

[Transcript] Patrick Brown at the Burlington Chamber of Commerce - June 14, 2017

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TRANSCRIPT – Patrick Brown Speech and Q&A at the Burlington Chamber of Commerce – June 14, 2017

MPP: Patrick Brown

Others: Lorne Coe, Ted Arnott

[START TRANSCRIPT]

Brown:

- Well, thank you, Arnie, for that introduction
- It is great to be here and I was looking forward to this, this opportunity to speak to your group and chamber
- I wanted to recognize, first of all, that I'm joined by our Ontario PC candidate, former *inaudible* Jane McKenna
- Jane has been a lifelong resident of Burlington, a small business owner, a former MPP for the area
- I know she'll be a strong representative for the community
- And despite the fact she's wearing red today, *applause* *laughter* come around to blue *applause*
- Also, to—thank you so much that we're joined by Lorne Coe, MPP for Whitby—

Oshawa and MPP Ted Arnott for Halton Wellington—Halton Hills

- And of course my former colleague in the federal House of Commons
- I didn't need to know that Mike Wallace was here, because you just need to hear his laugh
- And if anyone *inaudible* you can hear his laugh
- So Michael, always great to see you too
- *applause*
- Since 1947, the Burlington Chamber of Commerce has been a voice for the local business sector
- You represent over 1000 businesses and the calibre of businesses operating in Burlington becomes more and more impressive each year
- And I want to thank you for your advocacy on behalf of our job creators
- Recently we wrapped up another legislative session at Queen's Park
- And if the past 2 weeks are any indication, the Liberals will spend the summer making election promises that they'll never deliver on—frankly, they'll make it more difficult for businesses to do their job
- Now, I understand why they're making these promises every week or every day sometimes
- It's been 14 years—14 years they've been in government—and they've created an affordability crisis
- They *inaudible* and they're struggling right now in the polls and so they're trying to throw the kitchen sink at, at the, at the public to convince them that they can *inaudible*
- And what has their legacy meant for Ontario?
- It means Ontario families and workers and taxpayers pay more
- What it means is that after 14 years of failed Liberal policies, here the mighty Ontario's become a have-not province
- Imagine that—the mighty Ontario receiving equalization payments—the province that led Confederation for so many decades, now receives equalization payments
- That's not the Ontario I know, that's the Ontario I want nor am willing to accept—and you shouldn't either
- I want to change that
- I want Ontario to be that province that is that economic driver within Canada
- Now before I get into how do we make more Ontario more competitive, I wanted to talk about a few local issues
- After all, after all, we are in Burlington and I know that in Burlington, this instance, your focus is always not on succeeding province-wide, but caring passionately about our own community
- The first issue I wanted to talk about is the Halton courthouse
- The Halton region is one of the fastest-growing communities in Ontario
- The region needs the government to recognize this and ensure the necessary support for infrastructure
- Unfortunately, the Liberal government has taken Halton Region for granted for far too long, and we've seen this by the lack of judicial infrastructure
- The courthouse infrastructure in the region is aging, overcrowding is now impeding access to justice
- Throughout the province we are seeing an alarming number of criminal cases being thrown out due to trial delays—that's not right
- It's completely unacceptable to have potential criminals that are being allowed to walk free in your communities because of this lack of infrastructure support
- Justice delayed is justice denied

