

Morning Media Scan: Hydro Rate Reduction - June 1, 2018

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MEDIA SCAN: HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

June 1, 2018

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Print Coverage

Owen Sound Sun Times: Liberals listened to rural Ontario; A5; 2018.06.01

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Liberals listened to rural Ontario

From the minute I put my name forward and said I'd like to represent the people of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound at Queen's Park as MPP, people have been asking, "Why did you choose to run Liberal?" It's a question I still get every single day as I'm going door-to-door and meeting constituents at events and on the street.

Participating in the planning around the reduction in electricity rates inspired me to find a way to get more proactively involved in the decisions affecting our rural communities. I'm often part of the "clean-up crew," tasked with trying to find seemingly impossible solutions to persistent problems such as income inequity, unattainable/unaffordable housing, conflicting regulations and government red tape. It's rewarding work, yet I'm convinced there's room for greater impact earlier on in the process. I've now sat on three provincial committees representing electricity customers and have been able to advocate for stronger consumer protections, an increase in the Ontario Electricity Savings Program (OESP) monthly credit, and a ban on winter disconnections.

What I learned in working with our current government is that the Liberals have the capacity to listen to the needs of small town and rural Ontarians, when we bring solutions to the table. My dedication to fiscal responsibility, having built and managed a \$1 million+ budget to benefit Bruce and Grey communities, meant there was no way I could get behind the PCs' lack of a platform and promises to slash services. And while there are pieces of the NDP platform I can live with, Grey and Bruce are just too vulnerable to the economic devastation that would result from an anti-nuclear party coming to power.

We've been growing here in Grey and Bruce, where unemployment is less than four per cent. Ontario is growing under the Liberal government, too; we're outpacing the growth rate of the entire G7 for the third year in a row.

The Liberal government has begun implementing policies that level the playing field for all Ontarians, not

just the wealthiest one per cent. The new minimum wage, tuition reforms and the OHIP+ program are ways in which this government protects and supports the most vulnerable in our province. Publicly funded prescriptions for youth, massive investments in health care and developmental services, publicly funded tuition, are all working to improve the lives of Ontarians in real, tangible ways.

With over 3,000 farms and more than half a million farmed acres of land, Grey County is the number one producer for hay, apples, sheep and lambs and is the second top producer of cattle in all of Ontario. And in Bruce County, our farms generate more than \$255 million annually in gross sales including corn, soybeans, string beans, canola, winter wheat, beef, lamb, pork and more. Agriculture is complemented by a variety of support and processing industries, giving us local food in our restaurants and shops.

In Ontario, we care for each other. All of us are work together - through government - to do the things we cannot do by ourselves.

I've spent my lifetime in community work, the past 13 years as the executive director of the United Way (currently on leave). Helping people navigate our systems is both a joy at being able to make a difference, and a frustration that I see so much more to be done. Some voters I've met have said they're sorry that this particular election is the one I chose to run in, but the bottom line is that I'm #sorrynotsorry. There's a lot at stake, and this is exactly the right time for me to step up and make sure our voices are heard when the decisions that affect our lives are being made at Queen's Park.

Thank you to all of the supporters who've stepped up and volunteered your time and skills to my campaign. It truly takes a village. And thank you to everyone across the riding who gets out and votes in this election. Exercise your right to be heard on June 7! Francesca Dobbyn Liberal Candidate for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound

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Sarnia Observer: Voters need to look at Liberal, NDP record; A4; 2018.06.01

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Voters need to look at Liberal, NDP record

This is in response to David Nichols'letter (Sarnia Observer, May 29).

One may have expected someone from Toronto to wax nostalgic for Kathleen Wynne, but no one in this area ever will. "Brilliant," "compassionate" and "integrity" are words that should never be used to describe Wynne or any member of this Liberal government who have run roughshod over the people of Ontario for 15 years.

In the last 10 years alone, Dalton McGuinty and Wynne have more than doubled our provincial debt to \$350 billion. The interest on the debt is \$12 billion a year, equal to the third or fourth-largest ministry in the government and behind health care and education. Mr. Nichols, can you imagine how much money could go to health care and education for Ontarians if there had even been a modicum of fiscal restraint by the Liberals? Instead they choose to waste money or buy votes through the teachers'unions or public service unions or whatever kind of a scheme they can come up with.

Cleaner and greener electricity? Ask the people of Chatham-Kent who have had their water wells spoiled while having windmills jammed down their throats.

Ontario's auditor general states that Ontarians paid \$37 billion more for electricity over eight years than

they should have due to overpriced "green energy" and poor government planning. Now to cover up the mismanagement, Wynne has doubled down on the mess by foisting the debt to future generations by "giving people reductions" on their hydro bills in a bid to get re-elected.

