

***Transcript of Provincial Question Period
41st Parliament, 2nd Session
Tuesday, September 12, 2017***

Unedited Transcript

The following is a partially edited transcript of Question Period.

Table of Contents

MPP Brown to Premier (Hoskins)	
Re: Opioid Crisis.....	2
MPP Brown to Premier (Thibeault)	
Re: Coal Mining.....	4
MPP Horwath to Premier (Hoskins)	
Re: Hospital Funding	6
MPP Horwath to Premier (Hoskins)	
Re: Healthcare Funding.....	8
MPP Harris to Minister MacCharles (Hunter)	
Re: Service-Dog Access....	10
MPP Fife to Minister Naqvi	
Re: Sudbury Trial.....	12
MPP Martins to Milczyn	
Re: Housing Affordability	13
MPP Walker to Minister Naidoo-Harris	
Re: Childcare Spaces	15
MPP Forster to Minister Flynn	
Re: Worker's Compensation	16
MPP Hoggarth to Minister Del Duca (McMahon)	
Re: Bike Paths 18	
MPP Thompson to Minister Ballard	
Re: Industrial Turbines	20
MPP Horwath to Minister Flynn	
Re: Temp Agencies.....	21
MPP Potts to Naqvi (Sousa)	
Re: Cannabis Legislation	22

MPP Brown to Premier (Hoskins) Re: Opioid Crisis

>>Patrick Brown: My question is for the Premier. I would like to ask her about Sudbury, but I don't need the Attorney General telling me it is before the court. We all know it is before the court. We know that Liberal ethics and integrity is before the court. We -- We know alleged bribery is before the courts. We know that Liberal political corruption is before the courts. I'm not going to ask about that. B&cause I want a real answer. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier support the member illegal pill press act? Will the Premier help put a stop to these machines?

>> Premier Wynne: I know the Minister of health is going to want to speak to the health of this. I want to assure the people of the House, the opioid crisis that seized jurisdictions around the world is something that we are taking very very seriously. We are fighting. We have put hundreds of millions of dollars into the front line, into services and supports for the people who are on that front line and who are dealing with this very very serious situation. I have had an opportunity to sit down with a number of people who are front line workers. I sat down last week with the Minister of health and the chief medical officer of health and the chief coroner, Mr. Speaker to get their best advice. To fight this public health crisis.

>> Patrick Brown: My question is again for the Premier. While the Premier spends her time testifying tomorrow during the Sudbury bribery trial, the Ontario PC party is going to continue to fight for better mental health services. Research provided by the Ontario drug policy research network show that two Ontarians die everyday from the overdoses. There's no monopoly on a good idea. There is a tool kit here for fighting this -- There are a number of ways to combat this crisis. One of those tools in the tool kit is this illegal pill press act. Rather than partisan responses, what I hope is the Premier say this is a good idea, we're going to look at it and support the member from Kitchener. So can we count on the Premier to do that? Will you help those people?

>> Premier Wynne: Mr. Speaker, you know, I work everyday for the people of Ontario. And I will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. This week and next week and the week after. I agree that there is no patent on a good idea. Let me talk one moment for the things we are doing. We have a strategy. We are working to fight the strategy. Let me talk about some of those things. Providing an immediate \$222 million over three years to enhance and prevent opioid addiction. Adding more front line harm reduction. And I heard that from the front line workers that they needed that. They need more numbers in their rank. We're expanding the supply of naloxone. And doing it free of charge. And expanding rapid access medical clinics. Minister of health will speak to the other issue.

>> Patrick Brown: Again to the Premier, I'm disappointed that I didn't get a response on the legal pill press. Another way that we can help with this is understanding that there's a lack of education, a lack of awareness of how lethal this is. Two milligrams of fentanyl is an overdose. The government advertising is 57 million. Up 32 million. And instead of using this money for partisan vanity ads, can we not have a commitment to use some of their advertising budget to actually fight the crisis. To actually raise education and awareness. So I didn't get a response from the illegal pill press suggestion. This is another solution. Directly to the Premier, can we count on her support for advertising campaign to help fight this crisis?

>> Minister Eric Hoskins: Of course we are investing dollars and working with stake holders in developing a robust and effective public education campaign. That's necessary. It's impossible to address this comprehensively unless we do that. When it comes to pill presses, the leader of the official opposition should know, as he was a federal member of parliament, that the federal government just passed C 37 which includes a provision that prohibits the -- such as pill presses. And frankly it's simplistic. And with their law and order approach that they would focus on something as simple as pill presses. You need a multifaceted approach. I'm still waiting for any good idea that we can embrace. I want to know about what the member opposition thinks of safe injection sites as well. Do you support them?

