

***Transcript of Provincial Question Period
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Unedited Transcript

The following is a partially edited transcript of Question Period.

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MPP Brown to Premier Wynne Re: Electricity Deal Quebec

>> PC Leader Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, the Premier and her Cabinet will be meeting with the Québec Cabinet this weekend and my question is for the Premier. Historically, this has meant hydro ratepayers in Ontario are about to be on the hook for another secret deal to afford power that we do not need. So, Mr. Speaker, I have a very direct question, and that is will the Premier be signing a contract this weekend? Will she be importing more Québec power that Ontario does not need?

>> Premier Kathleen Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I would just say to the leader of the opposition that actually there will be no new contracts signed this week, Mr. Speaker. But I would also say to him that I think it makes eminent sense that Ontario and Québec would work together, Mr. Speaker. We are actually going to be holding our seventh joint Cabinet meeting, Mr. Speaker, because central Canada is a very important part of this country, Mr. Speaker. The majority of the population, the majority of the contribution to the G.D.P. So, Mr. Speaker, it only makes good sense that Ontario and Québec would work together, that we would find ways to collaborate on innovation, Mr. Speaker, and, Mr. Speaker, to work together on agreements that will benefit both provinces on energy, Mr. Speaker.

>> Patrick Brown:, Mr. Speaker, again to the Premier. When the Premier says work together, I wonder if that's code for negotiate. If Ontario does sign a new deal with Québec, and if it is anything like the deal that we saw in the newspapers this summer -- Ontario will be on the hook for more power we do not need. In fact Ontario doesn't need this power. Based on what we saw in the newspapers, let alone the 8 terawatt hours of hydro power from Québec that was covered in the papers that was suggested was proposed. Just last year this government wasted 7.6 terawatt hours of clean electricity, most of it clean green electricity, most of it filling our hydroelectric power. So, Mr. Speaker, I know the Premier has said they're not going to be signing a deal this weekend.

>> Premier Wynne: Mr. Speaker, let's be clear that the leader of the opposition is talking about a deal that was rejected, Mr. Speaker. It was not signed, Mr. Speaker, because, Mr. Speaker, we are always looking for ways to work with Québec, with other provinces, with states, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly to find ways to enhance our capacity in this province. As I said, Mr. Speaker, whether that is in innovation or energy. Beyond that, Mr. Speaker, whether it's in education. So we will continue to look for partners. We will find ways to work together as we have in the pt and, Mr. Speaker, as I said later this week our two Cabinets will be hosting a joint meeting in Québec city and that is, Mr. Speaker, our fourth consecutive annual meeting but our government, Mr. Speaker, has met with the

Cabinet of Québec. Over the last number of years. And, Mr. Speaker, I will also be addressing the national assembly.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Premier. Once again the Premier says work together and doesn't say there's no negotiation. In the summer when we saw this deal that appears to be scuttled by the media reports, you know we heard what stakeholders said about the negotiations and what was proposed. The society of professional engineers said I certainly see Québec's interest reflected in the deal. Ontario's interests are not so clear. The association of power producers of Ontario said Ontario already has a surplus of energy. So it's very difficult to see how this deal or any other sole-sourced deal with Québec to benefit the province or its ratepayers. So once again a very specific question, not about what the Premier's doing in Québec. Are there negotiations right now for another sole-sourced deal -- To benefit Québec instead of Ontario? Are there any conversations? Are there any negotiations. Ontarians deserve to know.

>> Premier Wynne: So, Mr. Speaker, let's be clear that what the leader of the opposition is asking is are we, as a government, talking to Québec or are officials from Ontario talking to Québec officials in the name of finding an agreement that would benefit Ontario, Mr. Speaker, as we have in the past? Previous discussions have LED to last year's agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Mr. Speaker, and lower costs to Ontario ratepayers by \$70 million, Mr. Speaker. So if the leader of the opposition is asking, are officials engaged in a conversation with Québec that is ongoing that could lead to further deals, Mr. Speaker, further agreements that would be beneficial to Ontario -- Would reduce costs for Ontario, the answer is yes, Mr. Speaker .

MPP Brown to Minister Duguid Re: Electricity Deal Quebec

>> PC Leader Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Since I can't get even answer on the Premier's job-creating plans for Montreal Mr. Speaker, I hope the Premier got a chance to see the Ontario society of professional engineers' report this summer. They crunched the numbers and the numbers were shocking. It showed Ontario wasted \$1 billion worth of clean electricity last year. Now I know \$1 billion is nothing to this government. There's too many billion-dollar scandals to count. But, Mr. Speaker, this is different. That could have powered -- Homes. Mr. Speaker, how does this government justify flushing \$1 billion worth of clean green electricity. Down the drain? How do they justify this while pursuing contracts for power generation?

