

# OPPOSITION DAY September 18, 2013

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Douglas C. Holyday:** I move that the Legislative Assembly calls upon the government

To recognize that world-class cities build subways;

To recognize that the government voted against building subways for Scarborough last year and only promised a new subway to win a seat in the recent by-elections;

To recognize that the government promised to fund \$1.8 billion for subway expansion in Scarborough, only to go back on their commitment with less money and fewer stops, and are now only putting forward \$1.4 billion.

And that the Legislative Assembly calls upon the Liberal government to live by the promises made during the last by-election, and build a world-class transportation system that includes a Scarborough subway from Kennedy station to Sheppard Avenue and that it be implemented in collaboration with city council and Metrolinx.

Addressed to the Premier.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Mr. Holyday has moved opposition day number 1. Mr. Holyday?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I'm pleased to participate in this debate on a motion by my colleague from Etobicoke–Lakeshore. I just want to refocus our attention to the motion itself, and that is:

“That the Legislative Assembly calls upon the government

“To recognize that world-class cities build subways”—not partial subways, subways.

That was a commitment that this government had made during the course of the past by-election. Now the member elected by the people in Scarborough, who heard the commitment for subways, is standing in her place, and it hasn't taken her very long to become very political about this issue and to side with her government to try and convince her own constituents to settle for less than was promised. That's a typical Liberal approach to government.

Speaker, we were hosted by the Lieutenant Governor and it was an opportunity for us to get together as some MPPs. The Premier was there, as were members from all parties. Although we were sworn to secrecy, the topic of the discussion was: How do we raise the level of debate in

this place so that we could actually get some work done? It's interesting, as I hear the debate here today, that there's a reason why people are cynical about what goes on in this place.

It's interesting, the member from Danforth stood in his place and read a very eloquent speech, and time and time again the member from Danforth urged us not to play politics with transit, and yet every other word that he said was, "It's only the NDP that can bring transit," and every word between that was how bad the Liberals are and how bad the Conservatives are. So this non-partisan speech that we had from the member from Danforth had nothing in it but politics.

Then we hear from the newly elected member—welcome to the chamber; glad to have you here—a former leader in the CivicAction coalition. We now hear from this newly minted member rhetoric that is so partisan that I cannot believe that they actually were written by the member herself. I would urge you to do this: Tell the speech writers to cut it out. You can write your own speeches—

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Davenport.

**Mr. Jonah Schein:** I just want to correct the record. The member from Danforth is not here. I'm the member from Davenport, and it was me who said the Tories and Liberals have a terrible record when it comes to transit.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. Continue.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I would just urge the newly minted Liberal member to write her own speeches. Speak from the heart. That is what in fact will make things happen here.

Now, here's what we want to achieve with this motion. We simply would like the government to once, just once, keep a promise. The promise that was made before the by-election and through the by-election was that they would build a subway in Scarborough and that they would do it in co-operation with the city of Toronto and the TTC. That was the commitment. Now that the election is by, what happens within a matter of days? The Minister of Transportation calls a press conference and announces his own plan.

Interjection.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** I just heard the member say that their plan is supported by the chair of the TTC.

Interjection.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** The chair of Metrolinx, ah. Well, the chair of Metrolinx has obviously been brought into the minister's office and told to get in line, because Metrolinx's initial response was that they too were surprised by the announcement that was made.

Interjections.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Absolutely they were. That is exactly the case.

You see, Speaker, this is why we have problems here, because Metrolinx itself has now become a creature of the Ministry of Transportation rather than the body of planning that it should be, which is why we have—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like you to rule. I put on the record several times that Metrolinx actually briefed the city long before I made the announcement. I don't think the member intentionally means to mislead the House by stating things he knows not to be true.

Interjections.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Excuse me. The member from Renfrew might want to get in his seat.

Secondly, thank you for your point and it's well taken. However, if you have a problem, you know the rules. You can call for a late show if someone causes you a problem.

Interjection.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, there you go.

That's not a point of order.

Continue.

**Mr. Frank Klees:** Thank you. Speaker, that is not a point of order. The minister knows full well that even Metrolinx was surprised by his announcement and that the chair of the TTC is absolutely opposed to his imposed plan.

I would like to remind the Premier, I would like to remind the minister of a statement made by the Premier to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario just a few weeks ago. Here are her words to municipalities, and I assume that included the city of Toronto: "Decisions based on evidence, community input and collaboration are the best decisions."

The Premier went on to say, "Today I will talk most about collaboration because it is a challenge, but evidence and community input inform my decision-making. I have maintained my focus on finding collaborative solutions."

Well, Speaker, if that's the case, then why does this government, why does this Minister of Transportation, insist on imposing a subway solution on the city of Toronto, on the TTC, that they absolutely oppose? Where is the collaboration that the Premier has promised the people of

this province and the municipalities of this province? We're here to say, "Yes, we need transit investment. Yes, we need a subway, but we need a subway that is committed to doing it right," as the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore said. The last thing we need is to build more transit that creates more gridlock. If we're not going subways, that's exactly what we're going to do: spend billions of dollars to increase the gridlock. Speaker, we have to do it right. That's why we're bringing this proposal forward.

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