

QP Briefing - Morning Edition

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Your morning briefing
16.02.2017 Jessica Smith Cross

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Headlines

Energy Minister Glen Thibeault presented hydro relief options to Cabinet yesterday and spoke with reporters on the way in. The options include moving some costs from hydro bills to the tax base, but just how much is TBD. The Star's sources say the options include helping rural and northern residents with high delivery charges but not a "scenario where urban residents with relatively cheaper delivery costs subsidize all rural residents."

Premier Kathleen Wynne said Nancy Elgie must search her conscience, but wouldn't call on the trustee to resign, the Star reports. Elgie is a York trustee who called a parent the n-word, which, her family said was the result of a brain injury that caused her to mix up words.

Four federal Conservative leadership candidates attended the Rebel's protest against motion M-103, iPolitics reports. The motion asks the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage to study how the government could "develop a whole-of-government approach to reducing or eliminating systemic racism and religious discrimination including Islamophobia, in Canada." Rebel Commander Ezra Levant called a VICE reporter a liar, after she tweeted that she'd seen a Nazi salute in the crowd.

. @ezrelevant You didn't see it, I guess. It was from the same area of the crowd where someone yelled "ban Islam"

— Hilary Beaumont (@HilaryBeaumont) February 16, 2017

Photos circulated on Twitter as potential evidence of someone giving the Nazi salute at the rally may or may not actually be someone giving the Hunger Games salute, for reasons that are currently unclear.

Toronto housing prices are either a dangerously overheated bubble or there's no end in sight to price increases, depending on which economist you ask.

Meanwhile, Pollara Strategic Insights' annual outlook poll, reported in the Star, found Canadians feel we're in a recession, even though we aren't and most have positive feelings about their own financial situation.

The poll literally asks people their feelings about their finances: 65 per cent felt at least one positive emotion about their economic situation, such "optimistic," "calm," "confident," "happy," "proud," "excited," and "inspired," while 48 per cent felt at least one negative emotion, such as "worried," "resigned," "upset," "pessimistic," "sad," "ashamed," and "bored."

And the latest in the will-Jagmeet-run-or-won't-he news:

NDP sources tell me an experienced team is ready to run @theJagmeetSingh's campaign if he decides to run. #cdnpoli <https://t.co/nre1ULZ1mx>

— Mike Crawley (@CBCQueensPark) February 16, 2017

Nearly 600 rats from North Bay have been adopted into loving homes.

And in case you missed any of QP Briefing's stories yesterday:

- Wynne taking lead on Ontario's Donald Trump trade strategy

- Cooler housing market could be a billion-dollar hit to provincial tax revenue: Budget watchdog
- Critics call for deeper cuts to health-care management under Patients First transition
- Sandals keeps mum on impact of pension accounting spat on eve of Auditor General's opinion
- Happening: CUPE education workers contract extension ratified

In the opinion pages:

- Andrew Coyne accuses Canadian conservatives of populist virtue-signalling and hysteria over the Islamophobia motion
- The sympathy fellow politicians have shown Nancy Elgie suggest they're protecting their own interests as leaders at the expense of black people, writes Desmond Cole
- MPPs are becoming more open about their mental health and it's a remarkable thing, writes Brian Platt
- The Sun's editorial board decries yet another criminal case getting tossed over court delays
- U.S. President Donald Trump is no reason to put the fight against climate change on ice, writes Martin Regg Cohn

Committees

9 a.m. and 1 p.m.

The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs meets (closed session) for 2017 Pre-Budget Consultations report writing. Committee Room 151, Queen's Park, Toronto.

Events

10 a.m.

Bonnie Lysyk, Auditor General of Ontario, will comment on the Government's Pension Asset Advisory Panel report regarding two of Ontario's jointly sponsored pension plans. Media studio, Queen's Park, Toronto.

12:15 p.m.

Laura Albanese, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and Deb Matthews, Deputy Premier and Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development, will make an announcement about attracting international students and skilled workers to Ontario. University of Toronto, Cumberland House, Centre for International Experience, Cumberland Room, 33 St. George Street, Toronto.

2:45 p.m.

The Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, will make an announcement in support of the automotive sector at the 2017 Canadian International Auto Show. He will be joined by John Oliver, Member of Parliament for Oakville. South Building – Level 800, Electric Avenue, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 222 Bremner Boulevard, Toronto, Ontario.

4:30 p.m.

Premier Wynne to meet with Xue Bing, Consul General of China in Toronto, Main Legislative Building, Room 281, Queen's Park, Toronto.

6:45 p.m.

Premier Wynne to deliver remarks at the Liberal Caucus Lunar New Year Reception, Shangri-La Banquet Hall & Convention Centre, 50 Esna Park Drive, Markham.