>> Minister Brad Duguid: Clearly, Mr. Speaker, what the leader of the opposition's saying is we shouldn't have surplus power ever in the province of Ontario. We remember the days, Mr. Speaker, when that philosophy drove our energy system. We remember the days where there were generators on the front lawns of queen's park because we didn't have enough power to meet demand. What the leader of the op scission either refuses to understand or comprehend or doesn't understand or comprehend is that our nuclear units are going to be coming out of service as our nuclear power is going to be regenerated. Mr. Speaker, as that happens we will need that surplus power. So we're planning ahead to ensure we don't do what those guys did, Mr. Speaker, and leave this province in a position where we don't have enough power to meet our corporate demand, our industrial demand and the demand for our House holds, Mr. Speaker.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier and I get why she doesn't want to be on the record on this. The Ontario engineers past president noted this is a 58% increase in wasted clean green electricity since 2015. And next year it could be worse. He said this is occurring all while the province continues to export more than 2 million homes worth of electricity to neighbouring jurisdictions for a price less than it costs to produce. So let's break this down, Mr. Speaker. The government flushes away more than \$1 billion worth of power, and then they export millions of homes' worth of power at a loss to the United States and other provinces. And at the same time the people of Ontario struggle to pay their hydro bills. Mr. Speaker, how does this make any sense? How can they continue to push power down the drain while exporting power for a loss? Will the Premier please answer?

>> Minister Duguid: Mr. Speaker, we've worked very hard to build a clean reliable and affordable energy system. And the fact that we're taking 25% off the bills on average of Ontario residents is something that Ontario residents Even if it's bad political news for the member opposite. And, Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. This

leader has absolutely no plan whatsoever. It's been 202 days since the leader of the opposition promised to come up with his new plan. A lot has changed in that time, Mr. Speaker. Spring has turned into summer and now summer's turning into fall. Our kids have finished grade one -- An entire baseball season has come and gone. Even the NHL playoffs have finished and now a new season is right around the corner, Mr. Speaker. I could go on and on. We're never going to get a plan from the member opposite. Because he has no plan

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, for a third time, my question is for the Premier. The past president of the Ontario society of professional engineers added this. He said -- the numbers show that Ontario's cleanest source of power is literally going down the drain. Literally going down the drain, according to Ontario's engineers. That's power that Ontario could have used and eliminated the need to sign contracts for more imported power. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier continue to let Ontario's cleanest source of electricity be poured down the drain, rather than attack others, I want to know why they've allowed this to happen. Mr. Speaker, why does the Premier hate Ontario's beautiful, clean, green hydroelectric power?

>> Minister Duguid: Mr. Speaker, we're the only party in this legislature that has a long-term energy plan that will provide a clean, reliable affordable energy system. The member opposite has no plan whatsoever, Mr. Speaker. No plans for clean energy. No plans for a reliable energy system and certainly no plan to reduce energy rates. In fact he opposed our plan to bring down energy costs by 25%. Mr. Speaker, and I wanted to do it for a long time. He's a real nowhere man sitting in his nowhere land making all his nowhere plans for nobody. He doesn't have a point of view and Mr. Speaker. And that's clean, reliable and affordable energy system for the province of Ontario. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Applause

MPP Horwath to Premier Wynne (Hoskins) Re: Wetlaufer Investigation

>> NDP Leader Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker. My question's to the Premier. On Thursday MPP S passed an NDP Motion calling on the government to immediately expand the mandate of the Wettlaufer long-term care inquiry. That motion demanded that the government take a hard look at the systemic problems in seniors care in this province. Will the Premier listen to the legislature, listen to countless families and move today to immediately expand the public inquiry to look into the crisis in seniors care?

>> Premier Kathleen Wynne: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I not Minister of Health and Long-Term Care will want to comment on the details, but let me be clear, Mr. Speaker. As I read the terms of reference for the review of the case, Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that there is plenty of scope in those terms of reference to actually allow for an investigation, if there is a systemic issue that arises in the process of looking at this one case, Mr. Speaker. And I was very clear as we went into this process, I was very clear about asking that question, Mr. Speaker, because I think if there are systemic issues that are raised I completely agree with the leader of the third party that those systemic issues need to be explored. But, Mr. Speaker, all of that is within the context of the terms of reference that begin with this particular case.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, it's a pretty sad day when the Premier of the province doesn't realize her public inquiry is tied to the Wettlaufer murders or other situations similar. That's what her inquiry does. That's why everybody in this House, including some of her own Cabinet Ministers, decide today support our motion, because everybody realizes we have a growing horrific crisis in already care and we need to be honest about that and address it. And the best way to do that is to ask the hard questions and come up with the recommendations that will happen through the proper scope public inquiry. So my question is back to the Premier, Speaker. Why does her Liberal government, why does her Minister of health refuse to acknowledge what everybody in this House acknowledged last week, and that is that we need a broader scope public inquiry to get to the problems in our long-term care system?

>> Minister Eric Hoskins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again it is an issue of great import to the province, and particularly to those families and friends and loved ones of those who are now deceased as a result of the murders that took place in Woodstock and in London. The assaults that took place as well. And our heart goes out to those individuals. And that is the primary focus of why, in response to Ontarians and many, many stakeholders asking us to launch a public inquiry we did precisely that. And I'm very -- and I'm very confident -- Justice Gillese will do the proper analysis, make the correct determinations, consult widely and broadly

and publicly and arrive at a set of recommendations so that we hopefully can -- Prevent this type of tragic situation ever occurring again, Mr. Speaker.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, seniors care is at a breaking point in this province. The frontline staff are doing the best that they can, but people are left in bed 18 hours without even having any personal contact from a worker in the facility. There are people who are missing meals, Speaker, in long-term care. There are 30,000 people on the wait list for long-term care. This House said that a public inquiry should take a hard look at the levels of staffing for example and funding in long-term care. It should ask about the government's inaction after many years now on countless recommendations that have come forward but nothing has been done to fix the system. It needs to look really honestly at the systemic problems that we have in long-term care, problems that so many families are up at night worrying sick about their loved ones in long-term care. So will this Premier do the right thing, Speaker ? Do the right thing, expand the public inquiry today or will we have yet another excuse and another Premier sweeping all of this under the carpet?

