RE: Letter to Rob Leone

From: "Tedesco, Lauren (TBS)" <lauren.tedesco@ontario.ca>
To: "Jancik, Mike (TBS)" <mike.jancik@ontario.ca>
Cc: "Ostergard, Matt (TBS)" <matt.ostergard@ontario.ca>
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2016 11:00:44 -0500

What would be the process for this – for our staff to have a conversation with him? Such as the policy advisor – wondering if it will get into the nitty gritty.

From: Jancik, Mike (TBS)
Sent: December-13-16 10:58 AM
To: Tedesco, Lauren (TBS)
Cc: Ostergard, Matt (TBS)
Subject: RE: Letter to Rob Leone

The message is good though I would eliminate the part about disagreeing with the tone.

Should be as a conversation first, with determination of whether there is a need to send the email as an "in follow-up to our conversation"…

Point is to be clear with him on what is it that we have done.

From: Tedesco, Lauren (TBS)
Sent: December 13, 2016 10:56 AM
To: Jancik, Mike (TBS)
Subject: RE: Letter to Rob Leone

This is based on the conversation you and I had last week. I sent a draft to Matt and asked him to review and add where needed. Sorry this didn't get to you sooner.

Lauren

From: Ostergard, Matt (TBS)
Sent: December-13-16 10:55 AM
To: Jancik, Mike (TBS)
Cc: Tedesco, Lauren (TBS)
Subject: Letter to Rob Leone

Mike,

I've written a draft of a letter for Rob Leone for your review. I took the approach of just dealing with the particular factual error Bevan was concerned about rather than trying to convince him of our approach broadly, which is probably an impossible task.

"Mr. Leone,

I read with interest your piece in QP Briefing earlier this week ("Auditor General Meets The Post-Truth Era"). While I generally disagree with the tone of the piece, I felt the need to write to you to point out one factual error.

You write:

“The problem that arises is that the government has given itself a legislative ability to pass a regulation detailing how an asset can be recorded. Via regulation, if a government wishes to record an asset/liability that is worth several billion, as having no value, it has the ability to do so, which is contrary to PSAB principles used by governments across Canada. In other words, legislating its own accounting standards allows the government to possibly cook the numbers.”

In fact, there was a professional disagreement about the appropriate application of the Public Sector Accounting Board’s (PSAB) standards, specifically in relation to public accounting for the Province’s jointly sponsored pension plans.

A regulation was made to allow the public service to sign-off on the impact of the Auditor General's view on accounting for pension assets in Ontario's 2015-16 financial statements. The Province filed a time-limited regulation, which legislates the accounting for pension assets of two jointly-sponsored pension plans for 2015-16 in a manner that is consistent with the fiscal outcome proposed by the Auditor General.

Our numbers are consistent with the Auditor Generals. The regulation was made in order for our professional accountants to be able to sign-off on the updated Public Accounts.

Thank you,

Xx”

Thanks,

Matt Ostergard
Communications Advisor
Office of the Hon. Liz Sandals, MPP
President of the Treasury Board
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