



# Hansard Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

38th Parliament

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

### Members Statement - June 6, 2005

Mr. Speaker:

It has become blatantly obvious that this government is not interested in protecting the rich historical collections housed within the building that stores Ontario's archives.

For months we have heard stories of ongoing mould infestation that has threatened the integrity of Ontario's most valuable collection of our heritage. Now, the safety of staff and countless others who use the archive facilities are also at risk because the building is structurally unsafe. Last week, we heard the alarming news that entire floors in the building might collapse. What can we expect to hear next week, or the week after, when tragedy strikes because this government failed to respond? We know that the government plans to move 80% of the collection to a new off-site storage facility north of Toronto. But, we have not been told when this will happen, or, what will become of the most frequently used collections that the government intends to keep at the main public service facility. How can this even be an option when the safety of those who use the building is compromised?

I have received countless letters and emails, Mr. Speaker, about this problem calling on the government to step in and do something to protect our collections. But, despite the warnings we've received, nothing has been done. This lack of action not only speaks to the government's inability to keep their promises, but highlights the fact that they simply don't care about the health and safety of the public or the priceless material housed at the archives that is disintegrating daily due to deplorable conditions.

It is high time that dithering on this issue be put aside and decisive action be taken. I call upon the Minister today to protect our heritage and public safety now.