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38th Parliament

JOHN YAKABUSKI, M.P.P. - RENFREW-NIPISSING-PEMBROKE

Member's Statement

April 19, 2006

Extension of Highway 417

Speaker, this is not the first time I have raised this issue, nor is it likely to be the last. Nevertheless, given the lack of response on the part of the McGuinty Government and the Minister of Transportation, I must continue to draw attention to the issue of four-laning Highway 417 through Arnprior and beyond.

Speaker, I would like the Minister of Transportation to know that after recently meeting with his Ministry officials to discuss the status of projects in my riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, I was not pleased with the fact that while the design work for the extension is ongoing, there is no commitment to its actual approval and construction in their current five-year plan.

I would like to ask the Minister, “When will your government realize that the residents of rural Ontario deserve a fair shake from their government”? “When will you realize that they have a right to the same economic opportunities afforded to those who live in the GTA?”

I have spoken many times on the benefits that would follow the 417 extension. The economic boost that would result for people in my riding would go a long way towards raising their standard of living.

So I say to the Minister of Transportation, you are not shy when it comes to collecting the gas tax from my constituents. Your government continues to take more from them, while it gives back less and less.

Speaker, I have two things for the Minister to ponder: give us back our share of the gas tax and build that road.