MPP Brown to Premier (Thibeault) Re: Coal Mining

>> Patrick Brown: My question is for the Premier. A few months ago, the government announced 6.7 billion dollar purchase of a foreign energy company. Ontario decided to get back into the coal business. While the Premier is testifying in Sudbury, Hydro One will go ahead with a purchase of the second largest coal plant west of the Mississippi. And despite what this government says, there is one pro coal party in the legislature, and that's your Ontario Liberal party. The Liberals, Mr. Speaker, now own one of the US's top 20 greenhouse gas producing power plants. That goes against everything the Premier pretends to stand for. A direct question, when will the Liberals and Hydro One be shutting down their shiny new dirty coal plant?

>> Premier Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, I recall as we shut down the last coal fired plant, Mr. Speaker, in the run up to that, I remember -- I remember, Mr. Speaker, because you recognize then I know the member opposite does, the shutting down of the coal fired plants is the single largest initiative. And I recall, Mr. Speaker, a certain Prime Minister, a previous Prime Minister in his government this member sat, Mr. Speaker, telling how well Canada was doing on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The record of Canada rested entirely on the results that we had here in Ontario shutting down coal and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

>> Patrick Brown: I did not get a response about this decision. Not only did the Premier's new purchase come with a coal mine, now the deal comes with an 800 acre toxic soup waste site. Senior campaign organizer said I quote, one thing you need to understand is that you are not just getting a coal plant, you are getting a toxic waste site. And all the liabilities that go with it. Added, might be on the hook for \$100 million clean up. Where is that coming from? Thank you, Hydro One. Thank you, Premier. You're putting Ontario on the hook for this. Mr. Speaker, how much will Ontario Hydro One rate payers be paying for this coal plant toxic waste clean up?

>> Minister Glenn Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Please rise and answer that question: It shows the lack of understanding on the energy system on that side of the House. Ontario rate payers will pay zero, Mr. Speaker. Just like their plan, Mr. Speaker. It's nothing. There is no plan coming from that side, Mr. Speaker. 194 days. 194 days, Mr. Speaker, since they talked about coming up with some idea on what to do with the energy sector, Mr. Speaker. What we've done, Mr. Speaker, reduced rates by 25%, making sure every family and House hold in this province sees that reduction. Again, Mr. Speaker zero from that side of the House. When it comes to -- they are a Progressive utility. Ahead

of the curve on technologies. And this just goes to show how far ahead of the curve we are when it comes to eliminating coal, Mr. Speaker.

>> Patrick Brown: Again to the Premier. And I get that their talking points on this are attack opposition, attack others. The reality is that they brought a dirty coal plant. The Ontario Liberal government intended to be against dirty coal is now in the business of buying coal. Maybe it's the Liberal members lost their value. Maybe they no longer oppose coal. It appears one Liberal may have a different approach. Former MPP Glenn Murray. And I wish him all the best on his new career. And I want to ask this direct question, did the former Minister of environment resign his seat from Cabinet and his seat in the legislature because he was so disappointed and could not support the government's decision to get back in the business of dirty coal?

>>Minister Thibeault: Glen Murray is proud to say that this government shut down coal plants, like taking 7 million cars off the road. He can talk about actually our energy system being 92% ghg free. That's something that this government done. Against what they were saying, Mr. Speaker. Always the no party on that side. And also no. But, you know, let's talk about a few things that happened. While they are sit on their hands, plenty happened in the world. And now summer is turning into fall. Our kids finished one grade and finished another. And others finished high school. And are getting free tuition, Mr. Speaker. That's all again, while they sit on their hands. 194 days, they have no idea what to do with energy. We'll continue to govern for the people in Ontario, Mr. Speaker.

MPP Horwath to Premier (Hoskins) Re: Hospital Funding

>> Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Yesterday the Ontario hospital association called on the Premier to immediately commit to rapid and aggressive new investment in Ontario hospitals. The oha confirmed, in fact, what I have been hearing all over this province for far too long. The Conservative and Liberal cuts to health care caused a crisis for Ontario families. People are waiting hours in the er. Forced to spend days on end, Speaker, on stretchers in hallways. When will this Premier stop the cuts and invest in the health care that Ontarionians deserve?

