

Windsor town hall Q&A
February 15, 2018

New question – added because Citizens for an Accountable Megahospital is expected to attend

Q: Premier, I'm glad the province is building a new mega-hospital here in Windsor, but I don't understand why you didn't listen to local concerns about WHERE it's being built. I'm part of Citizens for an Accountable Megahospital Planning Process and we are very concerned about the gaps in the consultation process. Why are we giving up TWO hospitals for one? Why is it being built on prime farmland and without consideration for the environment or impact on the area?

A: Thank you for raising an important issue. My government has committed \$2 billion for the construction of the Windsor-Essex Regional Hospital. Once built, it's expected to serve 400,000 people, provide advanced acute care and address the changing health care needs of this region.

This is an important and historic investment in health care in the Windsor. But as for the exact siting, that is not something the ministry of health or my office gets involved in. The placement decision was made by the hospital and the local LHIN.

I understand they led a significant consultation before making the decision as to where the hospital will be built. I also know discussions about maintaining some urgent care services in the downtown core are ongoing, and I trust the local officials to make the right call about where health care services are needed most in this area.

That's a local decision. The province is here to ensure the new Windsor-Essex Regional Hospital gets built not where it goes. We have committed \$2 billion for the construction, which is not a small number, and it's one of six new hospitals we have committed to building. That's just part of \$190 billion in investments in new hospitals and schools and roads and bridges and transit across Ontario.

Q1. Premier, I hear you and your government say all the time Ontario has the safest roads. Why then do we have our very own “Carnage Alley” in Elgin County? When will you build the barrier? Not just cables but concrete?

A1: Hi, thanks for the question, because road safety is important to us, and I want you to know I am aware of the local campaign to Build The Barrier.

And we are.

We will be building concrete barriers on this stretch of highway. It takes time to do the planning work and the environmental assessment for the concrete barriers. We need to get it right and make sure it's safe, so while that work is getting done we'll put cable barriers in place.

We know that this will improve safety in the short term while we get the long term work done in order to build those concrete barriers.

Q2. Hello, I drove in today from Lambton Shores. I have lived here my whole life but I don't recognize it. These wind turbines have ruined our landscape and they are poisoning our communities. Our water is full of silt and dirt. It's BLACK in some places. Now these monstrosities are falling down and breaking. When will you halt all wind turbine development? When will you fix the damage you've already done?

A2: Thank you for the question. I understand that communities need to have a say in the location of green energy projects, and that hasn't always been the case. That's why we changed the approvals process. And right now, we aren't actually approving any new contracts.

But to the specifics of your questions about the water quality, because I know that's an important issue. I want you to know that ministry scientists have tested water in that area, and have concluded

that the construction of the North Kent Wind project is not the cause of the water quality issue.

Now I know that there have been slightly different results from different wells, and some show no change in quality before and after the construction began and finish. Others show an ongoing drop in quality long after the construction finished, so other unknown factors could be at play.

And local, municipal officials agree with the province the water is safe to drink. Some of this water is cloudy, or what scientists call “turbid.” It doesn’t look very appetizing, but according to the Chatham-Kent Medical Officer of Health, in the absence of bacterial contamination **there is no health hazard from undissolved particles in water.**

I want to be clear because green energy projects are an important part of our supply mix.

Thanks to our leadership and repairs to an outdated hydro system, Ontario already benefits from 90% emissions-free electricity generated by a diverse supply of generation sources including wind, solar, nuclear, hydro-electricity, and bioenergy. Wind is and will continue to be part of that.

Q3. Premier, our province is in \$300 billion of debt. You’ve leveraged our future to bring down hydro rates, or at least you claim. My bill hasn’t gone down. But our roads here aren’t better. Our hospitals are fuller than ever. You’re closing schools in our rural communities. Why on earth do you think we should keep you in the Premier’s office?

A3: Thank you for that question and let me just say that this is exactly why I am doing these town halls. People should have the chance to ask these questions of their elected representatives. So Ontario’s economy is growing, it’s actually been growing faster than anywhere else in the G7.

Windsor actually enjoys one of the lowest unemployment rates in the province: just 4.6 per cent. The provincial average is very low right now too at 5.5 per cent. But those numbers don't tell the whole story.

But that prosperity isn't being shared equally, many families just aren't earning enough to make ends meet.

