

# Re: Issues for Pre-Avail Brief

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**From:** "Bevan, Andrew (OPO)" <andrew.bevan@ontario.ca>  
**To:** "Lazarus, Jordan (OPO)" <jordan.lazarus@ontario.ca>, "MacKenzie, Rebecca (OPO)" <rebecca.mackenzie@ontario.ca>, "Singh, Gurvinder (OPO)" <gurvinder.singh2@ontario.ca>, "@OPO-Media Relations and Issues Management" <opo-mediarelationsandissuesmgmt@msgov.gov.on.ca>  
**Date:** Fri, 24 Mar 2017 10:16:39 -0400

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On Fair hydro plan please the 4 year bit always

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Rogers network.

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

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## 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:
  - o supporting the creation of over 20,000 affordable rental housing units;
  - o making more than 275,000 repairs and improvements to social and affordable housing units; a
  - o 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.

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**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.

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**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