>> Premier Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I understand that the oha issued a news release today. And they are calling for more funding for Ontario's hospitals. And Mr. Speaker, we recognize that there needed to be more investment in hospitals, Mr. Speaker. And that's exactly why we have increased our investments in health, Mr. Speaker. And particularly in hospitals. And so in our budget, Mr. Speaker, there was two percent minimum increase to each hospital across the province and overall a 3% investment, Mr. Speaker, \$500 million in Ontario's hospitals that we put in place, Mr. Speaker. And that is an increase, Mr. Speaker. But we have increased funding every single year. But we recognize that particularly for hospitals there needed to be a particular increase and that's why we put that funding in place. We will continue to work with the oha. We appreciate the work that they do. We have recognized there needed to be an increase to Ontario's hospitals. That's why it was in the budget.

>> Andrea Horwath: And that's why the Liberals didn't listen to the oha and actually reduced the amount that they asked for by \$300 million just in this budget. Perhaps they should rethink when they go to the budget process and actually listen to what those folks are saying. The last Conservative government, they closed 28 hospitals. Fired 6,000 nurses. 7,000 hospital beds gone. When the Liberals came into power instead of reversing the cuts, they froze health care spending for four years. Five years after that, they stopped increasing inflation. They reduced the increases to below inflation. They continue to worsen the health care crisis across the province. Hospitals are overcrowded. We are going to be in big, big trouble. When is this government going to start implementing the change we need instead of following in the footsteps of the previous Conservative government.

>> Minister Eric Hoskins: Well, Mr. Speaker, we are making multibillion dollar investments in the hospital sector. And I'm proud to say the oha stands beside us. They are important partners. And we look to them on advice. Mr. Speaker, the Premier mentioned a few moments ago, in the last two years, more than a billion dollars into hospitals specifically. Over the next ten years, Mr. Speaker, we're putting \$20 billion into hospital infrastructure for new beds, for expansions, for redevelopment, for new hospitals. 34 projects underway right now or in the planning stage across the province. And these are all matters that the third party

in the last budget voted against. We will continue as we have every single year make important investments, and we're working with our partners to do that.

>> Andrea Horwath: Ontario families know that our health care system is not working. They know that our hospital and health care systems are not working. They know that long term care is not working. Doctors know that our health care system isn't working. And now hospital administrators are telling the Premier that the health care system in Ontario isn't working. The Premier and the Minister of health are the only two people, seem to be the only two people in Ontario who don't recognize that the health care system isn't working. Is this Premier really that out of touch, Speaker, or is it just not a priority for her Liberal government?

>>Minister Hoskins: Well, Mr. Speaker, the leader of the third party is correct when they referenced the fact that the PC's when they were in government closed approximately 10,000 hospital beds. And correct that the PC's fired more than 7,000 nurses when they were in power. It's important to recognize in this five short years when the NDP were in power, they not only closed 24% of the acute care beds in this hospital, close to the PC record, Mr. Speaker. 9,645 beds, hospital beds were closed by the NDP in five short years. They closed unbelievably 13% of the mental health beds in this province as well. And in their last budget before they were defeated, they decreased the hospital funding by 1%. So we are not going to take lessons.

MPP Horwath to Premier (Hoskins) Re: Healthcare Funding

>> Andrea Horwath: The Ontario hospital association said that one of the causes of the crisis in hospitals right now is that there's not enough care available for seniors outside of the hospital setting. CEO has called on the Premier and her Liberal government to make investments this year. Just to stabilize the urgent situation in hospitals and also other care facilities like long term care homes. What will the Premier be doing this year to make sure our parents and grandparents have access to a safe place to live when they get -- where they get the care that they need as they age?

>> Premier Wynne: Well, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question because I think she has hit on and certainly has recognized as we do, that that is a complex situation. That there is a continuum of care that is needed, Mr. Speaker. A continuum of care that won't be solved by just one initiative. That means that there are people in acute care beds in our hospitals who do need to be somewhere else. I had the opportunity to meet with advisers last week and we talked about that. How do we make sure that in every community across this province, where they are people in an acute care bed in a hospital that there is either the support for them to go home or there is a bed in a long term care home, or, Mr. Speaker, that we find ways to work with other sectors with the retirement home sector, to find ways to find appropriate beds for these.