>> Minister Hoskins: Well, Mr. Speaker, we owe it to Ontarians to get to the answers that they're asking for. And we intentionally drafted terms of reference for the gillese inquiry to be very broad, precisely for that reason, Mr. Speaker. Including the potential to look at systemic issues of oversight and accountability throughout the long-term care system, Mr. Speaker. And it includes -- she can look in the terms other relevant matters that the commissioner considers necessary to avoid similar tragedies, and these are tragedies of safety and security and well-being of people in our long-term care. Mr. Speaker, I trust justice gillese to get to the answer, to have a broad inquiry, to answer the questions that will Ontarians are asking for.

MPP Horwath to Premier Wynne (Hoskins) Re: Ministry Mental Health

>> NDP Leader Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker. My next question's also for the Premier. On Thursday this legislature also passed the NDP's bill through second reading to set up a dedicated ministry for mental health and addictions. I believe it's time to bring mental health care and addiction services out of the shadows, Speaker, and give them the funding and resources and attention that they deserve. But somehow this Liberal government voted against this crucial bill. Why is the Premier refusing to take this important step forward to help people who are suffering and desperately need better mental health and addictions care here in Ontario?

>> Premier Kathleen Wynne: Mr. Speaker, you know I appreciate the question from the leader of the third party and I also appreciate the idea of setting up a separate ministry. Mr. Speaker, what we know is needed for all the reasons that the leader of the third party identified, that this is an area of health that has lived in the dark corners of our society, Mr. Speaker. There has not been enough light shone on it and there has not been the resource that is needed to allow people to get the supports that they require. And so what we're doing, Mr. Speaker, is we're working to put those resources in place. We're actually increasing the funding to mental health services and doing, Mr. Speaker, the work that needs to be done. You know, if at some point, Mr. Speaker, there needs to be a conversation about the change -- a change in the way those funds are administered or the way the ministries are organized I'm open to that, Mr. Speaker. But the reality is we need to get money into the hands of people on the ground who are delivering those services And that's what we're doing, Mr. Speaker.

>> Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, mental health addiction scare has been an afterthought for this government for far too long, and it's about time we changed that. People in crisis should never have to wait for the care that they need, and this government knows that people are waiting far too long for the care that they need, Speaker. Children shouldn't be stuck on waiting lists for help for a year-and-a-half. Young people should never have to suffer the pain of losing a parent, let alone both parents, to mental health and addictions issues. But for seven years this government has sat on its hands and failed to transform mental health and addictions care so that it's actually there for people when they need it. Why won't the Premier do the right thing? Dedicate a ministry to fixing the system, fixing the problem and deliver the help that people need?

>> Premier Wynne: Mr. Speaker, if I believed that changing the name of a ministry, Mr. Speaker, would solve the problem of mental health in this province that has been with us for decades, Mr. Speaker, I would do it in a minute but

that's not the case. And it is also not the case that we have not addressed this challenge, Mr. Speaker. The fact is that we have a societal issue that people across the country -- when I sit with Premiers from across the country, every single one of them is dealing with these challenges. That's the reason, Mr. Speaker, that when the federal government put in place the new health agreement with which I was not particularly happy, Mr. Speaker, because it did not meet the needs of any of the provinces, but there was a component, Mr. Speaker, of mental health dollars that would flow to the province and there was a recognition that this is a challenge across the country. So the fact, Mr. Speaker, that in February we announced additional immediate investments of \$140 million over three years, Mr. Speaker, that we have put an additional 100 million into treatment for youth and children, Mr. Speaker. We continue to make investments and to change the system so people can find their way through and get the services that they need.

>> Andrea Horwath: The case, Speaker. What is the case is that this government, this Liberal government has had seven years to implement the recommendations from the select committee on mental health and addictions, and they still haven't done it, Speaker. Seven years later. Those recommendations still gathering dust. Today 12,000 children are waiting for care in this province. Young people are waiting up to 18 months to get mental health services. We're in the midst of an emergency of opioid overdose deaths, even though the Premier refuses to call it what it is. And after so many years Ontario still does not have a functioning mental health and addictions system in our province, leaving people in crisis to fall through the enormous crack that exists. It's -- if seven years wasn't long enough, Speaker, how much longer does this Premier think people should have to wait for the resources and attention. Mental health and addictions absolutely needs today?

>> Minister Eric Hoskins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's just not true that we -- we have been investing. We have more than doubled our budget in mental health since coming into office, Mr. Speaker. That party voted against \$140 million of new investments this year alone, including being the first province in the country to fund cognitive behavioural therapy. But it's important that the public and legislatures know that the select committee did not recommend setting up a separate ministry of mental health and addictions. It's easy to list an idea from the NDP Party in British Columbia has made the announcement -- But the select committee did not make that recommendation, nor did my advisory council of mental health addictions chaired by Susan Pickett, Mr. Speaker. Nor has any stakeholder suggested to me that creating a standalone ministry of mental health and addictions would be a positive thing. Better integrating mental health and making sure we reduce stigma and integrate it into the stigma. There can be no health without mental health, Mr. Speaker .

