

TRANSCRIPT – Patrick Brown on CFRA 580 – August 15, 2017

MPP: Patrick Brown

Media: CFRA 580 (Evan Solomon)

[START TRANSCRIPT]

Solomon: Kathleen Wynne speaking to the Association of Municipalities – 444 municipalities' right here in Ottawa – thousands of delegates. And they want one thing, well some of them do anyway, they want the HST to go up so they can pay of infrastructure deficit. I have called this the ugly unicorn. You may wish for it, but it isn't going to happen politically. Not even the Liberals are going to do it. But what about Patrick Brown, leader of the Progressive Conservative party of Ontario. He joins me now, Mr. Brown welcome back to town.

Brown:

- Great to be on your show again

Solomon: It is great to have you on the program. Let's – let's talk about this HST. Municipalities say – hey and they make a good case, let's be fair. It think politically it's differently. Let's just – they say property tax is not enough. That base is not enough for us to fund the infrastructure deficit. We need more revenue. Hike the HST by a point. Would you do it?

Brown

- No
- I'm not interested in tax increases
- If I lead a government, the only way taxes are going to go is down
- But having said that, I do believe we need to better by municipalities
- And there are areas where I think we can help them manage their budgets
- Because the reality is a lot of municipalities are struggling to make ends meet
- Alright no it's not all municipalities pushing for this tax increase
- The Mayor Jim Watson said it's not something he was pushing
- And so, I did have a lot of municipalities tell me that that might have been AMO's push
- But it wasn't theirs
- But here what I want to fix Evan
- You know we're spending – this HST increase is to get \$5-billion
- But we're spending \$190-billion in Ontario on infrastructure in the next 13 years
- According to the Auditor General, because we don't measure performance, because we don't measure outcomes
- Because we don't – we don't have competent management on infrastructure file, we could be seeing cost overruns of 25%
- That's tens of billions of dollars

- And there's real examples of this
- They built the bridge in Pickering
- Part of the bridge they built upside down
- They repaved the road near Mississauga every two years instead of every 15 years
- I want to make sure that every infrastructure dollar that the province invests in is spent in a transparent manner
- In an effective manner
- And that way, the dollars that are meant to go to municipalities will actually get to municipalities

*Solomon: But do you think it's enough? I mean the point that the municipalities are making is you can't just clean up the crap – and I think there's a lot of it. That bridge being one of them. Where – where the – I think it was ****inaudible**** that was built upside down. But it's not enough, right? ****crosstalk*****

Brown

- According to according to the Auditor General it's tens of billions
- And they're asking for \$5-billion
- This is tens of billion because the government was asleep at a switch
- But there are other areas that we can help
- Let me give you another example Evan
- Healthcare's never been a municipal responsibility
- Always been a provincial responsibility
- But we've seen is the downloading by ****inaudible**** of healthcare contributions
- The great example is mental health
- Right now you've got police forces that are telling me that sometimes 50% of their calls are mental health calls
- And because the province isn't funding mental health properly, you have police officers waiting at emergency for six hours
- You have huge new policing cost on municipalities that they can't afford
- What I want to do is to make sure we have fundamental that can respond to 911 call
- In the pilot project done have been done by some municipalities, this really works
- This really bring a cost down
- And frankly the better way to care for people in need is that there are ideas like that that I'm working on
- I do think we can do better by municipalities
- And that's an example of one area

Solomon: Okay, so when municipalities come to you, they – and they demand this HST 1%, you got to explain to them you're not going to give it to them. So what do you tell them?

Brown

- Listen, no municipalities are pushing me on it
- I think they know the Progressive Conservative leader, that's not a pitch that's going to resonate
- I'm not on for tax increases
- But what I have said to them is that we're going to do a better job on the current infrastructure allocation
- It's \$190-billion
- we're going to do better on – on mental health responsibilities of the province
- we're also going to reform joint instead of liability
- we're going to help them with the natural gas expansion
- there's a number of areas
- there's real municipal needs that we're there for
- and I can tell you Evan, the response has been quite positive with – with municipal leaders here in Ottawa

*Solomon: That's interesting. We'll talk to Andrea Horwath in a minute about that. Let's talk about where we are here, because look – and I've said this on air Patrick Brown – no party, the Liberals, the NDPs, no one's going to ask for an HST hike. It's just not going to do it. It's just not – it's not **inaudible** right now. It's not – with less than a year to the election, but –*

Brown

- Not now
- Not ever
- **crosstalk**

Solomon: Well not – not ever for you. Okay, fair enough. That – that's your word on that. This is the no new tax thing. I get that. What do you – tell me a bit about your own party. There's – I had, as you know, when you expelled Kanata MPP Jack MacLaren from the party, I had him on this program. And he basically lost it at me. He was screaming at me. I don't know. I never met the man. But he was going at it like I had done – you know, I had stolen his dog. But that's fine. Fair enough. And –

Brown:

- But how can they scream at you?
- A nice guy like you how can they scream at you?

