The New Democrats have also tabled legislation that would emulate the Auditor General Act and allow the Ombudsman to keep his or her office until such time as a successor has been chosen. With respect, one cannot go behind historic orders in council. I have the orders in council. The orders in council talk about a number of- "pursuant to provisions in section 7 of the Ombudsman Act, Wendy Ray is appointed temporary Ombudsman." We can't go behind that. There is no record. You see, there was a determination at that point that there was compliance with section 7. Today, here and now, we can, because it's not a matter of historic record. I've said you can't go behind the face of this, but the correspondence that's been exchanged, the Speaker's role as chair of a tripartite hiring committee, the Speaker having warned House leaders of the termination of the term of the current Ombudsman and the statutory conditions under which we're operating, I think, compel this Chair to hear the point of order and point of privilege.

I'm simply responding to my honourable colleague's suggestion that there is no point of privilege, no point of order. I submit that the case can be made, at least to the point where the Speaker is to consider it. We know that no debate around a privilege can take place until the Speaker determines it's a prima facie breach of privilege. "Prima facie," of course, means- Ms. Smith will be familiar with this. You've got court decisions like the United States of America v. Sheppard- on its face, without rebuttal. That's what prima facie means: on its face, at first glance, without a rebuttal that there is a breach.

We haven't reached that point yet. I'm asking this Speaker merely, once proper notice has been filed- a written notice- to hear those arguments.

Thank you, sir.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: By way of expansion and clarification, because the government House leader has cited the part of section 7 that they used to support this, we want to make very clear that, as you can tell by the reaction in the House, this is not an objection to the decision that was made. It is concerning the way that this decision was arrived at. This House clearly supports the decision to reappoint Mr. Marin for this term.

But she used the part of section 7 that speaks to "unable or neglects to" conduct. There is no evidence whatsoever that Mr. Marin is unable to continue in his role and there is no evidence to suggest that he is

neglecting to continue in his role. They're talking about timing. In other parts of the section it could be through "death or resignation"-he hasn't passed away and he hasn't resigned-or if "the Legislature is not in session." The Legislature is in session and will continue to be in session to March 31.

So if the government is using that section, it has not met those criteria. There is a cabinet meeting next Wednesday when this could have been dealt with and proper notice and proper consultation and involvement with the other two parties could have taken place, should the government have chosen to do so.

Thank you very much.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Welland.

Mr. Peter Kormos: In the interests of being conciliatory, why don't we just remedy this? Why doesn't the government just bring forward a motion for this assembly's consideration that would extend the term of Mr. Marin for six months, such that this assembly could consider it and vote as individual members wish? I don't know what the outcome of the vote would be. You see, when we come down to it, it's one of those things that could be remedied so quickly. The apology isn't necessary. We don't want an apology, but we could remedy this by letting the assembly make decisions about its officers. It's just a modest proposal.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Government House leader.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: The government has complied with section 7 of the Ombudsman Act. There is no precedent for a motion being brought to the House for an interim appointment or a temporary appointment, so there will be no motion brought at this time. There is no precedent.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to thank the member from Welland, the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and the government House leader for their comments on the point of order that was raised.

I note in the honourable member from Welland's comments that there may be a point of privilege raised at a later date and I will deal with that, if and when that happens.

I want to make it clear to all members that it's not for me, as Speaker, to be making any determination on the legality of the order in council. To me, the issue at hand is the duty to inform the House when such an order has been signed.

With that, I thank all members.

There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1200 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I'd like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the member for Windsor-Tecumseh and page Erin Gaudette, to welcome her father, Matthew; her uncle Dave

Thibideau; and friend Jamie Bowie to the Legislature today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to welcome some guests of mine from the community of Aylmer, Ontario: the staff and students from the Old Colony Christian School, who will be joining us today at Queen's Park. Welcome.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PURPLE DAY

Mrs. Christine Elliott: It's a pleasure for me to rise today and speak briefly about Purple Day. Purple Day is held each year on March 26, and is dedicated to raising awareness about epilepsy. It is named for the internationally recognized colour for epilepsy: lavender.

For me, this year's Purple Day holds significance. This evening, I will be attending the inaugural gala for Epilepsy Durham Region hosted by UOIT, Durham College and Trent University, Oshawa campus, in my riding. I was honoured this year to be asked to be one of the honorary co-chairs for this event.

Funds raised this evening will ensure that Epilepsy Durham Region can continue to maintain their community grassroots programming for the clients they serve.

Epilepsy Durham Region has been a vigorous advocate for people with epilepsy since 1987. What is unique to Epilepsy Durham Region is that they have been providing programs and services to my constituents without any government or United Way funding. They are truly committed to their guiding principles of improving the quality of life for those living with epilepsy and their families in Durham region.

Fifty million people worldwide have epilepsy, and every day in Canada, 42 new people will learn that they too have epilepsy. There are more people living with epilepsy than with multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and Parkinson's disease combined.

In closing, I urge my fellow members in this House to wear purple tomorrow to aid in raising awareness about this most important cause.

PURPLE DAY

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: March is the month during which epilepsy organizations hold their celebrations of Epilepsy Awareness Month and Purple Day. On March 26, people from around the globe are asked to wear purple and spread the word about epilepsy. The CN Tower in Toronto and Niagara Falls will be illuminated in purple to showcase their support.

As many of you may know, the organizations representing and supporting people living with epilepsy see March 26 as their official awareness day. But March 26 has never been officially recognized by the government of Ontario as epilepsy awareness day and, as was brought to my attention by activist Margaret Maye, president of Epilepsy Cure Initiative, those living with epilepsy and their family members would like to see that changed. Margaret is here, and I have just tabled a motion to that effect.

I would ask my colleagues to support my resolution to make March 26 officially epilepsy awareness day

in the province of Ontario, with the hope that we can build greater understanding and support for people with epilepsy and eventually find a cure for these seizures. Thank you, Margaret Maye, for all your work.

SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

Mr. Khalil Ramal: I would like to commend the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario for their unique approach to raising funds and awareness to make a real difference in the lives those affected by schizophrenia. This year, they have raised their money across numerous cities in Ontario by hosting a "yogathon." I was impressed with this idea as it is a very uncommon method, but it proved to be very successful in cities like Windsor, Hamilton, Brockville, Chatham and my home city of London.

The idea of spreading awareness and raising funds at the same time proved to be a very effective combo, especially when it's done through passionate fundraisers like Karen McSpadden, Kim Jovichevich and Laurel Catton, who together raised over \$2,000.

The Schizophrenia Society of Ontario is focused on finding a cure, and early intervention and awareness. They have been providing these services since 1994, and they have worked tirelessly to break the stereotypes associated with the disease. I would like to thank the SSO for being a fundamental part of the health and welfare of Ontarians. I hope to see more unique events like the yogathon in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for allowing me to do this statement.

CHILD CARE

Mr. Jim Wilson: I rise to bring forward the concerns of the 24 Ontario YMCAs over the government's flawed full-day kindergarten plan. Yesterday, my colleague from Parry Sound-Muskoka and I met with Tom Coon and Fiona Cascagnette of the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka. They made it clear to us that if Bill 242 is passed in its current form, it will destabilize Ontario's child care system and leave parents with fewer options and higher costs.

The bill prohibits school boards from partnering with local child care providers and operating extended day programs before and after school. This is a mistake. The YMCA has a proven model for child care delivery that not only works for parents but is cost-effective.

"If school boards are required to establish and operate extended day programs in addition to programs already on-site or close by, we'll have duplication on a massive scale," Mr. Coon told us. He went on to say, "Eighty-one per cent of YMCA child care centres in the province are located in schools. In Simcoe-Muskoka, 43 of their child care centres are located in schools."

What's more, if four- and five-year-olds are taken out of care of the groups like the YMCA, like this bill proposes to do, they will face increased operating costs that will result in higher fees for parents.

Let there be no mistake: Parents should be worried about this bill. It will harm quality child care delivery in Ontario, and it will drive the price of child care for the youngest and most vulnerable children through the roof.

JOB CREATION

Mr. Glen R. Murray: Our government's Open Ontario plan will help families and businesses affected by the global economic crisis. We're implementing initiatives that will create new jobs and make Ontario stronger and more competitive.

We are already seeing positive results. For example, Ontario saw 7,100 net new jobs added in February, which can be added to the 30,300 new jobs that were created in January. Even sectors hit hard by the global recession, such as our manufacturing sector, are seeing their job numbers go up. This sector increased by 12,600 jobs in February, which is on top of the increase of 8,400 jobs in January. Since October 2003, the Ontario economy has increased by 331,700 new jobs, and we are committed to bringing even more jobs to our province.

Our new five-year Open Ontario plan will open up our province to new economic opportunities such as clean water technology and mining, which will create more jobs and growth in our province. It is clear that our plan is putting Ontario on the right track. Our government understands that the best way to overcome the challenges of this global recession is by building a strong workforce and a powerful Ontario economy.

FOOD FREEDOM DAY

Mr. John O'Toole: Speaker, with your indulgence, I would first like to seek unanimous consent to wear the purple and mauve ribbon in respect to epilepsy.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. John O'Toole: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My statement is about Food Freedom Day. Members will recall that Food Freedom Day in Ontario fell on February 12 of this year. This means that it takes the average family just 43 days to earn enough to cover their annual food costs.

Yet the farmers' share of the retail food price remains relatively small. Only 27% of that goes back to the farm that produces the food, according to the recent Canadian Federation of Agriculture survey. We need a made-in-Ontario support program that will ensure farmers receive a fair return for their work and their investment.

1310

I'd like to remind the House of the recommendations from the Ontario Agricultural Sustainability Coalition. The coalition is asking for a permanent, predictable support program. Ontario pork producers, the cattle industry, grain farmers, fruit and vegetable growers, and veal producers are taking action.

I would urge this House to be proactive in working with farm communities to establish a viable risk management program that ensures the future of agriculture.

I would also like to recognize in the House today Bette Jean Crews, the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture; Ted Eng from my riding of Durham—he's an organic farmer in Uxbridge and

also a local councillor; Charles Stevens of Wilmot Orchards; Kirk Kemp and Mike Gibson from Algoma Orchards; and three young agricultural leaders in my riding: Scott Nesbitt, Scott Swain and Andrew Frew. Farmers grow the food we eat.

EVENTS IN GUELPH

Mrs. Liz Sandals: Last week, I had the pleasure of announcing our government's support of festivals in my community. The province is supporting four local festivals through the Celebrate Ontario 2010 program, with a combined investment of almost \$213,000.

In Guelph, the Guelph Jazz Festival and Hillside Inside will use this funding to expand their programs, attract new audiences and promote tourism in Guelph. The Guelph Jazz Festival will now be able to add a Nuit Blanche component to the festival lineup, hosting events at locations throughout the city all night long. Hillside Inside will be moving to a multi-venue format starting at the new outdoor skating rink at city hall, which we're also helping to fund, and ending at Guelph's River Run Centre. Artistic director Sam Bajjal said the grant "will make a big difference in terms of what we can lay out. So it's awesome we are getting this sort of support."

In Centre Wellington, the Fergus Scottish Highland Games and Sensational Elora, which combines visual and performing arts events with local food tourism, both received provincial funding.

We know that tourism is one of Ontario's economic engines. That's why I am proud to be part of a government that gets it and is investing in Guelph area festivals and supporting our local economy.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Charles Sousa: Our government is committed to improving our health care system and ensuring Ontarians can get access to the medical help they need.

