

RE: Issues for Pre-Avail Brief

From: "Appave, Priscilla (OPO)" <priscilla.appave2@ontario.ca>
To: "Beaudry, Jennifer (OPO)" <jennifer.beaudry2@ontario.ca>, "Lazarus, Jordan (OPO)" <jordan.lazarus@ontario.ca>, "MacKenzie, Rebecca (OPO)" <rebecca.mackenzie@ontario.ca>, "Singh, Gurminder (OPO)" <gurminder.singh2@ontario.ca>, "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>, "Bevan, Andrew (OPO)" <andrew.bevan@ontario.ca>
Date: Fri, 24 Mar 2017 10:44:41 -0400

Niagara Catholic School Board Labour Issue

- We want parents to know that we share their concerns and will do everything we can to support students and parents.
- We encourage both parties to get back to the negotiation table.
- A provincial mediator has been involved in the discussions and will continue to assist, if asked to do so by the parties involved.
- We encourage parties to explore all options available to them to resolve the dispute, including the use of binding arbitration.

From: Beaudry, Jennifer (OPO)
Sent: March-24-17 10:14 AM
To: Lazarus, Jordan (OPO); MacKenzie, Rebecca (OPO); Singh, Gurminder (OPO); @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Bevan, Andrew (OPO)
Subject: Re: Issues for Pre-Avail Brief

Randy will ask about the labour issue at the Niagara Catholic School Board.
Jamie, CP24 will ask about polls
BNN might stay on topic

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Rogers network.

From: Lazarus, Jordan (OPO)
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2017 9:50 AM
To: MacKenzie, Rebecca (OPO); Singh, Gurminder (OPO); @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Bevan, Andrew (OPO)
Subject: RE: Issues for Pre-Avail Brief

FYI - Angus Reid Institute poll/Approval rating

Religious accommodation in schools – Peel District School Board & space for Friday prayers for Muslim students

- Ontario is a diverse province, strengthened by our desire to share and learn from one another.
- We cannot stress enough our commitment to fostering an education system where all students, parents, staff and members of the school community feel safe, welcomed and respected in our schools.
- To be clear, all school boards are required to have a religious accommodation guideline in place to help boards establish open, fair and transparent processes for

considering individual requests.

- It is our expectation that all public school boards comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- We will continue to work with the education community to identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers in order to support student achievement and well-being, honour diversity, and affirm respect for all in our schools.

Cap and Trade

- Ontario needs a realistic approach that balances action with affordability to fight climate change.
- That's why our plan – which includes a cap on the pollution businesses can release into the atmosphere – is best.
- It guarantees emission reductions at the cheapest price possible for people and the economy.
- And it reinvests every dollar, allowing us to invest up to \$1.9 B / year in green projects - like transit, electric vehicle incentives and housing retrofits – that fight climate change and save Ontarians money.
- Compare this to Patrick Brown's carbon tax scheme.
- His scheme would cost families and businesses four times more without guaranteeing any reductions.
- And it doesn't include the investments necessary to reduce costs for families and businesses.
- Inefficient, ineffective and unaffordable – that's how you'd define a plan that costs more but does less.

Winter Disconnections

- Our decision to ban winter disconnections is designed to protect Ontarians.
- Alongside our Fair Hydro Plan, it's also helping make our system more fair – something everyone can get behind.
- The OEB has let us know that all disconnected customers in Ontario have been contacted, and some, such as cottage owners, have elected not to be reconnected.
- I know the OEB will continue to work closely with utilities to make sure that all customers who require reconnection are reconnected without delay.
- Anyone who hasn't been reconnected and wishes to should contact their local utility.

Natural Gas Rates

- The OEB is an independent regulator with a mandate to protect the interests of Ontario ratepayers.
- They set energy rates so Ontarians know what to expect.
- The current price of natural gas is well below prices in 2009 and 2014, and remains consistent with historical levels.
- It's important to remember the price is determined by supply and demand and impacted by global events outside of our control.
- As these global prices go up or down, the price of here follows suit.
- The OEB passes on these market changes as increases or decreases to the price for customers.

Fair Hydro Plan Ads

- Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan will lower electricity bills by 25% on average for all residential customers across the province, and will also benefit half a million small businesses and farms.
- Our government also has a responsibility to raise awareness and communicate

information about programs and services that affect our daily lives.

- This includes informing Ontarians of changes to their electricity bills so that they can use this information to plan for the future as they manage their household budgets.
- The government is communicating these changes over a variety of channels, including informational advertisements.
- We are also driving Ontarians to a dedicated website where Ontarians can learn more about what these changes mean to them.
- On March 13, 2017, the Auditor General approved these advertisements, and found them to be in compliance with the Government Advertising Act

Federal Budget

- We're pleased to see that the federal government will be supporting Ontario's commitments to invest in infrastructure and build an innovation-driven economy supported by a highly skilled workforce.
- We were encouraged to see commitments to early learning and childcare, affordable housing and transit
- And we welcome the increased flexibility to Labour Market Development Agreements
- We will continue to work with our federal partners to assess how these new investments will integrate with our plans.

Housing Affordability

- A strong housing market is reflective of Ontario's strong economy, but we also know that housing affordability is a concern for many Ontarians.
- That's why in the Fall Economic Statement we announced that we were going to start collecting data about housing transactions in Ontario.
- It why we have also doubled the first time homebuyers rebate.
- We are taking part in the national working group and are monitoring the housing market very closely.

On Rent Control

- We understand that individuals and families are concerned about the rising costs of rental housing.
- This is why since 2003, we have committed over \$4B to affordable housing.
- We are also:
 - supporting the creation of over 20,000 affordable rental housing units;
 - making more than 275,000 repairs and improvements to social and affordable housing units; a
 - and, providing rental and down payment assistance to over 90,000 households in need.
- But we know that more needs to be done.
- The Ministry of Housing is currently developing a plan that looks at ways to address the rising cost of rental units, as a part of the review of the Residential Tenancies Act.
- We will have more to share in the weeks to come.

From: MacKenzie, Rebecca (OPO)

Sent: March-24-17 9:16 AM

To: Singh, Gurvinder (OPO); @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Bevan, Andrew (OPO)

Subject: Re: Issues for Pre-Avail Brief

Let's add housing affordability/rent control. Thx

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Rogers network.

From: Singh, Gurvinder (OPO)

Sent: Friday, March 24, 2017 9:12 AM

To: @OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management; Bevan, Andrew (OPO)

Subject: Issues for Pre-Avail Brief

Hi all,

Put this list together on behalf of Jenn – I'm sure she'll have others to add/updates once she gets to speak to reporters.

Angus Reid Institute poll/Approval rating

Religious accommodation in schools – Peel District School Board & space for Friday prayers for Muslim students

Hydro disconnections

Cap-and-trade auction

Federal budget

Natural gas rate increases