- The public and victims deserve to have faith in our justice system
- Instead many victims are never seeing the justice they had, they had hoped to see
- For years, this government has said they would act upon this, but we are tired and tired of waiting
- And I want to acknowledge that MPP Ted Arnott has been pushing for a new courthouse in the region, has been up in the Legislature demanding that there's some attention paid to this, and for good reason
- And that needs to be rectified and certainly it's on our agenda
- If we can't convince the government to do it in the next 11 months before the next election, it's certainly part of the, the, the program that we plan to bring to Ontario
- And thank you to both Ted and Jane for your advocacy on that
- *applause* the other issue I wanted to mention is the issue of school closures
- Recently, we've seen an onslaught of school closures in communities across the province
- Just last week we heard the terrible news that two treasured schools will be closing in Burlington—Robert Bateman High School and Lester B. Pearson High School
- I know that this process has been extremely hard on the community, creating divisions at a time that we should be working together
- What's extremely concerning, too, is that Robert Bateman is equipped to deal with students with special needs at a time when we need to do more helping children with special needs
- Many parents say it took time to find a school where their children can get the attention that they need
- The closure of a school that has the highest number of special needs, special needs students in Burlington and the region is absolutely shameful
- The closures are arbitrary, and they're heartless
- They leave communities out to dry
- In many cases, a neighborhood without a school can leave young families looking elsewhere to build a life and can make a community less attractive as a place for investment
- Now I know the government is saying that they are closing schools where, where there's—population is being diminished
- But that's not the case, you know, it really is their way to, to pay for their own mistakes, scandal and mismanagement
- You know, when there's a, a small town in Northern Ontario where we hear about a school being closed for a population decrease, you know—there, there are, there are arguments there where'd you see whether there's going to be a consolidation
- But when you hear about schools being closed in Barrie, in Burlington, in Vaughan—areas that have had high growth—the government's record does, just doesn't add up
- The government continues to claim that there's going to be taking funds to build new schools, but that's 10 years down the road
- And you know the immediate goal they made they call 'stretch goals'—any goal the Liberals are going to, any promises they're going to make 10 years out, it has no, absolutely no faith in it
- Their legacy right now on schools is school closures
- Now, you know, when Kathleen Wynne first got involved in politics she said it was to fight Mike Harris' school closures
- That was her stated intention of why she got involved in politics
- Well, now the Liberals have closed more schools in the Province of Ontario than any government in our history
- So as much as she criticized Mike Harris and Ernie Eves, the McGuinty and

Wynne governments have now closed more schools than any government in Ontario history—incredible

- They have another 600 schools on the chopping block
- And you see that in your community
- There's evidence in every community of how we're seeing schools close
- Now we fought this in the Legislature, we put forward a, a motion to put a moratorium, to make sure we stood with parents
- And actually, some of the students and advocates for Burlington came down to Queen's Park, we had a press conference to highlight that this is going to diminish access to education and is not right and I, I certainly am proud of the folks who drove to have the courage to stand up against this
- And we put the motion forward to put a moratorium on the school closures
- And I have to say I was disappointed that your local MPP voted against that, and saying that these school closures were necessary
- *inaudible* I believe it was a mistake, and we need to do better for our children
- On the provincial level—those are the 2 local issues I wanted to attend to
- On a provincial level, our broader goal is to make Ontario competitive
- Our broader goal is if you look at a business in this province and if you're looking at your competition in another province or state, we need to make sure that you're competitive
- And my worry is over the last 14 years, we've become less and less competitive in the Province of Ontario
- I think the first fear just illustrates that is hydro
- And I'm going to talk to hydro first before we get to the other aspects of this
- When it comes to paying more and getting less, nowhere do we see that more than hydro rates
- And this is not something you need to spend much time explaining, because everyone sees their hydro bill
- It's ugly in Ontario
- Ontario has experienced the fastest-growing hydro rates in North America
- The Liberals plan to fix this is their 'unfair hydro plan'
- The plan isn't fair and it won't work
- Borrowing, borrowing money is not a plan
- The fact is the Liberals aren't fixing this mess, they're not attending to any of the structural challenges in hydro—they're actually making it worse
- You know, there was a recent Liberal cabinet document that got leaked by the government—and it showed after the election, hydro rates will skyrocket to record levels
- This is about reducing the bill for some by borrowing enormous amounts
- In what world does it make sense to borrow 93 billion to get 21 billion in return?
- It's all about election politics and you're going to pay more
- Every Ontarian is going to pay more
- At a time when we don't need the Liberals to make more of a mess of hydro, that's exactly what they're doing
- And if you're a business in the Province of Ontario and you can have hydro rates that are a third in Quebec, no wonder we lose a business like Xstrata
- You know, when I was talking to a company Stanpac in, in, in the Niagara Region, and they were looking to do an expansion—when it's 600,000 dollars less on hydro in Texas, where do you think that that expansion's going to happen?
- We have to be competitive on hydro
- And the mess they've created means we're not even slightly or even remotely