That's why we're expanding first-year medical school spaces by 38%. To help achieve that goal, we are opening 54 new first-year medical school spaces at the University of Toronto's Mississauga Academy of Medicine. The academy will be housed in a new four-storey building along with research laboratories and the graduate biomedical communications programs. This campus will open in the summer of 2011 to start training more medical professionals to serve Ontarians. These new learning spaces are in addition to the new undergraduate spaces we opened at medical campuses in Waterloo, Niagara and Windsor. What's more, we also have a new medical school facility under construction at Queen's University in Kingston, and we opened the Northern Ontario School of Medicine in 2005.

On top of that, we've already helped almost 900,000 more Ontarians gain access to a family doctor than in 2003.

We will continue to work with our health care partners to ensure that Ontario's health care system remains strong and that all Ontarians receive the health care they need. Stay healthy, Mr. Speaker, and thank you.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: I'm proud to support the McGuinty government's innovative vision for our province that was outlined in the speech from the throne. These initiatives will strengthen Ontario and make us leaders in a number of key sectors.

For instance, a new Water Opportunities Act will take advantage of our province's expertise in clean water technology to create more jobs and help provide clean water around the world.

What's more, we'll create 20,000 more spaces for students in colleges and universities, and we will open a new Ontario Online Institute to allow students to access their education right from their fingertips on their home computers.

We will improve health care services for patients by encouraging health professionals to work together, and new legislation will improve accountability in our publicly funded health care system.

In addition, we will work with northerners and aboriginal communities to protect our northern boreal forest as we capitalize on northern Ontario's chromite deposits in the Ring of Fire.

These are just a few of the strategies that will open our province to new opportunities and increase our economy. I fully support our government's visionary plan for the future of Ontario.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I would ask members to join me in welcoming my guests from the Old Colony Christian School in Aylmer. Welcome to Queen's Park.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), changes have been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. Flynn assumes ballot item number 11, Mr. Qaadri assumes ballot item number 13, Mrs. Cansfield assumes ballot item number 23 and Mr. Zimmer assumes ballot item number 67.

PETITIONS

TAXATION

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to be first in the presenting of petitions here today on the day of the budget, which is an important day, one that will surprise all of us. My petition reads as follows:

"Whereas Premier Dalton McGuinty is increasing taxes yet again with his new 13% combined sales tax, at a time when families and businesses can least afford it;

"Whereas by 2010, Dalton McGuinty's new tax will increase the cost of" all the "goods and services that families and businesses buy" and use "every day." Just a very few "examples include coffee" in the morning, "newspapers and magazines; gas for the car, home heating oil"-

Interjections.

Mr. John O'Toole: Oh, is it going to be in the budget?

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order. Read the petition, please.

Mr. John O'Toole: Well, they're heckling me-"haircuts, dry cleaning and personal grooming"; personal care, "home renovations and home services; veterinary care and pet care"; human care, "legal services, the sale of resale homes, and funeral arrangements; and"-the list is too long.

"Whereas Dalton McGuinty promised he wouldn't raise taxes in the 2003 election. However, in 2004, he brought in" the largest progressive tax increase "the health tax, which costs upwards of \$600 to \$900 per individual. And now he is raising our taxes again"-what a surprise.

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Dalton McGuinty government wake up to Ontario's current economic reality and stop raising taxes on Ontario's hard-working families and" small "businesses."

I'm pleased to sign this and support this and present it to one of the pages, Erin.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm pleased to present a petition from the people of Elliott Lake in the riding of Algoma-Manitoulin, and it reads as follows:

"Whereas the Ontario government is making positron emission tomography, PET scanning, a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients under conditions where PET scans have been proven to be clinically effective; and

"Whereas by October 2009, insured PET scans will be performed in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

"Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario, with the Sudbury Regional Hospital, its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

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

"To make PET scans available through the Sudbury Regional Hospital, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of northeastern Ontario."

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

ABORIGINAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Ms. Helena Jaczek: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the health of the First Nations youth in Ontario is of growing concern;

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

"To continue the partnership with the Right To Play partnership with the Moose Cree First Nation;

"To expand the Right To Play program to other First Nations communities; and

"To follow up these programs to ensure that other initiatives continue to promote the health of First Nations youth in Ontario."

I agree with this petition and will affix my signature to it and send it to the table with page Jameson.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I have a petition here presented to me by Lillian "Christine" Sarko-Houle, Brian Caldwell and Tammy Everest from the town of Tillsonburg. It's signed by over a thousand of my constituents, and it is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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

"Whereas Ontario is one of the few provinces that does not have independent oversight of child welfare administration; and

"Whereas eight provinces now have independent oversight of child welfare issues, including child protection; and

"Whereas all provincial Ombudsmen first identified child protection as a priority issue in 1986 and still Ontario does not allow the Ombudsman to investigate people's complaints about children's aid societies' decisions; and

"Whereas people wronged by CAS decisions concerning placement, access, custody or care are not allowed to appeal those decisions to the Ontario Ombudsman's office;

"Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the members of the provincial Parliament of Ontario to enact legislation in support of the Ombudsman of Ontario to have the power to probe decisions and investigate complaints concerning the province's children's aid societies (CAS)."

Thank you very much for allowing me to present this petition. I will affix my signature as I agree with this petition.

1320

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mrs. Liz Sandals: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas violent crime and gangs have been a problem in our communities; children require safe

schools and safe streets in order to thrive;

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

"To continue with their support of the guns and gangs program;

"To continue to recognize the importance of a strong and educated police force;

"To continue to support rehabilitation programs;

"To continue to keep education as a top priority; and

"To continue to make our streets and schools safe places to be."