MPP Harris to Minister Hoskins Re: Hospital Funding

>> MPP Michael Harris: Thanks. My question's for the Minister of health. Speaker, in 2012 the Liberal government announced an urgently needed electro physiology lab for cardiac care at St. Mary's hospital in Kitchener. After failing to deliver the Minister bowed to pressure and returned to St. Mary's to recommit and reannounce the lab last year. Minister, it's 2017 fall. Will he tell us where that vital lab is today?

>> Minister Eric Hoskins: It is a good question and I appreciate it, Mr. Speaker, from the member opposite, and last year as the member alluded to I was in Kitchener for a tremendous announcement at St. Mary's hospital. \$7 million commitment to their cat lab at the hospital. I know the member opposite saw just how great an announcement it was, Mr. Speaker, because he was present for the announcement as we did the tour of the hospital. And I appreciated that. And at that point, the -- at that point a yearing a the program was approved And the money was sent to St. Mary's hospital. But since then, since that time a yearing a, Mr. Speaker, St. Mary's has come back to the Ihin and back to the province and ministry asking to further expand that program beyond the \$7 million. In fact it would cost an additional \$2 million in capital and unknown as of yet operational costs. So now the hospital and the Ihin appropriately together with the ministry are working on that request for the expansion, Mr. Speaker.

>> MPP Harris: Speaker, the Minister had to be ashamed, literally shamed in this House to force him down to Kitchener for a reannouncement of this vital lab in 2015 2016 and now we're here again and he still fails to deliver. Last week CTV reported the the pass year to be tested and treated before being sent to London for this cardiac procedure. To this day, St. Mary's remains the only one of 11 cardiac hospitals in Ontario still waiting for this vital lab. Meaning Cassandra is one of hundreds forced to wait. And yet the only answers we receive to our questions are disappointing political distractions of course from the local government member that should have no part in this discussion. Speaker, this is a dangerous waiting game with our health care priorities, no politics and no more empty promises, will the Minister finally deliver the cardiac -- Patients in Kitchener Waterloo and surrounding areas require?

>> Minister Hoskins: Well, Mr. Speaker, the fact is the money that was approved and the money sent and the program exists ant program is growing as it should be. And what they're talking about and what we're very interested in is the request for a further expansion, just like we approved the project in 2012 but saves program because you can't just leap directly to the implantable -- you can't leap right forward to the full cardiac program. So in 2013, they launched their implantable cardio defibrillator program, additional \$2 million in funding then. With these investments it allowed them to mature as they asked for to be able to

develop and implement and provide the full program that was announced a year ago. \$7 million in funding provided. Come back for an additional request to expand that. New phase. The IHN and hospital and ministry are looking at it. I think all Ontarians, except that one, Mr. Speaker, would agree that's the appropriate process

MPP Taylor to Premier Wynne Re: Sudbury Trial

>> MPP Monique Taylor: Thank you, Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Last week the Premier of Ontario took the witness stand in the Sudbury bribery case. She seems to have trouble with her memory forgetting quite a few details about the interactions between herself and her team and the time that her party was courting the Minister of energy to run for them. For example the Premier couldn't remember if she ever talked to the Minister about paid jobs for his staffers. That's a pretty important piece of information. Is the Premier's memory any better now that she's had time to think about it? Speaker, the question is clear. Thank you, Speaker. This would go back to the Premier's accountability and transparency in the province. I would like to know if she or her staffers had an exchange with the Minister for his staff to agree to run for her party. Thank you, Speaker. I would like to know if the Premier has a policy within her transparency and accountability, about her accountability and whether she offered jobs to people in the production of people running for her party. Accountability and transparency. The people of -- Speaker, the Premier of this province has claimed time and time again that her government is accountable and transparent. When she was on the stand in Sudbury, she had a different reflection of what had transpired during her interactions with the now Minister of energy. Does the Premier still agree that she didn't have any recollection or did she have recollection of her conversations with the Minister of energy? Comes down to accountability, Premier.

>> The Speaker: That is not, in my interpretation, comply with the standard I've asked you to hit. New question.

MPP Rinaldi to Minister Flynn Re: GE Employee Compensation

>> MPP Lou Rinaldi: Let me see if I can make this relevant, Speaker. My question is to the Minister of labour. Minister, over the years, many constituents in my riding of northumberland-quinte west have either worked in the nearby General Electric manufacturing plant or know someone close to them who has. I've been following this -- the progress of their health case very closely, Speaker. This has been and continues to be a very difficult situation for these workers and their families. Minister, I know you have met with advocates of the workers and the workers themselves many times. This year we are making some progress. In the spring we have three-day permission clinics in Peterborough to provide workers and family members information and assistance with their claims. You also established a data working group. Speaker, to the Minister, can you tell us what consideration of their cases to the --

>> Minister Kevin Flynn: Thank you, Speaker. I rise today to answer this question to the member from northumberland-quinte west. I want to thank my Colleague to the right of me the member from Peterborough, the Minister of agriculture because it's just an incredible day for the G.E. Workers in Peterborough, Speaker. They've been through such a tough situation for so long. The situation has dragged on for people that were exposed to toxins in the past at the G.E. Plant so I'm so happy today to rise to speak to the incredible progress we've made by working together on this. This week, Speaker, the wsib announced that they have established a dedicated review team that's going to reopen and review more than 250 cases involving the G.E. Peterborough workers, Speaker. These cases should have got better examination in the past. They're going to get. The proper examination they should get today, Speaker, . Ensuring rapid action and solutions is what we've been about on this. This is a good day for Peterborough, Speaker.

