

PC Platform - GAA

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Attachments: GAA Ontario_Federal comparison table 20170320.docx (43.42 kB)

William, I looked at the PC platform re: GAA. Here is what is stated:

In the 2015 budget, the Ontario Liberals removed the Auditor General's oversight of government advertisements. **They restricted her powers to only a preliminary, non-binding review function instead of a final review function with full veto power** – meaning the Auditor General can no longer block taxpayer-funded, partisan ads from hitting the airwaves. This has allowed various advertisements, like the blatantly partisan ads selling the "Fair Hydro Plan," that are misleading and presume the passage of legislation.

Patrick Brown and the Ontario PCs will return the Auditor General's oversight over government advertising.

It's curious that the highlighted bit seems to misdiagnose the current condition though the result is consistent with the Auditor General's view and that of some other commentators.

If we're ever asked to review this legislation again by a government of whatever party, I think that in presenting options, we could devise something in between the 2015 legislation (no discretion) and the original (wide open discretion) with reference to what the federal government has done, albeit not in legislative form to date. In short, they have a fuller list of partisan factors within which an external reviewer can apply discretion in determining whether those factors are present. See federal column at pp. 5-7 in the enclosed comparison chart.

Thanks,
PGK

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