>> Andrea Horwath: The people of Ontario should be able to access the care that they need when they need it. 14 years of Liberal government. And they still can't access the kind of care that they need when they need it. Our health care professionals should be given the resources that they need to provide the care to people in this province. The resources that they need to do their job. Enough is enough. People all over Ontario are suffering at the hands of this Liberal government. The Premier has cut and frozen health care budgets for far too long. And she even refuses to do a broad inquiry into the dismal state of disrepair in our long term care system. How can this Premier ever even hope to fix our problems in long term care if she refuses to figure out what the problems are.

>> Premier Wynne: I'm going to ask the Minister of health to comment. Mr. Speaker, we have never frozen or cut the health budget. Never. We have increased the health budget year after year after year, Mr. Speaker. And I would just say to the leader of the third party. I recognize and we recognize that this is a complex issue. We recognize that as the demographics shift and as our parents and grandparents age and as we age, those of us who are baby boomers, we recognize that there is going to need to be a continuum of solutions. This is not a simple fix, Mr. Speaker. There isn't a single thing that we can do. Mr. Speaker, my mom is going to be 89 in a couple of weeks and my dad is 91. And I can tell the leader of the third party that it's not a simple thing to be with people as they

age and to help them find the right place to be. And Mr. Speaker, that story is being played out across this province.

>> Andrea Horwath: Obviously the Liberal government is not up to solving complex issues when they increase the health care budget and they still can't solve the problem to the health care system. Shame on them. This Premier should not be proud of this record. The care homes that our parents and grandparents live in are understaffed. That's no secret. Perhaps she hasn't been in one. The front line workers are forced to do too much with too little. Our association is warning that a crisis is coming. A serious crisis is coming if something immediately isn't done about the Liberal cut. Why is this Premier so out of touch that she doesn't see that health care is a priority for the people of Ontario, even if it isn't a priority for this Liberal government?

>>Minister Eric Hoskins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I have to say that I do appreciate the fact that the leader of the third party finally actually did acknowledge that our health care budget increased this year, just like it has every single year since 2003. It has never been frozen or cut. It has increased year after year after year, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that includes our funding over the next three years, we are investing an additional \$11 billion into our health care system. And that includes in this year's budget important investments that will result in individuals being able to see shorter wait times, more long term care, better staffer, alternatives. We're investing \$100 million into a dementia strategy. We're making the investments. Where our stake holders and patients in Ontarios need it.

MPP Harris to Minister MacCharles (Hunter) Re: Service-Dog Access

>>MPP Michael Harris: My question is to the Premier. I tabled the Ontario service dog act. Still awaits an accommodations. They should be guaranteed. And while the Premier makes her bribery trial debut tomorrow, we will be continuing to fight for the rights for children with autism. Accommodations that should be guaranteed and yet denied by the catholic school board. Will the Premier join our fight for this vital access and step in to ensure kenner and other children don't have their service dogs taken away from them when they get to school?

>>Minister Tracy MacCharles: I want to thank the member for this important question. Of course, our government's very committed to continuing to break down the Barriers faced by people with disabilities and those needing supports and accommodations, whether they are students, adults, people at work. The laws pertaining to service animals are clear, Speaker. And accessibility means giving people of all abilities that right to participate in everyday life. So we have standards in place. And organizations must allow a person with disability to be accommodated by a guide dog or service animal in public areas. We know the guide dogs are also covered as part of the blind person's rights. So we have standards in place. We have laws. I know the Minister of education will follow-up in the supplementary in terms of –

>>MPP Harris: Perhaps, in this case, schools are not public facilities and therefore are denied. So aoda regulations mandates accommodations as the Minister mentions. And the duty to accommodate. Doctors, teachers, and international training schools have testified of the importance of 9-year-old's kenner's service dog. Kenner is denied the service dog at school. What's worse, kenner is one of many with autism, PTSD, hearing, or other disabilities with service dogs being denied access. While Ontarionians raise their voices, I'm asking the Premier to save us the signing sending and tabling of that petition. If she believes in accommodations, she could step in today. Will she do it? Will the Premier step in and make sure that the public accommodations should be already guaranteed?

>>Minister Mitzi Hunter: Thank you, Speaker. I know this has been a challenging situation for kenner and his family. And while the Ontario human rights commission has ruled in favour of the board in this instance, Mr. Speaker, we expect school boards to consider the needs of students and to put those needs first and foremost in every decision that they make. And that includes appropriate accommodations and support for students in our school. So that they can be successful, Mr. Speaker. And that is why we are working to put together accessibility standard for education. And that's something that we are in the

process -- Because we want to have programs and supports in place. Whether that means individual accommodations, extra times, physical alterations to the classroom.