I totally support this, I will affix my name and hand it to George.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to present a petition on behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham, more specifically from the children's aid society of Durham. I recognize Wanda Secord, executive director, and the board of Durham children's aid. The petition reads as follows:

"Whereas Ontario is one of the few provinces that does not have independent oversight of child welfare administration; and

"Whereas eight provinces now have independent oversight of child welfare issues, including child protection; and

"Whereas all provincial Ombudsmen first identified child protection as a priority issue in 1986 and still Ontario does not allow the Ombudsman to investigate people's complaints about children's aid societies' decisions; and

"Whereas people wronged by CAS decisions concerning placement, access, custody or care are not allowed to appeal those decisions to the Ontario Ombudsman's office;

"Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the members of the provincial Parliament of Ontario to enact legislation in support of the Ombudsman of Ontario to have the power to probe decisions and investigate complaints concerning the province's children's aid societies (CAS)."

I'm pleased to sign and support this and present it to page Erin. It's her second page today; she's very busy.

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ontario government has taken an important step in its decision to implement full-day kindergarten; and

"Whereas children between the ages of six and 12 years continue to suffer from a lack of accessible, quality programs; and

"Whereas unlike youth and children in their early years, more than one million children six to 12 years old across Ontario are being left behind because of a lack of dedicated funding for accessible, quality middle childhood programs; and

"Whereas failure to increase middle childhood programming threatens a child's safety, education, and social development as they prepare to face the challenges of the approaching teen years; and

"Whereas implementing effective middle childhood programs increases self-esteem, improves school performance, and enhances quality of life for both children and their families; and

"Whereas Charles Pascal, in his 2009 report *With Our Best Future in Mind*, provides a framework and strategy for implementing a provincial structure for middle childhood programs across Ontario; and

"Whereas investing in middle childhood programs is part of Ontario's economic stimulus strategy;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to invest now in children six to 12 years old across Ontario and implement the recommendations made in the *With Our Best Future in Mind* report."

I agree with this and give it to Snigdha to be delivered. I'm going to affix my signature.

CHILD CARE

Mr. Yasir Naqvi: This is a petition from my constituents in Ottawa Centre.

"Whereas, in the 2006 budget, the McGuinty government allocated \$63.5 million for child care for each of the next four years. Each year since, \$63.5 million went to support our vital child care services;

"Whereas, if the province does not continue this funding in the 2010 provincial budget, municipalities will have no option but to make dramatic cuts to child care subsidies, destabilizing the entire system;

"Therefore, be it resolved that in the 2010 budget we call on Premier McGuinty and Finance Minister Dwight Duncan to:

"(1) Ensure the province provides sufficient funding to maintain existing levels of child care service and recognize cost-of-living and other legitimate increases in operating costs; and

"(2) Provide all necessary tools to support the transition to an early learning program, including base funding for child care programs to support operations and wages comparable to the full-day learning program, in order to ensure the child care system remains stable and sustainable."

I agree with this petition, affix my signature and send it to the table via page Sabrina.

TAXATION

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to present a petition on behalf of Bill Murdoch, the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the residents of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound do not want a provincial harmonized sales tax that will raise the cost of goods and services they use every day; and

"Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars"-I don't hear any outrage-"heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to house sales over \$400,000; and

"Whereas the 13% blended sales tax will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships"-sports memberships-"newspapers," lawyers, accounting and financial services fees; and

"Whereas the blended sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families and," more importantly, poor and low-income families;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario ...

"That the McGuinty Liberal government not increase taxes for Ontario consumers" on July 1, 2010.

I'm pleased to sign and support this on behalf of Bill Murdoch and present it to Anthony, one of the pages.

FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas early childhood learning is a fundamental program in the development and education of Ontario's youth;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Parliament of Ontario as follows:

"To continue to expand full-day learning across the province;

"To continue to make our children a priority for this government;

"To continue investments in the infrastructure of our education system;

"To continue to support Ontario's families through these initiatives; and

"To never go back to the days of forgotten children and mismanagement of schools we saw in the 1990s. We applaud the new investments in full-day learning and look forward to their continued growth across the province."

I agree with this petition. I'm going to sign it and send it with Harsh.

CHILD PROTECTION

Mr. John O'Toole: It's lonely at the top. Anyway, a petition to the Legislative Assembly. It reads as follows:

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

"Whereas Ontario is one of the few provinces that does not have independent oversight of child welfare administration; and

"Whereas eight provinces now have independent oversight of child welfare issues, including child protection; and

"Whereas all provincial Ombudsmen first identified child protection as a priority issue in 1986 and still Ontario does not allow the Ombudsman to investigate people's complaints about children's aid societies' decisions; and

"Whereas people wronged by CAS decisions concerning placement, access, custody or care are not allowed to appeal those decisions to anyone, including the Ontario Ombudsman's office;

"Therefore we, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the members of the provincial Parliament of Ontario, to enact legislation in support of the Ombudsman of Ontario to have the power to probe decisions and investigate complaints concerning the province's children's aid societies...."

I'm pleased to support André Marin as the new Ombudsman, and this petition, and present it to Snigdha.

EPILEPSY

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: This petition deals with the Epilepsy Cure Initiative.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas more than 300,000 Canadians have epilepsy and some of the leading epilepsy organizations in Ontario have already proposed improvements in specialized care for those afflicted with epilepsy, and that there is a need for improved access to these programs;

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

"Improve access to epilepsy care programs by developing and establishing highly specialized epilepsy treatment centres in Ontario."

I absolutely agree with this. I'm going to give it to Diana and I'm going to sign it as well.

TAXATION

Mr. Joe Dickson: I'm pleased to present a petition and I'm thankful I'm not the first speaker because that way speakers prior to me can hear the real words. This is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas a duplicated tax system puts our businesses at a disadvantage by increasing the costs of doing business; and

"Whereas a single, unified tax system reduces the burden on business by removing the provincial sales tax on goods and reducing administrative costs; and

"Whereas both Conservative and Liberal members of the provincial and federal Legislatures have voiced their support of a single sales tax; and

"Whereas local chambers of commerce, economists and experts are also supporting the move to a single tax system; and

"Whereas the recent RBC Economics report found that the HST is improving the competitiveness of Ontario businesses by lowering the cost of doing business in Ontario; and

"Whereas a harmonized sales tax is expected to create jobs for Ontario;

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

"That all parties of the provincial Legislature support the government of Ontario's plan to implement the HST and other tax reforms to benefit Ontario businesses and consumers."

