

Provincial Legislature Question Period Transcript for Tuesday, April 24, 2018

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Transcript of Provincial Question Period
41st Parliament, 3rd Session
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The following is a partially edited transcript of Question Period.

Table of Contents

MPP Fedeli to Premier Wynne
Re: Toronto Van Attack

MPP Bisson
Re: Toronto Van Attack

MPP Fedeli to Minister Thibeault
Re: Hydro One Exec Salary

MPP Fedeli to Minister Thibeault
Re: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

MPP Horwath to Premier Wynne (Jaczek)
Re: Hospital Overcrowding

MPP Horwath to Premier Wynne
Re: Hospital Overcrowding

MPP Clark to Minister Ballard
Re: Landfill Location

MPP Tabuns to Minister Milczyn
Re: Renter's Rights

MPP McNaughton to Minister Sousa (Thibeault)
Re: Cap-and-Trade

MPP Gretzky to Minister Flynn
Re: Ceasars Casino Strike

MPP McMeekin to Minister Milczyn (Coteau)
Re: Basic Income Pilot

MPP Hardeman to Minister Ballard
Re: Landfill Location

MPP Bisson to Minister Jaczek
Re: WAHA Hospital Clean-Up

MPP Qadri to Minister Hunter
Re: Advanced Education Expansion in Brampton

MPP Hillier to Minister Naqvi
Re: 2018 Budget

MPP Fedeli to Premier Wynne Re: Toronto Van Attack

>> MPP Vic Fedeli: Thank you and good morning Speaker to the Premier. PC leader Doug Ford and the entire Ontario PC family were all moved by the events of yesterday. Our thoughts are with the victims, the family, and those affected at Yonge and Finch here in Toronto. We want to thank the brave first responders -- Speaker we want to thank the brave first responders and the EMS teams who continue to work tirelessly on our behalf. Mr. Speaker, would the Premier like to share her sentiments with the House?

>> Premier Kathleen Wynne: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I know that everyone in this House joins with the families and the victims, families of the victims, friends of the victims, and all of the people who are affected by this and I would say, Mr. Speaker, we all are. Let me just read the update that I gave to the media this morning. I said this morning, Mr. Speaker, that as the city wakes up there are family and friends of this horrible tragedy and the victims themselves who have survived whose lives will never be the same our hearts reach out to them and we desperately want to give them some comfort. That desire to comfort can perhaps help us all in Toronto and beyond to be a bit kinder, a bit more gentle with each other today and the days to come in my role as Premier it is my responsibility to ensure that any provincial resources that are needed to cope with the ongoing investigation and security measures they are available. And I want to report to Torontonians and Ontarians that that is happening. I was briefed again first thing this morning. Our provincial security officials continue to work hand in hand with federal and municipal officials, the OPP is in constant touch with the RCMP and the Toronto police service officials who are involved, and who are involved in the ongoing investigation. The people who are involved in the identification of victims put extra teams on duty last night to move that employees along to help families get information sooner and to help ease those painful hours of waiting. I spent the afternoon yesterday with Mayor Tory in North York. I have nothing but the deepest admiration for the Toronto police officers, firefighters, paramedics who responded so quickly -- They responded so professionally, so compassionately to the tragedy that unfolded. These are brave, highly skilled men and women who deserve our heartfelt thanks I also had the opportunity to spend some time at Sunnybrook Hospital the hospital that received the largest number of victims. Again, we want to thank every one of the paramedics, the nurses, the doctors and all of the health personnel who responded so professionally and so well. CEO Andy Smith emphasized the sad reality that his team is prepared for a situation like this because they practice and train for such a day. Hoping it will never come. But when it did, and calls were made to off-duty nurses and personnel to come in, they were already on their way. They knew exactly what had to happen. So thank you to each of the professionals, each of the neighbors and passersby who helped an injured person there. Thank you to each and every person who lent a hand. I heard a question on radio this morning about whether our city our province our country will be changed because of this senseless act of violence. The lives of the families and friends of the victims are changed for ever. But our collective job now is to find a way to grieve. To acknowledge that pain and stand with those who have lost so much and then to make sure that the life of this vibrant, good city and province goes on. We are capable of deep compassion and understanding in Toronto, in Ontario and in Canada. And we will be called upon to summon all of those in the days ahead.

>> MPP Fedeli: Well thank you Speaker. I think we've first of all I want to thank the Premier for that. I think that was a thorough and respectful update. We genuinely appreciate the work of the first responders and the EMS teams that are out there. There are many questions that will be answered over the coming days and we look forward, Premier, to continued updates as the province and as the municipalities learn them. So our thoughts, our hearts ache for the family and for the victims Speaker, thank you.