>> MPP Rinaldi: Thank you, Minister. I'm happy to hear of where we are today. This has been, as I said before, been very difficult and lengthy process for these workers. I believe they deserve the justice they have sought after so -- such a long time. I think it's also important our government's working to prevent this situation from happening again. I have heard you say many times in this House that you work hard every day to ensure Ontario is amongst the safest place in the world to work. I know you work hard to ensure the people who go to work come home safe and sound at the end of the day. An important part of that is also ensuring that people don't get sick later in life as a result of their work. Minister, while you and your -- what are you and your ministry doing to address occupational diseases around the province?

>> Minister Flynn: Speaker, thank you again to the member for that question. Speaker, employers and employees and organized labour and health and safety

organizations and this government, my ministry inspectors, Speaker, do work very hard each and every day to ensure that Ontario has become one of the safest places in the world to work and remains one of the safest places in the world to work, Speaker. The Minister of labour, we know it's critical that occupational diseases are treated with exactly the same seriousness as -- as important as physical injuries. We're focused on prevention, Speaker. The corner stone what we've been able to learn from this, Speaker, what we've been able to learn from the G.E. Situation is that we need a dedicated occupational disease response team, Speaker. And that's what we're putting in place in the province of Ontario. It's going to examine. It's going to respond to all aspects of occupational disease, exposure. It's going to go from initial report -- To enforcement to helping the workers work their way through the claim system, Speaker. It's a huge step forward for safety in the province of Ontario.

MPP Jones to Minister Chiarelli Re: Infrastructure Spending

>> MPP Sylvia Jones: Thank you, Speaker. My question is for the Minister of infrastructure. Cording to public accounts documents, your government failed to spend nearly \$3.3 billion in infrastructure spending during the 2016/17 fiscal year. Ontarians are waiting for essential infrastructure for their communities, from hospitals to highways. Will the Minister provide a list of the projects that are now delayed or not started because 20% of the money he promised to communities.

>> Minister Bob Chiarelli: I'm surprised by the question, Mr. Speaker. Given the extend of -- extent of infrastructure investments we are making as a government. The member would know that we have a project -- or a project to move forward over 13 years with \$190 billion every infrastructure. Most of that is getting out extremely quickly, Mr. Speaker, and we don't take any back seat with respect to our investments in infrastructure. It's been very, very well received across the province, Mr. Speaker. We also know that there's a tremendous amount that's coming on track immediately, Mr. Speaker. That's coming on track in fact, Mr. Speaker, in many of the ridings that the Progressive Conservative hold, Mr. Speaker, and I'll address that in my supplementary.

>> MPP Jones: The facts show that 20% was not distributed. According to public accounts documents, this shortfall was due to, quote, lower-than-forecast construction activity for the period. Can the Minister tell Ontarians why he failed to get these projects going? Was it red tape? Was it inaction or is this another stretch goal? Ontarians expect their government to deliver on their promises but time and time again you don't get the job done. All-day two-way go to Kitchener, developing the ring of fire, go service to niagara just to name a few. With so many of your commitments and our communities waiting for action, will the Minister table a list of infrastructure projects not started in 2016 or 1?

>> Minister Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, we have the largest investment in infrastructure in the history of the province of Ontario. And that -- the delay because of the processing with the federal government, and some of them have been allocated to all of your ridings. For example, Mr. Speaker, if you look at Sarnia- Lambton, \$8.43 billion, Mr. Speaker, million dollars, Mr. Speaker, is allocated, is on track and it's moving forward, Mr. Speaker. If you look for example at Leeds greenel Grenville, Mr. Speaker, \$2,369,000 in the clean water program, Mr. Speaker. If you want to look at Kitchener-conestoga, Mr. Speaker. \$10,763,000 for clean water. We can go on. Yes, some of the municipalities have not been able to deliver the actual shovel in the ground on time. But they're coming, Mr. Speaker. They're

MPP DiNovo to Premier Wynne (Hoskins) Re: Transgendered Health Services

>> MPP Cheri DiNovo Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. It's been five years since the government passed Toby's law granting trans people protections under the Ontario human rights code. Yet there is no equality for trans folk when it comes to accessing health care. Pie constituent Liz fox who's here today, has suffered just trying to get basic follow-up care after surgery. The lack of care has left him absolutely House bound. Why is the government denying Luke access to follow-up care?

>> Premier Kathleen Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care will want to speak to this. On this day in particular, I want to acknowledge the work of the member for Parkdale- High Park on this issue and on so many social issues, Mr. Speaker. She has -- she has always been champion, Mr. Speaker. And I know that the announcement that she made today that she is going to continue to work in the community after the next election she will continue to work in the community on these issues in particular. Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely our intention that everyone in this province be treated equitably, Mr. Speaker, that they get the support as they need and, as I say, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care will speak to the specifics of this issue.

>> MPP DiNovo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, that Luke's not the only one. He's one of many who have been unable to access health care. The government is not even planning on offering many of the surgery options that trans folk need. In Ontario there are now thousands on wait lists, often under dire circumstances, waiting for necessary care, care that is, five yearsater, still only available outside the province. When exactly will equality in health care be offered to our trans community?