competitive on hydro

- We need to make sure that we have reductions in our hydro rates, not temporary election-time promises that will simply revert back to the skyrocketing increases
- So I want to address a few of the structural problems in hydro
- And say how we can deal with them
- So the starting point with hydro in Ontario is that we produce more than we need
- We produce much more than we need
- Actually, since 2009, we've given away 6 billion dollars in surplus electricity
- We charge you to give it away
- We give it away to Michigan and Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York—we give away to our competitors
- And through the global adjustment, we charge you for it
- Well, well—you know, talk about not being competitive, imagine that—charging you to subsidize your competitors
- 6 billion dollars since 2009
- I actually asked when the stats came out about how much free electricity we're giving away because of our over-generation
- I asked Kathleen Wynne in the Legislature, I said, 'do you know you've become the best Minister of Economic Development that Pennsylvania has ever seen?'
- *laughter*
- She didn't like that question, by the way
- You know, the Liberals—one of their talking points, one of their *inaudible*, they have all these rehearsed lines they say in the Legislature—is that they, this over-generation is because of their commitment to green energy
- Now, they passed the Green Energy Act—we like to call it 'the Bad Contracts Act'—that's 20-year deals for energy we do not need
- 20-year deals for energy we do not need
- And so what I mean by that is we have so much surplus energy in Ontario—the most recent stats said that in 2015, we generated 145 terawatt-hours of energy from our three main sources of water power, natural gas and nuclear, yet the province only consumed 137 terawatt-hours
- So way more generation than we need
- Our own water power—hydroelectric power—in 2015, we could have generated 4.8 billion dollars—
- 4.8 billion kilowatt-hours of energy, enough to power 500,000 Ontario homes a year, that we just spilled
- We spill water power in Ontario every day
- The Liberals say they did the Green Energy Act to become, to make the province greener—water power is green!
- We spill water power in Merrickville, in Manitou, in Niagara Falls
- You find a hydroelectric generation facility in the Province of Ontario—and we're wasting, we're wasting power there because of these bad contracts
- So let's talk about these bad contracts
- You're paying for them through your global adjustment—it's on the commercial bill, you see it if you're *inaudible* and the residential bill it's blended in
- On these 20-year ba-, these 20-year bad contracts, the 30 mega-ones?—the Liberals got 1.3 million dollars in donations from those companies
- So when they say they don't want to release those contracts, that, that, that they don't want to talk about those contracts—I understand why they're saying that
- They're their friends, they're their supporters they're trying to protect
- But don't believe for a second we shouldn't be looking at those contracts

- We only have 1 copy of 1 contract—that's the Samsung deal
- On the Samsung deal—which they accidentally gave us to us on an FOI—there was an exit clause
- You could have got out of a billion and a half of surplus electricity—that's advice of the, of the civil service, 'we don't need it, we don't need to pay for it to give it away to the US'
- But the Minister didn't want to appear like they were walking away from their Green Energy Act
- So they blew a billion and a half—can you imagine that?—blow a billion and a half?
- Because they don't want to appear like they're walking away from their Green Energy Act
- This Green Energy Act has been an unmitigated disaster
- And so there's 2 things—one, I want to look at those old, ugly, bad deals
- I actually want to make sure are there similar exit clauses like there was in the Samsung?
- How, how can we deal with some of our over-generation?
- What opportunities are there, legally, to diminish the exposure to Ontario taxpayers to have through these ugly contracts that Kathleen Wynne and Dalton McGuinty have signed
- But it's not just the old bad deals, they're still signing new ones all the time
- So I mentioned about their 'unfair hydro act'—how they're going to borrow 93 billion dollars to get 21 billion dollars in relief to make up for some of these bad contracts
- Then you think – you would think that after making this mess, they would stop signing new ones
- If you have this massive over generation, I think it's pretty clear, stop signing new ones
- Do you know what they did the next day, the next day after ****inaudible**** borrowed \$93-billion that we don't have
- They proceeded with 1000 new energy applications a day after their hydro announcement
- A thousand new ones
- Generation you don't need
- We're spilling our own water power
- And their still signing bad contracts
- So the Liberals are saying you can't go back to the past
- You can't go to these bad deals
- But they're still signing them
- And that is the definition on insanity
- making the same mistakes in the province of Ontario
- and so we need to address the structural problems in hydro over generation
- and absorb and ****inaudible**** the fact that – you know – we don't have value for money in hydro
- And if we do, we can have competitive energy prices in province of Ontario
- The secondary that I wanted to touch with you here today, is the whole issue of the recent labour reforms
- And I know there's more than a few people in the room who probably noticed that there was announcement – the recent announcement on minimum wage
- And we are carefully reviewing the government's new changes to the labour legislation in the province

