

# Summary of Question Period for Monday April 09, 2018

---

**From:** "Flowers, Robert (TBS)" <robert.flowers@ontario.ca>  
**Date:** Mon, 09 Apr 2018 11:55:24 -0400  
**Attachments:** Q.P.SummaryAPR09-18v1.docx (18.13 kB); 20180409 - Provincial Legislature Question Period Transcript.doc (123.39 kB)

---

Please see the select or full summaries of today's Question Period.

## **MPP Fedeli (PC) to Minister Thibeault (Energy) – re: Hydro One executive salary**

>> Vic Fedeli: Thank you and good morning, Speaker. My question is for the **Premier**. **Premier**, one of these C.E.O. Salaries is not like the others. Manitoba hydro, 466,000. Saskatchewan power, 4 --481,000. B.C. Hydro, \$489,000. Québec hydro, \$543,000. Hydro One, \$6.2 million Mr. Speaker, how does the **Premier** justify her \$6 million man? Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is very important that we acknowledge and recognize, Mr. Speaker, that executive salaries are high compared to the vast majority of Ontario salaries, and, Mr. Speaker, we remain committed to Hydro One's regulation, accountability and transparency through our government's involvement as a majority shareholder. That said, Mr. Speaker, Hydro One is now a publicly traded company, not a government entity and Hydro One, Mr. Speaker, also reports that 80%, 80% of the company's C.E.O. Compensation is paid out only if aggressive performance targets are met, targets that lead to more affordable bills for customers, Mr. Speaker. So since broadening ownership of Hydro One, the company's leadership has already made \$114 million in savings for their customers, Mr. Speaker. These significant savings have been realized through enhancement. To customer service, Mr. Speaker, and the company's commitment to lowering costs for the ratepayers, Mr. Speaker .

>> Vic Fedeli: Well, back to the **Premier**. Last year was a windfall for Hydro One execs. The millionaires club is a sight to behold. The president and C.E.O. Mayo Schmidt, \$6.2 million and, Speaker, that's an after an increase just this year alone. The increase is \$1.7 million. The former C.F.O., 1.2 million. The senior vice-president and acting C.F.O., just under a million. The C.O.O. Made 1.2 million. One executive vice-president made 2 million and another 1.9 million. This is outrageous, Speaker. They all make more money than the C.A.O.S of any other hydro company. Mr. Speaker, while the average family struggles to make ends meet, how does the **Premier** justify paying her millionaires club?

>> Minister Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again, Hydro One's rates continue to be set by the Ontario energy board, Mr. Speaker, and, when taking this into considerations the board is the energy sector's independent regulator with a mandate to protect the province's electricity consumers, and it continues to deliver on its mandate. So for instance last fall the board capped a portion of executive compensation at Hydro One for electricity customers and they're required to fund that at 10% of base salaries saving ratepayers \$30 million over this year and next, Mr. Speaker. And we understand, we understand that that affordability is critical for families and businesses, which is why we launched the fair hydro plan, which reduced rates by 25% on average for all

residential customers and as many as a half a million small businesses and farms, Mr. Speaker. Once again it is important to emphasize that this salary is only paid if aggressive performance targets are met, targets that lead to more affordable bills for rate payers.

>>Vid Fedeli: Back to the **Premier**. I can't believe, Speaker, that this government is defending this. The **Premier** once said, quote, any decision of that magnitude would require a two-thirds majority of the Hydro One board of directors, which means that having 40% ownership protects us. She added, with 40% ownership of the board, that would require that the people of Ontario have a say. She went on, one step further, Speaker, and said, quote -- will there be the ability of the government to retain control over major decisions because of that 40% ownership? Yes. So that means, Speaker, the **Premier** is responsible for these outrageous salaries, Mr. Speaker. How can the **Premier** be trusted when she is signing off on the \$6 million salary?

>>Minister Thibeault: Once again we recognize, Mr. Speaker, that these executive salaries are high compared to the vast majority of Ontario salaries and we remain committed to Hydro One's regulation and accountability and transparency through our government's involvement as majority shareholder, Mr. Speaker. But let's look at what the opposition is claiming. They're claiming that they're concerned about the lowering electricity bills but when it came for them to take action, Mr. Speaker, what did they do? They voted against a fair hydro plan, Mr. Speaker. And now because they don't support fighting climate change, they'll have to cut billions in programs that Ontarians count on every single day. They'll have to cut programs like free child care, like ohip plus, like free tuition or dental and prescription coverage, Mr. Speaker. Unlike their half-baked scheme, Ontarians know that we have a plan to increase fairness and create more opportunity, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to do that for the people of Ontario, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to act to make sure that we've got their best interests at heart.

### **MPP Fedeli (PC) to the Premier re: being “proud” of provincial debt**

>> Vic Fedeli: Thank you, Speaker. My question is for the **Premier**. The Member (MPP) from Mississauga-Streetsville is proud of this government's debt. He specifically said, quote -- we have tripled -- referring to the debt -- and we're proud of it. The people of Ontario want to know if the **Premier** shares the sentiments. Mr. Speaker, is the **Premier** proud that she has saddled our grandchildren with her debt?