>> Minister Eric Hoskins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, appreciate the advocacy. In fact this was an issue that the member opposite, last week, raised with me and I've subsequently followed up with a meeting with my ministry. Because it is an issue that I'm concerned about as well, individuals who go out of province or out of country to follow up and complete the gender affirming surgery, Mr. Speaker. And -- but when they come back, they may have complications or they may have questions or the need for further health care. It's a critically important issues and I've asked the ministry to begin that process with our stakeholders, with individuals that can provide us with the best advice on what suitable path forward might be. I to there's much more work to be done but I am proud, Mr. Speaker, of the work that we did that was announced or became effective last year in the spring where we changed the system whereby an individual could get approval -- For sex reassignment surgery so that going from one location we now have literally hundreds of individuals in locations across the province where that process can be sensitively done, Mr. Speaker.

MPP Des Rosiers to Minister Naqvi Re: Abortion Rights

>> MPP Nathalie Des Rosiers: My question is for the Attorney General. Harassment and intimidation outside of the morgentaler clinic in my hometown of Ottawa. Women and health care providers cannot safely enter nor exit the clinic, and we know that that's not only happening in Ottawa. If there's been complaints of harassment in the G.T.A. In the Peel region among others. It is important to protect women's rights to health care and women's right to choose what happens to their body. So, Mr. Speaker, can the Attorney General please tell us what is the government's plan to protect these rights of women?

>> Minister Yasir Naqvi: Thank you very much, Speaker. I want to thank the member from Ottawa- Vanier for asking a very important question. Speaker, our government does not tolerate any form of harassment against women exercising their fundamental rights to choose. It is also, Speaker, my steadfast belief and that of our government that every woman in Ontario has the right to make decisions about her own health care, and they deserve to do so freely without fear, without fear for safety, privacy or dignity, without fear of being judged or publicly humiliated because of her choice, without fear of being threatened with any violence, Har rassment or intimidation. Speaker, it is a woman's right to access health care services, be it abortion services or reproductive health services, without such fear, and our government, Speaker, as I have announced earlier, will bring in necessary legislation to protect women's safe access to abortion services in our province.

>> MPP Des Rosiers: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For his answer and attention to this problem. I have a further enquiry because I'd like to have more details about the legislation.: It's a step in the right direction. How this will balance with the rights of free speech. The protection of freedom of expression is important in Ontario as well. I as the former counsel for Canadian civil libertys association am very concerned about that. So can the Minister inform us how the bill will reconcile the rights of women to access health care and the freedom of expression of antiabortion protestors?

>> Minister Naqvi: Thank you very much, Speaker. I cannot get this question better expert than the member from Ottawa- Vanier being an expert in civil liberties and constitutionality and human rights. I very much appreciate this question from the member who taught law school and practice in the area. Over the summer we have been doing extensive analysis to answer this very exact question. We have consulted with legal and health experts and pro choice and anti-choice advocates. It was important for us to hear the voices on all sides of this issue, Speaker. We have also looked to British Columbia, Québec and Newfoundland, who have all implemented similar laws in the provinces over the

past few decades. Speaker, we also have looked at the courts. Certainly abortion clinics in Ontario have injunctions, limiting protests around them for years providing us with the necessary template to balance competing rights, not to mention the decisions by the supreme court of Canada. At the end of the day, Speaker, we know that not everyone will agree, but I believe that policies like this are important now than ever. We need to make sure we protect women's rights to have access to abortion services.

MPP Hardeman to Minister Duguid Re: Employee Lay-offs

>> MPP Ernie Hardeman: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Premier, over the last 10 months, there have been 1,300 layoffs announced in my riding. Three different manufacturers including Siemens in Tillsonburg. What does the Premier have to say to all those people who say that they have lost their jobs because of your government's policies?

>> Minister Brad Duguid: Mr. Speaker, I mean that's a foolish conclusion to come to when you look at what our policy has done to drive this economy forward. But let me first reach out and say something about those -- Let me say a few words about those workers that are impacted, Mr. Speaker, from layoffs from time to time, such as the workers in Siemens. It's very unfortunate. That was a plant that was very valuable to that community. The plant came about because of the policies of this government, the clean energy policy, that made that plant happen and provided those very good jobs for a number of years. Unfortunately Mr. Speaker -- The times of turbines that were being built there are no longer utilized and the market for those turbines have dried up. He's unfortunate. We will continue to work with those workers. Our hearts go out to them.

>> MPP Hardeman: Thanks very much. Back to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect to the Minister. The people who have lost their jobs want to hear from the Premier on this issue. The election is nine months away and I don't want to see any more layoffs in Oxford during that time. But our businesses saying with your government's policies their choices are layoffs or close their doors. 'Yote your government continues to drive jobs out of Oxford and Ontario by increasing the cost of doing business and making it harder for our companies to compete. Premier, 1,300 jobs lost in Oxford alone should make it clear your policies are not working. Will you commit to change your approach and stop piling new costs and regulations on our businesses, save the jobs we have left?

>> Minister Duguid: Mr. Speaker, as I said our heart always goes out to workers who find themselves caught in the transition. From time to time plants do close and that's part of the transition in our economy. But, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is there has not been a government in this country and very few governments around the world that are performing, have an economy performing at the level ours is. We have the lowest unemployment rate, Mr. Speaker, in 16 years. Our policies have helped -- Workers in this community create 76,000 net new jobs. 96% of which are full time. Mr. Speaker, we're leading the G-7 in growth. This economy is going well. For the Premier to suggest otherwise, Mr. Speaker, is absolutely doing a disservice to the hardworking business people in this province who are helping to drive this economy ahead. Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to make those investments to ensure that our economy can continue to grow.

