

TRANSCRIPT – Lisa MacLeod on 1310 News – December 6, 2017

MPP: Lisa MacLeod

Media: 1310 News (Rick Gibbons)

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Gibbons: joining us right now, Lisa MacLeod, Conservative MPP for Nepean Carleton. Hi Lisa

MacLeod

- Hey Rick how are you

*Gibbons: Good. I don't trying to sum this up here. It's always a **inaudible** waste and mismanagement in these reports. You sort of come – become almost immune to them over – over the years. What – what's your take on this report by Bonnie Lysyk?*

MacLeod

- Well in my decade and a bit here at Queen's Park
- I've never seen a report this big
- And it's – it's come in two volumes
- One looks at 14 separate different programs
- It has public accounts part of – of how we spend and where – what you just **inaudible** to, where Bonnie Lysyk's said there's a massive hole in the government's budget
- And then they talk a little bit about government advertising, as well as some of the – the arm's length organization that are affiliated with the government
- There was that report
- Then there was another report that basically – was a follow up audit
- That looked at all of the previous audits in the past, and to see if the government's program that they had audited were actually following on through on the recommendations
- And they found that in – in some instances, that none of these had been – had been done
- So, effective what we've seen in these 14 different services program that the government provides, and basically, a billion dollars in savings that could be found if they Auditor's recommendations were adopted

Gibbons: Yeah I – I want to jump in on that specific point, because the Auditor General – you're right, they take a look at follow-ups. Did – did you listen to what we say last year? Did you do anything about it? What Bonnie Lysyk is reporting today is that only a third of the recommendations that she impo – introduced last year in her report had been followed up – fully.

MacLeod

- Yeah, so that's really frustrating for me because I'm the vice-chair of Public Accounts
- Which is – so the process ***inaudible*** - I don't want to talk too much about process, but typically what happens is the Auditor comes up with reports
- Each caucus chooses several different chapters so we can review them and have the bureaucrats come in
- And then we make recommendations
- So, she has two sets of recommendations in there
- One is from her and her report
- And the second are from MPPs
- And so effectively what's happening here are there are ministries that are not following the legislature's will
- And that – that's really troubling
- But I think it's a sign of arrogance
- This is a government that's been in power for 14 years
- It appears that it might be a little bit of a sleep – switch too
- Because not only are they not living up to their obligations under these Auditor's reports, you see that in some cases she's gone in and – and all I'll use the one in my example that I find ***inaudible*** bothers me so much, is that fact we have no emergency management plan in Ontario
- Hasn't been updated in a decade
- So we are – if we were at risk of cyber-attack, major climate event, a nuclear disaster, or even terrorism, we don't have a plan for that in the province of Ontario
- I know our police and our first responders likely do, but how we communicate, and how – how we would deal with this type of disaster, the province of Ontario has not invested in that
- They have not planned for that
- They have not updated their own – thinking if you put this in perspective, they have their own climate change agenda, and they haven't even accounted for that in emergency management plan
- So again, their asleep at the switch
- Or they just don't care
- Or their just taking things for granted
- But, that's where we're at
- It's – it's whether they're going to continue to look at their previous reports or even if they're planning and – and being proactive
- It's not just – it's not being done

*Gibbons: **inaudible** oversight of power producers, I guess that is part of the job of the Ontario Independent Electrical System Operators – supposed to make sure that the rules are being followed – the spending rules. Hundreds of millions of tax dollars being – I want to say wasted but I think misspent maybe - *inaudible* when you got over what was it \$200-million spent –*

MacLeod:

- \$260-million

Gibbons: Spent on everything, what the car washes –

MacLeod:

- Scuba gear

Gibbons: What's going on there?

MacLeod:

- Well look
- We had seniors last year who saw their power disconnected in the dead of winter
- Yet wealthy power executives are expensing thousands of dollars on scuba gear and car washes
- They have a hand-picked committee that was supposed to clean up the energy sector
- Is now run by the same insiders who gamed the system
- And ratepayers with the help of this government
- So we – what we knew yesterday is that there was a group called Goreway um but we still have other questions
- Like for example, in the Auditor's Report she said there were 3 other organizations that were being investigated by the independent electricity system operator
- While sitting on this so called working group responsible for cleaning up the system
- So I think – I challenge Kathleen Wynne today in my press conference to immediately release the names of these people
- And tell us whether or not they remain on the working group
- They really don't have – they don't have the trust of the people of Ontario when you see this type of waste – waste and mismanagement
- And my colleague Todd Smith who is our energy critic brought up a really good point
- We know that a few years ago there were cash for access events that were being set up, particularly in the energy ministry
- And the question remains, when these people were paying \$10,000 or \$20,000 to meet with Bob Chiarelli, you know what were they asking for in return
- And could this have been cleaned up had that been cleaned up much earlier?

Gibbons: As you know there are a lot of concerns in this province about the state of the government's finances, we've run huge deficits in Ontario for many years, we now shoulder one of the biggest if not the biggest sub-sovereign debt in North America. And

uh you know there are long-term implications for that but we had been lead to believe I thought that the books were pretty well balanced. Bonnie Lysyk took a look at that, and said no way, that – whether this is a criticism of the kind of – you know, uh, accounting practices they're employing or whether she is alluding to a deception here. I – I don't know what but a \$4.5-billion deficit doesn't sound like the books are balanced.

MacLeod:

- No she says it's \$4.5 and it will grow
- And you know we had to base our plan off of their numbers because that's what has been available
- But we said for years the government's been cooking their books
- Like so – so the auditor has been very clear over the past number of years I believe this is the third year running that they've had a big open hole in their um public accounts which is their budget
- And they've had a big wide hole in their fair hydro plan
- And so – but then, even more so Kathleen Wynne had the nerve a couple weeks ago to come out and say you know what, there's no more waste in the system
- We're fine
- And then in this – in this particular budget we see in just 14 programs that there is a billion dollars that we could find
- So uh – I think that um, they're – they're playing a shell game
- And and the only people that are benefitting from it are some of the insiders around her party
- Because I can tell you, I'm doing a food-covered fundraiser this week on Saturday
- Because there are more people in Barrhaven and Bells Corner using food banks than ever before
- And that's a result of paying higher taxes and and it's a result of higher hydro bills it's a result of almost the cost of everything going up
- It's tougher to make ends meet in the province of Ontario
- Yet we see just a lot of waste
- And that waste could go to feed families
- It could go to lower hydro bills
- It could go to so many other priorities and and unfortunately, you know the mindset of this government is just to spend more and don't pay attention to where it's going
- And it's very frustrating

Gibbons: Alright got to leave it there, Lisa MacLeod thanks.

[END TRANSCRIPT]