I attach my signature to that, as I do agree, and I will pass it to Jameson.

TAXATION

Mr. John O'Toole: I'm pleased to read the offsetting petition, which offsets pretty well everything the member from Ajax-Pickering said. This is the truth. It reads as follows:

"Whereas residents of Durham do not want Dalton McGuinty's new sales tax, which will raise the cost of goods and services they" buy and "use every day"-this is signed by thousands of people; "and

"Whereas the McGuinty Liberals' new ... tax of 13% will cause everyone to pay more for gasoline for their cars, heat, telephone, cable and Internet services for their homes, and will be applied to home sales over \$400,000; and

"Whereas the McGuinty Liberals' new sales tax of 13% will cause everyone to pay more for meals under \$4, haircuts, funeral services, gym memberships," sports memberships, fitness memberships, "newspapers, and lawyer and accountant fees," financial planner fees-the list goes on; "and

"Whereas the McGuinty Liberals' new sales tax grab will affect everyone in the province: seniors, students, families," farmers "and low-income" people-everyone who lives here;

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

"That" Dalton McGuinty "not increase taxes" on July 1, 2010, Canada Day. Don't affect Ontario families.

I'm pleased to sign and support this.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The time for petitions has ended.

Pursuant to standing order 58(b), this House is recessed until 4 p.m.

The House recessed from 1332 to 1600.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

2010 ONTARIO BUDGET / BUDGET DE L'ONTARIO DE 2010

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I move, seconded by Mr. McGuinty, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Mr. Duncan has moved, seconded by Mr. McGuinty, that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

I would beg the indulgence of all members to allow the pages to deliver the budget, and I'd just ask right now that you ensure that-

Mr. John Yakabuski: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The members of our caucus were not allowed out of the lock-up. With only two minutes to get here, we are still waiting for our members. I would beg the indulgence of the House to allow this proceeding to wait until such time as the rest of our members have arrived, including-

Mr. Ted Arnott: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker: I think it's worthwhile to point out that it is a long-standing tradition [*inaudible*] Legislature are allowed to go into a lock-up in advance of the budget. But, as we tried to leave the lock-up at about five minutes to 4, we were told by the OPP that they were waiting for word from the Minister of Finance's office. They kept us back so that we literally had to race over here-

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Order. I would just say to the member from Wellington-Halton Hills, we do not need to rise on points of order to rag the puck. I will give members of Her Majesty's loyal opposition enough time to enter the chamber.

Once again, I would beg the indulgence of all members to allow the pages the opportunity to deliver the budget speech. I would ask that you keep your aisles clear because, as all members-and I'm sure many of our guests-are aware, the pages are endeavouring, as always, to break the record in delivering that speech. The record that they are attempting to break is 20.35 seconds.

Have all members received a copy of the budget?

Minister of Finance.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: Mr. Speaker, I rise to present Ontario's 2010 budget.

Monsieur le Président, je présente aujourd'hui le budget de l'Ontario de 2010.

For the better part of the last two years, the global economy has been mired in deep recession.

The Ontario economy, like most others, has felt the effects of both a global recession and the transformation of key sectors, especially manufacturing and forestry.

I'm pleased to report that some early signs of the recovery have arrived. However, the job losses that have affected Ontario families remain and this government will continue to take action.

Working together, we must continue to create jobs in the short term and continue to lay the foundation for growth and a new prosperity.

Ontario's speech from the throne established a five-year plan to open Ontario to new jobs and economic growth.

The Open Ontario plan will create an Ontario even more open to new ideas, new people, new investment and, most importantly, new jobs.

This budget begins to chart a course to a stronger economic future for the people of Ontario.

Speaker, when the recession hit, Ontarians, like Canadians elsewhere, had to cope with sudden, unexpected job losses that devastated individuals, families and communities.

We are responding with an aggressive job-creation plan.

We are investing \$32 billion in job-creating stimulus. According to the Conference Board of Canada, our investment is supporting over 220,000 jobs this year. Our stimulus plan added nearly a full point to Ontario's gross domestic product last year, and that is all good for Ontario.

We're also responding with an aggressive training plan.

Many Ontarians need to retrain and learn new skill sets in order to find work and get back on their feet.

As an example, the Kitchener-Waterloo region is a beacon of the new economy, with leading-edge universities, colleges and businesses. Today, more than 2,000 jobs remain unfilled in that region, which is also proudly known as the technology triangle. Yet, there is still a 10.1% unemployment rate there.

This speaks to the importance of skills training and upgrading as part of our jobs strategy.

That's why we've improved the job training services we provide through Employment Ontario. Over one million Ontarians were able to take advantage of skills training, rapid re-employment and summer jobs last year.

We created a program—the first of its kind in Canada—to help laid-off workers train for a new career.

1610

We called it Second Career, and over 27,000 people have benefited from the program.

Today we are announcing that an additional 30,000 people will be participating in Second Career. This will bring the total number of participants to nearly 60,000 since Second Career began.

Starting a new career takes courage and all Ontarians deserve credit for helping their neighbours make a new start.

Speaker, the Open Ontario plan will create even more new opportunities for Ontarians and their children.

We've already laid out some aspects of our plan with two important initiatives: tax modernization and clean energy.

As the economy recovers, the McGuinty government is creating an environment for jobs and for growth.

Our tax plan for jobs and growth is Ontario's most significant tax reform in a generation. It will create jobs and open Ontario to new investment and enhanced growth.

Personal income taxes were reduced on January 1 of this year.

On July 1, we're reducing corporate income taxes, eliminating the capital tax and moving ahead with the harmonized sales tax, the single most important step we can take to create jobs.

