

DISCIPLINARY HEARING

Mr. Peter Kormos: To the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services: How much more public money will OPP Commissioner Julian Fantino be allowed to burn through in his pathetic attempt to oust the adjudicator at his embarrassing disciplinary hearing?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Obviously it's a matter that's before the courts, so it would be inappropriate for me to comment. The member knows full well that that is the case.

Mr. Peter Kormos: You see, it's the taxpayers who are picking up the tab. Commissioner Fantino has three law firms on retainer, all being paid exorbitant fees by the taxpayers of Ontario. Why doesn't this minister just tell Fantino to get on with finishing his cross-examination so that we can be spared further mockery of the justice system on the public's dime?

Hon. Rick Bartolucci: Let me reinforce and repeat what I said: It would be very inappropriate for me to interject myself in those proceedings. That's not right; that is inappropriate. I don't plan on doing anything that's inappropriate or not right.

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FLOODING

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, as we move into the spring after an unusually wet and snowy winter, many communities across the province are concerned about flooding. As the accumulated snow and ice continues to melt, it's not uncommon for many areas to experience risks. Last spring, we saw a few declarations of emergency due to flooding in communities throughout the province. Clearly, flooding has the potential to have devastating effects, including property damage and public safety concerns, particularly if people aren't adequately warned.

Would the minister outline for the House what steps our government is taking to prepare and adequately warn communities that are at risk of flooding?

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield: Thank you very much for the question. The spring is coming and the floods are inevitable, so the challenge becomes how we manage it. It's an opportunity for us to share, through the Ministry of Natural Resources, what we are doing.

We have over 4,000 sensors at 1,200 stations across the province. They provide us the information. The water control structure has managed to minimize the impact of the flooding, but remember that at this time of year people forget that the flooding that may occur in the north hasn't hit us yet. It will hit us and can be significantly damaging to personal property and personal safety.

What we want to say to you, all of you—and we've sent a letter to every member, every municipality—is that safety is paramount; ensure that children stay away from running water; and, secondly, to access that information instantly on our website as to the different levels of flooding that are occurring in southern Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Steve Peters): Supplementary?

Mr. Wayne Arthurs: Minister, I understand that the Ministry of Natural Resources is responsible for flood forecasting and that flood advisories are then communicated to municipalities and local conservation authorities, which have plans in place to deal with such situations. However, I think we remain concerned about unorganized areas where there isn't a municipality or conservation area in place to deal with floods. This includes rural areas in southern Ontario, as well as First Nations communities in the north, such as the James Bay First Nations communities, which often experience flood emergencies in the spring.

Would the minister clarify for the House what plans are in place to aid these areas in case of flooding?

Hon. Donna H. Cansfield: Again, it gives us an opportunity to share with the House and with the general public what we do. In the far north and in the unorganized territories, we work very closely with emergency management. There are five major rivers that flood into Hudson Bay and James Bay, and flooding does occur. We do daily flyovers and often we take our First Nations with us so that we can have, from the air, an on-the-ground look at what is happening so that we're able to work with, in particular, emergency management, when and if there is flooding.

Again, I can't emphasize how important this is. Just because spring comes here, don't forget it's further in the north in times of thaw, and that thaw ultimately may flow down through our major river systems, so safety is paramount.

You have an opportunity to get the message out to your community. Have them use our website and our conservation authorities that work very closely with us, in order to get accurate, up-to-date information that we can—

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

TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

Mr. Robert Bailey: My question is for the Minister of Labour. Minister, in 2008, Premier McGuinty sent greetings to an organization, Staffing for Canada Week, where he said, "I applaud the staffing industry and temporary and contractual employees for their invaluable contribution to the continuing prosperity of our province and country as a whole."

We on this side of the House have some concerns with parts of Bill 139, which, if passed, will kill the temporary staffing industry, which employs, as you well know, over 200,000 people and is a very vital part of Ontario's economic recovery.

Minister, given your Premier's warm sentiments toward this industry and the importance that this industry plays in our economy, why are you and your party trying to kill this industry with Bill 139?

Hon. Peter Fonseca: I want to thank the member for the question. I also want to thank the member for the