MPP Bisson Re: Toronto Van Attack

>> MPP Gilles Bisson: Well, Mr. Speaker, these type of things are never things that we think are going to happen in our backyard. Unfortunately we do find out we live in a world in a world unfortunately things unfold in that are not pleasant for many who are directly affected in it and not affected directly. I think there is a couple of the things and the Premier summed it up well our police forces and the way they acted yesterday makes us all proud. That the reaction was in order to calm the situation down and to do what was right when it was coming to apprehend the individual. And I think we can all be proud of that, because I think it speaks volumes to the training that we do to our police to the ambulance people, to the paramedics the fire department and everybody else who showed up. Again kudos I think the Premier sut up quite well along with the leader of the Conservative party here in the legislature, they acted totally professionally. But the other thing that I think we are all impressed with, is how the public reacted. Those people that were there on the sidewalk. Those people that were there on the streets they were there doing what they could in order to be able to make things better and to try to administer afraid in fact a good friend of mine happened to be on site when it happened. I found out after we haven't talked about it yet because he's still going through probably some of that trauma. But I want to let you know that Andrea Horwath and new Democrats stand tall and proud with our police forces and emergency services and what they've done and with the citizens of this province Andrea is on site there this morning, thought she would go and pay respects directly on site so our party along with O leader are our congratulations go out to those that were on site and we grieve for the families quite frankly that have been so so devastated by what happened yesterday. Thank you.

MPP Fedeli to Minister Thibeault Re: Hydro One Exec Salary

>> MPP Vic Fedeli: Well thank you Speaker I'll now speak in my role as the interm leader of the official opposition and continue our duties in that respect. So back to the Premier. Premier, Ontario rate payers and tax payers want answers. Mr. Speaker, when didhe Premier become aware that Hydro One gave their CEO a \$6 million salary and a \$10 million severance?

>> Minister Glenn Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise and to respond to the question put by the leader within the House from the Conservatives. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the executive salaries at one we recognize these are high and continue to remain committed to work with Hydro One on their regulation accountability and their transparency, Mr. Speaker, through our government's involvement as a majority shareholder, Mr. Speaker. And I know, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to work with Hydro One because we have seen a change. The executive team has found \$114 million in savings, Mr. Speaker, they entered, you know, a vary winter disconnection program. So, Mr. Speaker, we'll continue to monitor, thank you.

>> MPP Fedeli: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Back to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, does the Premier approve of both the Hydro One CEO's \$6 million salary, and his \$10 million severance?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to costs, Mr. Spr, the board, the Ontario energy board that is, Mr. Speaker, they set rates. So by talking about firing the CEO of Hydro One, Mr. Speaker, that doesn't take anything off anyone's bills. So the board, Mr. Speaker, is the energy sector's independent regulator with a mandate to protect rate payers, and that is how it's going to continue to deliver on that mandate. For instance, Mr. Speaker, last, last fall, the Ontario energy board capped a portion of executive compensation, Hydro One electricity customers are required to fund at 10% of base salaries. Saving rate payers \$30 million over this year and next. So, Mr. Speaker, the Ontario energy board will continue to monitor we'll continue to work with Hydro One to help them become a better company, Mr. Speaker .

MPP Fedeli to Minister Thibeault Re: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan

>> MPP Vic Fedeli: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of energy, in speaking about the auditor general's comments on the Liberal hydro scheme, the Minister of energy had the following to say "Our plan has been approved by her peers at some of Canada's top accounting firms KPMG, emy and deloitte. The auditor Gener has said that's not true." Mr. Speaker, did the accounting firms mentioned approve the plan.

>> Minister Glenn Thibeault: Mr. Speaker, what we have are two world class accounting firms and I will outline what they had to say in statements about regulated accounting within the public sector accounting standards, Mr. Speaker. So KPMG said on the bases of our extensive research, deliberations and an opinion from another major accounting firm, we believe that the accounting policies adopted by the independent electricity system operator are in accordance with the Canadian public sector accounting standards. Deloitte, Mr. Speaker, they stated that concluded any regulatory assets and liabilities recognized through the appropriate application of these policies would meet the criteria for recognition under the Canadian public sector accounting standards, Mr. Speaker. Additionally, Ernst and young is financial auditor and consulted on this, Mr. Speaker, on an ongoing basis.

>> MPP Fedeli: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Back to the Minister of energy he uses phrases which have nothing to do with what we're talking about. In regards to kpmk, Ernst and young, and deloitte the auditor general said T sum of all of the work the Minister was just speaking about does not equate to the approval of the hydro scream. To the Minister is the auditor general correct?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, I don't believe I need to reiterate and read, reread what the accounting firms have said because I know the Honourable member had just heard those, Mr. S but they do talk about it and I will say, agains, as KPMG said these accounting policies are in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. Deloitte, meet the criteria for recognition under the accounting standard, Mr. Speaker. And I know, Mr. Speaker, we've said this before and I'll say it again it was a policy choice made by this government. We made this policy choice to ensure that we continue to have a clean, reliable and affordable electricity system for the rate payers of today and the rate payers tomorrow because, Mr. Speaker, the fair hydro plan. Not on the tax base because that's the logical thing to do, Mr. Speaker, and how it's been done in the past.

