

Summary of Question Period for Thursday Nov. 30, 2017

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Date: Thu, 30 Nov 2017 12:12:09 -0500
Attachments: Q.P.SummaryNov30-17.docx (16.84 kB); 20171130 - Provincial Legislature Question Period Transcript.doc (111.1 kB)

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

MPP Clark (PC) to Minister Matthews (Deputy Premier) re: stopping Ministers from fund-raising off the stakeholders

>> MPP Clark: Thanks, Speaker. My question is for the Deputy Premier. For 14 years this government has played fast and loose with the rules, bending and breaking many of them. The fact of the matter is that this Liberal government is untrustworthy. The wino Liberals gave access to Cabinet Ministers and strong-armed companies that do business with Ontario for the benefit of the Liberal party. They reward those donors by granting them expensive contracts and corporate handouts. Mr. Speaker, will the Liberal government stand with the people's guarantee and support the fact that we have to stop Ministers from fund-raising off the stakeholders?

>> Minister Matthews: Thank you, Speaker. And of course we've been talking about the people's so-called guarantee a lot this week. And I think we'll continue to be talking about it because there's a lot to discuss. So, Speaker, so far what we've learned is that this is a party that cannot be trusted. They're able to say anything to anybody to try to fool them to get elected, Speaker. The people of Ontario know better. They know who you are. They know what's in your D.N.A. They know you will cut the services that people rely on, Speaker. The proof is in the fine print. Over \$12 billion in cuts, Speaker. \$12 billion in cuts.

>> Back to the deputy premier. You know, it doesn't matter what the deputy premier says. Clearly the untrustworthiness of the liberal government goes far and wide, speaker. We've seen this revolving door of liberal insiders to government lobbyists over the last 14 years. Just look at the time the minister of environment led his right-hand man go right to a job with Tesla. The people guarantee will restore trust by closing that loophole. Mr. Speaker, why won't the government lock this revolving door, the one that opens in the minister's office and closes in the lobbyist's office?

>> MPP Clark: Back to the Deputy Premier. You know, it doesn't matter what the Deputy Premier says. Clearly the un-trustworthiness of the Liberal government goes far and wide. Speaker. We've seen this revolving door of Liberal insiders to government lobbyists over the last 14 years. Just look at the time the Minister of environment led his right-hand man go right to a job with Tesla. The people guarantee will restore trust by closing that loophole. Mr. Speaker, why won't the government lock this revolving door, the one that opens in the Minister's office and closes in the lobbyist's office?

>> Minister Matthews: Speaker, what the people's guarantee will do is guarantee a cut of \$6 billion in programs and services and another \$6 billion in programs that support lower energy costs and G.H.G. Reductions, Speaker. But that's not all. That's not all. A signature promise, Speaker, in the people's guarantee is a 22.5% cut in income taxes. It simply is not true, Speaker. It is not true. Cutting one bracket by 22.5% does not mean a 22.5% cut in income taxes. It is simply not true, Speaker. So if the people of Ontario are looking for somebody to trust. They must not look there.

>> MPP Clark: Again back to the Deputy Premier. You know, this government should know their role. It should be to restore the trust between the people of Ontario and this place and this chamber. Our leader, Patrick Brown, and the Ontario P.C. Party will introduce legislation that will make government accountable. In that legislation, we're going to restore government advertising oversight to the auditor general. O.R. P.P., climate change, hydro. There isn't a government ad they won't use for government purposes. It's appalling, Speaker. Mr. Speaker, why won't they restore the auditor general's oversight role? Will they continue to use government resources to campaign?

>> Minister Matthews: Mr. Speaker, what we got is a \$12 billion cut, a promise to reduce income tax by 22.5%, which isn't true, Speaker. And in addition to that, we have the proposal of a carbon tax that will add \$1,200 to the cost of families in this province. Speaker, this is a platform we're happy to talk more about. As long as they want to talk about it, trust me, we want to talk about it. But just remember, Speaker, it's \$12 billion in cuts. It's a bogus cut on income tax of 22.5%, and it's additional costs of \$1,200 for every family without reducing G.H.G.S one bit, Speaker. We've got a plan. It's --

MPP Horwath (NDP) to Minister Hoskins (Health) re: private hospitals

>> Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker. My next question's also for the acting Premier. Our hydro system should be putting people first, not private profits, and the same is true in our health care system. The NDP Will put forward an teamed bill 160, the Premier's health care privatization bill, to mandate the private clinics, or as the Liberals now call them, community health facilities, be operated on a not-for-profit basis. Will this government support the NDP Amendment or will they just continue to support private for-profit clinics just like the Conservatives?

>> Minister Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, I know that the legislation is being discussed in committee as we speak over the course of this week, and I look forward to being able to continue the debate here in the legislature, including on schedule 9 which is the aspect the leader of the third party has referenced that calls for greater oversight, greater accountability, greater transparency and plugging any gaps that might exist where the level of oversight, the level of accountability is insufficient for those health prechls that exist outside of the hospital environment Mr. Speaker -- health premises. Of course we're not talking about family health teams or community health centres. We're talking about places like X ray facilities where they do radiology. It's critically important that we have a regime that Ontarians can have confidence in. That provides that necessary oversight so we can be assured of the highest quality of care.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, privatization of our health care system is not in the best interests of Ontarians. But -- bill 160 makes it easier for companies to open private clinics in Ontario. That's what bill 160 does. That's why we are calling it the Liberal health privatization bill. And this government refuses to support our NDP Amendment to make

sure that all private clinics are not-for-profit facilities. People should not be profiting, companies should not be profiting on the health care of Ontario families. Why is this government clearing the way for more private for-profit clinics instead of improving the public health care of Ontario families?