MPP Fife to Minister Naqvi Re: Sudbury Trial

>>MPP Catherine Fife: My question to the Premier. The people of this province deserve a government that respects the democratic process. But at the Sudbury trial yesterday, we learned that your party only abides by the process when it benefits them. Instead of having a democratic race, there was confusion about who would become the candidate. First, rumors that Mr. Olivier would be appointed, then the Minister of energy was appointed. I realize that the government does not want to hear this question. But the people of this province knows that the Premier is going to court. Was the Premier aware that the Sudbury riding association had requested a democratic nomination meeting and not an appointment from her office?

>>Minister Yasir Naqvi: Well, thank you very much, Speaker. I would remind the members again as I did yesterday, that this line of questioning is inappropriate. This matter is before the court. And the member opposite knows that -- Thank you. I was saying this matter is before the court. Highly inappropriate to answer any questions related to proceedings.

>>MPP Fife: In exchange for becoming the Liberal candidate in Sudbury, two of the Minister of energy's former staffers receive paid positions -- well documented in email. Clearly there was a lot of pressure to appease not only the Minister of energy but also the riding association Mr. Olivier. On the record, and I quote, of course you recognize the position we are going to find ourselves in, where she's going to have to make a decision around the appointment. To the Premier, is that why you agreed to the Minister of energy's demands?

>>Minister Naqvi: Thank you very much, Speaker. The opposition is fully entitled to waste their time by asking questions that they know is inappropriate to ask in this Premier and this government will continue to focus on issues that will result in building a fair Ontario. Like raising the minimum wage, Speaker to \$15 an hour so we have fairer workplaces. Making sure that one-third of time students attending College and university for free. More new students are able to go to College university because in the past they were not able to do so. Because of the policy changes we have brought forward in making sure that families from low income families are able to attend College and university. These are the kind of things that people from Sudbury and across Ontario are working for.

MPP Martins to Milczyn Re: Housing Affordability

>>MPP Cristina Martins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of housing and Minister responsible for the poverty reduction strategy. And let me start by congratulating him on his appointment to cabinet. Speaker, this summer I had the opportunity to talk to my constituents about how our government is helping people get ahead in an ever changing economy from the many changes to OSAP to providing to OHIP Plus, over 4400 prescription medications for free to those under 25. I've also talked a lot about rent control. And I heard from families that they feel there is a greater sense of stability and fairness in the rental market. Would like to see the -- A landlord can increase the rent by whatever they want. Through you, can the Minister explain why the government has not removed vacancy decontrol.

>>Minister Peter Milczyn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank the member for the important question. Our policies are designed to create greater fairness. Thanks to our fair housing plan, all renters in Ontario now know their rent is not going to increase beyond two and a half percent. At the same time our government understands that if more landlords are participating in the rental housing market, there will be more affordable choices available for tenants. And through our plan, landlords will continue to have the predictability and flexibility to negotiating starting rents based on current market values with new tenants as well as with vacant units. We're going to continue to implement our plan. Making sure that the rental system is fair for all Ontarians.

>>MPP Martins: Thank you. And I'm glad the government has listened to the concerns of the people in my riding. And enacted the fair housing plan to protect renters. Again to the Minister of housing and the Minister responsible for the poverty reduction strategy. Rental and housing prices are rising. Including the greater horseshoe area. One of the primary reasons is because people want to live in great communities. With more than 80,000 people coming to Ontario each year, it's important that we are able to keep up with the growing demand for housing. People in my riding want to make sure that we maintain a healthy supply of housing for the people in Ontario. What is that government doing to ensure that Ontario maintains a healthy supply of housing?

>>Minister Martins: Thank you, Speaker. Our government under the leadership of Premier Wynne is committed to making it easier for the people of Ontario to buy or rent a home. Our plan is we supply and reign in speculation. Creating stability in the market and addressing affordability. Exactly for that reason that our fair housing plan contains \$125 million program to help stimulate more rental housing. It's why we are freeing up provincial land to develop up to 2,000 new units of housing. It's why we created a dedicated housing development group to

improve planning time lines and cut red tape and get shovels in the ground. And why we're working with our municipal partners to get secondary suites on the market as quickly as possible. Mr. Speaker, our government, unlike the Conservatives supports housing in Ontario, supports social housing, and market housing.