>> MPP Fedeli: Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Back to the Minister of energy the Minister has said "Of course we worked with KPMG and Ernst and young and worked with deloitte." All of them agree the accounting standards are accurate except the auditor general has said that is not true. They didn't approve the books. So Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of energy come clean.

>> Minister Thibeault: I will reiterate here's what KPMG said. On the base bases and -- we believe the accounting policies adopted by the independent elect system operator are in accordance with the Canadian public sector accounting standards, Mr. Speaker. And the policies and the implementation of this process for the fair hydro plan were designed, Mr. Speaker, and extensively reviewed by senior bureaucratic officials from my ministry, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of energy the ministry of finance, the treasury board secretariat the office of the provincial controller, Cabinet office. The Ontario financial authority, the iso, opg and work with the third party executives accounting firms, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to look at and monitor Ensure due diligence was completed.

MPP Horwath to Premier Wynne (Jaczek) Re: Hospital Overcrowding

>> NDP Leader Andrea Horwath: I want regret I wasn't here to hear the comments, I was at the memorial at young street and finch and I want to say that it was a very emotional scene and I'll you

can say to everyone here is I believe that together we need to mourn and we need to seek justice and we need to help each other heal. So that is -- I'm going to ask the Premier this. The Premier's underfunded hospital every single year since she's been in that hospital and I want to ask if she's surprised after years of underfunding that this created such a crisis in hall way medicine in our province.

>> Premier Kathleen Wynne: Well, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate that the leader of the third party was at the memorial I'll be heading up shrtly, Mr. Speaker. But, she wasn't here when I said how excellent, how excellent the service in our hospitals is, Mr. Speaker. And I was speaking about the response of the doctors and the nurses and all of the personnel at sunnybrook, Mr. Speaker, specifically, but I can speak for hospitals across this province that have responded to needs in their communities, Mr. Speaker, year after year month after month and we have supported them, Mr. Speaker. We have worked with them. We have increased the number of nurses, increased the number of doctors, increased the funding and we recognize, Mr. Speaker, that there is more to be done which is why on top of the \$500 million. There is \$822 million that will directly to hospitals, Mr. Speaker .

>> Andrea Horwath: After 15 years, the Premier has fired 1600 nurses since 2016. As bad as it is, Doug fo says that he would cut 4% from everything. That would me,000 nurses over four years. Firing 1600 nurses means this crisis has occurred, imagine how bad cost of overcrowding would be with Doug Ford firing 32,000 nurses? Will the Premier admit finally that she has created this crisis?

>> Premier Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I assume that underlying the question from the leader of the third party is that she doesn't believe that our health care system functions well. She doesn't bve, Mr. Speaker, that when people go to a hospital or they go to a doctor or a nurse practitioner, to clinic or go to a community health centre of which we have built dozens across the province that she doesn't believe that people get good care. And I would say to the leader of the third party that is absolutely not tru people in thisvince know that they can count on their health care system, Mr. Speaker. They know that their hospital, their clinic led by a nurse practitioner and community health centre, Mr. Speaker, they know that they are going to receive excellent excellent care, Mr. Speaker. They know that because we have supported the health care system and we will continue to do that.

>> Andrea Horwath: What the Premier forgot to talk about is hallway medicine Speaker. The crisis she's created in our hospitals. That is the concern that the new Democrats are talking about. You know the good news is people don't have to choose between the Liberals who created this crisis by underfunding health care and the Conservatives who would make it worse by cutting even further and privatizing our health care system. As Premier, I will fund hospitals properly Speaker I've made that commitment. We will end hallway medicine. New Democrats have made that commitment. Why can't the Premier admit that the Liberal government is responsible for Ontario's crisis in hallway medicine. Why can't just admit it. Everyone can see it Speaker .

>> Minister Helena Jaczek: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and as the Premier said we have continued our investments every year. I want to address the issue of nurses in our health care system because the leader of the third party did refer to some imaginary cuts in this regard. Since our government took office in, more than 30,000 nurses have begun work in Ontario. That is a 27% increase. That is a huge number and even just so recently, there are 1200 more nurses employed in Ontario compared to last year. It's these are substantial increases year over year and in fact there are almost 10,000 more nurses working since 2013. 2013these are the facts, Mr. Speaker, our wonderful excellent nursing staff as well as so many of the components of our health care system.

MPP Horwath to Premier Wynne Re: Hospital Overcrowding

>> NDP Leader Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my next question is also to the Premier. Hallway medicine has reached such a crisis that London health sciences has helped to develop a new "Hallway transfer protocol," a hallway transfer protocol? The vice-president of London health

sciences says theirs is not the only hospital affected by gridlock. We're seeing more and more of this because our system is stretched from a capacity perspective. Now is the Premier still denying that there is a hallway medicine crisis in the province of Ontario?