>> **Premier** Wynne: Speaker, let me just talk about the plan that we have been implementing, Mr. Speaker, and we are going to continue to build on as we brought our budget forward, Mr. Speaker. You know, what we know is that there are people across this province, whether it's family with a teenager who's looking for mental health challenges and I know that the girls government group is going to be talking about mental health today, Mr. Speaker. Whether it's a young mom who can't find child care, wants to get back into work but can't find child care that she can afford, Mr. Speaker. Or whether it's someone working in a minimum wage job, Mr. Speaker, who today has more money in his pocket --Because minimum wage is now \$14 an hour and will go to \$15 an hour. Those are the people who we are fighting for, Mr. Speaker. That is the care we know is needed under this province and what we are proud of.

>>Vic Fedeli: Well, back to the **Premier**. What we do know is that this government has put our province's future in doubt, Speaker. In no way, in no way at all is tripling the debt a responsible thing to do. Ontario has the highest debt of any province or state on the

entire planet, Speaker. This is crowding out the services we all depend on, like health care and education, which is why this **Premier** fired 1,600 nurses and closed 600 schools, Speaker. More than any other government in the history of our province. This debt is putting an unfair burden on our children and grandchildren. Mr. Speaker, E government's debt is the reason they cut services instefd caring about families Instead of caring about families.

>> **Premier Wynne**: Mr. Speaker, I know that the member opposite knows that we've built 800 schools. I know he knows that. Another 780. But, Mr. Speaker, the reality is that if we do not make these investments in people, then we will be in a situation where our economy will not continue to grow. We have balanced the budget this year, Mr. Speaker. We've made investments in infrastructure across the province, Mr. Speaker, and we know that at this moment what is needed in Ontario is an investment in people, an investment in their care, an investment in giving them the tools so that they can care for themselves and they can care for their families. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is standing up for a party that has promised that they will cut billions out of education, billions out of health care and billions out of serverss to people in this province, Mr. Speaker. That's not our plan.

>> **Vic Fedeli**: The people are disappointed that making up stories for political gain seems to be the new approach of the **Premier**, Speaker. Quite frankly we are shocked that this **Premier** is defending the member from mississauga-streetsville. What else does she defend from this member? He has advocated for higher taxes on hard working families. On his website the member from Mississauga-Streetsville called on the federal government to raise the G.S.T. By 1%. He wrote, quote -- the feds should restore one percentage point of the G.S.T. Removed during the previous decade, raising it to 6%. Mr. Speaker, does the **Premier** support the member's statement on new taxes as well? Is she going to be calling on Prime Minister Trudeau to raise the G.S.T.?

>> **Premier Wynne**: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I invite Veit the member opposite to read our budget, Mr. Speaker. I vine invite the member opposite to look at the policies we're putting in place. I invite the member opposite to talk to people in his community who are looking for child care, who are looking for mental health services, Mr. Speaker. Who are working on minimum wage, Mr. Speaker. I invite the member opposite to talk to those people and ask them their thoughts on getting more support. Mr. Speaker, we know that this party is capable of cutting billions out of the public service, out of education, out of health care. They've done it before, Mr. Speaker, and they would do it again.

### **MPP Lorne Coe (PC) to Minister Naidoo-Harris (Education) re: teacher union settlement**

>> **MPP Coe**: Thank you, Speaker. My question is for the **Premier**. The Liberal government just made a \$31 million payout to the English catholic teachers association a month before the election. Army bishop, president of the Ontario secondary school teachers' federation, describes the settlement on Friday, quote, as a dirty deal that clearly wasn't done dirt cheap. Sam Hammond, president of the elementary teachers' federation of Ontario called the payment, quote, outrageous. Speaker, he went on to say, quote -- is this a way for the Liberals to reward their political allies and retaliate against the elementary teachers' federation of Ontario and others for successfully challenging the government's violation of our charter rights? Speaker, does the Liberal

government. Share the concerns of Ontario's major teachers' unions?

>>Minister Naidoo-Harris: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm pleased to rise and speak about this very important issue and to all parties to work together to reach a resolution on remedy. And so they directed all of us to do that. And I'm pleased to say we have reached agreements with the OSSTF, with OPSEU, with CUPE and with UNIFOR. In addition to this, this is about also mitigating further risks and further constitutional challenges. And so we are moving forward by ensuring, Mr. Speaker, that our school system continue to run smoothly without disruptions. And so what we're doing is proactively moving forward with further settlements and agreements with associations. To ensure that we are resolving any grievances that may be out there and ensuring that we are preparing for the future. I'm happy to answer more.

>>MPP Coe: Back to the **Premier**. Speaker, at \$31 million payout a month before the election is rightly raising some eyebrows and concerns. Whether it's school closures, violence in the classrooms or the mental health crisis in elementary and secondary schools, the Liberal government only seems to care about education when it helps their political self-interest. Speaker, is the Liberal government trying to buy support a month before the action?

>> The Speaker: The member will withdraw.

>> Withdraw, Speaker.

>>Minister Naidoo-Harris: Mr. Speaker, again I want to point out that the superior court directed all parties to work together to reach a resolution on remedy. And so we have moved forward with agreements with the osstf, with opseu, with chpe and with unifor and now we have ongoing discussion with five different groups, as you heard. We just settled with owe equity av. We're also looking at five different other groups - - owe equity 5. Including aifo, O.C.W. And principle just to name a few. Why? Because we want to mitigate the risk of further constitutional challenges. Mr. Speaker, this is called doing our due diligence, ensuring that the school system is there, is strong and is working for all parties and everyone there. So to ensure that our children do get the best quality education they can. The parties are at the various bargaining table versus different priorities in their negotiations. So it takes time to ensure we're doing everything we can to reach agreements with all of these various pieces and all of these various associations. But we are doing our best to ensure that we are doing what needs to get done. Thank you.