MPP Walker to Minister Naidoo-Harris Re: Childcare Spaces

>>MPP Bill Walker: Speaker, while the Premier testifies tomorrow in the Sudbury bribery trial, the PC party is fighting for child care spaces for children. Parents who children were in before and after school spaces in schools you closed are scrambling to find other options. How many child care spaces could have stayed open if you hadn't shut down all the schools across Ontario?

>>Minister Indira Naidoo-Harris: I want to talk about the great work we are doing. Let's not forget what we are making historic, historic investments in child care. And we are pledging to move forward with 100,000 new child care spaces. But, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the member option for the question. Weapon to give children the best start in life. Our number one priority is to make sure that we are delivering programs that are safe and in good situations for our children. What we are doing is asking our schools to be able to provide parents where desired before and after school care on demand in the numbers that they require.

>>MPP Walker: I'm not certain how it can't be safe when there's no places for them to go to. In my riding alone, you still haven't announced if you will reen state closed schools and what will happen. I want to know, Minister, how many day care spaces did you close when you shut down 700 schools across Ontario? And how many millions of dollars did you waste shutting them down?

>>Minister Naidoo-Harris: Mr. Speaker, we know that most families, the workday doesn't begin and end with the school bell. That's where our government is committing to make sure school boards offer before and after school programming. It's a commitment we made to families in 2014. And we have been delivering. We have been delivering on that promise across the province. Let me tell you some of the things we are doing. Increasing access for families and children by building on the success kindergarten. Created flexibility in the system. Revised the framework to enhance and build on existing practices. These families are benefitting from these changes. Families now across the province, I believe the last number was 83% of schools in the province were supplying before and after school care.

MPP Forster to Minister Flynn Re: Worker's Compensation

>>MPP Cindy Forster: We're joined in the members gallery by the Ontario network of injured workers in this province. Speaker, for many years, the workers compensation program failed workers who find themselves injured on the job. If you're a worker in this province who gets hurt while at work and relying on benefits from compensation to meet your families -- On a policy called deeming. Pretending that a worker actually has a job that you don't actually have to cut your benefit payments. For a government that claims to be in tune with fairness and so in tune with workers in this province, it has LED workers into deeper and deeper poverty. When will the government put an end to deeming and fix the policies?

>>Minister Kevin Flynn: Thank you, Speaker. And thank you to the Honourable member for that question. The number one priority of the Minister of labour and the ministry of labour as an organization is to ensure that people go to work in the morning come home safe at the end of the day. Ontario remains one of the safest places in the world to work. Unfortunately we are not at zero yet. Accidents happen. Fatalities happen. And when they happen, the injured workers deserve the respect and the dignity of a good wfib system that allows them to return to work quickly. Or allows them to live a life of respect and dignity with the earnings that should go along with that. We have done a number of things to change that over the past few years. The worker is right. If you go back into years, I hope to address some of the things we have done in the supplementary.

>> MPP Foster: Back to the Minister of labour then. We need to ensure that workers injured on the job receive the protections and benefits they deserve. We have Jenny with us here today. She spent everyday for five years on a nitting machine in a factory in Toronto. She was sent home with a long list of injuries. She had surgery and could not return to work. Able to cut her benefits deeming that she could be a Wal-Mart greeter. A phantom job that she could never get. She went into depression. Sufferinsomnia. I ask this government again, when is the Premier going to fix our broken system of xenation and make sure that injured workers are given the benefits and protections that they need?

>>Minister Flynn: Speaker, thank you for the member for the supplementary. As I said, a priority of this government is treating people that are injured on the job with the dignity and respect they deserve. When the case is made that something should be changed, for example, we brought in full indexation for fully disabled workers by this January. Full coverage in injured workers deserve. To end benefit claw backs. You would wonder what those two things had to do with each other. They are improvements to the act. Improvements that are being made to the lot of injured workers in this province. And both things that that party voted against.

Standing in the House and telling us about improvements that could be made.
When the case is made and it is made in --

MPP Hoggarth to Minister Del Duca (McMahon) Re: Bike Paths

>>MPP Ann Hoggarth: Thank you, Speaker. My question to the Minister of transportation. I know that one issue that many cyclist face is they can't ride their bike all the way to work. Hopping on their bike is an important part of their day. For some, the distance just doesn't lend well to completing their trip this way. That's why I know a number of cyclist who want to bike for part of the trip and make transit to close the gap. Right now, they don't have this option because the infrastructure is securing -- to securing store their bikes before heading to the next stretch of their trip isn't there yet. This is a problem. And one I think deserves action from our government if we're committed to promoting cycling in Ontario. Would the Minister please inform the members of this House if there are any plans to provide this much needed cycling infrastructure?