>> Premier Kathleen Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to continue there is a need for continued and increased funding, Mr. Speaker, in our health system. There is an aging demographic, Mr. Speaker, particularly in areas of growth. There are real concerns about, about the need for more support which is exactly why we're investing an additional \$822 million in hospitals directly, Mr. Speaker. That's an overall 4.6% increase and that is in addition to the 3.2% increase we put in place last year. It will increase capacity and decrease wait times and improve access to care for families in Ontario. But, Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, we are investing in home care. We are investing in mental health, Mr. Speaker. We are expanding to cover seniors, Mr. Speaker. We recognize there is a transformation in health care people want care at home which is why we've been investing in health care technical continue to do that as well as invest in hospital.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker there was a real need for funding and support for the ten years that this Premier froze budgets or increased them below the inflationary level! For years the NDP has been telling the stories of every day people who found themselves in a hospital hallway. Or a bathroom or lounge room or TV room. The staff do their very very best, Mr. Speaker, but the lights are always on. People have no privacy and the resources they need are simply not there. In London, it won't just be hallways. The new protocol will see people put anywhere that isn't in front of an exit, a stairwell, or near a hazardous item. This is onto 2018 -- Is the Premier still denying there is a crisis in hallway medicine in Ontario.

>> Premier Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I think it's clear that feelings are running high today. And I think we all can acknowledge that. And Mr. Speaker, I'll just say, again, to the leader of the third party that we have consistently increased funding to hospitals. We have also Mr. Speaker, year over year increased funding to home care, Mr. Speaker, and to other parts of the health care system that need to be in place because people are asking for care in different ways, Mr. Speaker. I think that what the Minister of indigenous relations was responding to, Mr. Speaker, was at a time when we know that our health care professionals are among the best in the world, we all need to be supporting them. We need to be recognizing them for the excellent excellent professionals they are.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, four years of freezes. Zero increases. That's exactly what this Premier did. And she can paint it any term she wants but the facts are the case. A zero increase doesn't mean that they increased the hospital budget it means they froze them for four years Speaker. Doug Ford says he'll privatize everywhere including in our health care system. The Conservatives would cut and privatize and the Liberals have given us the hallway medicine crisis that we have right now so we can't trust them to fix it. But there is hope on the way because I have a plan to fix hallway medicine. To provide hospitals with stable funding that will end the crisis and add 2000 beds immediately. Why can't this Premier just admit, admit she's created a hallway medicine crisis in Ontario.

>> Premier Wynne: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the allegation that the leader of the third party is making is just not true, Mr. Speaker. We have increased funding to hospitals year over year, Mr. Speaker. I recognize that there is a need for an increased investment that is why there is a 4-point of % increase in our budget, Mr. Speaker. \$822 million, but I would say to the leader of the third party that as the Premier of this province, as the government. It is our responsibility to look at the entire health care system, Mr. Speaker. To look at all of the different parts of the health care system and to make sure that we respond to the evolution of people's needs in the province, Mr. Speaker. We have an aging demographic. People have said we want to be at home. We want more home care. We want health care delivered differently that is what we have done, Mr. Speaker, as we have continued to hire more nurses, more doctors, and increased funding to hospitals, Mr. Speaker.

MPP Clark to Minister Ballard Re: Landfill Location

>> MPP Steve Clark: Speaker it's been a month and a half since the Premier spoke briefly with opponents of the Ed mega dump in my riding. Media reported she would speak to me and get my views on the dump which is actually quite strange because I've been clear no mega dump should be built in my riding. I got one question for her today. Does she agree with me, the area residents, the township of Cardiac, the Mohawk Council Grand Chief Benedict that it's wrong to open a mega dump.

>> Minister Chris Ballard: Thank you Speaker and thank you for the important question about the dump. I know this is a very sensitive, a very sensitive issue and I understand that, that where dumps are placed, how dumps are located how big they are, can be a very sensitive. Granted no one is happy if they're having a dump placed in their community. But I will say Speaker that we do take the placement of the landfills quite seriously and we go through a rigorous monitoring and evaluation process before permissions are given around any. Any of the landfill sites and, Speaker, I'll speak more about other efforts that this government is making to deal with waste.

>> MPP Clark: Speaker, I can't, this is the same Minister, Speaker, who mocked my constituent's legitimate concerns by telling me in this House that one person's garbage is another person's treasure. I can assure you, Minister, that this garbage is no treasure to those forced to live with it. When the Premier was in my riding she told opponents that they have a compelling argument. No kidding. Her own ministry of environment and climate change says no dump in Ontario has ever opened with such stale dated permits. They told me that dumps usually proceed within one to eight years of getting a permit. It's been sitting on the shelf for over 20 years, Mr. Speaker, finally my question, will you join me today. Take a stand and pledge that no mega dump will go on this site without a full environmental assessment consultation with the Mohawk.

>> Minister Ballard: Well Speaker I think the -- I think the member opposite needs to understand a little bit more about the government's circular economy act, about our waste-free Ontario act quite frankly. But I won't talk about that right now. I will say that D-19, if remains valid under a number of conditions. Only if the proposed landfill is to be constructed as it was or sited and designed and while the approvals are still valid, the ministry, Speaker, is going to require a new assessment if changes are made to the project in regards to expansion, monitoring, or Collections under the D under the environmental. Assessment act. The ministry requires a new assessment of the county's proposed and expansion of the service hear of that project.