The latest scam this government has created is the carbon tax, where the cost of everything we use or buy has increased while they export \$450 million of taxpayers' money a year to Quebec and California to help reduce carbon emissions in Ontario. It is a scheme that would be so laughable if it didn't hurt Ontarians everyday of their lives. Yet the Liberals just use it to squeeze more tax dollars from everyone.

E-health, gas plants, selling Hydro One, carbon tax, election scandals, 300,000 good manufacturing jobs gone, school closings, hospital mismanagement.

I ask anyone who reads this to just think of all the people who could have been helped in this province if the last 15 years of Liberal government waste hadn't occurred.

And Mr. Nichols, it is not surprising to see the last line in your letter where you ask anyone who is a Liberal to vote for the NDP. With Andrea Horvath and the NDP, you will get exactly the same. There is no difference in either of those left-wing ideological driven parties that feel they know what is best for you and they will take your money and spend it on their ideologically-driven social engineering plans.

I ask voters to take a look at the history of the Liberals and the NDP: Do you want more of the same government waste, which in fact actually hurts people in the long run or do you want a government that will respect what you the taxpayer are providing for the good of all?

Karl Vanderzwaart

Brigden

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National Post: Ontario's carbon parties; FP11; 2018.06.01

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BYLINE: Todd Myers And Christine Van Geyn

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Ontario's carbon parties

If fighting climate change is a priority for Ontario politicians, they have a funny way of showing it. Whether the cap-and-trade carbon tax should be kept or scrapped is a key issue in the Ontario provincial election, with the NDP's Andrea Horwath and the Liberals' Kathleen Wynne in favour of keeping it, and PC leader Doug Ford in favour of repeal.

But what's strange isn't the idea of repealing it - after all, the auditor general found that cap-and-trade would cost \$8 billion by 2020, and achieve no meaningful greenhouse gas reductions. Rather, what's bizarre is that both Wynne and Horwath want to keep cap-and-trade while simultaneously favouring policies that are explicitly designed to undercut the purpose of the tax.

The theory behind the carbon tax is that increasing the price of greenhouse gases will change behaviour, so people reduce their CO2 emissions. When asked if Canadians should expect higher fuel prices with a carbon tax, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau responded that high prices are "incentives" for "behavioural change," and this is "exactly what we want."

This is a hard pill to swallow for Canadians now facing record gas prices. But the prime minister's logic is right: A carbon tax is intended to create higher prices to drive behavioural change. But Wynne and

Horwath are undercutting this driver by supporting perverse pricing policies.

First, the Wynne government is intentionally hiding the carbon tax from Ontarians' bills. The tax is not listed on our receipt at the gas pumps or on bills for natural gas. Instead, the carbon tax is lumped in with the "delivery" charge for natural gas. By obscuring the cost of the carbon tax, consumers aren't being given the pricing information that pushes them to reduce their gas and heating bills. Instead, consumers see a higher price, and assume it is part of broader price fluctuations.

To its credit, the NDP favoured disclosing the cost of the tax, and joined with the PCs to support a private member's bill requiring that natural gas companies disclose the price as a separate line item. The bill ultimately failed, but if the NDP forms the next government and keeps cap-and-trade intact, it should uphold its commitment of cost transparency by requiring disclosure of the tax on bills.

The second perverse policy move by the Wynne government is even more problematic, and it is a policy supported and doubled down on by Horwath. The Wynne government is borrowing money to lower electricity rates driven up by the carbon tax. The government said it would pour \$1.32 billion into electricity subsidies to offset price increases. The auditor general found that, despite these subsidies, electricity prices would still increase by 23 per cent by 2020.

Hearing this, the government poured even more money into subsidies and took on tremendous debt. The "Fair Hydro Plan" will cost upwards of \$93 billion, all to save \$24 billion in higher electricity costs the government itself imposed. The NDP is going further, by pledging to use 25 per cent of cap-and-trade revenues to subsidize low-income households and trade-exposed industries, so they don't even feel the cost of cap-and-trade. So much for behavioural change.

Why would these politicians spend billions to undermine their own policies? The simple answer is politics. Carbon taxes come with a political cost, but they also earn credit with green groups. Adopting a carbon tax, but then hiding it from voters, offers the best of both worlds politically. For taxpayers and the environment, however, it is worst of all worlds - the environment doesn't benefit, and taxpayers find themselves further in debt after the government attempts to bribe them with their own money.

Rather than trusting politicians to protect the environment, it is time to give families tools so they can choose how to reduce their own impact. Smart thermostats, smartphone apps that track electricity use, and other technologies give consumers the information they need to cut energy use. These are the policies all of Ontario's political leaders should favour while scrapping the carbon tax.

Todd Myers is the director for the environment at the Washington Policy Centre. Christine Van Geyn is Ontario director, Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

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