Major corporations like Bell Canada, Telus and General Electric have said that, due to our comprehensive tax reforms, they will be making significant new investments right here in Ontario-

Mr. Jeff Leal: Peterborough.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: -and yes, right in Peterborough, to my colleague Mr. Leal.

On July 1, our small business tax rate will be reduced to 4.5% and the small business surtax eliminated. This is a powerful incentive for those who create the most jobs in our economy.

Leading economists estimate that within 10 years, our tax plan will create nearly 600,000 net new jobs. It will increase capital investment of \$47 billion and increase household income by 8.8%.

That is good news for all Ontarians.

Clean energy is already a significant source of new jobs. Our plan is helping to create 50,000 new clean energy jobs over three years.

Al Gore calls our plan "the single best green energy program on the North American continent."

Samsung's partnership with Ontario to produce clean energy from wind and sun is just the beginning. This venture alone will create some 16,000 Ontario jobs.

As part of its Open Ontario plan, the government will introduce a new Water Opportunities Act.

The clean water sector already employs some 22,000 people in good, well-paid Ontario jobs selling Ontario-made water technologies and services around the world.

Ontario is well placed to become a global leader in the water technology industry. Our proposed legislation will help create still more jobs right here in Ontario.

Our Open Ontario plan is about creating new opportunities and growth for our province.

For example, we are examining whether there is unrealized value in our government businesses that could be unleashed to provide new jobs and opportunities for Ontario families.

In the coming months, we will be talking and listening to Ontarians about how we might proceed.

Education is this government's highest priority.

Monsieur le Président, l'éducation est la plus grande priorité du présent gouvernement.

The Open Ontario plan will build a stronger economy by expanding opportunities in our schools, our colleges, our universities and our trades.

Our plan will make Ontario the first in North America to implement a full-day learning program for four- and five-year-olds.

This innovative education program will begin in September for up to 35,000 kids in nearly 600 schools.

Ontarians are some of the most highly skilled and educated workers in the world. This is our greatest competitive advantage.

Today, 62% of Ontarians have post-secondary education or training, one of the highest attainment rates in the world. This is a remarkable achievement. We know that about 70% of the jobs of the future will require post-secondary education or training.

Open Ontario's goal is to raise Ontario's post-secondary attainment rate to 70%. As a first step, this budget provides \$310 million in new funding for 20,000 new spaces in colleges and universities this year.

Every qualified Ontarian who wants to go to college or university will find a place.

People around the globe want something for themselves and their children that Ontario offers—a quality post-secondary education.

We will aggressively promote Ontario's post-secondary schools abroad and increase international enrolment by 50% while guaranteeing spaces for all qualified Ontario students.

Our post-secondary initiatives will strengthen our schools and create more Ontario jobs.

Families and communities in the north have been hard hit by the global recession, so we are ensuring that the north benefits from the Open Ontario plan.

Under our plan, northern Ontario will see more jobs and more economic activity.

In spite of the challenges facing the northern economy, we continue to see real success in the region. For instance, Ontario's first diamond mine opened there in 2008.

There are many more new opportunities to be found in the north-particularly in the region known as the Ring of Fire.

For the 21st century, the discovery of chromite in the Ring of Fire, used to make stainless steel, could be as big as the discovery of nickel was in the 19th century.

We are fully committed to working with aboriginal peoples and all northern Ontarians to build on the Ring of Fire's significant potential.

This budget provides funding support for skills training programs to help northern Ontarians be ready for new jobs in this growing sector.

We will appoint a Ring of Fire office to lead our collective efforts to make the possibilities of this exciting development a reality for all northerners.

Together, working with our partners in the north, we will create Ontario jobs and support families while protecting the northern forest region.

Because northern families spend more to heat their homes, we propose a permanent northern Ontario energy credit that will help more than half of all northerners.

The northern Ontario energy credit would provide up to \$130 annually to single people and up to \$200 to families in the north to help with the higher energy costs they face.

Ce crédit représenterait jusqu'à 130 \$ par année pour les personnes seules et jusqu'à 200 \$ pour les familles du Nord afin de les aider à faire face aux coûts d'énergie plus élevés qu'elles doivent assumer.

This program is in addition to the sales and property tax credits already available to all Ontarians.

We will also create a three-year industrial electricity program averaging \$150 million per year for the north. The northern industrial hydro rate would target the industries hardest hit by this recession.

1620

It would reduce industrial electricity prices by almost 25% based on 2009 levels. The rebates would help qualifying large northern industrial facilities achieve electricity efficiency and sustainability. Most importantly, the industrial hydro rate will help protect and create new jobs for the north and for all northerners.

The federal government presented its budget a few weeks ago.

We were pleased to see that the Canada health and social transfer agreements have been extended for another year. However, we are very concerned about the expiration of close to \$1 billion in federal transfers for skills training, transit, wait times and housing.

Federal funding for child care is also ending.

Despite this, the McGuinty government will step in and continue funding the child care spaces abandoned by the federal government.

Our investment will equal \$63.5 million a year.

All told, this support will help 1,000 child care workers keep their jobs. It will help about 8,500 Ontario children stay in child care—a crucial investment that will help keep Ontario families working.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Ontarians who care passionately about child care to join us in our fight for better child care for all Ontarians and their families.

Mr. Speaker, when the world economy fell into recession, a variety of organizations, including the International Monetary Fund, recommended that governments around the world spend up to 2% of their GDP to fund job-creating stimulus plans.

Like most western governments, Ontario responded with a rigorous jobs plan that economists are now saying is helping families, growing communities and creating jobs.

As economies return to growth, governments must return to balanced budgets—and our government will.

As I said in the fall, our government will reduce the size of the deficit every year.

For the year just ending, we forecast a reduced deficit of \$21.3 billion—a notable improvement since I last reported to Ontarians, last fall.

Ontario is expected to be one of the leading provinces in Canadian GDP growth this year. Canada and the US are expected to lead growth among the G7.