>>Minister Steven Del Duca: Thanks very much. I want to begin by thanking the member for her question and her staunch advocacy for her community. Just this spring, our government announced investment of \$50 million to support commuter cycling infrastructure across Ontario. Now when we first announced this, we launched the Ontario municipal commuter cycling program. And promised more news that will be coming. I'm preesed to say that today I joined another Colleague in Burlington to provide that update. This morning, we announced that we are making it easier for cyclists to safely store their bikes with eight bike lockers at 15 commuter parking lots. Including the lot of highway 400 up in Barrie. This investment will ensure that people finish the first and last mile of the bike and encourage more people to car pool.

>>MPP Hoggarth: Thank you, Speaker. People in my community are looking for new active ways to get to work during the week and get around the city with their families on the weekends. I'm glad the Minister recognizes this and taking important strides towards building a cycling friendly province. In addition to the now. This morning -- on a number of initiatives that enable and support cycling in Ontario. Including the cycle on action plan. Which will involve collaboration with stake holders, the Ontario cycling tourism plan, and the Ontario municipal commuter cycling program. The Minister of transportation spoke about the car pool lots, including the lot in my community of Barrie. But I understand there was another announcement this morning. Can the Minister inform this House about the steps this government is taking to make cycling commuting easier for cyclists?

>>Minister Eleanor McMahon: Thank you. This morning I was pleased to along with the Minister of transportation make an importantn announcement about the future of cycling here in Ontario. To the program, our government is investing \$2 million to create 28 bike rooms at 26 go train stations. These rooms will be

installed and provide storage for 200 bikes making life easier and convenient for Ontarians. Speaker, we'll keep making these investments. Connects our communities, enhances quality of life, and because it's the right thing to do. We know that getting more people on bikes more often is a shared priority. Thank you very much.

MPP Thompson to Minister Ballard Re: Industrial Turbines

>>MPP Lisa Thompson: Thank you very much. My question is for the Premier. While the Premier spends her time testifying tomorrow, the Ontario PC party is fighting for the health concerns of our constituents. Over the summer, I continued to hear from constituents who told me stories about their health concerns from industrial wind turbine. Includes Norma, Karla, Joan, and Randy whose wife along with residents at their trailer park has been negatively impacted by the turbine. All of them told me over and over how they report issues to the ministry of environment and climate change. And then they do not see action taken on their files. Clearly the previous Minister either failed in his attempts to try and make a difference or he just gave up. Will the Premier commit to directing new Minister to ensure that the ministry takes complaints seriously and finally starts taking measures to address the harmful effects.

>> Minister Chris Ballard: Thank you to the member opposite for that important question. I know issues around wind Tur pine projects pop up. And I can say frankly, Speaker, that our ministry takes concerns around wind turbine construction seriously. Whether it be noise complaints or whether it be impacts on water. We take that very seriously. Because the health of Ontarians is pair mount, Speaker. So, you know, we understand that various projectses have been appealed. We understand that various projects have been taken to the environmental review tribunal. Consulting with the public is paramount. We make sure that we consult and monitor and stay on top of the issues throughout.

>>MPP Thompson: Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words. Speaker, the previous Minister committed to coming down to visit with my constituents who have reported over and over again detailed problems while living close to industrial wind turbines. We will all remember the previous Minister agreed and I quote that no one should have to suffer noise or noise pollution from any source. And certainly not wind turbines in their community. Speaker, in August I sent the current Minister a letter inviting him to visit some of these sites while he's in my riding for the international day. I have yet to hear a response. Will the Minister be permitted by the Premier to accept my invitation and visit with the Ontario residents. Raise significant concerns about industrial wind turbines.

>>Minister Ballard: Well, thank you, Speaker. You know, Speaker, there has not been a single renewable energy project that the party opposite has ever supported. Not a single one, Speaker. You know, if it were up to them, they would put an end to all the efforts they are making. And I can tell you thanks to the clean air and clean energy, Ontario saved more than \$4 billion. That's 4 billion dollars in annual health and environmental. Renewable energy projects are necessary and a crucial part of our switch.

