

For Approval - Brown on the Radio - Facts Still Matter in Ontario

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Hi All,

Below please find a fact check for Patrick Brown's comments on the radio yesterday. It will be sent by LCSB to the gallery and regional media.

Proposed Email

Good Afternoon,

Patrick Brown was on the radio yesterday delivering the same false talking points. We've fact checked these claims many times but will continue to do so because Facts Still Matter in Ontario.

He claimed: *"Rather than fight the Auditor General all the government has to do is get permission from those 2 pension funds that they're allowed to count those funds"*

Fact: The Independent Expert Panel concluded that the government controls access to the pension surplus which has a future economic benefit to the province and recognizing the asset will provide an accurate representation of the province's financial position. Tricia O'Malley, Chair of the Independent Expert Panel and chair of the Canadian Actuarial Oversight Standards Council stated *"From the accounting standards perspective, all that's required is that these benefits from surplus can be reasonably expected."* (Source: <https://news.ontario.ca/tbs/en/2017/02/pension-asset-expert-advisory-panel-submits-report.html>)

He claimed: *"You know, I look what's happening to our hospitals... the cuts we've seen to Quinte healthcare."*

Fact: Actually, all public hospitals across the province received an increase to base funding last year. In Quinte, that meant \$5.9 M more for the Quinte Healthcare Corporation – a 4.4% increase. This means more funding for hospitals in Belleville, Trenton, Picton and Bancroft. (Source: <https://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2016/11/ontario-improving-access-to-care-in-hospitals-across-the-province.html>)

Fact: On top of that, we're also providing over \$6 M to help build a new community health hub in Trenton. (Source: <https://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2016/08/ontario-supports-new-community-health-hub-in->

trenton.html)

He claimed: *"It's not Donald Trump making America great, it's Kathleen Wynne"*

Fact: Ontario's economy is growing faster than the United States

(Source: <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/economy/ecaccts/>)

Fact: If we look at employment growth since 2009, Ontario has seen growth of (9.4%), with Michigan (8.8%), Pennsylvania (6.6%) and New York (2.4%) all trailing behind.

(Source: Statistics Canada, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics and Ontario Ministry of Finance).

He claimed: *"They're also using the Hydro One fire sale money for it was supposed to be used for infrastructure, it's being used as one time budget money"*

Fact: Every dollar from Hydro One will be invested in new infrastructure projects like GO Regional Express Rail, Mississauga and Hamilton LRT's and the new connecting links program.

(Source: <https://news.ontario.ca/mof/en/2015/04/the-trillium-trust-and-moving-ontario-forward.html>).

He claimed: *"We have among the highest hydro rates in North America"*

Fact: No we don't

Pricing Comparison

2015 Industrial Electricity Prices (Canadian ¢/kWh)							
Jurisdiction	Cost	Jurisdiction	Cost	Jurisdiction	Cost	Jurisdiction	Cost
1 Manitoba	4.67	17 Arkansas	7.49	33 Newfoundland	8.65	49 Nova Scotia	10.02
2 Quebec	5.17	18 Tennessee	7.53	34 U.S. Average	8.71	50 North Dakota	10.75
3 Washington	5.64	19 Alabama	7.58	35 New York	8.72	51 Florida	10.79
4 Alberta	5.87	20 South Carolina	7.68	36 Indiana	8.74	52 Delaware	10.96
5 Ontario - North	6.35	21 Utah	7.70	37 Ohio	8.75	53 Maryland	11.86
6 Oklahoma	6.64	22 Oregon	7.72	38 Wyoming	8.87	54 Maine	12.64
7 Montana	6.68	23 West Virginia	7.80	39 Minnesota	8.89	55 Vermont	13.14
8 Kentucky	6.80	24 Saskatchewan	7.81	40 Prince Edward Island	8.90	56 California	13.85
9 British Columbia	7.04	25 Nevada	7.83	41 Colorado	9.05	57 New Jersey	14.44
10 Iowa	7.06	26 Arizona	8.00	42 Michigan	9.13	58 New Hampshire	17.17
11 Louisiana	7.06	27 Idaho	8.05	43 Virginia	9.23	59 Massachusetts	17.56
12 Canadian Average	7.31	28 North Carolina	8.09	44 South Dakota	9.31	60 Connecticut	17.58
13 Missouri	7.32	29 New Mexico	8.09	45 Kansas	9.54	61 Alaska	18.85
14 Georgia	7.35	30 Illinois	8.24	46 Nebraska	9.56	62 Rhode Island	19.97
15 Texas	7.37	31 Ontario - South	8.35	47 Pennsylvania	9.59	63 Hawaii	31.10
16 New Brunswick	7.48	32 Mississippi	8.41	48 Wisconsin	9.87		

Note: Estimates may differ from actual costs to a consumer based on location, connection, and operational characteristics. Prices exclude taxes and participation in any applicable jurisdictional benefit programs.

