

Evening Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction Plan - March 8, 2018

From: Electronic Media <cab.amedia@ontario.ca>
To: "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>, "Bevan, Andrew (OPO)" <andrew.bevan@ontario.ca>, "McEachern, Gillian (OPO)" <gillian.mceachern@ontario.ca>, "Donelson, Philip (OPO)" <philip.donelson@ontario.ca>, "Bossin, Bryan (OPO)" <bryan.bossin@ontario.ca>, "Tomney, Genevieve (OPO)" <genevieve.tomney@ontario.ca>, "Jancik, Mike (OPO)" <mike.jancik@ontario.ca>, "Basha, Cindy (CAB)" <cindy.basha@ontario.ca>, "Bateman, April (CAB)" <april.bateman@ontario.ca>, "Betzner, Lynn (CAB)" <lynn.betzner@ontario.ca>, "Bourdeau, Annette (CAB)" <annette.bourdeau2@ontario.ca>, "Bromm, William (CAB)" <william.bromm2@ontario.ca>, "Brown, Kyle (CAB)" <kyle.r.brown2@ontario.ca>, "Carrington, Sharlyn (CAB)" <sharlyn.carrington2@ontario.ca>, "Colford, Jonathan (CAB)" <jonathan.colford@ontario.ca>, "Covert, Leah (CAB)" <leah.covert@ontario.ca>, "Curtin, Marybeth (CAB)" <marybeth.curtin3@ontario.ca>, "Davidson, Steven (CAB)" <steven.davidson@ontario.ca>, "Deschamps, Angèle (CAB)" <angele.deschamps@ontario.ca>, "Di Giovanni, Robert (CAB)" <robert.digiovanni@ontario.ca>, "Dicks, Steve (CAB)" <steve.dicks2@ontario.ca>, "Doose, Ann (CAB)" <ann.doose2@ontario.ca>, "Evans, Kirsten (CAB)" <kirsten.evans2@ontario.ca>, "Farrow, Alicia (CAB)" <alicia.farrow@ontario.ca>, "Forrest, Jamie (CAB)" <jamie.forrest@ontario.ca>, "Foster, Robert (CAB)" <robert.foster@ontario.ca>, "Fournier, Pierre (CAB)" <pierre.fournier@ontario.ca>, "Gibbs, Sarah (MTCS)" <sarah.gibbs@ontario.ca>, "Green, Patrice (CAB)" <patrice.green2@ontario.ca>, "Greson, Sean (CAB)" <sean.greson2@ontario.ca>, "Hall, Caspar (CAB)" <caspar.hall@ontario.ca>, "Hartley, Hillary (CAB)" <hillary.hartley@ontario.ca>, "Heitshu, Tania (CAB)" <tania.heitshu2@ontario.ca>, "Hwang, Wendy (CAB)" <wendy.hwang@ontario.ca>, "Jonsson, Rachel (CAB)" <rachel.jonsson2@ontario.ca>, "Kwamena, Boafoa (CAB)" <boafoa.kwamena@ontario.ca>, "Lepage, Guy (CAB)" <guy.lepage@ontario.ca>, "Lewis, Allison (CAB)" <allison.lewis@ontario.ca>, "Ma, Cesue (CAB)" <cesue.ma@ontario.ca>, "Maddock, Michael (CAB)" <michael.maddock@ontario.ca>, "McElgunn, Jim (CAB)" <jim.mcelgunn@ontario.ca>, "McMichael, Rhonda (CAB)" <rhonda.mcmichael@ontario.ca>, "Paech, Arielle (CAB)" <arielle.paech2@ontario.ca>, "Peyer, Murielle (CAB)" <murielle.peyer2@ontario.ca>, "Pollett, Rene (CAB)" <rene.pollett2@ontario.ca>, "Pontikis, Maria (CAB)" <maria.pontikis@ontario.ca>, "Roach, Jackie (CAB)" <jackie.roach4@ontario.ca>, "Scott, Adrienne (CAB)" <adrienne.scott@ontario.ca>, "Selvadasan, Assumpta (CAB)" <som.assumpta.selvadasan2@ontario.ca>, "Skene, Katherine (CAB)" <katherine.skene@ontario.ca>, "Stinson, Jeffrey (CAB)" <jeffrey.stinson@ontario.ca>, "Sumi, Craig (CAB)" <craig.sumi@ontario.ca>, "Tomescu, Alexandra (CAB)" <alexandra.tomescu@ontario.ca>, "van der Valk, Jennifer (CAB)" <jennifer.vandervalk3@ontario.ca>, "Wheeler, Stewart (CAB)" <stewart.wheeler@ontario.ca>, "Wolgelerenter, Debbie (CAB)" <debbie.wolgelerenter2@ontario.ca>, "Yoo, Sarah (CAB)" <sarah.yoo@ontario.ca>.

