

MEDIA SCAN: HYDRO RATE REDUCTION PLAN

October 6, 2017

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ONLINE COVERAGE

INSIDE BELLEVILLE: TORY CANDIDATE HOPES TO REPEAT HISTORY — UNSEAT LIBERAL MPP RINALDI

By: John Campbell
October 6, 2017

<https://www.insidebelleville.com/news-story/7599492-tory-candidate-hopes-to-repeat-history-unseat-liberal-mpp-rinaldi/>

Port Hope — David Piccini beat out former MPP Rob Milligan as the choice of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario to run in the new riding of Northumberland-Peterborough South, and now he's looking to do what Milligan did in 2011 — unseat current office-holder Lou Rinaldi.

The Port Hope resident likes his chances: “After 14 years of this tired and self-interested government, Ontarians have really lost faith” in the Liberals and “do not trust” Premier Kathleen Wynne.

“Ontarians want change.”

The ruling party has been plagued by controversy, such as cancellation of the gas plant projects and the soaring cost of energy, which it has tried to stem by reducing hydro bills in the short term but will cost ratepayers more in the long run.

Piccini said he supports increasing the minimum wage but to raise it from \$11.40 an hour to \$15 by Jan. 1, 2019, as the Liberals propose to do, is “too fast” and it was done without consulting businesses.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business “was left out of the first round of consultation” and was brought into the process only after it and the Opposition “made a stink about that.”

“How do you ignore the largest association in Canada representing businesses (when making) such a drastic change?” Piccini asked.

It's an “out-of-touch government” that is trying “to cling to power and is no longer governing in the best interests of our community.”

Piccini said Rinaldi, who has been Liberal MPP for the area since 2014 and 11 of the last 14 years, “is a good man, he's just running for the wrong party. He's going to have some tough questions to answer come election time (next June). He's had a seat at the table when these decisions were made.”

Piccini, who's 29 and married, graduated from the University of Ottawa with a joint honours degree in political science and history.

He worked first as an international market analyst at Agriculture Canada and then as a policy adviser at Service Canada.

He served as an adviser in the office of then minister of international trade Ed Fast before trying his hand as a Tory candidate in 2015 but failed in his bid to oust Liberal MP Mauril Belanger, who had held the riding of Ottawa Vanier since 1995.

Piccini subsequently joined the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada as an adviser, providing advice on a full range of policy, business and operational issues related to the College's international activities.

Piccini said he has seen “first-hand the challenges the health-care system is facing” and based on that experience has concluded the government is “no longer listening” to the experts.

It's “taking the decision-making out of the hands of professional health-care professionals and placing it in the hands of bureaucrats. Ultimately that's not good for the patients.”

Piccini said he has a “sound understanding” of business, health care, education and trade as well as a solid work ethic.

“I've made an effort of getting out there and listening to everyone and speaking to key stakeholders in our community,” he said. “We're going to shake things up.”

CBC NEWS: ANALYSIS: CONSERVATIVES LAUNCH EARLY ATTACK ADS ON KATHLEEN WYNNE: FISHER

By: Robert Fisher
Oct 06, 2017 10:18 AM ET

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/conservatives-launch-early-attack-ads-on-kathleen-wynne-fisher-1.4343330>

Ontario's Progressive Conservatives have launched a couple of very different attack ads. Queen's Park analyst Robert Fisher looks at the ads and let's us know what he expects in the coming months. Listen to his full interview with Craig Norris of CBC's Kitchener-Waterloo by clicking the play button or read an edited and abridged transcript below.

Robert Fisher, Ontario politics analyst

What do you make of these ads?

It's all part of the pre-election air war. There's more to come. It's not the toughest I've ever seen. It's an attempt to link the Premier to two words: untrustworthy and corrupt. We've talked about a couple of trials underway, one in Sudbury and one in Toronto involving former senior Liberals. No verdict has been rendered. There has been no proven corruption but that won't stop the Conservative from pushing their corruption message.

Why is the party coming out with two different ads?

There's a softer tone to one of them. One of the ads has a very quick shot of him walking in the Toronto Gay Pride parade. The theme of that ad is the party can be a home for everyone. It's all about that battle to define Mr. Brown before the election.

Why are they using the tag line 'the people, not the insiders?'

Mr. Brown is saying that there are Liberals out there who have been rewarded for their loyalty to the party. Case in point — Mr. Brown wanted to know about the appointment of the new chair of the Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers, a group I didn't know existed and has some connections back to Queen's Park. The government's answer said the appointment was not a case of patronage. But the woman's CV says loud and clear that she is the former chief of staff to the Minister of Agriculture. She has strong Liberal connections. Her relative is a former Liberal MPP and lobbyist. In Mr. Brown's view she is an insider — who may well be deserving of the appointment but it comes with one of those political aromas.

We're still waiting to hear Brown's platform. Do you think the party is being vague on purpose?

I think it is. We are very close to this election. For Brown to slip badly, who knows the lingering damage that might do. There have been flip flops and criticism of a very steep learning curve for him as leader but by-and-large he has been staying on message and that's where the party wants him.

What attack ads do you expect from the NDP and Liberals?

The NDP have been sending out little clips from question period. I'm sure some tough ads pointed at the Tories and Liberals are going to come out. Attack ads from the Liberals will come as well but right now they are spending their time and your money on selling their agenda. The most recent one had to do with \$5.5 million on ads for the Fair Hydro Plan, a.k.a. those lower hydro rates. These ads are considered by the auditor general a pat on the back from the government, something the government said it would never do and brought in legislation then changed it to allow this. Despite the money spent on the campaign the government defends it as necessary to inform the people of Ontario.

Do you think those vicious, American-style attack ads could make their way here?

There have been negative ads before. People detest them but, sadly, they often work to change opinions. God help us if we go down the road the Americans are now on in their political advertising. It is unbelievable. They say it pays to advertise but, I would say, at what price?