MPP Tabuns to Minister Milczyn Re: Renter's Rights

>> MPP Peter Tabuns: Thank you Speaker, my question to the acting Premier we learned how five tenants living at 795 Collier street were forced so the landlord could complete renovations the landlord ignored the tenant's right to reoccupy the unit after the renovations were completed and instead, rented the apartments out to new tenants at three times the rent. It's called a rent-eviction. Last year, the Premier had an opportunity to support an NDP amendment to bill 124 that would close loopholes that allow unethical landlords to use rent evictions to force out tenants so they can jack up the rent. Why didn't the Premier support the amendments?

>> Minister Peter Milczyn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the member for Toronto Danforth for the question. In fact, Mr. Speaker, our government made substantial changes to expand rent control to all Ontario tenants. Previously about a quarter million Ontario tenants did not enjoy the protection of rent control. We brought that change in. Part our fair housing plan, Mr. Speaker, we wanted to make sure the tenants receive the protection that they require. We expanded the rent control system. We recently brought in the standard lease which takes effect as of April 30th. In a few days time and that will also give more protection to all Ontario tenants and make it clear what landlords obligations are and what tenant's rights are and I'm happy to decrease more of this issue. In the supplementary.

>> MPP Tabuns: Well he didn't protect these tenants. Back to the landlord. They are using pressure tactics to push tenants out so they can raise the rent to whatever level they want. In February,

tenants in Parkdale claimed their landlord neglected basic repairs but then, installed upscale amenities that the low income tenants were supposed to pay for guideline increases they were being forced to either finance the gentrification of their own unit or face eviction. They went on a rent strike. Why must tenants be on a rent strike to keep their home safe, properly maintained and affordable. Why?

>> Minister Milczyn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not able to speak to specific cases which might be before the landlord tenant tribunal but, Mr. Speaker, we do have a strong residential tenancies act that does have enforcement measures when a landlord breaks the law. And I know in some of these cases the rental enforcement unit of the Minister of housing is investigating and if there are charges that are warranted, they would be laid following a proper investigation, Mr. Speaker. If the landlord attempts to have expenses put on above the guideline increase they can mandate that only proper expenses are passed on to tenants and where there is a situation where a landlord tries. Illegally evict tenants there are remedies to protect tenants, Mr. Speaker.

MPP McNaughton to Minister Sousa (Thibeault) Re: Cap-and-Trade

>> MPP Monte McNaughton: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question this morning is to the Minister of finance many people in this province rely on natural gas to heat homes and run major appliances when the Liberals and NDP brought in the cap and trade carbon tax, they made life expensive for millions of people in Ontario. Mr. Speaker, in 2017, the costs of cap and trade on natural gas bills was on average an extra \$80.50 per year. But shockingly, Mr. Speaker, in 2020 according to the long term forecast commissioned by the Ontario energy board it could cost an extra \$336 per year. Mr. Speaker, that is an increase of 317%. Speaker, how much is this Liberal government prepared to make families pay for natural gas?

>> Minister Charles Sousa: I appreciate the question I will use supplementary to one of my Colleagues. Let's be clear we're talking about a cap and trade system that is enabling us to provide up to \$2 billion more to reinvest in new economies, and in new green energy program that enables us to build our economy and increase our gdp. And furthermore, Mr. Speaker, we are -- Mr. Speaker, we're now increasing natural gas into the communities that do not have that opportunity and that only happens because we do have a plan in place to enable the capital infrastructure programs that the opposition would vote against, Mr. Speaker. They're cutting back on the things that matter to Ontario included in the natural gas to all communities across the province and furthermore, a new economy and greater G in our province.

>> MPP McNaughton: Well Mr. Speaker, back to the Minister of finance when the Liberals and NDPs brought in the cap and trade carbon tax they knew it was going to hit families where it hurt. From keeping their car on the road to keeping their home heated through winter. And make everything in the province more expensive. Not only is the cap and trade carbon tax hidden on natural gas bills, it also has hst on top of it is this government wondelling to hike -- wonderfulling to hike the carbon tax from 8.50 cents to \$336 per year?