"Baker, Carys (ENERGY)" <carys.baker@ontario.ca>, "Berry, James (ENERGY)" <james.berry5@ontario.ca>, "Bodrug, Andrew (ENERGY)" <andrew.bodrug@ontario.ca>, "Campbell, David (ENERGY)" <david.campbell2@ontario.ca>, "Coker, Meaghan (ENERGY)" <meaghan.coker@ontario.ca>, "Den Heijer, Kevin (ENERGY)" <kevin.denheijer@ontario.ca>, "Esdaile, Trevor (ENERGY)" <trevor.esdaile@ontario.ca>, "Festeryga, Katherine (ENERGY)" <som.1katherine.festeryga@ontario.ca>, "McGrath, Jessica (ENERGY)" <jessica.mcgrath@ontario.ca>, "Moseley-Williams, Kate (ENERGY)" <kate.moseley-williams@ontario.ca>, "Nekolaichuk, Colin (ENERGY)" <colin.nekolaichuk@ontario.ca>, "Olsheski, Mark (ENERGY)" <mark.olsheski@ontario.ca>, "Ramasra, Raynier (ENERGY)" <raynier.ramasra@ontario.ca>, "Ruttan, Craig (ENERGY)" <som.craig.ruttan@ontario.ca>, "Teliszewsky, Andrew (ENERGY)" <andrew.teliszewsky@ontario.ca>, "Thompson, Rachel (ENERGY)" <rachel.thompson@ontario.ca>, "Tresise, Landon (ENERGY)" <landon.tresise@ontario.ca>, "Tretiakov, Iliia (ENERGY)" <ilia.tretiakov@ontario.ca>, "Walman, Evan (ENERGY)" <evan.walman@ontario.ca>, "Hansen, Alice (ENERGY)" <alice.hansen@ontario.ca>, "An, Derrick (OPO)" <derrick.an@ontario.ca>, "Leisk, Madison (OPO)" <madison.leisk@ontario.ca>, "Porter, Maddy (OPO)" <maddy.porter@ontario.ca>, "Whittington, Margot (OPO)" <margot.whittington2@ontario.ca>, "Yaqubian, Farnaz (OPO)" <farnaz.yaqubian@ontario.ca>, "Riggs, Matt (ENERGY)" <matt.riggs@ontario.ca>
Cc: "Sumi, Craig (CAB)" <craig.sumi@ontario.ca>, "Di Giovanni, Robert (CAB)" <robert.digiovanni@ontario.ca>, "Stinson, Jeffrey (CAB)" <jeffrey.stinson@ontario.ca>, "Nutter, George (ENERGY)" <george.nutter@ontario.ca>, "Halford, Gavin (ENERGY)" <som.gavin.halford@ontario.ca>, "Ma, Cesue (CAB)" <cesue.ma@ontario.ca>, "Law, Sally (CAB)" <sally.law@ontario.ca>, Electronic Media <cab.amedia@ontario.ca>

Date: Thu, 08 Mar 2018 21:00:33 -0500

Attachments: 20180308 - Media Scan - Hydro Rate Reduction (Evening).doc (69.63 kB)

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MEDIA SCAN: HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

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2018/03/07 20:55 - PostMedia
torontosun.com
Section: Columnists
By: James Wallace
Published: 2018/03/08
Story ID: TSWO201803080006

Toronto Sun Wallace: 8 Billion Reasons Not To Vote Liberal

There is a price, after all, to Kathleen Wynne's free-for-all re-election plans.

Another broken promise and another (\$8-billion) deficit.

Wynne won't be able to shake the stink of scandal, corruption and mismanagement hovering over the soon-to-be corpse of her Liberal government before the June 7 election.

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne (DAVE ABEL/Toronto Sun)

A new poll by DART Insight suggests 81% of Ontarians think it's time to change governments - a stunningly dismal condemnation, particularly given the survey was conducted with Conservatives at one another's throats during Patrick Brown's bid to recapture his leadership.

The Liberals are faring poorly outside Toronto and within, among men and women, rich, poor and middle class.

This latest deficit news won't help.

Finance Minister Charles Sousa had the grim task Wednesday of trotting out the bad news his government is again breaking a promise to balance the provincial budget.

It means Ontario Liberals will have run deficits in 12 of their past 15 budgets - 80% of the time - since taking office in 2003.

Sousa made predictable and laughable promise of "a clear plan to track back to balance" in future and spun the deficit failure as a necessary step to pay for needed "social and developmental services.

"For me, good public and social policy must also be good economic policy," Sousa said. "So we are making a choice."

Ontario voters will make a choice in June, as well.

The irony of Sousa's statement is that Ontario's Liberals have never adequately grasped the true meaning of good public, social and economic policy.

The Liberals are promising free prescription drugs for youth, lower hydro rates and will no doubt pitch \$8 billion new ways make Ontario more "fair" in the coming budget.

Meanwhile, the province's electricity system is a mess. We have nation-leading hydro rates and Liberal plans to cut rates by 25% will cost taxpayers \$39.4 billion.

Ontario's health-care system is a mess. Our hospital emergency rooms are chronically overcrowded and the province has chronic nursing, doctor and bed shortages.

We have abandoned the mentally ill to the streets and the hell that is their daily life.

Our social housing is old, run down and a nightmare for too many vulnerable people. So are our jails. Our courts are clogged and under-resourced.

Congestion is choking highways and the economy around the Greater Toronto Area and provincial transit leadership has been a joke and a failure.

Ontario's economy has seen job growth in Toronto and Ottawa but little elsewhere, and we've lost 75,000 manufacturing jobs and much of the sector to Mexico and the U.S.

Good public policy respects and serves all citizens. It embraces economic growth as a means to lift all people. It reinforces common goals and aspirations, not individual differences and grievances.

Fifteen years ago, the Liberals turned tax cuts and reducing red tape into dirty words and made deficits a virtue.

That's why they've been such bad managers.

It's why the province is in such a mess.

And why nothing will change until they're gone.