

Ontario Disability Support Program

MPP Stephanie Smyth: Good morning, Madam Speaker. I have spoken with community leaders at food banks, housing shelters and support organizations who all say the same thing: Doubling ODSP is the most immediate and effective way to fight homelessness in our communities.

To the Minister of Finance: How does this government expect people with disabilities to survive, let alone live with dignity, on rates that fall so far below the cost of living? Will the minister commit today to doubling ODSP in the upcoming budget?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I thank my honourable colleague for the important question, Madam Speaker. It's this government that has taken charge in the face of unaffordability and has made it a priority for us to make life more affordable for all Ontarians, including those on social assistance.

Madam Speaker, the member is talking about ODSP. We have raised ODSP rates by 17% in less than two years, and we've done more. We tied rates to inflation so that it could keep up with the cost of living every single year, and as a result of our decision in July, you will see a new adjustment, Madam Speaker.

More than that, for those who can and are able to work, we increased the earned-income threshold from \$200 monthly to \$1,000, so that those who can earn and work can keep more money in their pockets.

Madam Speaker, when it comes to making life more affordable for Ontarians, we will continue working, and we hope the opposition will support us in our efforts at making life more affordable for all.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

MPP Stephanie Smyth: The Ford government's 4.5% increase to ODSP last year amounts to just a few extra dollars—hardly enough to cover rising rent, as we all know, let alone the soaring cost of groceries and transportation.

Community leaders are really clear about this: Without a bold step like doubling the ODSP, we are going to see more people forced onto the streets. When will this government stop making people with disabilities wait, and commit to an income that actually meets their basic needs?

Hon. Michael Parsa: I do want to remind my honourable colleagues: The decisions that we've made to make life more affordable for Ontarians, including those on ODSP—regrettably, your party and the NDP have systematically voted against every single initiative, so it's very rich when it comes from the two opposition parties on the floor of the Legislature lobbying for supports while we're providing that. But when it comes to voting, they vote against every single initiative.

But that's okay. That's okay. People of Ontario know that they have a government that will stand up for them. They know that they have a government, a Premier, that will not stop fighting for them, which is why I alluded to some of the measures that we put in place. The increases that I mentioned earlier, Madam Speaker, are the largest increases in the program's history in

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(ODSP, Bill 17 Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act)

decades. The Liberals didn't do it. The NDP never did it. In fact, they oppose it. It's this government, it's this Premier, that will continue to stand up for all Ontarians.

Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025

Mr. Flack moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 17, An Act to amend various Acts with respect to infrastructure, housing and transit and to revoke a regulation

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Would the member briefly explain the bill?

Hon. Rob Flack: The proposed legislation, the Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, if passed, will support the development of housing and infrastructure delivery across Ontario. The legislation updates rules related to building, planning, transportation and development charges, to reduce delays and improve consistency. These changes will help enable faster construction of housing, critical infrastructure and transit, while supporting and streamlining provincial and municipal planning.