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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

38th Parliament

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

Members Statement – Gas Tax Reintroduction

March 19, 2008

Speaker,

Yesterday, I reintroduced my private members bill, bill 38. This bill if passed would compel the Province to share its gas tax revenue with all municipalities. That is what the federal government does now because it recognizes what we in rural Ontario have always held; that our roads and bridges are our public transportation system. The McGuinty liberals continue to insist that rural Ontario municipalities don't deserve their fair share of the gas tax collected from them. In fact Speaker, there is no question that rural citizens pay a far larger per capita share of the gas tax because without public transportation a vehicle is a must. For the most part families with two working parents require two vehicles just to get back and forth from work.

Speaker, it is patently unfair for the government to continue to penalize the hardworking people of my riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke as well as all rural people with their approach to sharing revenue. This initiative has received broad support from municipalities across the province. The Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus has identified it as one of their top priorities. If the Premier is determined to be unfair to municipalities just because the federal conservatives are treating them fairly, I say stop playing your childish games! Stop inhaling the fumes of Toronto traffic for a while and come up and visit us in good old Renfrew County. Perhaps the fresh air will clear your head.