

QP Newsletter: QP Briefing and Queens Park Today

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Good Morning,

Please find attached the March 7, 2017 issues of QP Briefing and Queens Park Today.

QP Briefing

Headlines

- o (P-2) Premier Kathleen Wynne has [gone to the opinion pages of *The Toronto Star*](#) to relay her hydro plan is "absolutely the fairer way forward." So, let's just move on already? Ontario's first minister writes she doesn't want political credit for the overall 25-per-cent

average cut from hydro bills, as the opposition benches contend, and that she didn't expect fanfare when dialling constituents with the news last week. Says Wynne: "This is just the right thing to do — policy wise and for families across the province."

Queens Park Today

In the park

- o (P.2) Ottawa Mayor **Jim Watson** was at Queen's Park to meet with Premier Wynne.

Wynne

and Watson discussed electricity prices, infrastructure investment, Canada 150 and the fentanyl crisis in Ottawa.

- o (P.2) On questions about possible Liberal leadership "usurpers" in her midst, Wynne said is extremely important that political parties have strong succession planning, but that she has a "strong, loyal team." The premier said she is focused on getting 25 per cent hydro reductions onto Ontarians' electricity bills by the summer—and feels pressure to make it happen.

Question period

PC questions

Hydro prices

- o (P.5) PC leader **Patrick Brown** began question period by referencing a *Globe and Mail* weekend [editorial](#) calling Premier Wynne's electricity a "power move" that is "simply rigging consumers' bills during an election year."
- o (P.5) Brown said Wynne's plan is not about being a "thoughtful government coming to the aid of consumers"—it is all about Wynne's political survival.
- o (P.5) Wynne said the plan is about giving people relief on their hydro bills and spreading the costs of improving the system over a longer period of time.

- o (P.5) Brown said he has written to the Financial Accountability Officer requesting a full accounting of the long-term costs of Wynne's electricity scheme.
- o (P.5) Wynne said the FAO was briefed on her plan last week and her government is happy to give his office any information it needs to review her plan.
- o (P.5) Liberal MPPs heckled Brown asking, "What would you do?" and referenced his appearance on Newstalk 1010 last week that was mocked on social media because
- o (P.5) Brown stumbled when asked about the PC's hydro plan.
- o (P.5) (The audio is available [here](#) under March 3 Free-For-All Round 1).

OPG North Bay

- o (P.5) PC Finance critic **Vic Fedeli** asked about job losses at the OPG facility in North Bay.
- o (P.5) Fedeli said if the province plans to relocate dozens of employees from North Bay, why is it doing it by stealth.
- o (P.5) Economic Development Minister **Brad Duguid** did not give a direct answer. He said it is a "sensitive issue" and not the government's role to get involved in human resources matters.
- o (P.5) Later in the day, OPG [confirmed](#) with the *North Bay Nugget* that its North Bay plant will close this year, impacting 20 jobs

NDP questions

Hydro prices

- o (P.6) NDP leader **Andrea Horwath** said the premier has spent years saying her government could do nothing about hydro prices because the Ontario Energy Board sets rates.
- o (P.6) She asked why the government did not act sooner instead of denying over and over again that the crisis facing ratepayers was real?
- o (P.6) Wynne said her government has been working for many months on finding a solution to help people with their electricity bills.
- o (P.6) Horwath said her plan to repurchase Hydro One shares will bring in \$7 billion for the province, compared to the premier's plan that will give away an additional \$25-\$40

billion to Wynne's banker friends.

- o **(P.6)** The NDP leader repeated calls for the premier to cancel the sell-off of any more shares of Hydro One.

Toronto Hydro

- o **(P.6)** NDP MPP **Peter Tabuns** asked the government whether rumours that Hydro One is negotiating to purchase Toronto Hydro are true.
- o **(P.6)** Tabuns said you can't trust this government because they will spend months denying things that end up being true—like the Hydro One sell off.
- o **(P.6)** Duguid said there are “no discussions going on between our government and the city of Toronto on this matter.”
- o **(P.6)** He said he does not know where the rumours came from.