>> Minister Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, I would welcome the leader of the third party to show me precisely where in schedule 9 it does, according to her, make it easier for the establishment of private clinics. It does not, Mr. Speaker. And it eliminates the possibilities of any future private hospitals. But, Mr. Speaker, we have had a moratorium in this government for many, many years on the establishment of any out-of-hospital for-profit entities including clinics, the alleged private clinics that the member O sit reports to be so concerned about. Mr. Speaker, in fact since 2011 -- and I don't have the data going back further -- but 2011, there were only five licences provided for out-of-hospital premises all them not-for-profit, Mr. Speaker. That's less than one a year and all for not-for-profit. So I'm not exactly sure. I suspect that it is additionally her efforts to fear monger about our health care system. Across Ontario. We are not changing our approach. We've had a moratorium. We're eliminating the possibilities of any future private hospitals and we're bringing all these regimes. Highly accountable system.

>> Andrea Horwath: Speaker, whether the health Minister wants to acknowledge it or not, there are now 1,000 private for-profit clinics operating in the province of Ontario because of decisions the Conservatives and Liberals have made over the last number of years. Bill 160, the Premier's -- This Premier's health privatization bill is another huge disappointment for the people of Ontario. Despite everything they say, when this government has a chance to stop for-profit clinics and support not-for-profit care, they won't commit to doing it. Why is the Liberal government working so hard to expand privatization in health care, just like they did in our hydro system instead of improving health care for people who need it?

>> Minister Hoskins: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it's interesting that earlier in this week, including yesterday, the leader of the third party was concerned about the establishment of private hospitals. But obviously she had another look at her legislation. She talked to her stakeholders including the Ontario health coalition and realized that she was wrong. That we are absolutely clear in our intent to ban any future private hospitals. So now she's moved on to something else. Mr. Speaker, we have defended universal health care in this province since coming into government in 2003. We will continue to defend universal health care. Schedule 8 9 provides for higher quality care, high early oversight, more accountability, more transparency of all of those facilities that do exist outside of our hospital system, many of which, by the way, were created by the NDP Or licensed by the P.C.S.

MPP Qaadri (LIB) to Minister Chiarelli (Infrastructure) re: most recent projects

>> MPP Qaadri: [Speaking in French] Voice of Translator: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of infrastructure. [End of Translation] Appreciate the Minister's 2011 long-term infrastructure plan, building together, and the diligent work that's been proceeding. This includes, Speaker, a \$400 million expansion in my only riding of Etobicoke general hospital, which will eventually quadruple the floor space. The 2017 long-term infrastructure plan is entitled "Building et -- better lives" and of course embodies a number of the government's core values. These developments shape who we are and help Ontario live life to the fullest. This includes, Speaker, a \$2 billion expansion of the finch L.R.T., with eight stops in my own riding. The Minister of transportation actually informs my

riding yesterday and together we made a related announcement. Speaker, I know there's a number of details of the current plan, building better lives. I ask the Minister to please detail some of those.

>> Minister Chiarelli: Thank you, Speaker. Thanks to the member for the question. A new plan built from a position of strength. \$190 billion, the largest infrastructure investment in the province's history, averaging \$12 billion per year, Speaker. We've carried out 100 major hospital projects with 35,000 more in plan or under construction. We're investing almost \$20 billion in G.O. Transit expansion. For smaller and rural municipalities, we tripled ocip to \$300 million annually and invested \$490 million in broadband. In partnership with the federal government, we are delivering 600 transit projects and 1,300 Klee clean water and wastewater projects. And we're the first Ontario government to invest in rural natural gas expansion with a \$100 million program, which the Conservatives have cancelled in their plan, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll have more details in my supplementary.

>> MPP Qaadri: Thank you, Speaker. I'd commend the Minister on that array of projects that he's listed. In particular I think it's important folks across Ontario have access to broadband. And so the broadband strategy and the remated community pilot project of course I think will have a material impact on the quality of life for people across tomorrow. I know as well that the long-term infrastructure plan also includes measures to make infrastructure greener as well as keep community needs at the heart of decision making. The plan is going to guide our unprecedented investment in public infrastructure and make sure that we're building the right thing at the right place at the right time for the right reasons. Speaker, this is as you might imagine more important than ever as Ontario faces climate change, destructive technologies and an aging population. In my own riding as I've mentioned, Speaker, whether it's the hospital, the College, the infrastructure, roads, highways we have an extraordinary amount of development. I'd like to thank the Minister personally. My question is -- [Speaking in French] Voice of Translator: My question is, account Minister elaborate in terms of the measures that our government is implementing? [End of Translation]

>> Minister Chiarelli: Speaker, our infrastructure investment supports 125,000 jobs per year, and there's much more than bricks and mortar. It's an investment in people and it's about building better lives. Our new plan announce as new broadband strategy and expand community benefit programs. It will phase in life cycle assessment to reduce our carbon footprint and the sale of surplus property will include a social purpose analysis. In their last year the Conservatives invested just \$1.9 billion in infrastructure, not even enough for maintenance of existing infrastructure, and invested next to nothing in the energy sector. They promised billions of new spending and buried on page 76 is \$12 billion in cuts that they're promising the people of Ontario. And those are just the cuts they're being up front about. Speaker, all of that is sleight of hand by the Conservatives.