The Ontario industrial price is based on the average all-in price for year-to-date May 2015, and includes the Hourly Ontario Energy Price, Class A Global Adjustment, delivery, wholesale market service charges and the Debt Retirement Charge. The 2 cent per kilowatt hour difference between northern Ontario and southern Ontario reflects the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program rebate.

All other Canadian prices (except Ontario) are from the Hydro Quebec Rate Comparison for rates effective April 1, 2015 for select local distribution companies servicing specific cities. Where Hydro Quebec reports prices for two cities in a province (e.g., Calgary and Edmonton), an average of the two is used; in provinces where only one city is reported (e.g., Vancouver in BC, Montreal in QC), that one price is used to represent the province for indicative comparison purposes. In the Hydro Quebec Rate Comparison, a large consumer reflects 5 MW with monthly consumption of 3,060 MWh.

American jurisdictions reflect year-to-date May 2015 data from the US Energy Information Administration's survey of approximately 500 of the largest electric utilities. The price reflects the average revenue reported by the electric utility from electricity sold to the industrial sector. The value represents an estimated average retail price, but does not necessarily reflect the price charged to an individual consumer. Prices are converted at an exchange rate of 1 USD = 1.30 CAD.

He claimed: *"One, stop the hydro fire sale...we'll lose future control of rate increases"*

Fact: Energy rates will continue to be set by the independent Ontario Energy Board, who has a mandate to protect ratepayers.

(Source:

<http://www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/OEB/Industry/Regulatory+Proceedings/Applications+Before+the+Board>

)

He claimed: *"We, we buy it [Electricity] and give it away at a loss, and sometimes we even pay them to take it," And "She's the one giving them free electricity"*

Fact: When the PC's were in power, they spent \$900 million importing electricity due to lack of supply. Given our current position of strength, Ontario is a now net exporter, benefitting ratepayers to the tune of \$230 million in 2015

(Source: Independent Electricity System Operator)

From: Andrew Rudyk [mailto:arudyk@liberal.ola.org]

Sent: February-23-17 10:01 AM

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Cc: Prins, Sebastian (TBS); Moore, Brynne (MOF); Heelis, Katie (MOHLTC); Najdovski, Dorijan (MCSCS)

Subject: [Transcript] Patrick Brown on CFRA – February 22, 2017

Transcript – Patrick Brown on CFRA – February 22, 2017

Media: CFRA

Soloman: Do you buy it? Ontario deficit down to \$1.9 Billion? Sure they used some reserve, sure there are one time sales but there's also higher revenues from the hot housing market. Do you buy it? Are the liberals actually wrestling the deficit just in time for an election? Let's find out Patrick Brown is the leader of the Ontario PC Party. Well Mr. Brown welcome back to the program do you buy the numbers?

Brown:

- Well first of all Evan it's great to be back on your show
- Um listen this government has been off on their numbers so often I think a lot of people simply don't have confidence in this government in terms of their numbers adding up
- We see these on-going disputes with the Auditor General in terms of the

government's numbers

- I'd also say you know we've got a real concern with the fact that using one time money you know the hydro one money was supposed to go towards infrastructure and the first \$4Billion from that sale has actually gone just to make their books look better
- One time money does not get Ontario out of the structural deficit
- You hear the challenge Evan, we're the most indebted subnational government in the world
- One time Band-Aid solutions doesn't help a government that is mismanaged

Soloman: Ok so but let's get to it. It's true that we have a huge debt but let me just talk about the deficit because this is what—we got to balance that first right? On the first thing about you said the dispute with Bonnie Lysyk whose the auditor general there really is a dispute there was an independent panel that they put together and they said well you know what? We uh the investments in the Ontario public serve employers union pension plan and the teacher's pension plan uh can be booked as assets and basically that's worth \$1.5 Billion. Do you buy that?