MPP Horwath to Minister Flynn Re: Temp Agencies

>>Andrea Horwath: My question for the Premier. The number of temp agency offices in Ontario has grown 20%. 20% in the last decade. Hundreds of thousands of people in this province now rely on these agencies for their pay cheque. The labour legislation doesn't go far enough to protect them on the job. Just last weekend we were reminded in the media of the dangerous conditions that many of these workers face. Some like 23-year-old amelia losing their lives because they had no other choice but to work in unsafe conditions. Will the Premier commit to doing the right thing by amending the bill to better protect temporary agency workers?

>>Minister Kevin Flynn: Yeah. The leader of the third party for a very important question. And yes, we're as concerned as you are when it comes to the growth in temporary help agencies. And let me say from the start, anybody that loses their life at work, seriously injured at work, our thoughts go out to them. It's something we try to prevent. The investigation on that obviously is still under review. Charges -- I'm not sure if charges will be laid or not. What we want to do is ensure the temporary help workers rights are protected while they remain on the job. What we have done, Speaker, bill 148 is to ensure that these workers are paid the same as their full-time counter parts. When they are performing the same work. Giving one week's notice. And they have access to a more fair and transparent organization system should they choose to organize. I'll address that in the supplementary.

>>Andrea Horwath: Today in Ontario too many shady companies contract out risky work to temp agencies. Because our laws are written so that if a temporary employee is hurt on the job, Speaker, the company isn't held fully responsible. Our laws make it easy for unscrupulous companies to save money by hiring temporary workers and allowing them to get hurt. Instead of investing in permanent employees and training them properly. Why is this Premier willing to let families who are already struggling just to get by risk their lives in dangerous workplaces in the province of Ontario?

>>Minister Flynn: As I said earlier, we have bill 148 before the House. We made the unusual move of bringing it -- taking it out to the public after first reading. Because we know people have a lot to say on this issues. We know it's something that we get the right input from those members of the public, we can do what needs to be done. A lot of it is on enforcement. What we are proposing to do is fire up to 173 people to go out and look at it. We can get into 10% of the workplaces. And that's something that we are unable to do right now with the hiring of those people. Number of changes that will impact. They come out of the workplaces review. And I don't know, Speaker, the third party referred to that review as a waste of time. I don't believe that was a waste of time.

MPP Potts to Naqvi (Sousa) Re: Cannabis Legislation

>>MPP Arthur Potts: Thank you, Speaker. And my question is for the Attorney General. We are all very much aware of the large number of illegal store dispensaries selling cannabis and popping up all over the province. The federal government tasked the provinces to determine their own regulations. I know in my community, we all have questions and concerns. So Speaker, can the Attorney General please clarify what the government is intending to do to shut down these dispensaries, to keep them shut down, so they don't continually pop up. Will the Attorney General explain to us the role that his ministry is playing –

>>Minister Yasir Naqvi: Thank you very much. Ontario is -- even as it becomes legalized, cannabis will remain a carefully controlled substance in Ontario. Our aim from start has been to protect you from all public health and safety, focus on prevention, and eliminate the illegal market. And Speaker, so what we have proposed, the model -- and an online retail channel. We are sending a clear message to shops that opened up. They are operating illegally now. And they will be illegal under the new rules. They will be shut down. Speaker -- from the Ontario association chief of police who said our preliminary review is that the government of Ontario has heard and responded positively –

>>Minister Potts: I want to thank the Attorney General for the work he is doing on this file. I believe they are taking excellent excellent response to respect the concerns of Ontarians. I know the Attorney General 's office has done extensive - - to gauge the public's interest in how we should retail legalized cannabis. And members of my community are pleased to hear of the safe and sensible approach the government is taking to how cannabis can be legally retailed. Combatting the illicit market is a key to keeping cities and most vulnerable as safe as possible. We are hearing that there will be 40 new stores open for distribution as well as online delivery access. Will the Minister explain how the government will decide on the new locations.

>>Minister Charles Sousa: I would like to thank the member for the question. Have been working on this strategy. As you know, the federal government is set to legalized recreational cannabis next July. And we are working hard to be ready. We consulted on retail strategy to ensure we get this right. Our safe and sensible approach to retailing distribution of cannabis received support many places. Strong record of selling substances. Establish 150 stand alone retail outlet's by 2020. We have on going discussions with municipalities regarding the roll out of their stores. We'll continue engage with municipalities as we site 150 stand alone stores. And together we are going to do away with illicit activity.