

Hansard: Fedeli to Sousa -- Ontario Budget

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INSTANT HANSARD

>> MPP Fedeli: Thank you. My question's for the Minister of finance. First they disparage the auditor general. Then they disparage the financial accountability officer. And now they disparage Kevin Paige, the former budget officer. In the 1990s, Ontario's average income was 10% above the national average. But in 2012, income in Ontario fell below the national average for the first time ever. In fact, between 2005 and 2015, Ontario families saw the slowest rate of income growth of any province in Canada. Once the envy of the country, middle class Ontarians now struggle. They work harder, pay more and get less under this Liberal government. Mr. Speaker, why has Liberal government spent 14 years allowing the middle-class families to struggle. To keep their heads above water?

>> Minister Sousa: Mr. Speaker, that is rich coming from that side of the House. We're providing for an increase in minimum wage that they are now denying the people of Ontario, Mr. Speaker. Stand up -- people of Ontario -- 5.9% unemployment rate the lowest it's been and it's 31 months below the national average. We will continually support everyone in this province for the sake of the families of this province, Mr. Speaker. They're putting at risk their live hood. They are instituting a much more expensive carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Ontario. We recognize -- We need to make it competitive for business as competitive for the people of Ontario where everyone can share in that growth. That is why we are increasing minimum wage to \$15, and they are not.

>> MPP Fedeli: Back to the Minister. This government brought in some of the largest tax increases in Ontario's history. Between the health tax, the H.S.T. And other fees, the Liberals have made life unaffordable. Families every day email and call our offices. They share their stories and they tell us they just don't have any money left. That is why we can't trust this Liberal government, and that is why a P.C. Government will reduce income taxes for the middle class. That's why a P.C. Government will increase the Ontario sales tax credits, and that's why an Ontario P.C. Government will make life more affordable for Ontario families, Speaker. That's what is fair. Why won't the Liberals make life affordable for Ontario families?

>> Minister Sousa: So, Mr. Speaker, we know their plan in the past. We hear it now going forward. It's not much of a plan because what they're going to do in order to achieve deficits no less, Mr. Speaker. They're promoting deficit spending going forward and we are going to balance this year, next year and the year after that. And in order for them to achieve even a little bit of that deficit that they're proposing, they're going to go back to firing nurses, closing hospitals, reducing funding for health care. And, Mr. Speaker, we have been disciplined and determined in our plan to recover and plan to come to balance and it's being achieved. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are going to put our economy in harm's way by taking extensive actions which they're proposing which will

definitely put us at a disadvantage over jurisdictions around the world. We will continue to support Ontario.

>> MPP Fedeli: Back to the Minister. Speaker, this is about trust. This is about looking out for Ontario families across Ontario. This is about making life more affordable. That is why we need to lower taxes in Ontario. After years of line rals raiding middle-class families to pay their Liberal insiders. If you want to know what the Liberals will do, just look at what they've done for the last 14 years. The Ontario P.C.S will make life more affordable. Speaker, why do the Liberals continue to make it harder for Ontario families to succeed?

>> Minister Sousa: It is all about trust, Mr. Speaker, and I can tell you this. We can trust this government to the continue to fight for the people of Ontario, while the opposition, you can trust them to cut the very measures that matter to Ontarians. I can tell you this, Mr. Speaker. When we provided for free medicare for everyone under the age of 25 for pharmacare they voted against that, Mr. Speaker. They'll take that away. When we were talking about providing for fre tuition for students so they can get a better start in life, they voted against that as well, Mr. Speaker. And that's what you can trust from that side of the House. We can also trust that the opposition, federally, when the leader of the opposition informs power, voted in the largest deficit in our history. And the largest debt increase in Canadian history to pay for the leader of the opposition. And the critic now stands here and suggests that somehow cutting revenue. As well as -- and, Mr. Speaker, cutting revenues and going into deficit spending is not what's best for people of Ontario. We need to provide for programs and services that --

N.B.: Transcripts are captured by a closed captioning system and may contain errors.