- But there's quick comments I wanted to make on that, is how ****inaudible****
- ****inaudible**** impacts your ability to be competitive in Burlington and in Ontario
- In an article I read that I thought was illustrative of some of the concerns that many of you have, was while John [Manley]
- You may remember him
- He was the deputy Liberal Prime Minister of Canada
- He was the Liberal Finance Minister under Jean Chrétien
- And now he's the President of the Business Council of Canada
- And while he saw the reforms
- He wrote, the government has got to get a competitive lens on anything they do
- We are not in island on the pacific ocean
- And he's a senior Liberal in Canada saying that we're not competitive
- Think about that
- Former Liberal Finance Minister saying we are not on the pacific ocean
- We have to be competitive
- What I think Kathleen Wynne consistently misses is that you know, in a competition for jobs, not just for being Burlington and Whitby we are in a competition for jobs with other provinces
- And that's Manitoba, Ohio, New York
- We're a competition for our adjacent – with our adjacent states and provinces
- And moves that she is making increasingly makes us less competitive
- Now I noticed that there are some changes that are necessary
- And I want to see workers get ahead
- But what I think is glaringly missing from these recent announcements is the cost benefit analysis
- Ontario Chamber of Commerce said themselves and I applaud the chamber for taking leadership on this
- The chamber wrote to the government, we need an economic impact analysis on the proposed reforms to consider the unintended consequences
- How many jobs have you lost
- How many vulnerable – vulnerable workers will lose their jobs
- They did an announcement ****inaudible**** an election
- You can't overhaul the provinces labour laws without knowing the impact on jobs and job creators
- If these changes cripple our small businesses
- We risk reduce job opportunities
- And even layoffs
- The best protection for workers are pointless if they don't have a job to wake up to in the morning
- In particular we are hearing a growing course of concerns from small business community regarding the dramatic increase in minimum wage are \$14 an hour by January 2018, and 15 an hour January 2019
- And part of this is going to happen almost over night
- And the fact we had 32% wage hike in an extremely – extremely short period time, is a concern
- Because we all want to get there
- Having higher wages is a good thing
- We need to protect jobs in Ontario
- And so what I asked the government to consider is the pace of this
- All we give is proper notice to our job creators
- If it's over a longer period, like some other jurisdictions are looking at

- Then – then we can remain competitive
- But when we're not competitive on renting
- We're not competitive on Hydro
- But we're already not competitive on some key pillars
- Having another area where we're not competitive
- I'm worried that's just going to flip another business out of Ontario
- Or that business is looking to **inaudible** jurisdiction
- I don't want that business going to Quebec
- I don't want that business going Texas
- I want to make sure those jobs and those job creators to keep in the province of Ontario
- Another thing I want to say is, you pay a lot of taxes to the province of Ontario
- We know that
- You pay your fair share
- And we pay your fair share
- We want to make sure you get value for money
- And there's one culture that I wanted to particularly change dramatically at Queen's Park
- Is value for money
- If you look at the Auditor General report
- And not a lot of them get a public attention they deserve
- One of the **inaudible** comes year after year is value for money
- For small businesses, **inaudible** you watch every dollar you spend
- You have to work hard to make sure you keep your businesses open and that you're successful business
- Your government should do the same thing
- You know when the Auditor General pointed out, we don't measure performance
- We don't look at – we don't look at future performances, past performance
- We don't measure outcomes
- We should all be alarmed
- And there's enough indication right now that it's not happening
- It's not just the ones that get the headlines
- The \$121,000 giant rubber duck
- Or the Canada Goose jackets for government workers
- It's in every aspect
- In infrastructure
- One of our biggest aspects of our budget is infrastructure
- And the Auditor General said we could be seeing cost overrun at 25% in some cases
- Because we don't measure performance
- There's the cases of Pickering Bridge **inaudible** which was built upside down
- And that company gets another contract
- **inaudible** during two years, even though it was supposed to be every 15 years
- That's not value for money
- Businesses will show you how to have value for money
- We need that **inaudible** to be at Queen's Park
- Now I am a little pessimistic on some of the challenges right now in Ontario
- Whether it's Hydro
- Whether it's these labour reforms
- Whether it's value for money
- But despite all that, I am optimistic about our province