MPP Sattler to Minister Matthews (Flynn) Re: Ontario Colleges

>> MPP Peggy Sattler: Thank you, Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Speaker, since the Liberals took office, Ontario's 24 public Colleges have even an alarming rise in precarious work, to the point that 81% of teaching is now done by contract faculty with substandard wages, no access to benefits and no job security. This means that many of Ontario's 500,000 College students are being educated by professionals who are struggling to make ends meet, who are demoralized and stressed out, who are forced to reapply every four months for the job they have been doing for years. Speaker, there is a direct connection between the quality of education for students and the quality of work for faculty. Will the Premier commit today to improving job security for contract faculty in Ontario's 24 colleges?

>> Minister Deb Matthews: Thank you, Speaker. Thank you to the member from London West for that question. And I want to say welcome to all of the opseu representatives who are here from our College sector today. Speaker this year we're celebrating 50 years of the College system in Ontario and I tell you it's been 50 extraordinary years. It is impossible to imagine this province without Colleges, and I just want to take this opportunity to say thank you to the people who make our Colleges great, and that is the faculty. I do know, Speaker, that the issue of precarious employment in our Colleges is a very real and live issue. I know that we are in bargaining so I will leave the bargaining to the bargaining table. But I do want to say, Speaker, that we recognize this issue and Minister of labour has brought -- introduced bill 148. That actually starts to address this issue.

>> MPP Sattler: Thank you, Speaker. Again to the Premier. New Democrats have long supported equal pay for equal work, which is why we pushed for strengthened language. In bill 148, language the Liberals voted against. We heard during committee hearings that bill 148 provides too much latitude for employers to avoid their equal pay obligations. And given years of Liberal underfunding of the College system, Colleges will have an incentive to use the loophole and not move forward with equal pay. Speaker, what will the Premier do to hold Ontario's Colleges to their equal pay obligations for contract faculty and to ensure that the resources are there to support implementation of equal pay?

>> Minister Kevin Flynn: Thank you, Speaker. And thank you to the member for that question. Two approaches to that answer obviously. We look at the province of Ontario over the years. The track record. We have in reaching Collective bargaining agreements without strikes or lockout I think is exemplary. It's about -- or lockout is about 98 or 99%. I'm convinced that attitude will continue throughout these negotiations as well, Speaker. And that's something we're always confident that when we work together, we're able to achieve those types of agreements.

We have a history of stability. Obviously bill 148 introduces another angle to this, Speaker. We've gone out and consulted broadly on this issue. We took it out after first reading. The committee had I think a long time to hear a variety of views on this, Speaker. We continue to work on it. We continue to debate it in the House, Speaker. Work in progress. But the intent, Speaker, is to inject more --

MPP McMeekin to Minister Milczyn (Jaczek) Re: Basic Income Plan

>> MPP Ted McMeekin: Thanks very much, Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for the poverty reduction strategy. Speaker, our government under the stewardship of our Premier has always taken a leadership role in exploring bold ways to create fairness and opportunity for the people of Ontario. That's what our fair workplaces plan is about. It's what our fair hydro plan is about. That's why anyone 24 years old or younger will be able to get their prescription medications for free. And that's why we launched the basic income pilot, in order to test how we can help people living on low incomes better meet their basic needs while improving their health, education and employment outcomes. Speaker, this week is international basic income week. And I want to ask. You to the Minister if he could tell members of this House more about Ontario's basic income pilot.

>> Minister Peter Milczyn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank the member for Ancaster Dundas gran brough west Dale for the question and for his tremendous advocacy on this issue for many years. While Ontario's economy is growing and it's strong, many people just aren't feeling that growth in their everyday lives. The three-year basic income pilot will study whether a basic income can better support vulnerable workers and give people living on low income the security and opportunity to achieve their potential. What we learned from this pilot will help inform our longer-term plan for income security reform. The pilot was launched this spring in Hamilton, Brantford, Brant county and Thunder Bay and, later this fall we'll be launching the next phase in Lindsay. In addition the basic income pilot for first facials is being Coe created with our first nations partners. Throughout the summer we've been holding community information sessions. We're building awareness, and I know the Minister of community and social services will elaborate further in the supplementary.

>> MPP McMeekin: Thank you, Speaker. And to the Minister for his answer. Speaker, our government recognizes that some Ontarians are struggling to keep up with the rising cost of living. We are working hard to improve the lives of all Ontarians, including and especially our most vulnerable. As we enter international basic income week, a week where activists around the world are combining their efforts to advocate for a basic income, it's important to highlight our government leadership in launching a basic income -- And he's a good man. I'm sure he'll do that. It's important to highlight our government leadership in launching a basic income pilot in Ontario as a way to see if there's a better way to help people get ahead. And stay there. The pilot is an important example of how our government is applying evidence-based policy to promote fairness in the economy. Mr. Speaker ,.

>> Minister Helena Jaczek: Thank you to the member for his question. And I'm very pleased to share with you on international basic income week details of our evaluation process. Our ultimate goal is to better understand whether a basic income could provide more opportunity to people living on low incomes and whether it could potentially improve their overall health and educational attainment. Our pilot was designed to ensure that findings from the evaluation are of the highest validity and integrity. To assist with the evaluation, the government has appointed Dr. Quan Mackenzie, a special advisor for the pilot research and evaluation advisory committee. He is an expert in the field and his role as special advisor will be to provide advice on how to best evaluate the outcomes of the pilot. I'm sure that his expertise will be invaluable as we move forward on this important project.