>> Minister Glenn Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise and talk about cap and trade and of course the decision that was talked about earlier for us when we talked about consumers' bills. So cap and trade, Mr. Speaker, and the decision on how to present that on consumer bills was made by the Ontario energy board, Mr. Speaker. And that is an independent arms-length regulator for the province's energy sector. And it did so, Mr. Speaker, based off of extensive consultations with consumers, utilities and environmental stakeholders including over 40 written submissions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In their decision, the Ontario energy board highlighted the cap and trade costs are part of doing the business of delivering natural gas homes and businesses, Mr. Speaker, and to quote the board and the oep's view separating out cap and trade costs as a line item is inconsistent in the manner. Our -- are reflected on --

MPP Gretzky to Minister Flynn Re: Ceasars Casino Strike

>> MPP Lisa Gretzky: Thank you Speaker my question is to the acting Premier the labour dispute is three weeks long. 2300 workers are ready to negotiate. They've been ready since day 1. But it takes two to bargain Speaker and cea SARS management hasn't shown they are willing -- they are anything but a willing partner. They canceled all programs up until May 19th. This isn't just any business. Speaker, casinos in Ontario operate in partnership with the OLG a division of this Liberal government. These 2300 workers make hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue that the casino takes in possible. They deserve respect and a partner in the negotiation process. Not someone that won't engage in bargaining. Speaker, will the Premier direct Caesar management to live up to its responsibilities and get back to the bargaining table.

>> Minister Kevin Flynn: Thank you to the member for that question Abo the Caesar strike Speaker. The province of Ontario have said this over and over again we have one of the best dispute resolution records in north America. When people are Collectively bargaining in this province and in about 98% of the cases, Mr. Speaker, we reach a Collective agreement without having to resort to a strike, a lockout and that is something we should be proud of. Thank you Speaker. Currently in cea SARS we have over 2,000 employees members of unifor 444 been on strike Speaker since April the 6th. At the time of the strike deadline they did reach a tentative agreement, Speaker. Not ratified by the members I'll follow up in the supplementary.

>> MPP Gretzky: Why did the Minister of of labour it takes two parties at the bargaining table and cea SARS is not bargaining. Mr. Speaker, let me be clear, nobody is asking the Premier to interfere with Collective bargaining we are asking her to make sure that management at cea SARS Windsor comes to the table in good faith. That is all. Cea SARS Windsor management hasn't even reached out to unifor to schedule dates. They are not wonderfulling to talk to -- willing to talk to the front line workers who provide services. E premie needs to know that losses to Windsor's economy are estimated to be in the millions and climbing. Speaker, workers can't bargain with themselves. They need a partner who is also committed to reaching a fair deal. Cea SARS unwillingness to come to the table isn't just on them. It's on the Premier. Because she's responsible for OLG and all government owned casinos. When will the Premier do the right thing and make sure that cea SARS management gets back to bargaining.

>> Minister Flynn: Thank you Speaker and thank you to the member for the supplementary. We have an excellent record of dispute resolution in this province. Some of the best arbitrators in the country some of the best mediators in the country and we bring them into situations like this Speaker. We offer them to the parties. In this case, an agreement was reached at the table Speaker. The agreement was sent to the membership, the membership did not ratify it Speaker. As a result of that, an April the 18th we had our mediators back into the situation Speaker. I agree with the member it's the responsibility of the employer and the union to make every effort to resolve their differences at the bargaining table Speaker. I don't know how the member is asking me as a Minister of labour to interfere in this dispute Speaker we don't do that. We provide assistance the best deal. Are those reached at the bargaining table we urge both sides to return to the table and strike a deal Speaker .

MPP McMeekin to Minister Milczyn (Coteau) Re: Basic Income Pilot

>> MPP Ted McMeekin: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, my questions for the Minister of housing. Speaker in our 2017 budget this government committed to creating more fairness across Ontario. Part of that commitment was the introduction of the basic income pilot. This pilot aims to determine how a basic income can expand opportunities and job prospects while providing greater security for people living on low incomes. The pilot was launched in four sites including my home riding of Hamilton and studies both randomized control trial and saturation trial. I've been happy to see the early and positive results. Our innovative basic income pilot is also receiving international recognition. The

basic income pilot was recently chosen as a finalist for fast company's annual. Best ideas award. could the Minister please update the House on the status of the basic income program?

>> Minister Peter Milczyn: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the member for the question and his life-long advocacy for social justice. So, Mr. Speaker, on the first anniversary of launching the basic income pilot I'm pleased to announce it is fully subscribed. 4,000 people are now satisfying payments from the three-year pilot. 2000 people have been placed in the control group which provides the pilot's evaluators on crucial data. Participants are telling us already how it's transforming their lives. Being able to pay the rent, buy groceries, and buy new clothes and helping them get back to school. Helping them turn their lives around. The basic income pilot is part of the government's plan to build everyone up in this province whether it's increasing the minimum wage, providing more housing, medicare, or other help it's important that we support our people. The bi is showing that our government invests in care as opposed to a government that would cut benefits for Ontario and call it deficiencies.

>> MPP McMeekin: Thank you Speaker and thank you to the Minister for that answer. Speaker I know that my constituents in Hamilton and the surrounding region enrolled in the project are already beginning to see the difference that a basic income is making -- a basic income is making on their lives. Alana is on the pilot and she and several others are in the legislature to commemorate the one-year anniversary of this pilot. This group and many others are willing to share their experiences at the upcoming basic income congress to be held in my beloved Hamilton this May. We're looking forward to hearing their stories and perspectives. Speaker, I'm proud on this side of the House that we continue to look for innovative ways to support low income Ontarians. Can the Minister please tell this House what the next steps are for the basic income program?