That's exactly why we're stepping in to increase fairness and create more opportunity by phasing in a \$15 minimum wage.

We know many people like you have seen prices go up and seen their incomes stagnate. That's not fair.

And it's why we're also taking action in other ways to help make life more affordable in Ontario: Our Fair Hydro Plan is lowering bills by 25% on average with lower-income families and those in rural and remote areas seeing decreases as high as 40-50%.

We also expanded rent control to protect you from unfair increases, free tuition to help your son or daughter go to school, OHIP+ to cover your children's drug expenses and expanded childcare to give working parents more flexibility.

Q4. Premier, I'm an environmentalist from Pelee Island. I know the threat from climate change is real and I applaud your government's work, though I think it could go much further. That said, I am concerned about the impact of wind turbines on migratory birds. I know we need green energy, but we also need birds. What are you doing to protect endangered birds from being cut to pieces by giant turbines?

A4: Well, first of all thank you for understanding the threat we face in climate change and the work you're doing to fight it. As you may know, we've made great progress in building out a clean, reliable energy system that now produces over 90% emissions-free electricity by a diverse supply of generation sources including wind, solar, nuclear, hydro-electricity, and bioenergy. After years of necessary investments, we've stopped buying more big renewable energy

projects, which could include wind turbines, because we no longer need more power.

In terms of the impact on birds, Ontario does have clear rules in place to protect birds, bats, and their natural habitat. This includes environmental impact studies, protection of significant wildlife habitat and mandatory post-construction monitoring – all requirements that we expect the wind industry to follow. Additionally, Environment Canada has further requirements for applicants to meet regarding potential impacts to migratory birds.

So I want you to know that there are measures in place to keep birds safe, and you're right that we need to protect the great biodiversity in this province as part of our fight against climate change.

Q5. Premier I'm a farmer and my family has been working this land for generations. Never before have we faced a government that has been so hard on us. From taxes and eco fees and high hydro, then you go and ban neonics for no real reason other than Toronto environmentalists decide it's the new threat. It's junk science. Fake news. Well, I have lived on this land longer than most people in this room have been alive. I care about it. And I'm telling you neonics are no threat. Will you reverse this ban?

A5: Thank you for your question and for all the work you do. I know just how hard farmers work. This is an important question because when it comes to issues like this I think we need to find a balance. We need to find a way to protect our pollinators – our bees -- but to also make sure that we don't make things too onerous for farmers.

So, to be frank, this measure came after reports of bee deaths in massive numbers. And I don't need to tell you how important bees are to our environment or our food supply. These changes were based on science and conversations with experts. We consulted broadly on our pollinator health strategy, and what we came up with is a **balanced** plan that has reduced the use of neonics but also

provides farmers with new and different tools to increase yields while better managing their pest populations.

I was agricultural minister when this policy was first being developed and I want you to know how important that balance was to me. I also want to stress the policy on neonics is NOT a ban. There are options for farmers to apply for exemptions when their use is absolutely necessary. It's a reasonable approach that ensures farmers still have the tools they need, while also doing everything we can to protect our pollinators.

Q6. I'm glad you're here tonight Premier Wynne because I have something you need to hear. I want to know when you're going to call a full inquiry into long-term care in Ontario. We all read the headlines about the killer nurse who ran rampant and unchecked. But her actions are part of a much, much bigger problem. The inquiry cannot focus on Elizabeth Wettlaufer alone.

A6: So I want to start my answer by expressing my deepest condolences to the victims, their families and the communities in Woodstock, London, and the surrounding areas. What happened was truly horrific, a tragedy that should never have happened and should never happen again.

That's exactly why we've established a public inquiry led by the Hon. Justice Eileen Gillese to ensure that we get the answers we need to prevent a tragedy like this from ever happening again. As to your question, this inquiry **will go beyond** the circumstances of the Wettlaufer case and will provide us with recommendations to improve the safety and well-being of all long-term care residents. The inquiry will look at all aspects of the system, what rules were in place, what policies maybe should have been.

In particular, Justice Gillese has been asked to inquire into the circumstances and systemic issues which may have contributed to the assault and death of residents who were under the care of Elizabeth Wettlaufer. A final report, including recommendations, will be delivered to the Attorney General by July 2019 and shared with the public.

