

Summary of Question Period for Thursday May 3, 2018

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Please see the attached summaries of today's legislative Question Period.

MPP Jones (PC) to Minister Sousa (Finance) re: FAO report

MPP Tabuns (NDP) to Minister Del Duca (Economic Development) re: proper funding of public transit

MPP Martow (PC) to Minister Coteau (ComSoc and Children and Youth Services) - re: Malware Attack to Child Welfare Cases

MPP Jones (PC) to Minister Sousa re: FAO report

>>MPP Jones: Thank you. my Quon is to the acting **Premier**. Both the auditor general and the financial accountability officer have released reports in the past weeks showing the Liberal government has misrepresented the true state of the government's finances and they are quibbling over pennies. The financial accountability officer -- And we aren't quibbling over pennies, Speaker. The financial account officer is reporting the 2018 deficit to be more than \$12 billion. That's twice what the finance Minister 's projected. The Liberal government has called this an accounting dispute. I believer the auditor and the financial accountability officer. When will the government come clean and amend their deficit forecast for 2018?

>>Minister Sousa: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I also appreciate the work done by the F.A.O. They both reaffirm that we obtained a very cautis and reasonable approach in our assumptions going forward. The F.A.O. has real inforced and reinforced some of the Progressive measures that we put on will have a profound positive impact on our society as well. The auditor general has cited two issues and the F.A.O. Has assumed them in his estimates going forward. Both of these two issues, whichs pension assets that are jointly sponsored by the government, as well as the fair hydro plan that enables us to reduce rates by 25% on the ratepayer base, are being disputed by the auditor and professional accountants both internally and externally. We recognize that dispute but we're not going to weigh into it. What we're going to do is continue to foster investment. And grow our economy -- of Ontario.

>>MPP Jones: What is the point of having an auditor general and a financial accountability officer if U don't lis to them? When the Liberal government came to power in 2003, Ontario's D was \$139 billion. In

less than 15 years we've watched Ontario's debt balloon to over \$300 billion. If we stay on the Liberal path of deficit spending, Ontario's debt to G.D.P., already at 40%, will exceed 45%. Twice Bob Rae's legacy. Again I ask the Minister, will you finally admit that the auditor general and the financial accountability officer are right and amend your financial numbers to reflect this year's deficit will be over \$12 billion?

>>Minister Sousa: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is now disputing the integrity of our civil service and professional accountants internally that signed off on these measures. The member's now also disputing the chair of the Canadian standards on accounting principles that has also provided an opinion on the matter saying that the very pension assets the auditor's now disputing is the very same assets she audited and approved only years ago and has been for the past 20 years, even when the Conservatives were in power. Furthermore the issues around the fair hydro plan around rate regulated accounting is in fact permissible even today in this government in other areas as well as other parts of Canada and United States. So we have taken their advice. We've made a policy decision to provide supports for the people of Ontario and we've been very open and disclosed. In fact investors around the world are investing in these very measures. O.P.G. -That debt very clearly on their books, has a clean audit and is approved by our auditor as well, Mr. Speaker.

>>MPP Jones: Spin it all you want, Minister. The financial accountability officer and the auditor general don't believe you and neither do we. The F.A.O. Reports that the government spending plan will add \$70 billion to the province's net debt increasing it to almost \$400 billion in 2021. F.A.O. Chief economist David West said at a basic level, the government's current spending levels are unsustainable. Unsustainable. But that's not the only word people have used to describe the books. Deal tear racial. Dangerous precedence. Unlikely assumptions. Unreliable. Distorted. Boous. That's just a small selection of the words used. That is your legacy. Do the right thing. Update your deficit numbers to reflect the \$12 billion deficit.

>>Minister Sousa: Here's our legacy, Mr. Speaker. We lead Canada, Europe, United States in economic growth. We've balanced the budget. We have a \$600 million surplus. The lowest unemployment in two decades. We have -- foreign direct investment and Canada's doing well. And our public accounts, which is the actual results of the year, have proven that we've balanced the budget and have a surplus, Mr. Speaker. Have affirmed our double-a rating and stable, Mr. Speaker. The F.A.O. has made projections every year, and each time this government exceed Ed targets and we are now doing better than we've ever done and we continue to make life more affordable for the people of Ontario. They both reaffirm that we obtained a very cautious and reasonable approach in our assumptions going forward. The F.A.O. has reinforced and reinforced some of the Progressive measures that we put on will have a profound positive impact on our society as well. The auditor general has cited two issues and the F.A.O. has assumed them in his estimates going forward. Both of these two issues, which pension assets that are jointly sponsored by the government, as well as the fair hydro plan that enables us to reduce rates by 25% on the ratepayer base, are being disputed by the auditor and professional accountants both internally and externally. We recognize that dispute but we're not going to weigh into it. What we're going to do is continue to foster investment.

MPP Tabuns (NDP) to Minister Del Duca (Economic Development) re: proper funding of public transit

>>MPP Tabuns: Thank you, Speaker. My question to the acting **Premier**. The Ontario government used to fund 50% of transit net operating costs and the successful funding formula that ensures high quality service. This funding was cut by the Conservatives and it stayed cut under the Liberals. Municipalities and transit advocates like TTC Riders have repeatedly asked for this funding to be restored. Why has the **Premier** repeatedly refused?