>> Minister Michael Coteau: Yeah I would like thank the member for the question and welcome the advocates joining us here in the legislature. Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to evaluate and test how the basic income can support vulnerable workers, improve health education, and housing outcomes for people on low income. However, Mr. Speaker, our government understands that more needs to be done to support all low income Ontarians. And that is why in our 2018 budget our government announced historic investments to social services. Mr. Speaker, \$2.3 billion the next three years will increase social assistance rates, change earning exemptions and eliminate rules I'm finally happy that the NDP has a plan. In social assistance but the real threat to social assistance in the province of Ontario is the Conservatives who in the last administration. Cut social assistance

MPP Hardeman to Minister Ballard Re: Landfill Location

>> MPP Ernie Hardeman: My question is to the Minister of municipal affairs. Currently the Minister of environment is required to approve a landfill. Demanding the right to have authority over landfill does the Minister believe that municipalities should have the opportunity over actions taken in their community?

>> Minister Chris Ballard: Well thanks Speaker. And thank you to the member for his advocacy around this issue. And we're taking his bill under careful review. Our first priority is, Speaker, to keep waste out of landfill through existing waste diversion efforts. We're keeping approximately 3 million tons of waste out of landfills every year. And through our waste free Ontario act Speaker which I regret to say the member opposite voted against, we're committed to doing even more. Our new model is going to shift more of the burden of reducing and reusing waste to producers. We expect this shift is going to save municipalities across Ontario about \$120 million a year. Still, Speaker, we recognize. That we have to have solutions in place for waste that can't be diverted.

>> MPP Hardeman: Veryh, Mr. Speaker, and back to the Minister of municipal affairs. I recently introduced a bill 16 respecting municipal authority over landfill. It's an act who would give municipalities the respect they deserve and give them a say over the location of landfills and ensure

they are willing hosts. Mr. Speaker, it's about respecting municipal authority in their communities. Will the Minister support my bill giving the municipalities the authority and to have a say or will he continue to deny them that right. And I would like the Minister of municipal affairs to answer the question as this is a municipal issue.

>> Minister Ballard: Well thank you Speaker, you know, and I seem to recall from my time on a municipal council there is nothing in the act that prevents a municipality around this issue right now. But I will leave that to the member opposite to debate. You know, I can tell you though Speaker from this portfolio the Minister of environment and climate change any decision regarding landfall requires independent nonpartisan staff with the ministry of environment to consult widely. Through thorough consultation with the public, with stakeholders, with indigenous communities, municipalities and others. And through this consultation, Speaker, ministry officials, they're able to identify and find solutions for any potential negative effects before decisions are made so Speaker we remain very committed to working with municipalities and communities to ensure that protected.

MPP Bisson to Minister Jaczek Re: WAHA Hospital Clean-Up

>> MPP Gilles Bisson: My question to the Minister. The community of Attawapiskat had their elect generated by way of diesel generators unfortunately in Attawapiskat like other communities. In this case Attawapiskat, there was a major diesel spill over a period of years that contaminated ground underneath what is now the daycare centre. What is now the hospital. What is now the ambulance garage, nurse's residence and other buildings in around that site being where the tanks used to be. There used to be an allocation but when we cleaned the spill at the hospital because of another spill, we utilized that money to pay for it. My question to you have we made a new reallocation of funds. And clean up the site.

>> Minister Helena Jaczek: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for this question and I am not familiar with the particular circumstances of this particular event that happened at some point in the past. I will commit to the member I will look into it in more depth but I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, our government is absolutely committed to the health of our first nations communities and I think we've demonstrated this type of commitment with the signature last year, the former Minister of health made an agreement with the Anishinabe and Health Canada outlining a path to transforming the health care system for our first nation. This is a health care facility. I certainly will look into the circumstances. And provide the member with a further response in the near future.

>> MPP Bisson: Thank you to be clear, Minister, your ministry made the allocation so the responsibility is accepted by Moh because much of where the spill is happened to be under Moh responsibility. So the community was concerned when I was there they were concerned everything has grounded to halt after they utilized that money to clean the spill that happened later on under the Waha hospital in Attawapiskat. So what we need is a commitment to make sure that the dollar that is supposed to be allocated for the cleanup which were five years ago worth 1 point of it will obviously be more than that today is reallocated so the community can do the cleanup and make sure that kids daycare centers, nursing and nursing residents and ambulance attendances and ambulances and people in the hospital are not at any risk and the community is -- any risk and the community is cleaned up.

>> Minister Jaczek: I certainly will look into the situation but it is a good opportunity to talk to some of our recently announced new initiatives we are providing funding directly to each of the 133 first nation communities in Ontario to strengthen access to culturally appropriate home and community care services and in this case if there is some interruption obviously we wish those vital services to be continued. And we are creating 16 new or expanded indigenous governed and community driven interprofessional primary care teams across Ontario. Providing culturally safe primary health care services and programs to some over 70,000 indigenous peoples. I have visited some fly-in communities I understand the issues on the ground. I certainly look into this particular situation.