MPP Oosterhoff to Minister Hoskins Re: Long-Term Care

>> MPP Sam Oosterhoff: My question is to the Minister of health and already tear. Speaker, earlier this year the residents of niagara west-glanbrook found out planning to move 50 beds out of the Killian lodge in grimsby down to Hamilton. Adrian Peters visits his wife at Killian lodge every day. Adrian chose Killian precisely because of its location. He will no longer be able to see his wife every day if she is moved to Hamilton. What action will the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care take to ensure people like Adrian in niagara will be able to see their loved ones in care?

>> Minister Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the member opposite. And I'm proud to say that we have, since coming into office, built 10,000 new long-term care spots. As well we've redeveloped 13,000 and we're well on our way to our commitment by 2025 to redeveloping 30,000 long-term care beds in this province. Now as it pertains to this specific proposal, and that's all it is at this point. It is a proposal from Rivera. It has come forward to the government, and part of our -- the approval process Mr. Speaker -- and there's no guarantee of approval by the way, but part of the process that we require is a robust community consultation. So that I believe is what the member opposite is referencing in part, that there is now a public consultation being taken so we can legitimately and importantly get feedback from -- The very communities and very families that may be positively or negatively impacted as we continue our deliberations.

>> MPP Oosterhoff: Back to the Minister. Speaker, the reality is that this Liberal government has failed to make the substantial and meaningful investments in long-term care that are needed for Ontario. This government is failing families not only in niagara west-glanbrook but families like those of Adrian's across all Ontario. Speaker, after 14 years of Liberal mismanagement my constituents are rightly concerned that long-term care capacity could be removed from the niagara region. Beds are being taken away with no plan to replace them. This is unacceptable. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, can families like Adrian's count on more long-term care beds in niagara? Or will they be disappointed once again by this tired Liberal government?

>> Minister Hoskins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course we're committed to continuing to invest in long-term care. In fact in the most recent budget that that member and that party voted against, Mr. Speaker, we increased that long-term care budget by an initial \$80 million. And importantly, Mr. Speaker, 60 million -- sorry. That was a 2% increase much it was \$80 million this year alone. Part of that was for behavioural supports which is to accommodate those seniors, those individuals in long-term care who have more complex needs, including for example dementia. But we have a very robust -- I want to reassure the member

and the community he represents that we have a very robust process where a requirement of any proponent, whether it's creating new beds or shifting moving beds, that we require them to engage the community, engage those people most affected, and we then -- answer. With the Ihin's involvement we receive that as part of our determination whether we should consider this proposal or not.

MPP Campbell to Minister Del Duca Re: Road Development

>> MPP Sarah Campbell: Residents were shocked last month when they learned that the long-delayed twinning of highway 17 has been delayed yet again. Instead of being completed by 2020 the completion date is now 2021 and beyond, meaning that we really have no idea when this crucial project will finish. Given more -- even more shocking is that instead of accepting responsibility for the delay, the Minister of northern development shoal lake 39 first nation blames. Is this the type of reconciliation we can expect from this government?

>> Minister Steven Del Duca: Thank you very much, Speaker. I thank the member opposite for the question. This is an issue that in my three years and little bit as Minister of transportation I've had the opportunity to work -- you know, hard on with respect to talking to the communities in the affected areas. Speaker, I've not only heard from members from northern Ontario on our side of the legislature. I've also had the chance to speak with our federal Colleague BOB nult from that communities and heard from mayors alonged way. Right across the north there is a great dole of excitement about the fact that our government is so committed to investing hundreds of millions of dollars in expanding highways in every corner of the north, Speaker. In fact we see in our northern highways program more moneys dedicated to the expansion of highways than probably any other time in Ontario history, Speaker. I also also know know that longing a the Premier herself. Was in the Kenora area and had the chance to meet with both shoal lake 39 and 40. I can confirm that the ministry of transportation Including our first nations to make sure we advance --

>> MPP Campbell: The public accounts recently revealed that this government failed to spend \$3.3 billion in budgeted infrastructure cash last year. In fact, the Premier had spent nearly \$4 billion less on infrastructure during her first four years than the previous Premier spent -- During her last four years. This Premier keeps playing political games with her infrastructure project and promises especially in the north. She'll drop by to make big announcements, but when it's time for action she disappears. This is why crucial projects like the twinning of highway 17 keep getting delayed. When will this Premier stop blaming first nations for her own lack of action on this infrastructure file?

>> Minister Del Duca: Well, Speaker, you know I'm a little bit astounded by that question. In 2017/2018 this Premier and our government we are investing a historic \$630 million to expand and repair highways in northern Ontario, Speaker. In my entire time -- in my my entire time as Minister of transportation I have year in and year out members of the NDP Caucus do their best, Speaker, to try and impede progress when it comes to critical transportation infrastructure whether we're talking about the gtha or talng about the northwest of tomorrow, Speaker. Premier Kathleen Wynne and our government will continue to make the right

investments in the right place at the right time and we'll do it partnering with our first nations, Speaker, to make sure we produce the best possible outcome for they will and for the entire people of Ontario. Thanks very much, Speaker