Brown:

- No the government appointed a committee to argue against the Auditor General
- That was not a committee appointed by the Auditor General, the government appointed a group to be their buffer against the fact that the Auditor General said their numbers don't add up
- Let me just say the Auditor General's assessment that you can't raid pension funds, you can't count it against your deficit was based on the 2011 agreement on public accounting
- These aren't the Auditor General's assessment, these are national acknowledged public accounting standards and so this is the first time that I think we have in Ontario's history where you got an Auditor General saying the government's numbers do not add up
- So rather than fight the Auditor General all the government has to do is get permission from those 2 pension funds that they're allowed to count those funds
- The government has not done that, they have not gone to OPSEU they have not gone to the teachers and ask for permission
- Why?
- Because those people probably don't want those union members would never be given the government permission to raid their pension accounts

Soloman: Okay well they're booking them as assets, I don't know if they're raiding them but they're certainly booking them as assets. I don't want to get into an accounting discussion but it actually—the politics of it matter so less people roll their eyes about this. There's a \$1.5 Billion on the books and 1 government is going to say hey look at us as you say well one party is going to say hey you're still in the red. What about the notion that you know like we thought there was going to be a \$4.3 Billion deficit but

there's not and one of the reasons is that there's actually growth and there's tax revenue. Their argument is going to be yea we heard you Patrick Brown but we're not only investing we're growing the economy it's working.

Brown:

- They're also using the Hydro One fire sale money for uh it was supposed to be used for infrastructure, it's being used as one time budget money
- So that's insincere in itself
- They had promised the public those fund would be used for infrastructure, the first \$4 Billion in shares has gone to just make their books look rosier
- These are games, these are accounting games and I think the public sees through it
- The Auditor General certainly sees through it
- The Financial Accountability Officer has seen through it
- This is not the opposition pointing out the government's numbers don't add up
- These are the independent legislative officers who are calling the government out on this
- It's wrong
- But what do you expect from a government that is tired that's been in office for 14 years and is running on fumes

Soloman: Islamophobia, they're going to put uh a motion out to condemn Islamophobia it's going to come from the new Ottawa-Vanier MPP Nathalie Des Rosiers and this tied the federal conservatives in knots. On a federal level only Michael Chong will support it. The rest of the leadership candidates won't for fear that it's going to, you know, harm free speech or somehow give credence to Sharia law. You say you're going to support it, why?

Brown:

- Hate is hate
- One of the beautiful things about Canada is we have freedom of religion
- And we will denounce any forms of, of hate
- You have the freedom to, to worship any religion you choose and should never face discrimination in Canada
- And for me it was a no brainer to support the motion

Solomon: Do you think that the federal, your federal cousins, it's a motion, do you think some of your federal cousins who have raised concerns about free speech, raised concerns about blasphemy laws have kind of missed the point of this one?

Brown:

- Ya, I'm not get involved in the federal debate but I've made my opinions very clear that, hate is hate and we will condemn in any forms
- Whether it's against Canadians of Jewish faith or Muslim faith
- Frankly we had a bill last month on the BDS issue and, and, and we voted to condemn hate against of those Jewish faith
- And um, it, you know--

Solomon: Was this a political trap they were hoping that you fall into?

Brown:

- I, you know, I, I don't think it was—
- Who knows what their intentions were
- I'm not going to analyze what the Premier's office was thinking when they encouraged this
- But it's a fair motion
- A horrific, horrific act happened, terrorist act happened in Quebec City
- And to want to condemn that, that act, to condemn hate against those of Muslim faith is appropriate
- And whatever their intentions it's, it's an appropriate motion and it has my support

Solomon: That's a good answer Patrick Brown. I appreciate your candidness on that. Today on CTV and here on CFRA we are doing a special on drugs in Ottawa and the opioid crisis and the access to fentanyl. Kids are dying all over the province, all over the country. What's your view? What's the government need to do to deal with this opioid crisis?

Brown:

- It is a crisis and, you know, we have an MPP North, from North Bay, Vic Fedeli, that actually did a private members bill on this
- Call on the government into, into action
- So, I understand that there is an issue of collaboration and resources that need to be dedicated to this
- And, given the number we're hearing it's, it's something that frankly we need to have attention to in the legislature

Solomon: One of the issues, and we just talked to Dr. Mark Ujjainwalla who runs Recovery Ottawa, one of the things he's says is, look everyone is talking about supervised injections and all this stuff. Why don't we talk about drug therapy? You know it costs almost \$150 000 to keep someone in prison. When you've got an addiction

you're in and out of the prison system. It costs society and you have former police chiefs like the former Ottawa police chief Vern White who you know is now a conservative senator who says, you know what we've got to do? It's cheaper to spend \$50 000 on a treatment program like Betty Ford for someone who's an addict than put them in jail. That's the real money spent and we have no money really going to that. What's your take on that?

Brown:

- I think that's a fair argument to make
- That we need to have better programs available for treatment
- I've got a lot of time for Vern White
- I think he was an excellent officer and, a smart Senator
- And I think those who have been on the front lines, we should certainly look at those potential solutions
- What we have right now doesn't work
- What we have right now falls short
- And so, all new ideas should be on the table and, and we should have time allocated whether it's in Ottawa or at Queen's Park to look at this in a very serious manner