Q7. Hello, thanks for coming tonight Premier. I want to ask about affordable housing and inclusionary zoning. I was thrilled when your government took up this long-time NDP policy, but now I see the details are full of holes. When will you draft a real inclusionary zoning policy, one that will actually ensure affordable units are being built?

A7: Thank for you the question. I'm well aware that finding a decent and affordable place to live can be difficult. It's a complex problem, and unfortunately there's no one solution. I'll be frank: what governments have tried until now is not working. I want to find the rights tools to help foster liveable, affordable, mixed-income cities.

Inclusionary Zoning is one of those innovative solutions. It's why we are moving ahead with it – and yes I'm glad our colleagues across the aisle in the NDP agree with us on this front. But I also want you to know we are listening as we move ahead.

Our Minister of Housing started consultations in December and has had an enthusiastic response so far. Some people think our proposal does not go far enough, and I hear their concerns. This is a new tool that we need to get right. It will help create more affordable housing, but it is not a panacea. It must be used alongside tools like rent control, portable housing benefits and an increased minimum wage.

Housing advocates have told us our proposal does not require enough affordable housing units to be created within each development. But it is a proposal – the final version won't be ready until we hear more from the public and housing experts. We need to strike a balance between creating affordable housing and ensuring developers can and want to build. We also cannot squeeze out middle income households in the process. But we hear this concern and take it very seriously. And we need to get that balance right, so that Inclusionary Zoning makes it easier for everyone in Ontario to find a safe place to call home.

Q8. Hello Premier, I want to thank you for standing up for workers in the fight for a fair \$15. But I want to know why, if you're so

concerned about workers, you passed back-to-work legislation last fall?

A8: Thank you for the question. I want to be clear that throughout the entire college strike, our focus was on students. Students were in the middle of that strike for far too long and that was not fair.

I'm a firm believer in collective bargaining and had hoped an agreement could be reached at the negotiating table.

But when it became clear this standard process was exhausted, we acted immediately and quickly by bringing in legislation to get students back in the classroom in time to salvage the semester.

It was the responsible thing to do. The Conservatives would have trampled over the collective bargaining process and the NDP would have let it go on forever. The Ontario NDP actually voted **against** our legislation and tried to keep students out of the classroom for longer.

Ninety percent of students went back to class. That's exactly what I wanted to see all along. Still, students and their families were understandably upset about how long the strike dragged on. That's why we required colleges to establish a dedicated support fund to assist them. Students can apply for assistance until the end of their winter term and I encourage everyone to do so. We've already disbursed almost \$1.5 M to over 3,000 students and we're in the midst of processing thousands more.

Q9. Premier, how do you think picking a trade war with New York State is going to help workers here in Windsor? Aren't you poking the bear when we are all terrified Trump is one day going to decide to tweet he's ending NAFTA?

A9: I will always stand up for Ontario workers and businesses - even in the face of U.S. protectionism. That is my job. I've said all along that if any jurisdictions took actions to harm Ontario workers and businesses that we would respond in kind. That's why I plan to introduce legislation next week that would give us the tools to respond directly to "Buy American" legislation from places like New York State and Texas.

I also believe in free trade and the importance of an updated NAFTA agreement. That's why I've been working so hard to connect with my US counterparts to stress the importance of this agreement and the beneficial two way trade that occurs because of it.

Because NAFTA is absolutely essential to all three countries' economies. Trade between our three countries is now worth well over \$1.4 trillion dollars — three times what it was worth in 1995 when NAFTA took effect. Our combined GDP is over \$26.5 trillion dollars.

But, as I've always said, if a state attempts to take actions that would harm people in Ontario, I won't hesitate to stand up for our workers and businesses.

Q10. Premier, why do you keep letting Justin Trudeau sell out workers? The TPP was a bad deal before, it's a worse deal now. The auto sector simply can't take it.

A10: The Federal Government's decision to sign TPP will bring new opportunities for trade, investment and job creation in Ontario. However, I do share your concerns as they relate to the auto sector.

That's why I recently held a roundtable discussion with leaders in the auto sector because I know how essential this industry is to the

economic health of our province. We're working closely with our federal partners to understand the potential impacts of the latest TPP, and will continue to represent Ontario's interests at the NAFTA negotiating tables -- especially as it relates to the auto sector.

