

OPINION

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Grier should ban greasy burgers and fries

Health Minister Ruth Grier will go down in history as the woman who would be king. In her previous position as environment minister, she lorded over the selection of dump sites without a moment to listen to alternatives.

Now she's decided Ontario residents should give up smoking and she'll give them a hand.

New smoking legislation makes it illegal to buy cigarettes if you're under 19, to sell cigarettes in pharmacies, or from vending machines, and bans smoking from all health facilities.

Her reasons for doing so are clear. The ministry of health



Viewpoint

Paula Crowell

says 13,000 people in Ontario die each year from tobacco use.

Smoking is linked to conditions such as heart disease, lung cancer, chronic lung disease, stroke and cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus and bladder. Lung cancer is one of the biggest killers of adults, and 80 per cent of lung cancer is caused by

tobacco use.

Grier's aim is to make it harder to smoke and more importantly, to start smoking. Young people are one of the growing markets for cigarette manufacturers.

While her intentions are good, the smoking law leaves a bad taste, even in the mouth of the most ardent non-smokers. Any parent will agree, you can't legislate good behavior. Rules are constantly broken, often just because they are there.

By making smoking more of a forbidden practice, Grier will cause the underground smokers' connection to flourish.

The money and energy which will be spent on enforcing these laws would be better spent providing young people with positive non-smoking role models. Why not arrange class trips for children at a Grade 5 or 6 level (because more kids are starting to smoke in Grade 7) to a hospital where lung cancer and lung disease patients can show graphically what smoking has done to them.

This sort of legislation bodes poorly for Ontarians. What's next?

A ban on the sale of greasy burgers and fries because they cause clogged arteries and lead to heart disease?

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Opinions wanted
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Why not one first rate school for all?

Dear Editor,

Isn't it time we acted a little more rationally towards our education system or is it systems? Is that where the problem is?

Two sets of buses going up and down the same streets, two complete bureaucracies (that's worse than the Federal government), two large head offices for each district, some schools loaded with portables but with a school a block away half-empty, and perhaps worse than any of the above — two sets of politicians!

I recently read in the paper about an offer from the public school system to the separate school system to pool the busing costs and stop the duplication saving thousands of dollars for each system. It was indignantly turned down by a separate school trustee. Why? Would the public school children contaminate the separate school children? Did the separate school trustee have a vested interest in the bus company?

I don't know and I don't care, but when you read headlines like "Bankruptcy Looms for R.C. Board," it is time we all took a look at what we are not doing for our children in the way of having adequate funding; and what we are doing to ourselves in the way of allowing these well paid bureaucrats and politicians to increase our taxes 6-8-10 per cent each year - way above inflation.

Yes, I am aware the provincial government legislates many costly changes and additions to the

Editor's Mail

school systems with no extra funding (which in itself is ludicrous), but with one well run, well financed school system we could, indeed, offer our children, knowledge, challenge, and above all direction, and this without duplication.

What would the savings be on our school taxes. 10-20-30 per cent? Remember the education tax makes up 72.8 per cent of our total tax bill. Like to save 30 per cent of that? Perhaps when you take a look at a cost of \$100,000,000, over a 30 year period for a new education centre for

the York Region Separate School system the problems start to show up.