- I am incredibly optimistic about our province
- Despite all the challenges our province is still home of equal opportunity
- Anybody who works hard, who sweats and toils can succeed in this province
- I know that given the right circumstances, given the right circumstances Ontario will once again be a place where people want to bring good-paying jobs and want to stay
- I think there are fixes that can address all of this, that we can have a government that understands the need to be competitive
- Ontario families wouldn't dream of giving up on our great families and I know that [inaudible] aren't going to give up on it either
- But in order for that to happen, we need change at Queen's Park, we need to change the culture at Queen's Park
- Only the Ontario PC Party represents change for the better
- We got the two parties, the Liberals and the NDP that are always having identical perspectives
- The NDP, even voted for the Liberal budget
- They voted for the Green Energy Act
- You have the parties on the left and you have the PC Party that's saying, "We need reasonable change in the province of Ontario"
- To make sure that we have a province that is competitive in the global competition that we are in
- And that's why I am running to become the next Premier of Ontario
- I'm running because I believe Ontario can get, I believe Ontario can be a province that succeeds
- I'm running because I believe Ontario can do so much more to help people, to make life a little easier, a little more affordable for families, for businesses, for everyone
- I want Ontario families who work hard to pay less to get ahead
- And that my friend will be better, it will be better for families, better for seniors, better for businesses and better for Ontario
- And that's why I am working 24/7 to make sure we can get this province back on track
- And on that note I am so grateful that so many of you came here today to hear a little bit about our concerns and our aspirations for the province
- And on that note I am looking forward to the Q and A and the fireside chat

Applause

Q & A

Question: You did touch on the "Fair workplaces, better jobs" plan, I guess the first question, has your party done any calculation on economic benefits of plan?

Brown:

- *Well, most government legislation, there is a cost-benefit analysis*
- *For some reason, on this, the government chose to jump ahead of this, to skip that analysis*
- *And we said, "Before you can proceed or consider it, you have to have that cost-benefit analysis"*
- *And so, it's the government's duty to do that and when they skipped that process, that should have raised red flags everywhere because they probably knew that would not paint a positive picture for [inaudible] that they're doing this and that's why they withhold this*

Question: So the government has been saying this is compassionate, the Chamber would argue that the loss of jobs hurts and...

Brown:

- *I think everyone wants to see higher wages but if you do it in a fashion that causes job losses, that's not compassionate*
- *Now, I was speaking to business person last night at a reception and he told me that their business they're going to [inaudible] Cineplex theatre*
- *And those are vulnerable jobs and if we see a lot of job losses, for those who can't afford those job losses, that's worse*
- *I do think that this is for partisan political purposes, it's not looking at the best interest of the province*
- *There has been no gradual implementation*
- *This is about politics, unfortunately and the government doesn't mind, they're oblivious*

Question: What do you think can be done to improve this business confidence, just for context, in our Chamber 24% are confident in Ontario.

Brown:

- *I think part of the fix is you have to be honest with the people of Ontario*
- *And you have a government that is running a massive deficit and they're pretending that they don't*
- *You have the Financial Accountability Officer, you have the Auditor General saying the government's numbers don't add up, well over \$5 billion deficit*
- *We already owe more than any province of state in the world, subnational jurisdiction in the world*
- *And the government is pretending that everything is fine*
- *So I would think that being honest and transparent with the public, having numbers told exactly as they are*
- *Not arguing with the non-partisan legislative oversight*
- *Be honest with the people of Ontario and say what is our plan to get back to balance*

Question: Cap and trade in Ontario has caused concern for some members of the business community, has caused confusion on how it will impact their bottom lines. Some members of our own Chamber have encouraged the call for suspension of the cap and trade system. What would you propose?