Soloman: Hey hey screaming at me is actually probably a good sign for Jack I-I-I cheer him on on that, but he's formed this Trillium party, and there's been a lot of folks, and you know this, Marjory LeBreton who is a former Senator and – and – uh she's been concerned about what happened in West Nepean. You've got uh – uh – Thomas Mooney who has now quit his bid for the Guelph nomination, and I'll quote lately there's been a whole lot of warning flags across the PC party landscape. There's concerns about you. Is this just a small beans or is this Patrick Brown you've got to get your team in order if you want to – If you want to get in the game here.

Brown:

- Well – first of all, uh- the fact that we have so many people wanting to run for the party, the fact that we've got more members than we've ever had in our party history is a good problem to have
- Uh- listen - right now Wynne and uh - the NDP are struggling to find candidates to run
- Um but there are two issues you raise
- The first one Jack McLaren um – you know uh he wore out my patience
- He can't disparage Francophones, he can't disparage women, uh and expect to be part of the modern inclusive PC party uh that I'm building
- As leader of the Party, I have to make those decisions and uh I'm very comfortable with that choice he did not reflect are values
- In terms of nominations, I took the extraordinary step of actually hiring PwC to make sure that they're run fairly and PwC isn't cheap but I wanted to make sure that I have the confidence that overenergetic campaigns aren't uh – [abusing] the process we've set up
- But I've also you know – as leader of the Party, I-I want to make sure we do our due diligence
- I made sure the party hired uh – uh – two – two backroom – background checks on candidates
- And so we can make sure that the candidates that are nominated, we have full confidence
- And there are some cases where our background checks have not panned out
- And that's our right – that's our right to do our due diligence and homework
- Frankly, in the last federal election, you had Prime Minister Harper in some instances have to defend candidates um - that they hadn't uh – uh – uh *inaudible* the whole story on
- The guy who peed in the cup and a few other cases like that, that they got off message
- And weren't able to communicate their – their – their positive story
- And uh I can tell you, the 79 candidates we've nominated, are ones that I've got confidence in
- And I think will be great MPPs

Soloman: Concerned about the polls tightening up a bit?

Brown:

- Well a new poll just came out in Toronto showing that the PC party had gone up once again
- Mainstreet Research
- But let me – let me – let me say about that, and is that as much as those polls may be very positive for our party, I do believe it is going to get tight
- I don't believe the PC party is going to stay at 49% in the city of Toronto like the most recent poll said

- Uh – the Liberals are going to say anything, they are going to do anything, um to attack us
- They can't defend their own record
- We expect this to become a closer race
- And I'm going to continue to tell Ontarians what- what this choice is
- It's a choice between the same old same old Liberal NDP left wing policies
- Or a PC party that will make sure that your family can work hard and can get ahead and make ends meet in Ontario

Soloman: I have always said this to you Patrick Brown, and you and I have had long conversations. The – the average person listening to you right now on this day may be sick of the Liberals, and they may be – have a time for change, I get that. But they're going to say to you hey, Mr. Brown, tell me that when I vote for you, my hydro bill is actually going to go down that – that – that year. Is it actually going to go down, I'm going to pay less on hydro and so far on fundamental issues, I haven't seen how you're going to do that. What am I missing here? What – how do I know that you say you're going to do different things, but will you actually do differently?

Brown:

- I am going to make hydro prices go dramatically down
- Let me tell you exactly how
- The Liberals and NDP approach has been over generation
- An over generation they charge you for on your global adjustment
- Most recent stats, we generated a 145 terawatt hours of energy in Ontario
- We consumed as a province of 137
- Because we signed so many extra bad contracts we don't need
- We had to give away billions of surplus electricity
- We had to spill our own water
- The most recent stats said that we spilled enough waterpower – enough waterpower to power 500,000 Ontario homes
- Your global adjustment- you don't see it on your residential bill
- But it's blended it
- And in many cases, it ****inaudible**** your bill.
- And I get some of the stuff with global adjustment, I can't get back
- The gas plant – that 2 billion dollars, that's on your bill I can't get that back
- But these bad contracts that have been signed
- The new ones are proceeding with the new generation that they're signing onto
- I can fix that
- I can get your hydro bill dramatically down

Soloman: Ok, you got to cancel those contracts I guess

Brown:

- Well actually, more so than that

- It's not just cancelling contracts
- It's about not proceeding with new ones
- The day after they borrowed 93 billion dollars to get 21 billion dollars in temporary relief
- They proceeded with 1100 more contracts
- And I get it Evan, I know why Kathleen Wynne doesn't want to look at these contracts
- Why she keeps signing new ones
- The 30 mega contracts of which we can't use any of the energy
- The 30 mega contracts the Ontario Liberal Party accepted 1.3 million dollars in donations
- She's not going to look at those bad contracts
- They are her friends
- They're Liberal insiders she's protecting them
- But let me say unequivocally I don't owe anything to anyone
- I'm going to look at every single one of those bad contracts and if there's exposure for Ontarians that I can get out of, that I can make sure we protect the interest of Ontario rate payers I'm going to do it.

[END TRANSCRIPT]