Our planning assumptions for economic growth, which are based on private sector forecasts, are 2.7% real GDP growth this year, moving to 3.3% in 2011. That is significant progress. That means good news for Ontario families and those Ontarians whom we're helping to find work.

In 2011-12, the deficit will drop to \$17.3 billion, and then fall to \$15.9 billion in 2012-13.

We will cut the current deficit in half in five years and eliminate the deficit in eight years.

Our path to recovery is fair, our path to recovery is realistic, and above all else, our path to recovery is responsible.

Reducing the deficit is about a sustainable future for our children and ensuring that our tax dollars are spent wisely.

A significant risk for Ontario and other governments is the possibility—some would argue the probability—of rising interest rates.

Every 1% increase in interest rates would cost Ontario an additional half-billion dollars every year.

Every additional dollar that goes to interest payments is one less dollar for priority areas such as education or health care.

Mr. Speaker, about 55% of Ontario's total program spending goes towards wages and benefits in the public and broader public sectors.

Our plan for protecting public services like schools and hospitals must acknowledge this reality.

About 1.2 million people are proudly employed in the broader public sector in Ontario.

Ontarians value and appreciate the contributions of those who deliver their public services. They also expect those who are paid by tax dollars to contribute to the sustainability of those public services.

Public servants make a valuable contribution to the health and well-being of this province. They are an important part of our well-educated workforce.

That is why we will not propose mandatory unpaid days off.

This is why we will honour all existing collective agreements.

Still, we must take significant steps to control expenses in one of our largest spending lines so that we can protect and preserve public services like education and health care.

Members of provincial Parliament will lead by example and take a three-year salary freeze, extending our current freeze for two more years.

In addition, the government will introduce legislation that would freeze compensation structures of non-bargained political and Legislative Assembly staff for two years.

The legislation would also freeze compensation structures for all non-bargained employees in the broader public sector and Ontario public service for two years.

For those represented by bargaining agents, we will respect all collective agreements.

However, the fiscal plan provides no funding for incremental compensation increases for any future collective agreements.

Par contre, le plan financier de la province ne prévoit pas de fonds pour des hausses salariales dans les conventions collectives futures.

As contracts are renegotiated, the government will work with transfer partners and bargaining agents to seek agreements of at least two years' duration. These agreements will provide no net increase in compensation, will help manage spending pressures and protect the public services that Ontarians rely on.

All of us who are paid with tax dollars have a role to play as we chart the course forward.

We expect our transfer partners to bargain responsibly so that, together, we can all do our part to protect schools and hospitals.

By next year, the legislation would redirect up to \$750 million towards sustaining schools and hospitals and other vital public services.

Controlling compensation is but one important step in our plan to continue managing responsibly.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, Ontarians are committed to a strong public health care system.

Today, we face new challenges and must redouble our efforts.

Just 20 years ago, 32 cents of every dollar spent on government programs were spent on health care.

Today, it's 46 cents. In 12 years, if we don't take action, it could be 70 cents.

So the question now facing us is, how do we fund the best health care while maintaining our investments in schools, helping the vulnerable or protecting the environment?

This year, building on our past achievements, the McGuinty government will launch a plan to reduce generic drug costs for Ontarians.

Currently, Ontarians pay too much for generic drugs. That's why we're planning to reduce the cost of generic drugs to ensure that all Ontarians have affordable access to the prescription drugs they need.

We also plan to introduce legislation that would call on health care professionals and executives to be even more accountable for improving patient care.

We will review the Public Hospitals Act and ensure that the hospital system taps into the expertise of community partners and health professionals.

Across government, we will ensure that we manage responsibly and direct investments to those priorities that are most important to Ontario families.

1630

Upon completion of our stimulus-related infrastructure projects, we will take a measured approach to planning and construction of some of the government's other capital projects.

Managing responsibly and in a balanced way is our record. This year and in the years ahead, our task is to keep growth in expenditures below growth in revenues.

Our efforts to manage responsibly have delivered results:

- OPS travel costs have decreased by 26% so far this year;

- we froze MPP salaries;

- we reduced OPS senior executive performance pay; and

- with the introduction of the HST, we will reduce the number of full-time OPS employees by 1,253- saving \$100 million a year now and into perpetuity.

Since 2003, Ontario has been one of the most efficient providers of programs and services among provincial governments.

In 2008-09, Ontario general per capita government spending was the second lowest among the provinces, proving that we provide highly efficient services. This year, and going forward, we plan to freeze program administration spending so that Ontario remains one of the most efficient governments in the country.

Building on our previous expenditure management measures and the recent work of the treasury board working group, we will continue with a comprehensive review of all government programs and services.

The comprehensive review will be overseen by the treasury board and will ensure that the government's resources are focused on delivering the programs and services that support:

- jobs and economic growth;

- access to high-quality education and health care; and

- clean, safe, strong communities, including effective supports for our most vulnerable.

The goal of the review is to move resources from low-priority areas to high-priority areas and to move forward with the Open Ontario plan.

In addition to improving efficiencies, we will also improve access. For example, we provide a wide range of benefit programs to help Ontarians. There are many ways to access these programs and no central hub or source for information.

Our plan is to improve and simplify access to those programs to make it easier for people to find them and more cost-effective for us to administer them.

Speaker, our plan to manage expenses responsibly is fair and balanced. Our plan to manage expenses is the right thing to do.

Speaker, when the recession began, we took action and now that the recovery is on the horizon, we will not rest.

When we came to office in 2003, Ontario faced a deficit, struggling public services, crumbling infrastructure-and no plan for the future.

Our government put a plan in place and took action.

We rebuilt schools and hospitals. We invested in colleges and universities. We built new roads, new bridges, new transit and new water treatment plants.

We supported a greener Ontario, we brought in the Ontario child benefit and raised the minimum wage to make this province a better place to live for all Ontarians.

Our planning has allowed us to invest while balancing budgets, paying down debt and cutting business and personal taxes.