The province of Ontario has also worked hard to support the auto sector. Since 2004, we've invested \$1.42 billion in the auto sector, In turn, our investment has leveraged \$16.4 billion more in private-sector investment and helped create or retain more than 82,250 jobs.

Those investments are part of the reason Windsor's unemployment rate is now just 4.6 per cent – and regardless of what happens with any one free trade deal, I will always work to protect and stand up for auto workers.

Q11. Madame Premier, I appreciate your time tonight. I want to ask you about your comments a few weeks back about Patrick Brown. You talked about supporting women. But what about the men? Should anonymous, unverified accusations really be enough to ruin a man's career? Do you think Steve Paikin is a predator now, I know you talk to him all the time.

A11: So, I'm not going to comment on any specific situations.

But, in general, this moment in which we find ourselves is important.

It is a difficult and brave thing for women to do when they come forward and talk about their experiences. It's an important part of the discussion, but it's not the end. We can't just assume that that will change everything. Their voices alone are not going to make the change that we need to see. We all have to be vigilant and we all have a responsibility to shine a light on the dark corners of our society. So if you see something, say something. In our workplaces, on our campuses, our streets, at parties, we all have a responsibility to be part of the cultural change that is happening right now.

And in the office I run we have clear policies in place for when these types of situations arise. Clear policies are important

because they protect both women and men. So that when a complaint does arise, there is a process in place for that due diligence.

Once again, I just want to stress how important this moment is for women around the world, **but as premier I can't comment on any one specific set of allegations.**

Q12. Premier Wynne, when will you stop taking NDP ideas, watering them down and feeding them to the public as if they are helping? I'm a pharmacist and I know OHIP+ isn't helping. It's made things more complicated. And the people who needed drug coverage the most weren't kids. Any kids with extreme needs were already covered. The people who need it are middle aged, usually single and often male. They aren't filling diabetes or cardiac medicines. Then they end up in hospital. They cost us more because we aren't investing in their primary care. When will you admit the NDP had it right and cover the 100 most-used medications in the province?

A12: I agree with you that increasing access to pharmacare is a good idea. We are extremely proud to be expanding our universal health care system through OHIP+. This is a program that is making health care more affordable for families by making prescription medications free for youth in Ontario. I know many people in this province are excited about this new program, but they also have big questions.

More than one million prescriptions have already been filled through OHIP+. That's great news.

I also want you to know I understand the need to do more. OHIP+ is our government's first step towards a universal pharmacare plan for everyone in Ontario and Canada. Those conversations need to continue with the federal government and I'm pushing for that. We thank the NDP for coming to the table with their ideas on pharmacare and adding to that important conversation. I think it's clear that we both agree that increasing access to pharmacare is a good idea and

we both understand that this is an extremely important issue for Ontarians.

Q13. Premier, thank you for coming tonight, but I want you to know I'm angry. And angry might be putting it mildly. I have been living in pain for two years now. I was scheduled for a knee replacement last month. Then it was cancelled because Windsor hospital was so overcrowded. When are you going to seriously invest in health care in this province? I can't wait another year for this surgery.

A13: I'm very sorry to hear you've been dealing with that. It's more than frustrating to have to wait for surgery. Everyone in Ontario deserves access to high-quality health care and no one should have to wait as long as you have.

I want you to know that patients always come first and every decision we make is centered that. While specific cases like yours are unacceptable, Ontario's health care system today is better than when we came into office.

Here in Windsor, we've increased the number of doctors by 30% under our watch. There are 700 more nurses working here since 2010 as well. We've increased our investment in the system each and every year. At Hotel-Dieu Grace, this meant a \$9-million boost in funding last year. Overall, these consistent increases are allowing us to treat more patients, provide better care and reduce wait times to some of the shortest in the country. Overall, wait times are down. But I know that's not what you experienced, so we are working to do even more.

It's important to know that the new Windsor-Essex Regional Hospital redevelopment project is moving forward too. The new hospital will serve over 400,000 people and will provide advanced acute care services designed to meet changing health care needs of the region's residents.

As always, I know there's more work to do and I promise we'll keep doing our best to make sure you get the health care you deserve.