Brown:

- *Listen, I think we all want to get to a low carbon economy*
- *I certainly take climate change seriously*
- *We should all do our part but I think the way the Liberals have gone about this, as usual; they're making a mess of it*
- *Cap and trade hurts Ontario, it hurts our province*
- *I would dismantle cap and trade, I would remove Ontario from the Western Climate Initiative*
- *The plan that Kathleen Wynne has signed up for, right now, the government collects money \$1.9 billion a year in additional revenue and they have to buy green credits from California and Quebec*
- *Initially \$300 million in green credits and it's going to grow to over \$2 billion in green credits*
- *Why a business in Burlington will be subsidizing in Beverly Hills? Why did we sign onto a plan where have to buy green credits from our competitors?*

- *doesn't make sense*
- *It's almost as bad as the green energy act*
- *Where it's simply a wealth transfer out of the province of Ontario*
- *How **inaudible***
- *I understand that it's a national framework*
- *That Canada has said every province must have a carbon price*
- *But if it's really about environment*
- *If it's really about the environment why does government get to keep it*
- *If you want to alter behaviour*
- *Why does it need to be a revenue source for the government?*
- *And they're going to collect \$1.9 billion every*
- *Every cent should be given back*
- *What's ever collected should be given back in broad based cash relief in businesses*
- *In families*
- *More prosperous in the province of Ontario*

inaudible** hiring is a major challenge for Ontario businesses, it has been made clear in our province with the current education and **inaudible** needs of our community. What is your plan to strike in Ontario's workforce, And again **inaudible** 4 percent of membership did not encounter **inaudible

Brown

- *So great question*
- *It's something I talk a lot about around the province*
- *The need to link education to employment*
- *We don't do that very well in Ontario*
- *When we say study whatever you want it doesn't matter if you're still young*
- ***inaudible** we graduated 9000 teachers for 5000 teaching positions*
- *But we had massive shortages in skill trades*
- *In technology*
- *I want to make sure that what we're teaching young people will lead ultimately to*

a job

- Germany does that well*
- There's jurisdictions that do that well*
- And the government has been linked*
- Other provinces are moving ahead with coding*
- And the curriculum in Ontario seems to be the last to **inaudible***
- If anything, a lot of classes, a lot of schools don't even have shop class*
- And we're trying to get more young people to use their hands*
- Just seems, the government's not taking that perspective*
- How are we going to get that young person a job*
- The chamber did a pretty impressive report that says, that government, people get jobs that are advertised in Ontario*
- That we cannot fill*
- The government loses 3 billion dollars a year in revenue*
- Revenue we desperately need for jobs available in Ontario that we can't fill*
- We have to change that*

So let me ask, what is the conservative stance on long term care facilities, and finding ways to accommodate increasingly aging population with increase life expectancy

Brown

- Well its certainly one of the challenges that Ontario faces*
- There's a huge shortage of long term care*
- And when it comes to broader health care in the province of Ontario*
- We need to make sure we care for people at the right point of their health care journey*
- When you have wait times for long term care that could be 3, 4 or in some cases 5 years in communities*
- And its four times the price to have someone in a hospital bed*
- That's not good*
- That's not good value for money*

- *I'm going to communities right now for new ****inaudible**** ALC rooms in a hospital*
- *Certain level of care*
- *People waiting in hospital beds*
- *And 20 percent of hospital beds are ALC*
- *Imagine that 20 percent of the beds in some hospitals being used for people waiting for long term care*
- *And this government has not invested in long term care*
- *We had a previous administration ****inaudible*****
- *Ten thousand long term care beds*
- *You're not seeing investments or anything long term care*
- *Instead is being left to hospitals and families and it's not doing a good job*

This one's straight to the point, what will you do to impress council measures of the province

Brown

- *I was getting to my comments address to the chamber*
- *****inaudible*****
- *In some cases, half of the bill is global adjustment*
- *Now there's so many parts to the global adjustment that I can't get back*
- *Billion dollars in gas plant*
- *That's gone*
- *That's a hundred billion*
- *There's going to be a criminal trial in the fall*
- *Hopefully there will be some accountability there*
- *We can't get that back*
- *But we can deal with this over generation*
- *We need to stop signing new contracts*
- *We don't need them*
- *We need to look at the old ugly bad deals the province signed*

- *The fact they're keeping it a secret itself is alarming*
- *If they had nothing to hide share these contracts*
- *If there's no exit clauses, there's no way for us to get out of these ugly deals share these contracts*
- *Be transparent, be public*
- *When the government keeps things secret it doesn't ask **inaudible***
- *And so I believe*
- *If I have honor to reform the next government*
- *When people ask what do you want to do the next morning*
- *When I wake up that next morning the first thing I want to say is I want to see what's **inaudible***
- *I want to see how we're going to deal with this over generation that is deadly for Ontario*
- *Six billion dollars been given away*
- *They charge you to give it away*
- *We have to hit that immediately*