Speaker, when the global crisis hit, we took action.

We invested in a stimulus plan to protect and create jobs and we reformed our tax system to create

hundreds of thousands of jobs in the long term.

Now, through the Open Ontario plan, we continue to take action.

Today, I've announced a plan to take action on post-secondary education and a plan for northern Ontario.

We are taking action to eliminate the deficit and we can ensure the sustainability of our public services that we value as we do that.

As always, our plan is fair.

Our plan is balanced.

Comme toujours, notre plan est équitable.

Notre plan est équilibré.

Our plan is focused on the priorities that Ontarians share.

And those priorities include taking steps today to build a strong Ontario for tomorrow.

Nous ouvrons les portes de l'Ontario-au commerce, aux étudiants, aux possibilités à l'échelle mondiale.

Nous avons ce qu'il faut pour être les meilleurs.

We are opening Ontario's doors-to trade, to students, to global opportunities.

We have what it takes to be the best.

Our Open Ontario plan will get us there.

We can do it, we can do it together. And when we do, we will be bigger, we will be better, we will be stronger.

Merci, monsieur le Président.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The member from Renfrew-Nippissing-Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I move adjournment of the debate.

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

Debate adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**CREATING THE FOUNDATION
FOR JOBS AND GROWTH ACT, 2010 /
LOI DE 2010 POSANT LES FONDATIONS
DE L'EMPLOI ET DE LA CROISSANCE**

Mr. Duncan moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 16, An Act to implement 2010 Budget measures and to enact or amend various Acts / Projet de loi 16, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures énoncées dans le Budget de 2010 et édictant ou modifiant diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour will say "aye."

Opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The minister for a short statement.

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I already spoke.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

Hon. Dwight Duncan: I have a message from the Honorable David Onley, the Lieutenant Governor, signed by his own hand.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): The Lieutenant Governor transmits supplementary estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending March 31, 2010, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. Monique M. Smith: I move adjournment of the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): This House stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. on Monday.

And for the members' information, the pages' time was 25.54 seconds.

The House adjourned at 1638.

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Accounting Professions Act, 2010, Bill 158, Mr. Bentley / Loi de 2010 sur les professions comptables, projet de loi 158, M. Bentley

Second reading agreed to 301

Securities industry

Mr. Gilles Bisson 301

Mr. Charles Sousa 303

Mr. John O'Toole 306

Mr. Peter Tabuns 309

Debate deemed adjourned 311

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Peter Shurman 311

Mr. Monte Kwinter 311

Mr. Khalil Ramal 311

Hon. Carol Mitchell 311

Mr. Monte Kwinter 311

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters) 311

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Severance payments

Mrs. Christine Elliott 311

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky 311

Severance payments

Ms. Lisa MacLeod 312

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky 312

Aboriginal rights

Mr. Howard Hampton 313

Hon. Christopher Bentley 313

Hospital funding

Mr. Michael Prue 314

Hon. Deborah Matthews 314

Full-day kindergarten

Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer 315

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky 315

Hospital funding

Mme France G linas 315

Hon. Deborah Matthews 315

Transportation infrastructure

Mr. Charles Sousa 316

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 316

Taxation

Mrs. Julia Munro 316

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky 316

Manufacturing jobs

Mr. Paul Miller 317

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky 317

Forest industry

Mr. Rick Johnson 317

Hon. Michael Gravelle 317

Wind turbines

Mr. Jim Wilson 318

Hon. Brad Duguid 318

Public transit

Ms. Cheri DiNovo 319

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 319

Public transit

Mr. Tony Ruprecht 319

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne 319

Credit counselling agencies

Mr. John O'Toole 320

Hon. Sophia Aggelonitis 320

Jardin d'enfants à temps plein / Full-day kindergarten

Mme France Gélinas 321

Hon. Leona Dombrowsky 321

Appointment of Ombudsman

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters) 321

Correction of record

Mr. John O'Toole 321

Government announcements

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette 321

Hon. Monique M. Smith 322

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters) 322

Order-in-council appointments

Mr. Peter Kormos 322

Mr. John Yakabuski 323

Hon. Monique M. Smith 323

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters) 325

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters) 325

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

Purple Day

Mrs. Christine Elliott 325

Purple Day

Ms. Cheri DiNovo 325

Schizophrenia Society of Ontario

Mr. Khalil Ramal 325

Child care

Mr. Jim Wilson 326

Job creation

Mr. Glen R. Murray 326

Food Freedom Day

Mr. John O'Toole 326

Events in Guelph

Mrs. Liz Sandals 326

Health care

Mr. Charles Sousa 327

Government policies

Mr. Yasir Naqvi 327

Visitors

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters) 327

Private members' public business

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters) 327

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Taxation

Mr. John O'Toole 327

Diagnostic services

Mme France Gélinas 328

Aboriginal programs and services

Ms. Helena Jaczek 328

Child protection

Mr. Ernie Hardeman 328

Community safety

Mrs. Liz Sandals 328

Child protection

Mr. John O'Toole 329

Middle childhood programs

Ms. Cheri DiNovo 329

Child care

Mr. Yasir Naqvi 329

Taxation

Mr. John O'Toole 329

Full-day kindergarten

Mr. Lou Rinaldi 330

Child protection

Mr. John O'Toole 330

Epilepsy

Ms. Cheri DiNovo 330

Taxation

Mr. Joe Dickson 330

Taxation

Mr. John O'Toole 331

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**2010 Ontario budget / Budget de l'Ontario de 2010**

Hon. Dwight Duncan 331

Debate adjourned 335

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**Creating the Foundation for Jobs and Growth Act, 2010, Bill 16, Mr. Duncan / Loi de 2010 posant les fondations de l'emploi et de la croissance, projet de loi 16, M. Duncan**

First reading agreed to 335

Supplementary estimates

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters) 335

[top](#) | [new search](#)