Q14. Premier, you may have heard we have a lot of tomato farmers out Leamington way. I'm one of them. And I was hurt badly when Heinz closed. The new plant just isn't buying as much from us. Now the new minimum wage is going to make things even worse. I bring in migrant workers from Jamaica each year, the same crew. Good men. Hard working men. Men who farm at home and know my land now. They work hard, I feed and shelter them well. But a \$15 minimum wage will mean I can't bring as many. I won't be able to pick as many tomatoes. When will you stop trying to force so many policies on us here in the south? You're strangling our businesses, our farms.

Q14: Ontario's economy is growing and we're seeing that growth right here in Windsor where the unemployment rate has fallen to 6.1%. However, we know that not everyone is benefitting from this growth.

That's why it's important that we continue to create a competitive business climate and partner with business. When the Heinz plant closed we stepped in to find another business for that facility and we continue to make investments through our Southwestern Ontario Economic Development Fund. We invested in Chrysler and many smaller businesses like Select Tool Inc., Windsor Mold and Saturn Tool & Die among others to create and retain thousands of jobs in the region.

I know there's economic uncertainty right now and we're committed to creating fairness and opportunity throughout this province by partnering with business.

Q15. Premier, I used to like you. I liked your defense of public services. I even voted for you, even though I'm a registered New Democrat. Then you went and sold-off Hydro One. What happened to you being the defender of public ownership of public good? Will you admit that was a mistake, or at least that you lied to us all about your core values?

A15: So, I want to thank you for your past support and I hope I can earn it again.

I understand there is still anger about that decision, so let me explain my thinking a little bit more.

We knew — we heard it from communities everywhere — that we needed to make significant investments in our roads and bridges and transit.

Through the broadening of Hydro One's ownership, we are able to make the massive investments in infrastructure that our province so desperately needs. It's the largest infrastructure investment in Ontario's history — \$190 billion over 13 years. These investments will mean shorter commute times, newer classrooms, safer roads, new and renovated hospitals, better access to natural gas for rural communities, and more. Broadening the ownership of Hydro One allows us to do this without increasing debt, taxes, or cutting public services.

There's a clear difference between our approach and what the former government did with the 407. They gave the 407 away in a fire sale. We took a prudent approach to the partial sale of Hydro One, reinvested that money in the province AND continue to be the single largest shareholder. That means we still benefit from dividend payments.

We needed to make critical investments in infrastructure and broadening the ownership of Hydro One was the way to do it.

Q16. Hi, I own a lake front property about an hour outside of Windsor. I drove in today Premier because I'm at my wits end. I'm 75 years old, my family has owned this property for longer than Canada has been a country. Now, thanks to the idiots at MPAC, I can't afford to live there anymore. Will you help people like me stay in our homes? Will you lower our property tax increases?

A16: I'm sorry you've had to go through this. We know there's a lot of economic uncertainty out there right now which is why we continue to

upload costs from municipalities so that they can keep their property taxes down.

What I would suggest to you, if you haven't done this already, is to appeal the MPAC assessment. Sometimes they get their valuation wrong and so there is an avenue for you to appeal that decision to see if you can get a lower assessment.

Q17. Premier, you have made a lot of empty promises to the southwest in recent years. I have family in Kitchener still waiting for all-day GO and a Highway 7 expansion. I have been waiting for my auto insurance rates to drop or my hydro bills to go down. So I admit I'm more than a little skeptical when you promise high-speed rail to Windsor.

A17: Hi, thanks for the question, but I want you to know: We are 100% committed to bringing high speed rail to Windsor. We recognize how important it is to connect Windsor with the rest of the province and that's why Windsor is part of the on-going environmental assessment. This isn't just a blue sky promise, the work to plan that line is underway.

I get that there is some concern about the phasing of the project, but this is an enormous project that will take time to get done. And our special advisor has concluded the Windsor portion could be completed by 2031 -- and we're committed to getting it done.

I also just want to assure you the work toward all-day, two-way GO trains to Kitchener is also underway, as is the Highway 7 expansion. Good, safe and reliable transit and transportation projects simply take time.

Q18. Premier, why won't you dump an Ontario Liberal candidate who engaged in predatory collection practices?