>>Minister Del Duca: Speaker, I thank the member for his question. I know that he and others have raised this a number of times over the last couple of years but they fail to comprehend in the way they ask their question, Speaker, is that this government is investing more in public transit infrastructure in the city of Toronto and across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area and in every community across Ontario that has public transit, more so than any other government in Ontario history, speak and in fact just a number of months ago we started to double the amount of gas tax money that the communities the supporting

public transit themselves locally received. Speaker, over the next couple of years that gas tax funding to specifically support expanding public transit and support public transit service in those communities will double, Speaker. This is a significant step forward with respect to supporting those communities and their transit needs, while at the same time, Speaker, we continue to invest in the infrastructure. I'll be delighted to provide more details on that in the follow-up answers.

>>MPP Tabuns: You'd think, Speaker, from that response that everything is dealt with. But in fact subways in Toronto are still to crush capacity. Bus routes have been cut and service on remaining routes keeps getting less frequent and reliable. Meanwhile fares are going up while services are getting to be worse. No wonder so many people think that their only option is the car. But the **Premier** has the ability to change this. She can restore the province's traditional 50% funding for net transit operating costs and improve service not in 10 or 20 years but today. Why won't she?

>>Minister Del Duca: Speaker, as I mention in my initial answer to the first question that came from the NDP Caucus on this, here are just some of the things that our government's invested in, specifically in the 416, specifically in Toronto as it relates to public transit. So for example \$3.7 billion for go regional express rail. Here in Toronto aid loan which will help to start and enable smarttrack. \$5.3 Billi to build the Eglinton crosstown L.R.T. Single largest public transit project in Ontario history. Almost \$3 billion to continue to expand rapid transit in wonderful Scarborough. Speaker. \$974 million from the move Ontario trust for the Toronto-york- Spadina subway extension which opened in Vaughan last December. Speaker. \$456 million to build out the union Pearson express. And specifically to the gas tax funding I allude today earlier, \$2.1 billion since 2004 for the city of Toronto I look forward to talking about more of the good news we've delivered to the people of Toronto for transit in the final answer.

>>MPP Tabuns: Thank you, Speaker. Again to the acting **Premier**. That answer is why people are so cynical about public transit. The **Premier** will run publicly funded ads boasting about how much she cares about transit ride remembers. But on the buses, on the subways and on the streetcars, transit riders know the truth. Service has gotten worse while fares have become more expensive. The **Premier** can change this. She can restore public confidence in transit. She can improve transit service today. She Cantore provincial ding for transit operations as the NDP Has committed. Why won't she?

>> Minister Del Duca:Speaker, I mentioned a seconding a that there's more. So for example here in the city of Toronto our government investing \$416 million to support the purchase of brand-new streetcars. Starting in early 2019, Speaker, all G.O. Transit trips within Toronto specifically will only cost presto card users \$3 per trip. Speaker. Which means, to the very people the member from Toronto- Danforth pretends to repre and speak for, we are making their transit more affordable. That's what our government is doing. Speaker. Just this morning, maybe the member didn't know this the **Premier** and Minister of transportation joined with mayor Tory and others to sign an M.O.U. To commit provincial funding to the downtown relief line, to the Yonge north subway services To more transit in Scarborough. To the waterfront L.R.T. That's what our government's doing while -

MPP Martow (PC) to Minister Coteau (ComSoc and Children and Youth Services) - re: Malware Attack to Child Welfare Cases

>> MPP Gila Martow: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of children and youth services. In 2016, 22 privacy breaches were reported to the ministry of children and youth services with regards to child welfare cases. This past February, two C.A.S. Agencies were victims of ransomware attacks. In both cases thousands of dollars were paid out to cyber criminals. The government was warned that cyber security must be a priority for children-based societies and that funding had to be allocated to protect sensitive information. Mr. Speaker, this Minister mandated the A.F. Agencies to upload their data which puts them at risk of security breaches. Will the Minister tell us what police agencies were brought in to investigate the hacking of Ontario's residents' sensitive information?

>> Minister Michael Coteau: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member opposite for the question. Mr. Speaker, we brought forward the most comprehensive piece of legislation for while protection in the history of this province. Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation did a lot to change the way in which child protection is delivered in the province, including the way in which we Collect and the way in which we hold these organizations accountable. Mr. Speaker, the party opposite decided to vote against bill 89, which included very comprehensive pieces of information. And in the supplemental I'd like to talk a bit about bill 89 and why the Conservatives voted against it.

>> MPP Martow: Again to the Minister. The ministry is on record promising that -- has an I.T. Audog on file for each case to monitor who's accessing the file. Jane cuevarncova recently asked for the log-in data of who was accessing her file. The response from a spin man the ministry S that searches on records are actually not tracked. Since data breaches are obviously occurring, and this Minister has failed to monitor the whole mess, will the Minister tell us if families have been notified that he may have allowed their private information to be exposed? And I'd appreciate an answer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker .

>> Minister Coteau: Mr. Speaker, bill 89, actually lays out -- which was proclaimed this week without the support obviously of the Conservatives. The NDP Did support the bill n.that bill it raised the age of protection, strengthens the rights of young people, commits to addressing systemic racism. Kits -- commits to culturally appropriate services for first nations and ways to hold C.A.S.S accountable. Mr. Speaker, the party opposite voted against it. Why? Because one of their candidates, Tanya granic Allen, walked into their caucus and told them that the life coalition would not support it because of the gender identity piece. That party should be ashamed of their position when it comes to protecting our children here in the province of Ontario.