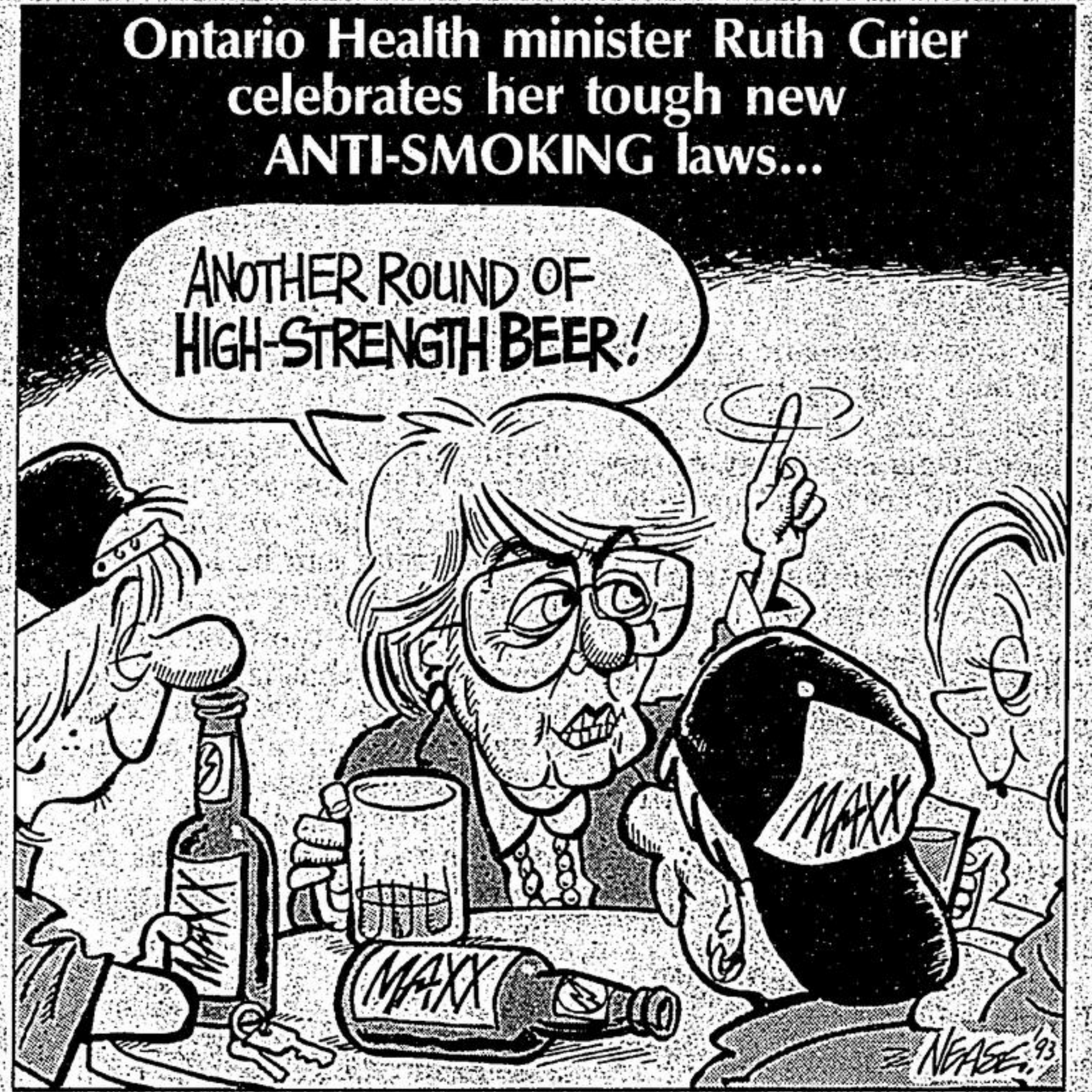
Politicians work so hard to try to get re-elected that many times they abrogate their fiscal responsibilities to the people who elect them.

Remember the provincial government gave a grant (gift) to the York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board of \$12.6 million in January 1993. This money came from people, some of whom support the public school system and some who support the separate system, all of whom support the provincial government.

So why not one, first rate, well funded, school system for all our children?

This would take leadership, trust, desire and guts. Who has it!!

Percy E. Hughes
Unionville



Ontario Health minister Ruth Grier celebrates her tough new ANTI-SMOKING laws...

Canada Post is worst culprit for junk mail

Dear Editor,

I agree with Donna Marrin, letter to the editor Nov. 13 Weekender. Telephone soliciting is very frustrating. Equally frustrating to me is the mounds of junk mail, addressed and unaddressed, that appears in our mail box on a daily basis. Canada Post is the worst culprit. Despite the fact that I have a sign posted on our mailbox "no flyers, newspaper inserts or valu-pacs please", they continue to be delivered. In fact, I recently

received a flyer advertising positions for people to deliver advertising flyers for Canada Post! A third source of aggravation is door to door soliciting.

I have four month old twins and it seems I am always in the middle of a diaper change or nursing when the door bell rings. I think it is high time our government started doing something to protect our rights. This is my home. I should be able to decide whether or not I want people calling me,

coming to my door or leaving advertising in my mailbox!

Perhaps our new MP Jag Bhaduria could have Markham designated a "solicitation-free zone." I know local businesses will complain but that's just too bad! It is time to start thinking of alter-

native strategies for advertising. For example, requiring businesses to obtain permission from householders to solicit their business.

Tammy L. Morrell-Bellai
Markham

We say no to suicidal teens

Dear Editor,

On Monday, I found myself in three recently constructed, publicly funded, multi-million dollar administrative buildings in York Region.

On Tuesday, one of our hospitals announced staff reductions to their Child and Adolescent Crisis Program due to a projected deficit for 93/94 of \$31,000 (slightly higher than the monthly hydro bill of \$25,000/month for the York Region Administrative Centre). This program serves primarily suicidal adolescents. It is the only program of its kind in York Region. Dr. Jennifer Steadman, clinical director of the Child and Adolescent Crisis Program predicted suicide rates will increase without effective crisis intervention.

On Wednesday, a Grade 9 high school student committed suicide. Something is very wrong with this scenario. Has government at all levels lost sight of the real issues? Or is the real issue the fact that there is money to be made from building construction and there is no profit to be made from saving teen lives? It is time for us as citizens to make our voices heard, and to take action. How can we say "yes" to buildings and "no" to suicidal teens. This is not the time to get stuck in the mire of funding problems. It is the time to move forward with solutions, immediate then long term.

Ann Lefebvre
Markham

Adam®

by Brian Basset

