

Summary of Question Period for Monday December 4, 2017

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MPP Brown (PC) to Minister Ballard (Environment and Climate Change) - re: cost of cap and trade

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the environment and climate change. And I'm going to have to paraphrase this headline because it contains some un-parliamentary language but I'll try to get it out while respecting the chair. It's a "Maclean's" magazine headline. It says Kathleen Wynne's attack on the Ontario P.C. plan is I'll use the word confuse voters, recognizing the parliamentary requirements. It added **Premier** Wynne is wrong. Hear that? **Premier** Wynne is wrong when she claims the Conservative carbon plan will cost families more than cap and trade and do less to cut emissions. This comes -- get this Mr. Speaker -- from the very economist the **Premier** was trying to cite, saying the **Premier** is wrong. Facts do matter in Ontario, Mr. Speaker. So will the Liberals retract their attack and apologize for this --

>> Minister Ballard: Indeed facts do matter and I'm waiting to hear some good facts from the other side, yet all I'm hearing is hyperbole. Speaker, what Ontario needs, what Ontario is getting is a realistic approach -- That balances action with affordability to fight climate change. That's what the voter is asking for in Ontario, Mr. Speaker. We don't take that lightly. Action, action with affordability, Speaker. Our system guarantees, guarantees emission reductions at the cheapest price possible for the people and the economy of Ontario, Speaker, and it invests every dollar, by law, every dollar -- Mr. Speaker, is invested in those things that will stop greenhouse gas emissions or reduce them, Mr. Speaker. This is a very active system we have.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, back to the Minister. The economist that the from **Premier** cited Trevor Tanguay has said and I quote -- -- the **Premier** is very wrong. Her attack is baseless and simply untrue. It holds no weight. The **Premier's** claim that it will cost more and do less to cut emissions is wrong. Those are the facts by the very person the **Premier** is citing. And so given the fact that we know the **Premier** was wrong, I would hope the Minister would do the right thing, to have integrity to do the right thing and simply apologize for what was a false claim. We deserve that in this House. So once again to the Minister, will he apologize on behalf of the government for the false claims that have now been proven completely baseless and incorrect by the very economist --

>> Minister Ballard: Well, thank you, Speaker. You know, this P.C. Platform, using air quotes, is proof the Conservatives will say anything, absolutely anything to get elected. You know, Speaker, unlike the member of that party, we recognize that climate change is already costing us -- With increased insurance rates, higher food costs and more weather-related damage, Speaker. Yet their carbon tax scheme, scheme, under their scheme, consumers, the public will pay more, up to \$400 a year more in annual costs

because of their scheme, Mr. Speaker. You know, the "National post" called it a shell game, noting that any tax cuts will be paid for by an 81%, 81% increase -- In the existing provincial tax on gasoline. You know, Speaker, they will fall short of the legislative -- Lowering emissions.

>> Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister, everywhere we look Liberal spin on the carbon backstop is being disavowed. Economist Trevor Tombay says the **Premier** is -- Wrong. Canadians for clean prosperity say the Liberals are. Wrong. Even the ecosystem says the Liberals are. Wrong. Mr. Speaker, the **Premier** is wrong. She has been caught saying an untruth. And so my question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, we'll give them -- and you know what? The Liberals are heckling. They got caught saying an untruth. But I want to give the Minister another chance. Will they apologize to the people of Ontario for stating a fact they know is incorrect and the very economist you quoted said you are wrong. Will you apologize?

>> Minister Ballard: Thank you, Speaker. I think this is proof positive that you can't shout your way into government, no matter how hard you try. You know, if there is an apology, Mr. Speaker, I'm waiting to hear for an apology from the leader of the opposition about how he tried to hide 6 billion in green project cuts in that scheme of a platform, Mr. Speaker. That's what I want to hear. Here's what their scheme is going to do, Mr. Speaker. It's going to cut funding for transit projects like the go regional express rail. It's going to cut green hospital renovations. It's going to cut repairs to schools and social housing, Mr. Speaker. It's going to cut Energy efficiency home renovations. All of the things, Mr. Speaker, that are helping this province meet its carbon reduction targets by 2050.