A18: As part of our candidate vetting process, Deanna was upfront and made us aware of this situation. The interactions that led to the ruling from the Law Society were clearly unacceptable. Deanna took full

responsibility for her staff, apologized and worked with the Law Society to address these matters at the time. She is a passionate advocate for her community and will be a strong representative for Humber River–Black Creek. This matter has been dealt with and Deanna remains a lawyer in good standing with the Law Society.

Q19. Hello Premier, you talk a lot about protecting women. But does that include women in our prisons? Delilah Blair's family is still looking for answers after she died in the South West Detention Centre. Five people have killed themselves in our jails here in the Windsor area. When will you realize Coroner's inquests aren't enough?

A19: My sincere condolences go out to the family and friends of this individual. I can't comment on the specifics of one case that's being investigated, but I can say I know we need to do better on this file.

That's why our government is already engaged in bold and comprehensive reforms.

To ensure lasting change, we are enhancing staff and mental health supports for those in our custody and care and we continue to hire more new correctional officers. We also intend to introduce new legislation that, if passed, will help us build a better corrections system, one that's focused on rehabilitation and supporting people as they transition back to the community.

I am committed to continuing to work closely with frontline staff and managers, as well as partners across the justice system to ensure that any future changes meet the needs and safety of all our staff and inmates.

Q20. Premier, you might not realize this from your cozy spot in Toronto but we live on the border here. It's not as bad as Quebec or Manitoba but the flow of illegal immigrants who would leech off our system is getting worse. I guess you and your buddy Justin Trudeau are OK with that as long as you get

big city photo ups. But we aren't down here. When will you stop letting illegal immigrants in, especially when there are so few good jobs left.

A20: Well, thank you for that question, and as I'm sure you're aware the federal government in charge of immigration policies. With that being said — I believe that Ontario must remain an open and welcoming place — a place where people come from around the world can come to create a better life for themselves and their family. Yes, it's important that people follow the rules, but other than our Indigenous people, every one of us came from somewhere else.

In terms of good paying jobs, I know that even though our economy is growing not everyone is enjoying a fair share of that growth. That's why we're raising the minimum wage, making university and college tuition free and make prescription drugs free for everyone under the age of 25.

Diversity is what makes Ontario so strong. It adds to our prosperity, a prosperity I am working every day to ensure is shared fairly across this province.

Q21. Hello Premier, thanks for driving down from Toronto. I'm a new homeowner and a new mom. My husband works in auto manufacturing, at least for now. I'm an ECE in a local school, but we are worried about costs. And now our house has already gone down in value. It's already worth less than what we bought it for just 6 months ago. I want to know why you imposed housing policies to help rich kids in Toronto buy homes on us down here in the southwest?

A21: Thank you for your question. Congrats on the new home and the new baby – I remember well what an exciting if terrifying time that was.

Housing costs are a concern not just here in Ontario but across the country and internationally as well. When the rising cost of housing is making more and more people insecure about their future, we knew we had to act.

While a strong housing market was reflective of Ontario's strong economy — affordability was a real and growing concern. That's why we introduced the Fair Housing Plan to stabilize the market for home buyers and renters. It was a complex plan for a complex problem, and it included measures both to address real estate affordability and rental costs.

But there's no silver bullet to make the housing market work perfectly for everyone all the time.

Obviously housing prices will go up and down over time but what we want to see is a degree of stability throughout the market. Yes, Toronto has been the focus for many people but the reality is that communities across the province – Hamilton, Kitchener-Waterloo, the 905, Ottawa, and Thunder Bay to name a few – were seeing prices spike. The goal of the plan was to make buying and renting a home more affordable and recent data shows that our plan is having its desired effect.

Q22. Hi, I wanted to ask about the new bridge to Detroit. I have family across the river, and I sometimes go there for work. We really need this bridge and soon. Now I'm hearing it won't even be done by 2020. Is that true?'

A22: I completely agree with you that this is an absolutely essential project. We have worked with the federal government on this project every step of the way – but it is ultimately in their hands.

The completion of this bridge will not only benefit this region but increase economic opportunity throughout the province and the country. While the Federal Government is in charge of this project, I agree with you that the sooner we get this done the better. I'm pleased that this project is finally moving forward after years of delay, it's time we get this bridge built.

Q23. Premier, I want to know where this promised 25 per cent reduction on my hydro bill is? My bill might not be going up as fast but it sure as heck isn't any lower now than it was when you Liberals brought in that awful green energy scam.