*Agriculture and **inaudible** now driving the highest dollars in Ontario GDP, as the world population expands demand for safer **inaudible** grows, what is the PC platform and initiatives dedicated to this value alternative sector?*

Brown

- *I think it's critical*
- *You obviously want to have access to homegrown **inaudible** products in the province of Ontario*
- *And there are concerns*
- *Particularly around how this fifteen dollar minimum wage is going to affect sectors*
- *There's a lot of sectors that are alarmed*
- *You look at the letters coming out of the agriculture sector*
- *That's going to hit the sector very very hard and so **inaudible***
- *Whether it's on Hydro One fire sales of Hydro one or transmission lines looking to be built or if you look at if you look at hydro prices, minimum ugh minimum wage,*

you look at red tape, you look at all the alarm bells being raised by the agriculture sector, they aren't being tended to and it's certainly on our agenda to do so.

This goes back to the fair workplaces plan. Will your party commit to repealing the minimum wage?

Brown

- So we said we all said we want to get to a higher minimum wage, so the goal is to get there it's the pace, and so I believe that a um a pace that gives more notice to job payers is much more appropriate.*
- Look at look at the timelines that other jurisdictions are thinking, ugh that they're a hoping to also get to a \$15 minimum wage.*
- We have to be complete, my goal in this is to yes we are going to get to a higher minimum wage, but it needs to be done in the broader context with other provinces and states and giving proper notice to our job creators*

so there's um opposition towards the government's plan on protecting the environment, so what is your policy and what would you do to protect the environment?

Brown

- So I actually ****inaudible**** opposition to protecting the environment everyone wants to protect the environment but I think it's the execution.*
- Um they're they're trying to to transition Ontario to a local ****inaudible**** economy I want to make sure that every cent that is collected stays in Ontario*
- I believe we can protect our lakes , we can protect our airways, we can protect our province and we can do a very good job at that, but let's have an Ontario solution not one where we start sending ****inaudible**** to California and Quebec*
- And then two billion in a ****inaudible*****
- I want to make sure for example BC said*
- BC said*
- Why would we ****inaudible**** something that is a wealth transfer from BC to califronia and they said whatever is collected from BC will stay in BC*
- I want to transition Ontario to that model*
- Or whatever we collect stays in Ontario*

*What about, ****inaudible**** and to help with job creation ****inaudible****?*

Brown

- Walked away thinking how small businesses*
- I think that's ****inaudible*****
- I think the ability to get product to marketplace*
- Invest in some infrastructure*
- Having a skilled workforce*
- All those areas will make small businesses more competitive*
- In terms of research and development*
- I support inaudible*
- Certainly we should do more of it*
- I think when it comes to innovation we have challenge of commercialization*

aspect of that

- We've got great ideas that are incubated in Ontario but are commercialized elsewhere
- As we need better job and inaudible
- To actually have those companies stay in Ontario

*When you're talking about infrastructure, so the decision you invest in particular on infrastructure projects often requires sources from all three level of government **inaudible**. However decision making of the investment **inaudible**. How are all three levels of government going to collaborate in order to collaborate in order finance **inaudible** main infrastructure projects?*

Brown

- Well there has to be collaboration
- My perspective is that we're all in this together
- There's only one taxpayer
- It doesn't help if the province or municipality, federal government argue
- The best way forward has to be in collaborative approach
- I've now been elected to all three levels
- I spent time on city council
- I spent time on federal level
- So I have insight into each level
- My goal
- There's going to be an infrastructure commitment to the city of Burlington
- We're going to make this commitment
- But we're going to inaudible
- What your infrastructure inaudible is
- I think that's a respectful way to show
- One, a commitment to infrastructure
- And also respecting the inaudible

Instead of raising minimum wage, why not raise the provincial personal tax exemption level to a higher level for low income earners?

Brown

- Yeah it was one of the suggestions made
- Yeah it was one of the suggestions made by CFIB obviously the government did not take that perspective

[END TRANSCRIPT]