MPP Qaadri to Minister Hunter Re: Advanced Education Expansion in Brampton

>> MPP Shafiq Qaadri: Thank you Speaker. My questions for the Minister, Speaker as you'll appreciate Ontario's economy is growing. We lead the G7 in economic growth and as you'll know we have the lowest unemployment rate in two decades. And of course that kind of economic growth will be accompanied by demographic growth in many of our communities. And by the way I would like to thank the Minister for presenting herself at Collegiate in Etobicoke North for the recent educational announcement. Speaker, Brampton is one such vibrant city the second fastest growing city in Canada. Youth population expected to grow by 20% by 2035 much so offer in the city of Brampton like strong economy, stable market place, growing transit system and of course inclusive community spirit. Speaker I would like to ask the Minister could she explain and detail more of the access to education initiative that her. Is executing for young people.

>> Minister Mitzi Hunter: Thank you Speaker and I want to thank the very dedicated and hard-working member of to be north for this question. -- Etobicoke North for this question. We have great communities and great education system a classroom of students here today and it's important that we give them hope for the future. Our government recognized that Brampton is a city that is really at the heart a great city and that is why, Mr. Speaker, that with the leadership of our Premier, we made a commitment to the people of Peel region. We promised that we will build a university campus. We asked universities and Colleges in Ontario to partner so that they could bring this vision to Brampton. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to stand in this House today to say that we have delivered on this commitment. Last week the member from Brampton West, the member of Mississauga Brampton South the member from Springdale and were pleased to announce that Ryerson College will develop a campus that is focused on the people of Brampton.

>> MPP Qaadri: Of course I'm completely aware of how people in Peel are thrilled by this new announcement courtesy of Ryerson and Sheridan and of course folks in Brampton want to stay in their community they've been calling for a local option for education and our government has delivered. And Speaker I want to again salute the Minister for initiatives and education in this knowledge based economy whether we're talking about full day care, computer coding in grade school increased graduation rates and the 235,000 folks availing themselves of the free tuition. My question Speaker is this. Would the Minister please outline more details about this educational investment in Peel region?

>> Minister Hunter: Thank you Speaker and thank you again to the member from Etobicoke North and I want to thank all of our caucus members from the Brampton and Peel region for championing this initiative. Speaker our government is ensuring that Brampton continues on its path to innovation because it's in the supercorridor. We want people to stay in their communities and with our programs like free tuition that we're offering we're making Colleges and universities more accessible. Our focus is to create talent pipeline in this community for science, technology, engineering and art as well as mathematics for students. Enhancing as already my talented and innovative regions through a focus on theme. That is why Speaker our government announced an investment of \$90 million to support this opportunity for the people of Brampton and Speaker tens of thousands. Smart companies are already doing business in the region. By building this campus buses will have a steady display.

MPP Hillier to Minister Naqvi Re: 2018 Budget

>> MPP Randy Hillier: To the Attorney General, the Attorney General is charged with providing advice to the Cabinet and protecting the integrity of the crown. In the past few weeks, the Premier has been campaigning on the public dime. At last count it was 39 different events across the

province and for that the Premier is under investigation. Will the Attorney General advise Cabinet and the pre to end this pernicious practice of campaigning on the tax payer's dime.

>> Minister Yasir Naqvi: Thank you very much Speaker. First of all I would highlight to the member opposite the Premier is under no investigation whatsoever. The members opposite have filed a serious complaint to elections Ontario and elections Ontario, of course, looked at all matters that are brought forward to them and they issue a template response as they have done so in this particular instance. But Speaker I am just -- I am just, you know, continuing to notice how the members opposite that Doug Ford team does not want the Premier to talk about the plan for care and opportunity. Per plan to build Ontario up. Her plan to create opportunity for hard been working Ontarians a plan that will ensure we expand ohip plus for children up to seniors 65 and older. A plan that ensure we increase the mainly to \$15 an hour. -- The minimum wage to \$ an hour. A plan that will put much needed investment in the health care system.

>> MPP Hillier: To the Attorney General the writing is on the wall for this tired uncaring and scandalous government. A line bme exposed the many suspected sketchy practices but the Premier continues to bend the rules and use tax payer money to campaign across the province. Will the Attorney General advise and instruct all of Cabinet not to delete e-mails or shred important documents that would obstruct or frustrate the chief electoral officer's investigation into these pernicious practices?

>> Minister Naqvi: Mr. Speaker, the people of Ontario want to know what Doug Ford is hiding why does he not want the media to follow him and to make sure they get to ask the important questions. Why does he, request doesn't he answer questions to the media when imposed to him because Speaker Doug Ford has an agenda of cuts, cuts and cuts. Doug Ford wants to cut taxes for large wealthy businesses. Doug Ford will cut minimum wage for hard working people. Doug Ford will cut services like. He wants to just cut, cut and cut Speaker.