A23: Thank you for the question, you raise an important issue and one I would like to address because there is a lot of misinformation out there.

I know the cost of hydro remains a concern for many people across the province, so I'm happy to address it here in Windsor.

It's why lowering bills by 25% on average for families and as many as half a million small businesses and farms across the province was so important to me as part of our Fair Hydro Plan.

This is the single largest rate reduction in Ontario's history. Rates are also going to stay down — that means no more unexpected big spikes — as we're holding them to the rate of inflation for the next four years. On top of that we've also expanded or introduced investments like the Ontario Electricity Support Program and the new Affordability Fund, both of which provide further assistance to those who need it most.

So bottom line is that you should already be seeing that reduction on your bill and there may be other programs you qualify for to help you save even more money.

Q24. Why the province did not pitch into the Paul Martin building when the feds gave it to the University? It's there and it's ready for a law school

A24: Universities and colleges in this province are great innovators, and they are always bringing us new ideas to make our post-secondary system even better.

But there is a process in place.

As with every request, we consider the costs and outcomes of the proposal before making any final commitment. This was also the case for University of Windsor Law School proposal for the Paul Martin building. As Alan Wildeman, President of the University of Windsor, has acknowledged publicly, our government has been and will continue to be a strong supporter of the University of Windsor. The Law School relocation was one part of a three phased plan from the University of Windsor to redevelop the downtown core. We provided \$15 million to Windsor to support the first two phases: the downtown campus development of both the School of Social Work and the School of Creative Arts.

Since 2003, we have invested more than \$105 million in capital investments at the University of Windsor. But we can't do everything, I'd love to, but we have to spread our funds across the province. As you can imagine, sometimes there are very worthwhile projects -- like phase three of the law school's proposal -- that the province is unable to support due to competing demands for capital dollars.

However, I can tell you today that we've committed an addition \$3 billion for capital investments over the next 10 years across the province. We are in the process of developing a plan for those funds to make sure they best serve Students across Ontario.

Q25: Why is Streetcar 351 being renovated/ why is the province not involved?

Background: Streetcar 351 is an old trolley that first ran on Staten Island in NY before it was purchased and used in Windsor. The city is spending up to \$750,000 to restore it. Some people think this is a waste of money, others want even more done. There is also a debate about where it should go and what it should be used for. City staff currently asking for community feedback about its future use.

A25: Hi, thanks for the question. It's my understanding that is a municipal issue and one the city has not asked for our help to support.

That said, it might be something that we'd fund through tourism culture and sport or through the ministry of infrastructure

It's an interesting idea and I welcome a proposal from the city if it's something they submit. But ultimately this is, at least for, a discussion and decision for local lawmakers.

Q26: Will you follow through on your earlier musings about uploading some roads in the area?

Q26: Thanks for the question because it's such an important issue. My government has made transit and transportation infrastructure a priority. Not just in cities, but across the province.

Our government has a strong track record of investing in local projects like we did with the Herb Grey Parkway.

Big projects like that require provincial support, but so too do small ones for roads or bridge repairs. Local decision makers are often the best ones to decide which projects are most urgent, so as a province we want to give them the tools to do just that.

So, instead of uploading local roads what we recently did is double the amount of money that municipalities would get from the gas tax.

For the City of Windsor the annual funding will be doubling over the next couple of year to around \$7M. That's money the city can count on every year to help maintain, build and repair local roads.

****Questions added during prep:****

Q: Premier, what do you have against the Caboto Club now? It's been a part of the Windsor community for generations and you've attended events there in the past.

A: Thank you for the question, and I just want to say I know what an important part of the community the Caboto Club is.

After an issue with the makeup of the board was raised with my office, it was decided to move the event to a space where everyone could feel comfortable.

Q: Premier, who do you want to win the PC leadership race?

A: Whatever is happening with the opposition, I will continue to focus on running the province of Ontario. I can't get distracted by partisan party politics. Instead, my focus when I arrive at work every morning remains on getting to work and building a fairer, better Ontario.

Other topics that will come up but we don't need to prep:

- College strike
- General affordability
- Minimum wage
- Sexual violence
- Marijuana either about amnesty or about safety and communities not wanting stores
- Auto insurance rates